



SANTA CRUZ DECLARATION

We, the delegates gathered in Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Bolivia, in the 6th World Ranger Congress, November 2009, and representing the rangers from 43 countries on six continents,

Consider:

- That the founding principles committed to in the Zakopane Declaration in the 1st World Ranger Congress, support this declaration issued from Santa Cruz;
- That despite the efforts made to try to change the difficult living and working conditions of rangers in the world, rangers in many countries still do not see the minimum and necessary changes in benefits asked for;
- That in any country where rangers face difficult working conditions, there is often a correlation between this and an absence or weakness of appropriate institutional support and/or legal recognition;
- That many rangers in these conditions may also be subjected to serious impacts on their health, family life, and professional career that may not meet legal requirements or basic human rights;
- That the omission of these rights directly affects their management effectiveness, making it impossible to work and manage for protected areas;
- That the strength of independent ranger associations is fundamental for the stability and protection of the system of protected areas;
- That many rangers are victims of persecution and violence at work, facing situations of extreme danger in the field, often paying with their lives;
- That despite these difficult conditions in many parts of the world, rangers continue to perform their responsibilities and be motivated by their solidarity and their deep commitment to their jobs, their spirit of professional service against often great odds, and by maintaining a sense of belonging to the world's protected areas;
- That the impacts of climate change, unless addressed immediately by governments around the world and its citizens, will lead to the inexorable decline of global protected areas and their values;
- That the Dependents Fund originated in the 3rd World Ranger Congress in South Africa 2000, attending to the humanitarian needs of the families of rangers killed is acknowledged.

We therefore resolve:

- To urge all governments and contractors, to ensure decent working conditions for rangers of protected areas, with salaries commensurate with their professional responsibilities, and to strengthen their capacities through training and professional development;
- To urge governments to establish clear legal authorities and recognition for the profession of protected area rangers;
- To widely repudiate all assaults against park rangers;
- To urge governments to establish and implement clear and specific policies regarding the management of protected areas and the role of the ranger;
- To send a joint statement (attached) to the United Nations Convention on Climate Change to be held in the city of Copenhagen in December 2009;
- To strengthen support to the families of rangers who have died in the line of duty, through formalizing our cooperation with The Thin Green Line Foundation (TGLF), and to explore strong strategic alliances with other organizations that support the protection of the park ranger in their lives and work; and
- To strengthen our efforts to work with ranger associations to gain increased agency recognition and support for the work of rangers.