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BBC Earth to launch on beIN platform expanding its footprint across the Middle East and North Africa

Audiences in MENA to enjoy premiere of landmark BBC natural history series Blue Planet II

BBC Worldwide today announced that its global factual brand **BBC Earth** will launch as a linear channel across the MENA markets through the beIN DTH service on April 5th. The agreement will also see BBC Earth extend its distribution in Turkey, launching on the region's largest pay-TV operator Digiturk.

Seeking to inspire audiences by sharing the incredible wonders of our universe, **BBC Earth** showcases the work of the world's foremost factual film-makers and will take audiences across MENA on a thrilling journey of discovery. beIN is one of the leading sport and entertainment global networks, and its MENA platform offers the complete spectrum of entertainment, from blockbuster movies and series to factual documentaries and children's programs, to subscribers across the MENA region.

BBC Earth will be a fully localised channel on the beIN network with a schedule curated specifically for local audiences and with 100% Arabic subtitling. The channel will launch with the latest and critically acclaimed natural history series from the BBC, ***Blue Planet II***.

Natasha Hussain, Vice President and General Manager for Middle East & Mediterranean Region, BBC Worldwide said: "Our expanded partnership with beIN marks an important step in BBC Earth's journey as a global brand as it increases its reach to a significant new audience across the MENA region. The BBC is uniquely positioned as the world leader in natural history and factual film making, with an unparalleled 60 year heritage in leading production

of quality natural history programming. With beIN we are delighted to deliver world class production, creation and technological breakthroughs that BBC Earth has to offer”.

Schedule highlights for **BBC Earth** include:

Blue Planet II- This bold cinematic experience which is captivating viewers across the globe, takes viewers on a magical adventure across the greatest, yet least known, parts of our planet- our oceans. Since *Blue Planet* aired in 2001, our understanding of the oceans has completely changed. **Blue Planet II** uses breakthroughs in marine science and cutting-edge technology to explore new worlds and reveal the very latest discoveries. This landmark series will bring viewers face to face with unexpected new landscapes and introduce compelling contemporary stories from our ocean. Over the course of more than four years, the **Blue Planet II** team have mounted 125 expeditions, visited 39 countries, filmed across every ocean and spent over 6,000 hours diving underwater to bring us closer than ever before to the captivating lives of some of the most extraordinary sea creatures.

In the UK, **Blue Planet II** was seen by 14.1 million people in the week since it was first broadcast, making it the most watched programme of the year.

Astronauts: The Toughest Job In The Universe: This incredible documentary follows 12 ordinary people as they take on a demanding training regime usually reserved for real-life astronaut candidates. From piloting skills to life-and-death decisions, the intense training programme pushes the candidates’ bodies, minds and emotions to the limit, all while being assessed by a doctor, a psychologist and legendary astronaut **Chris Hadfield** – former commander of the International Space Station. The person who impresses the most will receive the ultimate reference: Chris’s backing for their application when the space agencies next take on recruits.

Life Below Zero Series 5: The series that won an Emmy Award for Outstanding Cinematography for a Reality Programme, **Life Below Zero** series 5 puts a spotlight on the the hardy characters who have chosen to live off the grid in one of the toughest areas of the world- Alaska’s unforgiving landscape and climate.

Hunters of The South Seas: This documentary series follows the lives of people who live in a distant corner of the western Pacific called the Coral Triangle, known as the ‘Amazon of the Seas’. The people here have adapted to ocean life like nowhere else, building an extraordinary community entirely at sea. Each isolated community has adapted different but equally ingeniously to the challenges of their surroundings and are famed for the unique skills that have enabled them to survive and thrive in and on the ocean. Explorer **Will Millard** travels to meet them- from the whale hunters of Lamalera who catch huge prey using just hand-thrown harpoons to the free-diving Bajau spear-fishermen of Sulawesi who stalk the seabed on just a lungful of air – these are the last true people of the sea.

BBC Earth will be a 24-hour channel and will be available on the beIN platform channel number 308. **BBC Earth** will join **CBeebies**, the BBC's pre-school brand which has been available on the platform since April 2016.

BBC Earth is the world's leading natural history and science producer with single landmark titles having been watched by an estimated 500 million globally. The deal with beIN follows on from the recent launch of BBC Earth in Greece on pay-TV provider Cosmote.

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For more information, please contact:
Louise Loffel – CEMA Communications Manager
Email louise.loffel@bbc.com

About BBC Worldwide

BBC Worldwide is a principal commercial arm and a wholly owned subsidiary of the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC). Its vision is to build the BBC's brands, audiences, commercial returns and reputation across the world. This is achieved through investing in, commercialising and showcasing content from the BBC around the world, in a way that is consistent with BBC standards and values. The business also champions British creativity globally.

In 2016/17 BBC Worldwide generated headline profits of £157.3 and headline sales of £1,059.9m and returned £210.5m to the BBC.

For more detailed performance information please see our Annual Review webpage:

bbcworldwide.com/annual-review/
bbcworldwide.com
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beIN MEDIA GROUP, chaired by Nasser AL-KHELAIFI, is an independent company established in 2014, and the owner of beIN, the leading sport and entertainment global network. beIN is now distributed across 43 countries within Europe, North America, Asia, Australia, Turkey, Middle East and North Africa (MENA).

Aside from building the beIN SPORTS premium network, beIN MEDIA GROUP is expanding beyond sports into entertainment through production and distribution as well as in the digital space. In November 2015, a new platform was launched in MENA including 28 beIN owned channels with 20 related to sports, 4 to movies and 4 to kids, in addition to growing numbers of third party channels. In March 2016, beIN MEDIA GROUP acquired MIRAMAX film studios offering movie production capabilities and a library of over 700 films. beIN MEDIA GROUP acquired Digturk the leading PAY TV operator in Turkey, in August 2016.

For more information on beIN MEDIA GROUP, please contact mediaoffice@bein.net