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# INTERNATIONAL RANGER FEDERATION

## NEWSLETTER NOVEMBER 2022



## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

It has been a rewarding period to once again see rangers meeting in person across the world. Congratulations to all those involved in arranging the three regional events; the African Ranger Congress, European Ranger Congress and the Oceania Ranger Forum, which took place between August and October. The positive energy and many successful discussions contributed to all of these gatherings having valuable outcomes including the development and application of new ranger associations. On behalf of the International Ranger

Federation (IRF), I would like to extend a big thank you to all the organisations who supported these events, financially and in any other way, especially assisting with rangers' attendance. Without such support, these events would not have been the success they were.

An additional thank you to the rangers who attended as well. Attending always comes at a cost and sacrifice, but I am sure everyone found it to be worth it. This is the first time that there has ever been three IRF regional events so well done to regional bodies, the European Ranger Federation (ERF), the Game Rangers Association of Africa (GRAA), and to Oceania (CORA). The congresses highlight the value of like-minded members from the ranger sector coming together and as the IRF we look forward to when we can see all regions hosting such events.

These congresses were well timed as they pre-empted some significant global events, namely the Climate Change COP 27 and the Convention of Biodiversity (CBD) COP 15. If you have not read the recently published paper by Appleton *et al*, titled '*Protected area personnel and ranger numbers are insufficient to deliver global expectations*', please do (<https://www.nature.com/articles/s41893-022-00970-0>). IRF contributed to this paper which was initiated by what was seemingly a simple question; 'How many rangers are there in the World?'. The paper reiterated what we have always known - that most conservation areas do not have the requisite ranger capacity, but it really is concerning to see that currently, there are only being 286 000 rangers globally. Although the 2020 spatial protected area targets set by the CBD were almost met, the paper shows how setting such targets without looking at the human capacity needed to manage these areas, leaves the world with a false illusion that our life-support systems are secured and are improving our ability to mitigate the effects of climate change.

I doubt the word 'ranger' was mentioned even once in Egypt at the Climate Change COP 27. We hope that this will not be the case at the upcoming CBD COP 15 where the 30-by-30 targets are likely to be adopted. If it is just about area and not combined with management effectiveness, then the same illusion will be in place. The paper states the same, in that 'Without both addressing the current personnel shortages and identifying and meeting the workforce needs associated with the 30-by-30 target, ... effective management of this expanded global protected area system is unlikely to be achieved.' One must also remember that the 30-by-30 target is the minimum requirement for sustaining biodiversity and essential ecosystem services, for attaining relevant sustainable

development goals (SDGs) and for mitigating the impact of climate change<sup>[1]</sup>. We now have some idea of the workforce that is needed, but what is needed by the workforce to ensure it is effective? That is what IRF is working on with its partners, to develop and professionalise a sector, and rapidly. It is certainly cause for concern when we think of how many rangers are needed but also how many are needed in just seven years!

But this is also an opportunity. What workforce is needing a 5-fold increase (as a minimum)? It would be interesting to model what biodiversity that is around today, is attributable to the presence of rangers, and what will be around for generations to come if we make the needed investment into an effective global ranger workforce or not? We, have a lot to do but it is exciting times at this pivotal point in our ecological history.

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[1] Appleton, M.R., Courtiol, A., Emerton, L. *et al.* Protected area personnel and ranger numbers are insufficient to deliver global expectations. *Nat Sustain* (2022). <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41893-022-00970-0>

## 'PROTECTED AREA PERSONNEL AND RANGER NUMBERS ARE INSUFFICIENT TO DELIVER GLOBAL EXPECTATIONS'



Photo credit: Chris Galliers

A new scientific paper, '[Protected area personnel and ranger numbers are insufficient to deliver global expectations](https://doi.org/10.1038/s41893-022-00970-0)' published this past October in *Nature Sustainability*, reveals that we need five times more personnel than what we

have right now to protect 30% of the planet.

This is the first global census of protected area personnel since 1999 and the first-ever census to include rangers; it estimates that we need a workforce of 2.9 million people, including 1.53 million more rangers.

Not only is there not enough rangers to fulfill global expectations, but rangers urgently need better recognition, capacity, and resources to do their jobs safely and effectively. **The paper reveals that there are only 286,000 rangers in the world!** The numbers are out to validate the long-time call from the International Ranger Federation (IRF) that there are insufficient numbers of rangers to meet the current needs, let alone those that are planned and needed in the future.

If the new goal is to effectively protect 30% of the planet by 2030, we are not only going to need to invest in current rangers but also future ones. Rangers are, in many cases, putting their lives at risk so that society can enjoy fresh air, fresh water, and a healthy planet. To ensure the professionalism of the workforce and recruitment of more rangers, the IRF calls for investment into current and additional rangers - men, women, state employed or private or from local and indigenous communities, and to provide them with the recognition and resources they need and deserve.

The Universal Ranger Support Alliance (URSA) is working with IRF to develop the ranger sector as a vital professional service, similar to medical personnel and first responders. Rangers need better working conditions, opportunities for training and learning, fairer employment opportunities and conditions, and better representation, advocacy, and accountability.

Access the new research paper in which IRF collaborated here:

<https://www.nature.com/articles/s41893-022-00970-0>

The world plans to **conserve 30%** of its lands and seas by **2030**.

Yet there are *nowhere near enough* rangers and other staff to manage the current protected and conserved areas.

17% of the world is currently protected land, managed by a mere **550,000 rangers and other guardians**.

We will need **2.9 million people** to effectively manage **30%** of the world's land.

**More people work at golf courses and country clubs in the U.S. alone than there are rangers in the entire world.**

**380,000**

The number of people working at golf courses and country clubs in the U.S.



