

# The Thin Green Line

The Thin Green Line is a quarterly publication about the activities of the International Ranger Federation (IRF), a Federation of Ranger organisations.

If you have a submission for The Thin Green Line, please send it to [executivepa@internationalrangers.org](mailto:executivepa@internationalrangers.org).  
Thank you to our volunteer translators for the non-English editions.



Volume 27, Oct 2014 – Dec 2014

## Calendar of Events

10-12 February, 2015  
National Park Law Enforcement Association (PLEA) annual conference Austin, Texas  
[www.parkranger.org](http://www.parkranger.org)

22-26 May 2016  
8th World Ranger Congress  
Estes Park, Colorado,



## From the Acting President

Wayne D. Lotter Vice President IRF & Member Game Rangers Association of Africa  
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It was indeed not only hugely pleasing to have had the privilege to have participated in the IUCN World Parks Congress in Australia in November and to have seen so many rangers present, but also to be able to witness what was by the by far the most prominent and powerful showing that rangers had at the event than at any previous IUCN Congress. Rangers

Jeanine Grobbelaar

Thank you from the bottom of my heart for all the work you are doing - you are loved and appreciated by so many people. God bless you all

## Continued from the Acting President....

featured on a daily basis... in presenting at and hosting side events, in plenaries, in displays and exhibitions and stalls, in hosting the field day excursions, in receiving awards, and even in some of the entertainment. Of all groups represented it can be said that rangers were the most 'stand out' and unified group and represented the heart of IUCN 2014 WPC.

Well done to each and every one who contributed to the Congress, in all ways, both great and small. It would however be remiss not to mention the critical and absolutely sterling efforts of our President, Sean Willmore; the local host IRF member association, PAWA; and The Thin Green Line Foundation; in putting in an unprecedented effort and pulling off a massive success in so far as furthering the ranger cause at the WPC, and that which we all work for and believe in.

The Executive Committee of IRF was able to meet physically during the event as well, as most members were in attendance. This is a rare opportunity apart from during the World Rangers Congresses, because most of our committee meetings usually have to be done via Skype or email.

All of the events I was involved in personally were successful in progressing what was intended and needed to move the applicable projects to the next level, with agreement being reached on the next steps to be taken by the relevant parties in each instance. The only constraint of the Congress at times was the number of things running concurrently, which made it impossible to cover all bases at times and one thus had to prioritise on what was most essential not to miss.

Sean Willmore has left for a long overdue and well deserved break, which leaves me as acting President for three months since the beginning of December. His emails will be forwarded to me for responding to on a periodic basis, but I don't have direct access to the IRF President email address so if you require a quick response on matters that are not best dealt with via the IRF Secretary then please feel free to send to my below address directly during this period up until the beginning of March 2015.

Sean will also be getting married during this period! We wish him and Monika nothing but the very best wishes for the big event and for a long and happy life together. Sean will write more about all the exciting developments and happenings of the WPC, in his next President's report for the TGL Newsletter.

In the meantime I would like to sincerely thank each and everyone for your dedication and participation in IRF matters, both directly and indirectly, over the past year. Best wishes for the festive season and for the year ahead, 2015!

There is only one full year ahead and then we look forward to the next World Rangers Congress (WRC) in the United States, in 2016, leading us to a new leadership team and a new chapter in the IRF's history. Let us all resolve what we can best do to make a difference in the year ahead, write it down for ourselves, and make sure we look back on the decision with a sense of satisfaction and accomplishment by the next WRC!



# From the Secretary

Tegan Burton  
 Secretary IRF & Member Protected  
 Area Workers Association of NSW  
<mailto:secretary@internationalrangers>.

Following the World Parks Congress in Sydney, another of the strengths of the IRF came to the fore as Ranger networks throughout NSW and beyond leapt in to action to host international rangers for the remainder of their stay in Australia.

Members of the Protected Area Workers Association of NSW took visitors into their homes, provided hospitality, and showed them their wonderful parks and reserves. Life long friendships were formed and through these actions we all strengthened our ties and learnt from each about protected area management in each of our respective countries.

