

BISON PLANET CONCEPT

Bison Planet is a captivating documentary series that provides an adventurous, informative, and entertaining journey into the world of both bison and buffalo species worldwide.

While the terms "bison" and "buffalo" are often used interchangeably in North America, they hold distinct meanings globally. This series explores the differences and connections among North American Bison, their European cousins, the Wisent, and the "true" buffalo species: the Asian Water Buffalo and African Cape Buffalo. We reveal these animals' shared histories of near-eradication and resurgence, showcasing their roles and relationships with humans across centuries.

With real-life action footage and expert testimonials, we hear from herdsman, conservationists, and custodians, guided by a compelling narrator. From evolution to modern-day ecological importance, we dive into these species' behaviors, habitats, and interactions with people, from beneficial partnerships to controversies. We also examine why countries worldwide are rewilding them for ecosystem restoration.

Traveling through diverse landscapes—North American prairies, Poland's ancient Białowieża Forests, India's Kaziranga National Park, Africa's Maasai Mara, and the Netherlands' Kraansvlak dunes—**Bison Planet** brings the awe-inspiring world of these keystone species to a global audience, celebrating their unique contributions to the natural world.

The series opens with an engaging montage, flashing snippets of various bison and buffalo species to set the stage for the show's broader concept. We follow a chronological journey across history to the present, weaving each species' story throughout the series. By juxtaposing topics, species, and locations, we delve deeper into each animal's existence and significance as a keystone species in its part of the world.

The first episode explores origins, tracing how North American Plains and Wood Bison, alongside the Wisent (European Bison), are related to the ancient Steppe Bison from Russia. We examine their evolutionary journey, from shared ancestry to their development as distinct species, and how they faced near extinction, with some still endangered. As the series unfolds, we also draw parallels with their distant cousins—the wild and domesticated Water Buffalo in India and the Cape Buffalo in Africa—and their own evolutionary paths and challenges.

Through stunning footage of Plains and Wood Bison across Canada and the U.S., we highlight differences among the species, including the Wisent in Europe, and clarify distinctions between bison and buffalo, such as the Asian Water Buffalo and African Cape Buffalo. We trace the North American Bison's evolution, its historical bond with Indigenous Peoples, and the species' near eradication. We also note the Wisent's genealogical connection to North American bison and recount how European bison similarly teetered on the brink of extinction, along with the struggles facing buffalo populations in Asia and Africa.

Bison Planet is an immersive documentary series that explores the evolution, distribution, and ecological importance of bison and buffalo worldwide. Each episode unveils the life cycles, behaviors, characteristics, and predators of these massive bovids while diving into their complex relationships with humans across time and continents.

The series delves into the intertwined existence of bison and buffalo with people, from North American Plains Bison and European Wisent to Asian Water Buffalo and African Cape Buffalo. We learn of their cultural and spiritual significance to communities, including Indigenous Nations of North America, Maasai people in Kenya, and early Ice Age societies in Europe. We visit First Nations communities, witnessing how bison are honored in ceremonies, sweat lodges, and powwows, while also exploring ancient cave art that suggests the reverence Ice Age people had for bison as essential to their survival.

As we meet herdsman, custodians, and conservationists, we touch on the species' modern roles and controversies. In North America, we explore the cultural reliance on bison by Indigenous Plains Peoples for food, shelter, clothing, and spirituality—a connection that endures today. Similarly, we see how the Cape Buffalo holds practical and spiritual significance for the Maasai, just as it did historically. We also witness lighter, sometimes quirky, human interactions with these animals, from people riding bison through town to the ancient tradition of water buffalo races.

Bison Planet examines the delicate balance between rewilding and agricultural uses. We explore the controversy over European bison rewilding in places like Germany, where conservation efforts conflict with local industries. Through footage from bison conferences and expert discussions, we investigate how these keystone species contribute to ecological restoration, reviving diverse ecosystems worldwide.

From North American plains and Poland's ancient forests to the Maasai Mara, Kaziranga's grasslands, and Dutch dunes, **Bison Planet** offers a sweeping global view of bison and buffalo as majestic eco-engineers and cultural icons essential to biodiversity and heritage.

Bison Planet is intended to be educational, inspirational, and entertaining and also to bring about greater awareness, understanding, and empathy for these amazing land mammals around the globe. We hope audiences come to appreciate and celebrate bison and buffalo everywhere throughout the world.