**285,000**

The number of rangers in the world.



vs.



A new study calculates that **we will need 5X MORE PEOPLE** to manage the world's protected and conserved areas.

Source: <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41893-022-00970-0>

## WORLD RANGER DAY 2022

# I STAND WITH THE WORLD'S RANGERS

**WORLD RANGER DAY  
31 JULY**



The International Ranger Federation (IRF), along with all its members, partners and supporters honored and celebrated wildlife rangers around the world for World Ranger Day, on the 31<sup>st</sup> of July. This year's celebration focused on the diversity of the ranger workforce, including places they work, types of jobs they perform, and the countries and communities they hail from and work alongside.

"Rangers are incredibly important guardians of biodiversity and ecosystems. They are participating in reducing climate change, which benefits local communities and broader society," said Chris Galliers, President of the International Ranger Federation (IRF). "They work in a diversity of environments around the world and whilst carrying out this critical work of

protecting things we rely on— such as clean water and air— they face many threats. These threats can be life threatening and so as environmental health professionals, rangers need our support.”

More than 80% of surveyed rangers around the world have identified the support of communities as necessary in order to effectively do their jobs. As a result, URSA is also helping IRF ranger associations build trust in the communities with whom they work. It compiles the best practices from rangers around the world that can help prevent, minimize or mitigate tension and conflict between rangers and communities with whom they have contact. URSA's new global social safeguards, work standards, and policy support a more diverse and safer sector.

The International Ranger Federation (IRF) with the Thin Green Line Foundation released its annual Roll of Honour ahead of World Ranger Day. One hundred and fifty rangers tragically lost their lives on the job during the past year. The figure is higher than the numbers reported in 2020 and the second highest number of ranger deaths recorded since recording started in 2006.

The Roll of Honour illustrates a troubling trend for the ranger profession. A [recent paper](#) tallied and analysed the deaths of rangers worldwide between 2006 and 2021. The statistics showed that on average two rangers died while on the job every week. The leading causes of death were homicide and occupational or work-related incidents, such as firefighting and wildlife attacks.

“Although rangers have dangerous jobs, they are still rescuing people and wildlife after natural disasters, mitigating human-wildlife conflict, and curbing poaching,” said Olga Biegus, URSA Programme Manager. “They will be key players as we respond to climate change and protect biodiversity.”

Rangers, who often have many different titles around the world, protect nearly 15% of the earth's land mass and 7% of its oceans. The areas they protect include national parks, communally-owned wild landscapes, coastal systems and cultural heritage sites, many of which are highly visited places by tourists.

**RANGER ROUNDTABLE WEBINAR,  
REGIONAL CONGRESSES, EMBRACING  
DIVERSITY.**



If you missed it, we invite you to watch the recording of our last Ranger Roundtable: Regional Congresses - Embracing Diversity [here](#).

While celebrating **World Ranger Day on July 31<sup>st</sup>**, rangers from all over the world held a live conversation to respond to the question: How can ranger communities embrace diversity in their upcoming regional congresses and meetings? These roundtables were a collective work from the International Ranger Federation, The Thin Green Line Foundation and the Universal Ranger Support Alliance.

## RANGER CODE OF CONDUCT

The International Ranger Federation (IRF) and Universal Ranger Support Alliance (URSA) hosted seven virtual workshops across different regions to create awareness on the Ranger Code of Conduct. The workshops were conducted in 25 languages in total to ensure that we reach out to our target audience. We would like to thank Cristina Sganga, Human Rights expert, and UN OHCHR for their technical support and guidance.



Image credit: Leena Dahl

## UNIVERSAL RANGER SUPPORT ALLIANCE (URSA)



**Towards an Equity and Equality Policy in the Ranger Workforce - Call to share your expertise and documentation on diversity, equity, equality, rights, and similar!**

Based on IRF Chitwan Declaration 2019 and stated under the Objective D of the URSA Action Plan, URSA is committed to supporting implementation of adequate systems and structures that enable equal opportunities, fair treatment, and equitable working environments for rangers across the sector. To date URSA published a report 'Towards Gender Equality in Ranger Workforce'. Now a further step is needed.

The IRF is working closely with URSA to start a consultation process and to develop a policy on equity and equality in the ranger workforce. Recognizing the limited information on this topic and lack of resources online, **we call for the support of any Ranger Association who currently has a policy and/or guidelines on the Equity and Equality to reach out and share with us your documentation and experience.** Please contact [federationofficerirf@gmail.com](mailto:federationofficerirf@gmail.com) if you have specific expertise and you'd like to support the consultation process. Your insight and experience are valuable!

The work on the **Equity and Equality** draft policy will also include an advisory board, consisting of experts and/or practitioners in **Equity and Equality**, diversity, indigenous people and local communities, as well as representatives from the ranger sector. Should you wish to join this group – please contact Olga Biegus at: [obiegus@ursa4rangers.org](mailto:obiegus@ursa4rangers.org)

URSA, together with the IRF, will be organising a side event at the **CBD COP** in December. As a run-up to the session, there will be a **Vital Sites** event on **23<sup>rd</sup> November, 1400 – 1530 CET / UTC+1** discussing inter alia, the newly published paper on protected area staff numbers globally.

## GLOBAL FOREST WATCH SURVEY

### Free training for Rangers at Global Forest Watch

[Global Forest Watch](#) (GFW) is an online platform that provides data and tools for monitoring forests in real time. GFW and the International Ranger Federation (IRF) are collaborating for the first time to design a free workshop exclusive for rangers! If you are interested in learning how to use GFW in your work, please share your interest in a training on how to use GFW's data and tools by [filling out this form \(takes less than 5 minutes\). We will be in touch once training is scheduled.](#)

Link to the survey here: <https://es.surveymonkey.com/r/2JG95MZ>

## RANGER COMPETENCY SURVEY



The Universal Support Alliance (URSA) is in the process of compiling a list of competences needed by a professional ranger.