After providing tireless support throughout the Congress, Chris Pavich took Florin Halastauan, IRF European Representative from Romania, and Branko Stivic, from Croatia, home with him. Ostensibly their plans were to go canoeing in the Mudgee area, but rumour has it that sampling of some of fine local viticulture were also on the agenda.

Luigi Eybrecht, from Bonaire in the Dutch Caribbean, hung out at Myall Lakes with Katrina Gray, went on patrol with Cape Byron Marine Park Rangers, and gave presentations on his work in Bonaire. His infectious smile was a hit while Holly North and Di Mackey showed him all that Byron has to offer.

Barbara Mertin of Austria, another wonderful ranger with an infectious smile, spent time with Michael Treanor in Sydney before visiting Ann Walton at Bellingen en-route further north to Queensland. Michael reported that the house and home was definitely poorer and quieter for her leaving and his kids can't wait for Barbara's next visit. Ann - she ain't saying nothing except what a great time it was.

Meanwhile the Far South Coast was crawling with rangers from all over the world. If you didn't have an international ranger in your house then you just weren't cutting it on the social network. Wayne Lotter and Krissie Clark, from the PAMS Foundation in Tanzania, searched for that rare and mystical creature the Mogareeka Flamingo, but instead found numerous macropods and arboreals during their nightly spotlight behind George Malolakis' house.

Keith Roberts of Kenya had the pleasure of unwinding and enjoying the peace and tranquility of Davidson Whaling Station. William Soko, from Zambia, was hosted first by Sarah Ferguson and





*Coral, Miliany, Henry, George*



*George, Tegan & Krissie*



*Miliany George William Henry on patrol*



*Audience*



*Jeff & Russian Protected Area Cats*



*Sothene & Barbara*

## Continued...

then Wendy Noble, and could often be heard saying that if he had not made the journey to the far south coast it “would have been the biggest mistake of his life.”

Lyn Evans travelled south with Milianny Campos of Brazil, who also stayed with George along with Henry Kaniki from the Solomon Islands. One big happy family. Every day was full of excursions to the local parks, a memorable 4WD patrol, barbeques, and wombats. And eventually all good things came to an end.

## From the Treasurer

Meg Weesner

Treasurer IRF & Member Association of National Park Rangers

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(REPEAT) The IRF continues to hold funds in UK-based bank accounts. The Association of National Park Rangers (United States) is also holding funding from a Parks Victoria (Australia) grant for the next International Young Conservationist Award, to be presented in late 2014.

The IRF continues to receive periodic income through donations and minor merchandise sales, while the only ongoing expense is the hosting of the IRF website.



Paige Trent - Heart-warming to see such dedication. We sleep better knowing you are protecting our most precious creatures. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts.



## Thin Green Line Flag

The Flag Store, Ohio, United States ([www.theflagstoreandmore.com](http://www.theflagstoreandmore.com)) is making a Thin Green Line flag to memorialise fallen park rangers, for example during World Ranger Day celebrations. The flag is based on the Thin Blue Line commonly used to memorialise fallen police officers in the United States.

The flag is 3x5 feet, made from all-weather nylon, with three horizontal stripes - black, green, black. it costs USD\$24.95, and can be shipped internationally.

[www.theflagstoreandmore.com](http://www.theflagstoreandmore.com)

For more information, or to place an order, please contact [flagstoreandmore@gmail.com](mailto:flagstoreandmore@gmail.com)



# From the Editor

Nicola Potger  
Volunteer Editor

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The IRF website is a place where your stories can be told, and we can learn about our colleagues from around the world. We'd love more POSTCARDS FROM THE FIELD to post on the site - <http://internationalrangers.org/postcards/>. Just a few words and a photo go a long way to keeping in touch. We'll even publish "Wish you were here" if you send us a great photo!

If you need inspiration for a postcard, you can ask for a quiz to be sent to you from [webteam@internationalrangers.org](mailto:webteam@internationalrangers.org). Or, if you have a great story on your own website it can also be linked.

