

Now, Avery's lawyer, Kathleen Zellner, is seeking to seize on the momentum

him somebody we have interviewed multiple times who we think is credible." The cases of Avery

and his nephew, who were prosecuted separately, made international headlines late

last year when they were the subject of the documentary. The team behind the show

supportive adult", meant the confession was "involuntary". Judge William Duffin said: "Especially when the

be freed." The prosecutor in both cases, Ken Kratz, said he was surprised by the judge's

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Wrecking the planet with greed?

YAZEED KAMALDIEN

Dutch documentary forces us to examine our daily living habits

ENVIRONMENTAL films screaming about the Earth's collapse are a dime a dozen, leaving audiences momentarily shocked but ultimately getting on with business as usual.

Dutch documentary film-maker Renée Scheltema, who has lived in Cape Town since the 1990s, wanted to make a film that would have a different impact. "This film is for somebody who knows something is wrong and wants to do something about it," he said.

Scheltema's film warns viewers about environmental challenges but also offers solutions from different parts of the world.

She spent several years on the film, now being screened at the Labia cinema in Cape Town. It will also have a run at The Bioscope cinema in Johannesburg next month.

For a year, Scheltema travelled around the world to interview economists, environmentalists and various people involved in projects that lessen the impact on the environment.

A woman who raises awareness about how plastic is having a devastating impact on the environment is an example of one person in the film driving change.

Scheltema points to the global economic system with its interest-based philosophy that places individuals and governments in debt for lengthy periods.



Dutch documentary film-maker Renée Scheltema's inciteful portrayal of environmental destruction is showing at the Labia in Cape Town. PICTURES: SUPPLIED



The film highlights efforts to combat the destruction wrought by consumerism.

This has partly resulted in nations rapidly turning their natural resources into commodities in a desperate bid to repay back loans. Locals suffer the consequences as their countries start resembling graveyards with shrinking natural resources.

Linking the economy to environmental challenges is a fresh angle on a problem that seems to only get worse.

The planet's resources are declining but consumption

demands increased production. Coupled to declining resources is the impact of creating waste as not everything produced is consumed.

"I knew that economic growth was the problem. I wanted to make a film on the root cause of why we are wrecking this planet," said Scheltema.

"If we think we can grow on a finite planet it's not possible. Economic growth

is part of the problem. And greed is a consequence of the wrong system.

"The system is making us greedy. There is never enough money for everyone and we are making more debt. We have created a system where we make money with money.

You pay compound interest. It's criminal."

Tackling the root cause of environmental degradation, Scheltema's film proposes alternatives to the current

so you can exchange services that you enjoy. You can also trade goods with each other.

"There can also be more ecological currencies. An example is how very poor people are rewarded to collect trash and plastic.

"The plastic will go to a recycling depot and they will get food and bus tickets. If they can get shelter then they don't need money.

Scheltema might sound like an idealist but her film shows examples where ecocurrencies exist successfully.

Another alternative to interest-based banking systems has been the emergence of "sustainable banks that are not part of Wall Street (New York's banking headquarters)" said Scheltema.

"These sustainable banks will only lend money to projects that are not harmful to the environment," she adds.

"My film is about practical solutions. There are solutions on an economic, government and personal level.

Scheltema said her film swims against a tide of "corporate media".

"Most people just watch television and it's irrelevant information that they are consuming. I want people to see it and know about the damage that is being done."

Normal is Over has been shown at a number of film festivals this year, including in the Netherlands and the US.

It is also available on the video sharing website Vimeo.

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