

# THE HUMAN ELEMENT

Screening Toolkit & Discussion Guide

## **Film Synopsis**

In an arresting new documentary from the producers of RACING EXTINCTION, THE COVE and CHASING ICE, environmental photographer James Balog captures the lives of everyday Americans on the front lines of climate change. With rare compassion and heart, THE HUMAN ELEMENT’s coast-to-coast series of captivating stories inspires us to reevaluate our relationship with the natural world.

## **THE HUMAN ELEMENT as an Advocacy Tool**

With this guide, you will learn how to coordinate a screening of THE HUMAN ELEMENT, promote the event on social media, generate impactful post-screening discussions, and use the film to advance your organization’s mission and vision. Intentionally formulated without a call-to-action at the end, THE HUMAN ELEMENT can be adapted to your organization’s local- and/or issue-specific solutions. The film is available as a full 80-minute feature, or separated into four separate, 20-minute sections: EARTH, AIR, WATER and FIRE.

## **Table of Contents**

Step 1: Secure the Essentials .....	Page 2
Step 2: Organize Your Screening .....	Page 3
Step 3: Spread the Word.....	Page 4
Step 4: Host the Screening: Tips .....	Page 5
Discussion Guide .....	Page 6
Step 5: Follow Up .....	Page 7

## **Questions or Feedback?**

Reach our impact coordinator, Caroline Beaton, at [caroline@earthvisionfilm.com](mailto:caroline@earthvisionfilm.com).

# STEP 1 – SECURE THE ESSENTIALS

- (1) **Identify your impact goal.** Determine what parts of THE HUMAN ELEMENT align with your organization's core philosophy and purpose. Then decide how you can use THE HUMAN ELEMENT to advance a specific facet of your mission, whether it's recruiting new volunteers, soliciting donations, or signing a petition. By setting a goal in advance, you establish your motivation in screening the film and set the stage for change that is meaningful and relevant to issues your organization champions.
- (2) **Choose a target audience.** By determining who you want to reach, you can tailor your social media promotion, discussion questions, and screening schedule to resonate with your audience more effectively. Examples of audiences you may want to reach include: Volunteers, community organizers, companies or business leaders, affinity groups, and donors.
- (3) **Select a venue.** Prioritize venues with that are centrally located and have free parking and projection capabilities. Here are some venues to explore:
  - School classroom or auditorium
  - Community center
  - Local church
  - Elected official's office or town hall
  - Your organization's workplace
  - Outdoor projection / public park
  - Local theater
  - Your home, or a friend or colleague's home
- (4) **Pick a date and time.** We recommend selecting a date that gives you 4-6 weeks to plan your event, find a location, and promote the event. Pick a time when the majority of your target audience is available and has at least two hours to dedicate to your screening. Starting at 6:30 or 7:00 PM seems to be a sweet spot for programming because it gives people enough time to leave work and drive to the event.
- (5) **Get the film.** We are excited to announce that the film is available now across North America on iTunes, Amazon, Google Play and [many other streaming platforms](#). The most carbon-friendly and cost-effective way to screen the film is to download it directly from one of these platforms. (We highly recommend buying and downloading the film instead of renting it to ensure a seamless screening experience.)

Alternatively, if you'd like to host an educational screening, don't plan to charge for tickets, and would prefer a physical copy, please [fill out this request form](#) with your confirmed event details and we will ship you a Blu-ray shortly. To offset the cost of materials, shipping and our time, we kindly request a \$25 donation to Earth Vision Institute, which you can make [here](#).

If you need a different form of the film (such as DCP, pro-res hard drive, or DVD), please email [caroline@earthvisionfilm.com](mailto:caroline@earthvisionfilm.com).

After you have selected how you want to screen the film, confirm that your chosen method works properly by testing it ahead of the screening date using all the same hardware and accessories you will use on the day of event.

## STEP 2 – ORGANIZE YOUR SCREENING

(1) **Get clear on your “call-to-action”.** THE HUMAN ELEMENT was intentionally created without a specific call-to-action at the end so organizations can advocate their own regional and issue-specific solutions. Go back to your impact goal from Step 1, and design discussion questions, panel topics and guest speaking subjects around it. Then capture and emphasize a specific plan or thought you want audiences to take away from your event, such as:

- Write down their name and email address to get mobilized for action.
- Host their own screening.
- Vote on certain policy issues, or call their representatives.
- Get more involved with, or donate to, your organization.
- Make more environmentally-friendly choices in their personal lives.

(2) **Have a post-screening plan.** Use our [discussion guide on page 6](#) to facilitate meaningful conversation and grassroots change around your impact goal. You can choose to facilitate conversation as a group, in breakout groups, or by inviting local political representatives and leaders, academic experts, or activists to moderate or participate in a panel discussion. At the end of the discussion, your attendees will be primed to take action



**TIP: Consider inviting in expertise.**

**“Trusted messengers”:** Recruit local experts with direct experience that validates the messaging in the film to participate in a post-screening Q&A or panel. For example, a firefighter, politician, city planner, doctor, teacher, or nurse could talk about how the issues in the film impact your community directly.