To date, we developed, with contributions from many rangers and others working for protected and conserved areas, a draft list of competences that should be relevant for any ranger across the world.

This is a request for support to finalize the Global Ranger Competences list by sending us your comments / suggestions here:

[Global Ranger Competences\\_final draft - Consultation](#)

We are looking forward to see your suggestions the latest by the **15th of December 2022**.

THE THIN GREEN LINE FOUNDATION



### **Connecting Our Ranger Community**

This last quarter has been busy for the Thin Green Line team. With travel restrictions finally easing in Australia where we are based, our team has been able to support more initiatives for rangers to connect face to face and we have been privileged to attend some of these events too. Meeting rangers and being able to listen firsthand to your experiences is a humbling, and inspiring part of our work.

In August, we visited Western Australia where one partner organisation is helping indigenous rangers connect with their local communities through a Junior Ranger Program. Thank you to the Indigenous Desert Alliance, Ngurrara Rangers, Nyangumarta Rangers and the Djugerari and Ngaanyatjarra Schools for allowing us to learn from your cultural exchange and junior ranger teaching programs. We were thrilled to see the rangers' confidence light up as they guided local children onto their traditional lands and teach them how to care for country. Keep up the great work!

We have also attended the African and European Ranger Congresses and the first ever Oceania Ranger Forum. Watching rangers come together after such a long time apart has been truly inspiring and we are heartened by the impact that these events have had on the wider community.

At the recent Oceania Ranger Forum, hosted by IRF member CORA (Council of Oceania Ranger Associations), the New Zealand Ranger Association was officially formed, and the Samoan Ranger Association became a provisional member of IRF. We're thrilled to have supported this inaugural event and have the opportunity to learn from the inspiring discussions surrounding 'inclusive conservation'.

We've also had an update from our partners, Freeland in Asia, who are supporting cross-border training initiatives between rangers in Thailand and Myanmar. By training these rangers together, we're helping to build partnerships across international boundaries – boundaries that wildlife doesn't

understand, and that poachers try to exploit.

The past few months have been an exciting time for Thin Green Line and rangers alike. We're thankful to all the rangers that have taken time recently to tell us about your fears, challenges, solutions, and the things that make you so passionate about protecting wildlife. We can't wait to meet more of you at upcoming events!



**Image credit:** Freeland, Thailand

## OCEANIA



**Image credit:** Jolene Nelson

**OCEANIA RANGERS COMING TOGETHER AS ONE...**

**The International Ranger Federation's (IRF) regional body for Oceania; the Council of Oceania Ranger Associations (CORA)— hosted the inaugural Oceania Ranger Forum in Rotorua, Aotear, New Zealand recently. While yearly CORA meetings have been held previously within Australia, never has one been to this scale involving the cross pollination between so many Oceania countries and with such positive outcomes.**

The Oceania Ranger Forum brought together over 180 rangers from Australia, New Zealand, Samoa, Solomon Islands, as well as representatives from Papua New Guinea and the USA, to collaborate on the theme of 'inclusive conservation'. Discussing common issues, opportunities, challenges and solutions to better take on our roles ensuring the protection of our precious cultural and natural values, and special places within this amazing part of the world. The success was testament to the efforts of a small team of dedicated volunteer rangers (see pictured, with the exception of Jen Pitman and Lucy Gibson who were absent).

With the support of our partners and sponsors, including the IRF, The Thin Green Line Foundation, Universal Ranger Support Alliance, Fireground/EMERG, Department of Conservation (NZ) and many others, we were able to support delegates to engage in [Māori](#) culture, network with like-minded people, experience inclusive conservation and inspire a range of personal and professional development opportunities and friendships with a view to growing ranger associations in the Oceania region.

One of the most rewarding outcomes of the forum was further development of Rangers of Aotearoa New Zealand (ROANZ) Ranger Association and the Samoa Ranger Association (SRA). Both were welcomed into the IRF/CORA family with open arms and the opportunity to develop mutually beneficial relationships in the future.

Delegates commented about the quality of the presentations as some of the best they had ever seen. As keynote speaker, IUCN Oceania representative Lou Sanson presented 'Life in Nature and Why the World Needs More Rangers'. He outlined a brief history of conservation in Aotearoa/NZ and why NZ needed to move back to an indigenous Māori view of Kaitiakitanga (custodianship) to reverse the huge biodiversity decline since European colonisation.

He outlined throughout his career as a Ranger to Director General in NZ

conservation, as he moved into international connected challenges of climate change and biodiversity loss, why the IUCN's 30 by 30 Project and Nature Based Solutions are such a critical path forward to 2030 to avoid runaway climate change. He is pursuing through his networks messaging, if we wish to succeed with 30 by 30, the world will need to double the number of rangers from 550,000 to over 1 million within 8 years. This will present a huge challenge and opportunity for Rangers to become a world valued profession over the next 8 years!

We heard from Department of Conservation (NZ) rangers Kohu Kohiti and Chelsea Gurnick speaking about their mahi (work) and how they are encouraging 'cultural safety' within their working environments. This involves recognising and respecting the cultural identity of others, while safely meeting their needs, expectations and rights, working towards restoring what is lost and protecting what remains.

Merenia Hudson delivered outstanding real-life examples of indigenous-led initiatives that offer a beacon for meaningful environmental justice and moving beyond conservation towards reconciliation.

As did Indigenous Australian rangers Jamie Langdon and Jarrod Edwards, sharing with us their work through the Healthy Country Planning framework in Lutruwita (Tasmania, Australia). Showcasing that partnerships and collaborative conservation opportunities will benefit everyone through honest and meaningful engagement.

