

ANTARCTICA: A CALL TO ACTION
Excerpt from the Foreword by Orlando Bloom

My cousin asked me to take a trip with him to Antarctica in December 2006. It immediately appealed to me -- the promise of the adventure, the wide-open seas. This would be the journey of a lifetime and would fulfill my longstanding dream of witnessing a seldom-visited environment that is increasingly threatened by the way we live today. Although in reality it seemed a daunting idea, the opportunity was too good to miss.

My cousin's (Sebastian Copeland) enthusiasm is always contagious. He's a true adventurer and a passionate believer that it is within our grasp to make a difference. For as long as I can remember, the environment has always been a great topic of conversation between us. With his knowledge and insight, I always felt I had a privileged view into what was really happening, and so the opportunity to see it up close for myself was a gift.

It is impossible to put to words the feeling of my first sighting of an iceberg on the horizon. Like modern-day dinosaurs, these towering blocks of ice are nine times greater below the surface and lay in tranquility, reminding me of a land hardly known and of a time long forgotten. But what struck me most was the deafening silence that would be interrupted only by the occasional screech of a gull, a penguin, or a breaching whale. This was a true natural wonderland, untouched by man. One can't help but feel humbled -- and yet connected -- when one truly understands our position in the natural order, that we are only one of 30 million species inhabiting this planet.

It is my hope that the images my cousin has captured so dramatically and with such commitment will incite people to learn more and to appreciate what is truly at stake.