The News section of our website - <http://internationalrangers.org/news/> - is also an invaluable communication tool. This is the place to share significant ranger news or major events from your part of the world that deserve to be on the front page – photos essential! Again please send text and photos to [webteam@internationalrangers.org](mailto:webteam@internationalrangers.org)

## International Game Warden Magazine

**International Game Warden Magazine is seeking game warden related articles for upcoming magazine issues** IGW (International Game Warden) is a 30-year-old quarterly magazine, produced for NAWEOA (North American Wildlife Enforcement Officer's Association).

Every magazine issue profiles fish and wildlife cases from around the world, in an effort to educate game wardens, and the public, on anti-poaching efforts and the sacrifices game wardens make each and every day. Unlike other magazines, IGW is written by game wardens for game wardens. In recent years IGW has had very little input from countries outside of North America, a trend we would like to reverse.

Please take the time to submit articles and photos from your jurisdictions, regarding; anti-poaching techniques and tips, fish or wildlife investigations/cases, or any game warden related materials you feel would be of interest to your peers around the globe.

To learn more about IGW, or to subscribe, log-on  
to: [www.igwmagazine.com](http://www.igwmagazine.com) Sincerely, Todd Vandivert- Editor International Game  
Warden Magazine [editor@igwmagazine.com](mailto:editor@igwmagazine.com)



## Regional Representative Reports

### North America

Jeff Ohlfs

North America Regional Representative & Member PLEA, ANPR, CSPRA, and PRAC  
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It's been busy since our last TGL edition. I'm now in my busy season and we had the World Parks Congress. I won't go into too much detail because I know many others will be mentioning it. I will say it was nice to see so many friends and to meet so many new friends. 6,000 participants from rangers to Presidents and Princes all were sharing a common cause, the protection of our protected areas. Thanks to Sean, PAWA, Parks Victoria, and so many others, the IRF message was heard. Our message of protecting the protector was heard at the opening, closing, and seen throughout. The International Ranger Station in the exhibit hall saw most all the participants passing through and receiving our message.

Prior to the WPC, I attended ANPR's Ranger Rendezvous at Estes Park, Colorado. This will be the venue for the next World Ranger Congress. It was a great trial run for 2016. I think you will find the Y of the Rockies will be perfect for our Congress and it is on the edge of Rocky Mountain National Park which will offer many opportunities to explore. Colorado is a great state to explore in general. The Congress Organizing Committee met during the Rendezvous. I won't repeat their report in this edition. At Rocky Mountain National Park's headquarters, I was humbled to find a memorial to Ranger Jeff Christensen who died on a backcountry patrol in 2005 (see photo). Please consider stopping at it for a moment and remembering all rangers killed in the line of duty.

I introduced the rangers for Aruba's national park to the IRF and meet with several rangers from cities in Colorado. Colorado has as many local government rangers as California has.

There's no time like the present to start planning for World Ranger Day. The Friends of James Garfield National Historic Site are already planning for probably the largest World Ranger Day Celebration in the US. It will be July 31<sup>st</sup>, so save the date, and if you are in the area (Mentor, Ohio), please plan to attend.

This is my second report in a row on assaults on rangers in the US. In October, Boston City Park Ranger James Lunnin and his supervisor, Al Hurd, were stabbed in a brutal attack on Boston Common by a 34-year-old homeless man with a history of violence. Ranger Lunnin was stabbed five times. They were investigating a report of a man with a knife. Both rangers are home. They are definitely heroes! As with all rangers in the world these incidents need to stop. Please continue to get the word out about Protecting the Protectors! I'm disappointed in the IRF allowing for the advertising of a near nude calendar in the edition of our professional newsletter. I think it shows a lack of dignity.

Finally, elections will be at the next WRC. I will tenure out. So, all North American members need to consider someone from their association stepping up to take the North American Regional Representative on the IRF board. If anyone has interest or questions on the position, please contact me.

## Continued...

I want to wish everyone a Happy Holidays!



On July 29, 2005 U.S. Park Ranger Jeffrey Christensen was killed in a fall while patrolling in the Mummy Range of Rocky Mountain National Park

His service and sacrifice to the National Park Service and the people of this country will never be forgotten.