Gavin Bensemman from Auckland Council, emphasised the importance of developing ways for the young to connect with nature. He delivered a highly entertaining outlook on how he is developing empowering programs for children so they will make change for the future.

Jim and Jean Thomas presented on the Tenkile Conservation Alliance and the amazing and inspiring work this award-winning pair have done with 42 communities in Papua New Guinea, and still do, with the development of an online portal/app called 'Mother Nature'.

Charity Huahiri, the only representative from the Solomon Islands, gave us insight into the work the Ono Tribal Association are doing in the Malaita Province to protect their resources and communities.

We had a motivational talk from Mike Lynch (current IRF Treasurer and retired ranger with California State Parks) who shared his wealth of expertise and knowledge on how bringing together like-minded people can have wonderful mutual benefits for one's profession and mental health. With the NZ and Samoa Ranger Associations on the Oceania Ranger Forum's agenda, Mike had some valuable tips on how this can be done for the benefit of NZ/Samoan rangers.

Australian Forest Ranger Rachel Goodoy discussed the complexities and positive outcomes of balancing recreation and tourism with plantation management and conservation, while Peter Cleary and Gayle Hardie delivered a thought-provoking presentation on the need for rangers to understand why being emotionally healthy is so important in our role as rangers. They highlighted ways to recognise our own strengths and emotional health levels and how they impact on others.

Brendan Moodie from Tasmania Parks and Wildlife Service, took us on his ranger association's journey as they trekked, rode and paddled from the top of Tasmania to the bottom in any effort to raise much needed funds for Timor Leste rangers. Rangers participated in a 525km relay, raising \$22,000 for 8 motorbikes and equipment.

Always inspiring, The Thin Green Line Foundation champions Jennifer Mann and Leigh Foster, showcased the inspiring work TGLF continues to deliver to support programs for rangers around the world.

And last but not least, we had Amanda Dudgeon take us on her journey so far 'Walking the Thin Green Line' – a year long journey sharing the stories and characters of Oceania, raising money for less fortunate Oceania rangers, along with raising the profile about the amazing work rangers do protecting nature.

You can find out more at:

Website: <https://www.walkingthethinggreenline.com>

Instagram: @walkingthethinggreenline

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/walkingthethinggreenline>

Along with holding the CORA annual meeting, delegates were also treated to an array of cultural and informative field trips and celebrations. To kick off the event we were welcomed by the local Māori people conducting a Powhiri. That evening, we enjoyed a traditional hongi (food cooked in the ground) and cultural

show. After the two days of presentations, groups went in different directions visiting [a Māori](#) living village, thermal pools, Whakarewarewa Forest and local lakes where restoration work has been implemented by the local community.

Holding such an event was a massive step towards expanding CORA and embracing the opportunity to be more inclusive of the Oceania region. We look forward to holding more events such as this to ensure the long-term and effective protection of this special region.

Jolene Nelson, IRF Oceania Representative & CORA Chair.



