



20 April 2021

Dear Messieurs Foster and Frylinck and Ms Ehrlich,

**ACADEMY AWARD NOMINATION – BEST DOCUMENTARY FEATURE:
SOUTH AFRICAN DOCUMENTARY "MY OCTOPUS TEACHER"**

On behalf of all the people of South Africa, I offer my congratulations to the production team of "*My Octopus Teacher*", especially also for having recently won the British Academy Film Awards (BAFTA) for Best Documentary.

A special commendation is due to the Sea Change Initiative, the producer Craig Forster, and the directors Pippa Ehrlich and James Reed. The documentary is storytelling at its best, with a deeply resonant conservation message.

The team should be justifiably proud, as are we, that "*My Octopus Teacher*" has been nominated in the Best Documentary category for this year's Academy Awards – a first ever for a South African documentary. This Oscar nomination is part of long list of commendations and awards the documentary has received.

Conservation of our natural world, and our oceans in particular, is a national priority for South Africa. It also advances Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 14 that exhorts us to "conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development."

That this documentary has opened a window into the natural beauty and diversity of South Africa's oceans and marine ecosystems, is to be commended. Importantly, this documentary will encourage a greater appreciation and advocacy for marine conservation at a time when ocean degradation is a growing global problem.

In this regard, I am greatly encouraged that the documentary will be translated into multiple South African languages.

I call on the producers of "*My Octopus Teacher*" to ensure it gains greater distribution locally, especially in our schools.

Bringing home the Oscar will indeed be a crowning achievement for the production team and for our country.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'C. Ramaphosa', written over a white background.

**Mr Matamela Cyril Ramaphosa
President of the Republic of South Africa**

**Craig Foster, Ross Frylinck & Pippa Ehrlich
Sea Change Project**