**THE HUMAN ELEMENT team:** Though our team is typically not able to accommodate in-person panel or Q&A appearances, we can sometimes join by Skype. Please let us know if you are interested in us speaking at your screening.

(3) **Set your screening schedule.**

**Sample Schedule** (suggested time: 1 hour and 40 minutes total)

Welcome (audience members take their seats, introduce the film and screening purpose) | **5 minutes**

Film screening | **80 minutes**

Discussion introduction (introduce guests) | **5 minutes**

Q&A, panel discussion, or open discussion | **20 minutes**

## STEP 3 – SPREAD THE WORD

- (1) **Share your event online.** Publish your screening details on your organization’s website as soon as possible. Include venue, location, time, length of the screening, and guest appearances. Then post details about the event and THE HUMAN ELEMENT on social media several times leading up to the event. Refer to our [social media toolkit](#) for inspiration. For more information about the film and additional, free-to-use photos, see our [Press Kit](#).
- (2) **Create a Facebook event page for your screening.** ([Here’s a Facebook event banner you can use.](#)) Add [@thehumanelementmovie](#) as a co-host so we can help you promote it as well. Please also email [caroline@earthvisionfilm.com](mailto:caroline@earthvisionfilm.com) with your confirmed event details and URLs so we can ensure that your event gets the most visibility possible.
- (3) **Tag THE HUMAN ELEMENT’s social media platforms:**

**FACEBOOK**  
**INSTAGRAM** (@thehumanelementmovie)  
**JAMES BALOG'S INSTAGRAM** (@james\_balog)  
**TWITTER** (@humanelementmov)

- (4) **Use hashtags to reach a larger audience:**

#thehumanelement	#wildfire	#climateaction
#naturephotography	#californiafires	#carbon
#anthropocene	#green	#arctic
#sealevelrise	#environment	#glaciers
#climatechange	#globalwarming	#renewables
#docfilm	#earth	#climatechangeshealth

- (5) **Identify influential members of your community** (elected officials, local celebrities, business leaders) to build buzz and awareness around the issue: tag them on social media, invite them to your event, and/or ask them to share your screening with their networks.

## STEP 4 – HOST THE SCREENING: SCREENING TIPS

- ❑ Prep panelists. Prep your panelists with your call to action in advance, so they can incorporate that into their answers where applicable.
- ❑ Sound check. Do a tech check before the screening to ensure it's ready to play and at a good volume. If screening to an older or hearing-impaired crowd, consider turning on closed captions.
- ❑ Ask arriving attendees to sign in so that you can follow up with them right after the event and remind them about your call-to-action.
- ❑ During your screening introduction, give them your screening schedule so attendees know what to expect.
- ❑ After the film ends, don't let the energy in the room drain while the credits run for three minutes; cut them off after 20-30 seconds.
- ❑ Once the film has ended and the lights have turned on, begin the discussion by acknowledging the weight of the content. Consider asking 1-2 audience members to share their reflections.
- ❑ Then pick up the energy and pace as you begin your discussion and call to action. Connect the film to local issues to emphasize why the themes from the film matters to your community.
- ❑ After your Q&A, discussion, and/or panel, end on a high note: offer a specific call-to-action that everyone can participate in.
- ❑ Capture the event for social media. Take a group photo and some fun candids after the screening. Tag THE HUMAN ELEMENT when posting on social media to share your screening experience.

# DISCUSSION GUIDE

- Have you felt the impacts of climate change?
- What are “human tectonics”? Are humans really as influential as fire and water?
- How is “the human element” at play in earth, air, water and fire?
- How does James Balog use art and science to communicate new ideas?
- Which stories in the film resonated with you most?
- Which of the four elements most impacts you and your community?
- What are some things that your community is doing to help the environment? What are things you think they *should* do to help the environment? How can you help initiate a change?
- Do you feel optimistic or pessimistic about the future of our environment?
- James Balog says “truth matters more than ever.” What does he mean?
- The last quote of the film is: “We depend on the stability of the fundamental forces of the world. An imbalance in one element leads to an imbalance in another. People are the only elements that can choose to restore balance ... It’s up to us to make the right choices. Our survival demands it and our children deserve it”. What do you think are the “right choices?”
- Who do you think is most responsible for finding a solution to environmental problems: individual people, corporations, or the government?
- What one thing will you do this week to make a positive impact on our climate?

## STEP 5 – FOLLOW UP

- (1) **Report back to THE HUMAN ELEMENT Team.** Please email [caroline@earthvisionfilm.com](mailto:caroline@earthvisionfilm.com) with photos, the number of people who came to your event, a short paragraph on the audience's reception, and any stories from the event or guests that we might be able to use to inspire action. If you collected email addresses from interested attendees, please share them with us so we can keep in touch.
- (2) **Stay in touch!** Follow us on our [website](#) and social media channels (page 4), and let us know how we can help with future screenings.

**THANK YOU** from THE HUMAN ELEMENT TEAM. We look forward to hearing about your screening!