Image credit: Jolene Nelson

## EUROPEAN RANGER FEDERATION (ERF)

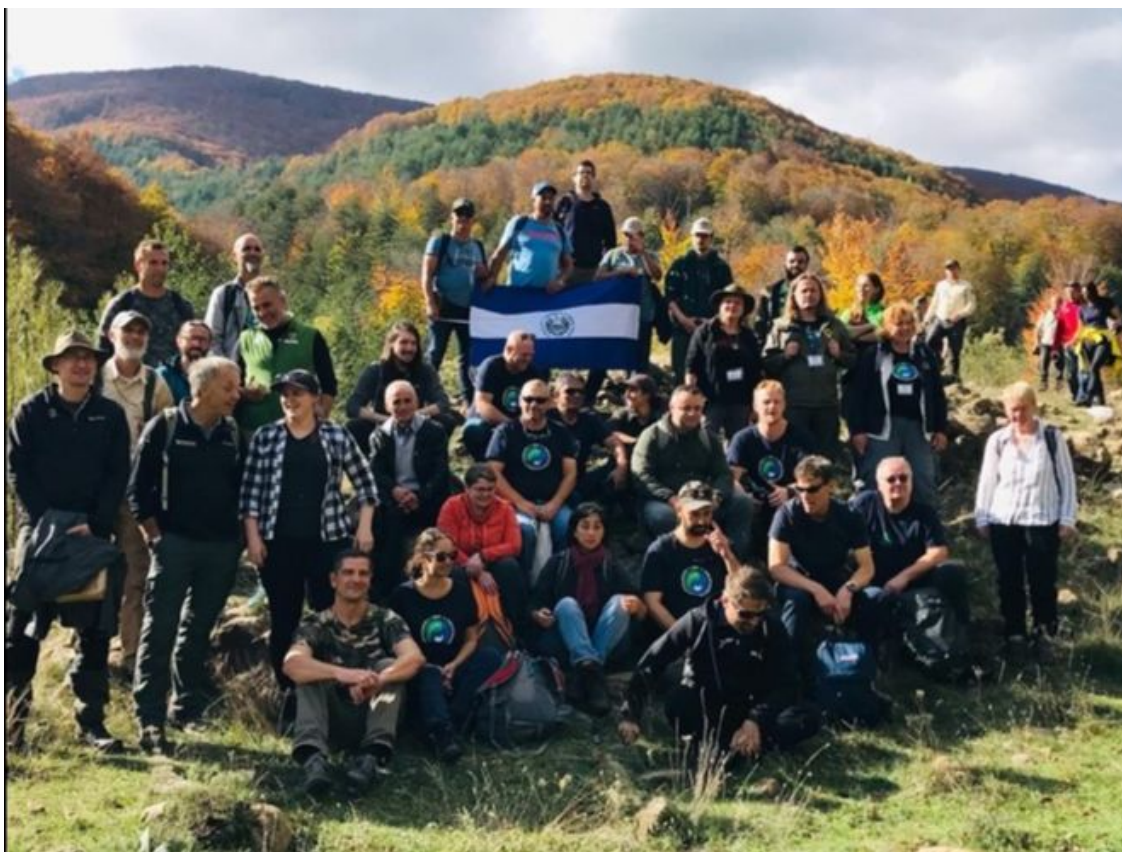


Image credit: European Ranger Federation website

**The 5th European Ranger Congress held in Tirana, Albania, ended after three rich days of expert presentations, fieldtrips, workshops, inspiring talks and countless new ideas on how Europe's rangers can help conserve biodiversity.**

About 100 rangers and conservation experts from 24 countries, from all sides of Europe and the globe gathered at the congress in Tirana to find the best answers for the future; with the motto being 'Biodiversity on the Edge – Working Strategies for Rangers in a Rapidly Changing World': From working with new monitoring methods, use of drones for biodiversity conservation, networking ideas for Europe's rangers, involvement of junior rangers, to issues of support for rangers as custodians of biodiversity, participants discussed a wide range of strategies in presentations, workshops and countless conversations.

**Albanian rangers introduce colleagues from Europe and the world to their diverse habitats:**

Field trips to the Albanian national parks Shebenik and Divjake impressively demonstrated what needs to be preserved in Albania and how the local rangers are committed to doing so: Primeval beech forests and marshlands are just a few examples of the rich and unique habitat diversity in Albania. Urs Reif,

President of the European Ranger Federation (ERF) said, “The ERF is so much in thanks to the rangers of Albania, the Albanian Ranger Association, and of course especially Artenisa who organized it all. We hope we can come back here and enjoy the country but also give back directly to the rangers here in Albania with some useful support.”

### **Participants from Europe and beyond raise support for rangers around the world:**

The European Ranger Congress also attracted visitors from beyond Europe: for example, a delegation of rangers from El Salvador were guests at the congress and enriched it with insights into the special tasks and challenges of their work in their home territory. Their visit was made possible by the close contact and tireless support of colleagues from the Bavarian Forest National Park, but also by the generous financial support of the Greenpeace Environmental Foundation, which made the congress possible in this form in the first place.

The ranger community itself also put together funding for rangers in need of support. For example, participants raised 750 euros through the traditional ranger raffle, which will be split between the Thin Green Line Foundation and the Frankfurt Zoological Society who are steering money towards rangers and protected area staff caught up in the Ukraine crisis.



Image credit: European Ranger Federation website

### **Expectations, goals and wishes (Urs Reiff, ERF President)**

Watch: [https://vimeo.com/764531446?](https://vimeo.com/764531446?embedded=true&source=video_title&owner=185679996)

[embedded=true&source=video\\_title&owner=185679996](https://vimeo.com/764531446?embedded=true&source=video_title&owner=185679996)

**Participants' voices:**

Watch: <https://vimeo.com/764598987>



**Image credit:** European Ranger Federation website

**Learning about rangers in Albania**

**With the fifth European Ranger Congress, Europe's rangers were guests in Albania. The aim of the congress in Tirana was also to get to know the work of the local rangers and the still young Albanian Ranger Association.**

Thus, the approximately 100 rangers from all over Europe who participated in the congress were also on the road in two protected areas: the Divjake-Karavasta National Park with its extensive marshland, and mountainous Shebenik-Jablanica, at the same time home to the World Natural Heritage Rrajca Beech Forest with its primeval forest character.

We spoke with two local rangers who guided us through the area: Xhek Nezha, Monitoring Chief of the Regional Protected Area Administration, and Fatmir Brazhda, Director of the Elbasan Protected Area Region, where the Shebenik National Park is located. In the video, they talk about the history, special features and species of the protected area, the challenges of their work and relations with the local population.

Watch: <https://vimeo.com/764937590>

**Presentations of the ERC to browse through at home**

Back home and looking for the tool or idea presented in the dozens of presentations at the European Ranger Congress? Or just curious, if you could not attend?

Find presentations here:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1dqynxTjgLaUxnXuDeTSf2uoOVd-cdlHj>

### **Tirana Commitment sums up action points for ERF network**

The European Ranger Congress was also an opportunity for the Board of the European Ranger Federation and the representatives of the national ranger associations to reflect together on a strategic roadmap for how Europe's rangers can be better supported in the future.

The Tirana Commitment summarises the key action points on which the ERF intends to base its actions in the future, in close coordination with the ranger associations of Europe.

Download Tirana Commitment here:

[https://www.europeanrangers.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Tirana-Commitment-ERC\\_2022.pdf](https://www.europeanrangers.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Tirana-Commitment-ERC_2022.pdf)

For more information visit the European Ranger Association website at:

<https://www.europeanrangers.org/>

## AFRICA





Image credit: Game Rangers Association of Africa

### **The Kasane Ranger Call to Action - 29 September 2022**

Over 90 rangers from 12 countries participated in the 2nd African Ranger Congress in Kasane, Botswana, from 14 -18 September 2022. It was organised by the Game Rangers' Association of Africa (GRAA), endorsed by the International Ranger Federation (IRF) and supported by The Thin Green Line Foundation (TGLF), Universal Ranger Support Alliance (URSA) and the Wildlife Ranger Challenge. The Congress attracted rangers working for government, NGOs and community organisations from across Africa. It was a Congress by rangers, for rangers and about rangers that built networks, camaraderie, morale and celebrated ranger achievements during the African Conservation Awards.

We, the rangers of the African Ranger Congress, are committed to furthering the professionalisation of rangers which builds on the IRF Chitwan declaration and the URSA Action Plan. Whilst acknowledging previous commitments made, we call for the following actions to be undertaken by the global community and for them to hear our voices and help address our needs for the benefit of people and wildlife.

Increased advocacy, representation and recognition of the ranger sector:

- Acknowledgement that the GRAA, as the IRF regional ranger representative body, be recognised as an independent point of reference

for rangers that sets acceptable standards for the ranger sector using the best available knowledge.

- Being guided by professionalism, the GRAA commits to acting with consequential responsibility, ethical dependency and integrity when interacting with the IRF, IUCN, URSA, national and international bodies for the benefit of rangers.

#### Improved and sustained ranger sector capacity building:

- Recognition and support to build and sustain ranger sector capacity whilst creating a professional, effective and resilient ranger corps with the necessary safeguards in place.
- We ask that the leadership potential amongst all rangers is recognised, and developed to ensure accountability and inspire the ranger corps towards a common purpose.

#### Better employment conditions and welfare:

- Action to enhance ranger employment and welfare conditions, improving pride, trust and resiliency amongst the ranger workforce.
- Improvement in support structures for all rangers including government, community and private sector rangers to improve their wellbeing - these should include, but not be limited to medical and life insurance schemes, legal support, trauma response for medical emergencies and professional counselling services, to support rangers and their families.
- Ensure greater recognition for the families of rangers, acknowledgement of their support to rangers and establish systems to improve their wellbeing.
- Respect and acknowledgement of the rights of all rangers to job security, fair remuneration, career development and progression as a way to improve resiliency against demoralisation and corruption.

#### Greater equality and equity in the ranger profession:

- Realisation that equality can only be achieved in the ranger profession when fair and just conditions are available to all rangers. Recognition of the capabilities of all rangers, regardless of culture, race, religion, gender, and education to ensure equal opportunities for all.

#### Improved community relations, ranger conduct and accountability:

- We urge all organisations employing rangers (including governments, NGOs and community organisations) to adapt, adopt and implement the

IRF Code of Conduct to improve ranger conduct and accountability. We note that the rights of rangers should also be known and respected at all times.

- Acknowledgement that rangers are not separate from communities and that they often come from local communities surrounding the conservation areas in which they work. The creation of an atmosphere where communities see rangers as family through rangers' good values as they conduct their critical and diverse work professionally, responsibly and accountably in a way that respects human rights.

For more information on the African Ranger Congress please contact: [info@gameranger.org](mailto:info@gameranger.org)

The African Ranger Congress was made possible by the following organisations and initiative.



## AFRICAN PROTECTED AREAS CONGRESS



Photo credit: IUCN-WPCA

IRF, URSA, GRAA and many other partners met during the IUCN [Africa Protected Areas Congress](#), in Kigali Rwanda from 18 – 23<sup>rd</sup> of July 2022. Together, they delivered or participated in various sessions on: Ranger capacity and support in delivering the 2030 targets, Code of Conduct, Ranger and communities trust and human rights.

The **International Ranger Award ceremony** became one of the main highlights of the entire congress, with standing ovations for all attending rangers from Africa. You can read more about the 2022 winners on the [IUCN website](#) and on social media of URSA, IRF and GRAA and many of other partners. **Congratulations to all winners and recognised teams!**

Finally the [Kigali Call to Action](#), thanks to collaborative effort, called for: *“Stronger support and resourcing of rangers, including community rangers accountable to communities to conduct their critical and diverse work professionally, responsibly and accountably in a way that respects human rights. We urge Governments and other organizations to adopt the new International Ranger Federation Code of Conduct presented at APAC.”*

## LATIN AMERICA RANGER FEDERATION



The process of creating the Federación Latinoamericana de Guardaparques - FLG (Latin American Ranger Federation in English) has taken many years. The idea started at the IRF 6th World Ranger Congress in Santa Cruz, Bolivia 2009, but it was not consolidated despite the efforts made. At the 8<sup>th</sup> IRF World Ranger Congress in Estes Park, United States 2016, the need to work more unitedly as Latin American park rangers to solve the underlying problems that affect the group was once again identified. After that, in 2018 the Latin American Meeting of Park Rangers was held in Ecuador, where a Technical Committee was created by consensus, with representatives from 12 countries. As a result, the document *Regional Diagnosis of the Labor Situation of Park Rangers in Latin America* was published. However, the group of park rangers is aware that the technical document is not enough to reach the solutions proposed in it, but that much work must still be done on internal strengthening in an organized and collaborative way to face the new regional challenges that affect the collective of rangers.

With this diagnosis, it became evident that park rangers in Latin America face very different problems from other parts of the world, for which it was identified that one of the strategies to achieve comprehensive solutions is the unified and collective work of the associations of each country individually (for their knowledge of the territory and local problems) and joint work at the regional level (with the aim of finding comprehensive solutions), as this will improve the options to achieve collective objectives. Therefore, on October 17, 2019, at the III Congress of Protected Areas of Latin America and the Caribbean, held in Lima – Peru (III CapLac), the Latin American Ranger Federation (FLG) was re-founded with 4 organizations from Chile, Ecuador, Paraguay and Uruguay. The FLG was presented to the IRF General Assembly at the World Ranger Congress Nepal 2019 and was widely accepted by the attendees.

Subsequently, Costa Rica, Brazil (Amapá, Brasília and São Paulo associations), the Federal Union of Park Rangers of Argentina, the Single Union of Workers of SERNANP of Peru, the Dominican Association of Park

Rangers and the Association of Rangers of El Salvador joined. Currently, the FLG is made up of 12 organizations that represent park rangers in 10 countries, but it is committed to integrating more organizations and promoting the formation of new associations in the region.

In 2020, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the actions of the FLG were limited. Despite this negative context, bimonthly meetings were held between the organizations that make it up, communications were made to countries in the region (Guatemala, Brazil, Ecuador and Argentina) and contacts were made with NGOs in the region to seek internal strengthening of the organization. However, since the second half of 2021, FLG virtual activities increased significantly:

- In August 2021, an informative meeting was held through the IRF with the Game Rangers Association of Africa (GRAA) to learn about the operation of this organization, which has been operating for more than 20 years in a continent where working conditions for park rangers are very complex.
- In September 2021, three park rangers representing the FLG participated with a message/declaration on the importance and problems of the collective's work in the region's protected areas at the IUCN World Conservation Congress held in Marseille.
- First Meeting of Women Rangers in Latin America (September-November 2021). FLG actively participated in each of its instances: inaugural speeches, presentations and moderation in the working tables, elaboration of the Agenda of Women Park Rangers and preparation of the final Declaration. In December, during the closing ceremony, the FLG was also on the agenda with final reflections and reading of the Meeting Declaration. In addition, it is part of Commission 5- Coordination of the Women Rangers of Latin America Agenda, a mixed commission made up of various international conservation organizations. It should be noted that the need and initiative to approach the profession from a gender perspective was identified in the *Regional Diagnosis of the Labor situation of Park Rangers in Latin America*.
- In October 2021 and then again in 2022, FLG park rangers participated in the events 'Why is it worth being on the front line?' and 'Ranger's knowledge and innovations in Latin America', as part of the annual Celebration of the Protected Areas of Latin America and the Caribbean.
- By 2023, the FLG plans to hold its first annual face-to-face assembly and strengthen itself internally with face-to-face and virtual training. To achieve these objectives, it has the support of the IRF and URSA since 2021.



**Image credit:** Latin American Federation: The FLG works together for the welfare of the collective of park rangers in Latin America

## TIKAL SUMMIT AT PETEN, GUATEMALA

# TIKAL SUMMIT 2022

## Tikal National Park, Guatemala



### Tikal Summit

Petén, Guatemala, C.A.

# 2022

Heart of the  
Maya Biosphere Reserve

**10-13**  
**October**

Convenor  
Global Conservation

f t i

Organizing Partners

Global Conservation and FUNDAECO organized a three-day Summit for National Leaders in Park and Wildlife Protection of Latin America in Tikal, Guatemala from 10-13<sup>th</sup> of October. More than 100 delegates from 14 countries attended the Summit from United States, Mexico, Guatemala, El Salvador, Belize, Honduras, Costa Rica, Panama, Cuba, Venezuela, Ecuador and Peru. IRF also participated at this event.

Staff from the Center for Protected Area Management and Training at Colorado State University provided training on Leadership and Best Practices in Protected Area Management, Law Enforcement, Community Protection and Sustainable Financing to National Park and Protected Area Leaders in Latin America. Experiences were shared from colleagues at other UNESCO World Heritage sites focused on key challenges facing national parks and wildlife,

showing examples of success and best practices in the region.

The main result was the [Tikal Declaration](#) that calls on government authorities, societal leaders, the business sector, international cooperation agencies (public and private), and all citizens, to support, defend, strengthen, and expand the national systems of protected areas of our countries, and supporting the following first two recommendations among others:

***1. It is urgent to support the professionalization, dignification and recognition of the work of managers, technicians, park rangers and community brigades of protected areas, assuring them the necessary job stability, decent wages and benefits, education and training, equipment, infrastructure and legal support necessary to conduct their vital work. It is important to support and ensure generational change and succession plans that incorporate the next generation and take advantage of the knowledge and wisdom of older professionals.***

***2. It is essential to ensure the accompaniment, security, support and legal defense of the guardians of nature, who are in the first line of defense of the natural heritage of our nations and are exposed to multiple threats from invaders of protected areas, transnational organized crime, wildlife and timber trafficking networks, and illegal mining and fishing.***

## CELEBRATION OF PROTECTED AND CONSERVED AREAS IN LATIN AMERICA



IRF and the Universal Ranger Support Alliance (URSA) joined the Celebration of Protected and Conserved Areas in Latin America on the 17th of October. Hosted by Re:wild and organized by IRF with support from the World Commission of Protected Areas-IUCN, and the Latin America Ranger Federation, more than 50 participants attended the virtual event 'Ranger's knowledge and innovations in Latin America'.

After a presentation of URSA work by the IRF Development Officer, a panel conversation was held between rangers from Uruguay (Hernán Giménez), Peru (Celsa Natividad Ortiz Rígle) and Mexico (Maricarmen García Rivas). The rangers shared with the audience the way they use creativity and innovation to solve everyday problems, how they link their skills with their cultural identity and what their profession has taught them.

You can watch the event [here](#) (starting at hour 2:48)

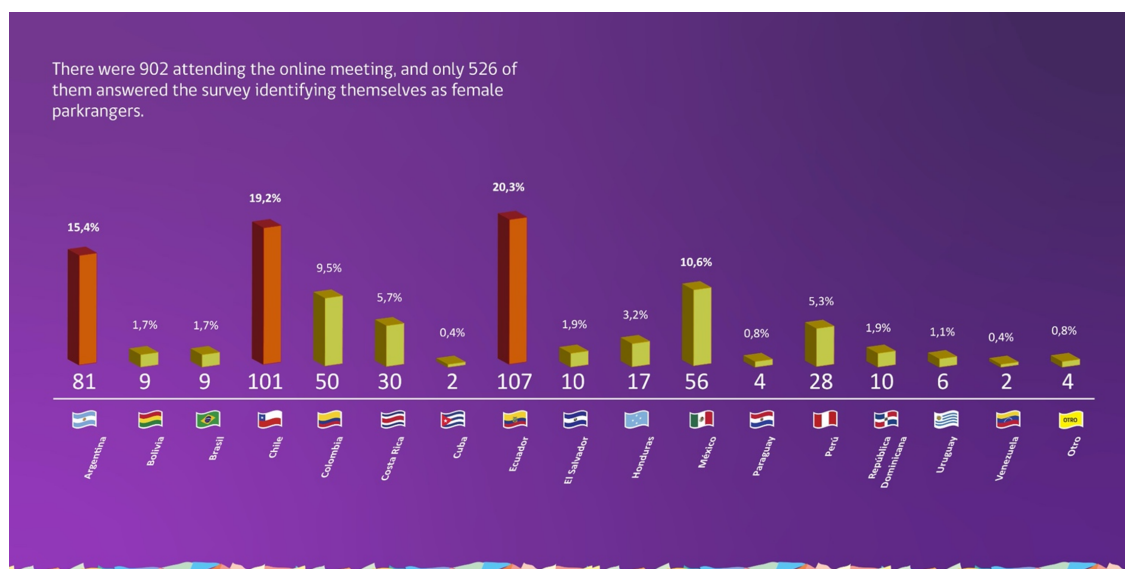
## RESULTS FROM FEMALE RANGER SURVEY IN LATIN AMERICA

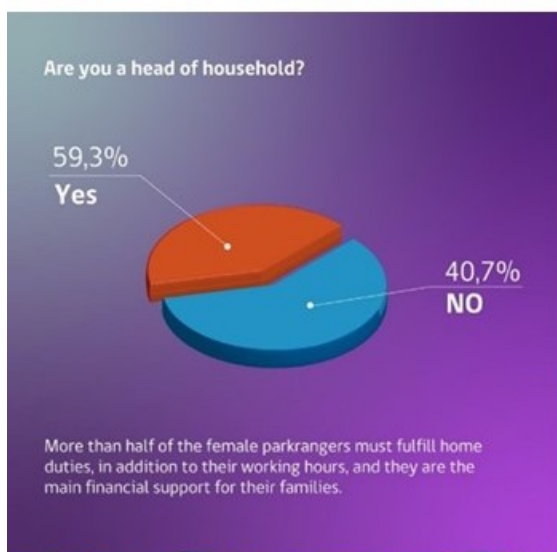
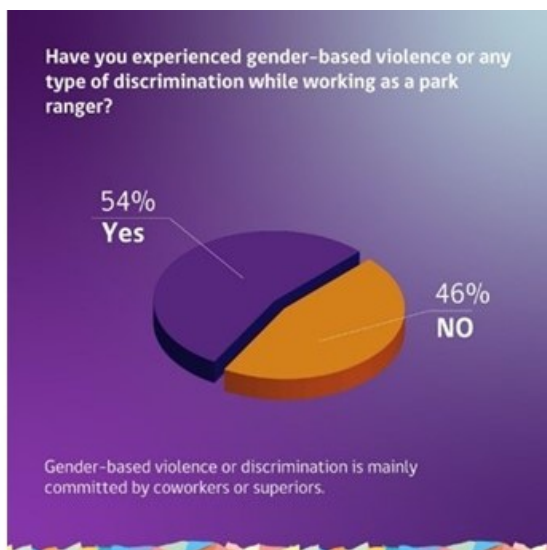
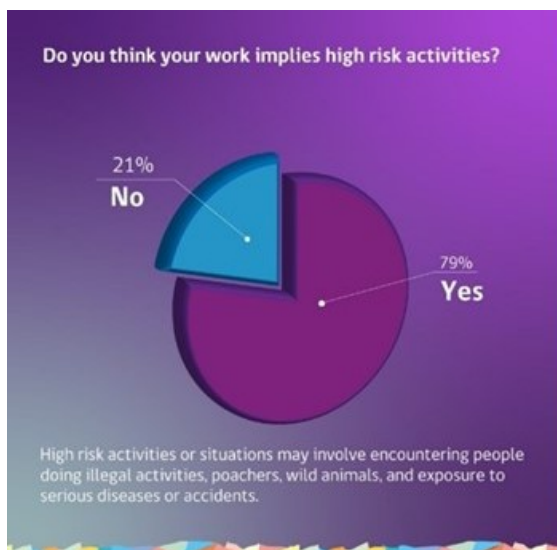
During World Ranger Day on July 31st, CONAF Chile (National Forestry Commission of Chile) shared the results of a survey that was carried out among more than 500 women rangers from Latin America and the Caribbean during the First Latin America Women Ranger Congress organized by CONAF Chile last year.

With these results, the countries can move forward and strengthen actions to address the inequalities, gaps and barriers faced by female rangers in the region.

Under the leadership of CONAF, the International Ranger Federation has been working closely with regional partners on this process. Among them, Federación Latinoamericana de Guardaparques, Así Conserva Chile, RedParques, IUCN, Mujeres en Conservación, The Nature Conservancy, WWF, WCS, PNUD, ONUDC and the Center for Protected Area Management of Colorado State University.

For all the materials, access the congress website [here](#). Key results from the survey is displayed in the graphics below:





## FESTIVE SEASONS' GREETINGS



With the end of the year fast approaching, the IRF Board and Regional Representatives, would like to wish all our members, partners, supporters, families and friends a blessed festive season and a prosperous New Year. Happy Holidays!

## VIEW THIS NEWSLETTER IN SPANISH OR FRENCH

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<https://mailchi.mp/8ef9c4736101/boletn-noviembre-2022>

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