## Oceania

Peter Cleary

Oceania Regional Representative & Member Victorian Rangers Association

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### International Union for the Conservation of Nature's World Park Congress Sydney, Australia 2014

It was both an honor and a privilege to be chosen to represent the Victorian Rangers



*A Traditional Welcome to Country at the Opening Ceremony is always a highlight*

Association at the International Union for the Conservation of Nature's World Parks Congress. It was an enormous event in both the number and diversity of delegates. From managers to planners, scientists and rangers to dignitaries, over 140 countries were represented. The delegates spent the majority time listening, workshopping and talking about nature and conservation management, current challenges, discussing solutions and creating initiatives.

The main streams I took time to engage in were –

Use of technology, music, arts and other devices to *Inspire a New Generation*;

Considering the impacts of *Climate Change* and how we should address and communicate this enormous threat effectively;

Promoting and encouraging the great *Diversity and Knowledge of Indigenous Peoples* throughout the world;

Viewing projects and successes in *Reaching Conservation Goals* and promoting *Healthy Parks to foster Healthy people*.

I also took a particular interest in the business and conservation finance modeling which is being use to ensure sustainable land practices and factoring the value of environmental services, for mutual benefits across all sectors. This helped me to step outside the square and broadening my understanding and the reality of how this economic landscape has changed.



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### Participation

The Phillip Island Nature Park Rangers were invited to present an e-poster in the Reaching Conservation Goals stream **Saving Summerlands, a Peninsula for Penguins...from the ground up!** It highlighted the buyback of 183 houses in the Summerland Housing Estate, to protect the penguins and the ecotourism business, a 27 year project that has come to fruition. It was valuable to be able to contribute to the dialogue and show the success of this onground project with my colleagues.

The projects I saw presented were rousing in realising that some of great results have been achieved amidst the great challenges that abound. These included the surveying of the Amazon Savannah country, known as the Campineria in NE Brazil and the challenges of conducting ornithological surveys in Malawi. With over 40 presentations occurring concurrently, it was difficult to visit all sessions of interest.

### Partnerships

Another great highlight was the sponsoring of two delegates, Henry and Nixon, from the Solomon Islands. The VRA used the money raised from World Rangers Day to partner with The Thin Green Line Foundation, Global Leadership, The Nature Conservancy and the Solomon Island Community Conservation Project to ensure the smooth passage and maximum benefit for Henry and Nixon during their visit. Two backpacks of second hand clothes and equipment were passed to our Solomon Island colleagues from our stores.

The Tasmanian and Queensland Rangers Associations also jointly sponsored the passage of Iverimi from Fiji. Once again, the IRF network passed on equipment to many visiting rangers including laptops, pocket knives, binoculars and GPSs, for their use in their roles in ongoing conservation efforts. The morale boost and benefit our visiting delegates received from this Congress was undoubtedly evident.



IRF Oceania established preliminary connections with rangers and managers from Fiji, New Caledonia, New Zealand and Papua New Guinea. We hope to support and provide assistance where we can.





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### **International Rangers Federation**

Under the guidance of Sean Willmore, who instigated the setting up of the International Ranger Station, the world's rangers made our presence felt at plenary sessions and conducted a Meet a Ranger Q&A event. A parade during the closing ceremony gave us the opportunity to remember our colleagues who have paid the ultimate price in the line of duty and to highlight the IRF awards given to two Young Conservationists, a Lifetime of Achievement and the Jane Goodall Hope and Inspiration Award.



*IRF Oceania discusses future initiatives at the Parks Victoria's pop-up park!*



*The International Rangers Station was well attended and visited, highlighting our cause and giving rangers a place to base themselves. Daily lunchtime presentation, an avenue for correspondence and meetings and a chance to purchase souvenirs were all great functions from the stations presence.*



## Momentum

The Congress had moments of great inspiration and gripping realism. Ensuring the ongoing protection of global natural and cultural assets is a great challenge. It is hoped that the experience and motivation infused to all delegates promotes better results in our motivations and our roles.

Many thanks to the Protected Area Workers of NSW for facilitating the smooth passage of over 65 international and national rangers to the Congress, organising accommodation, transfers, transport, side events and logistics.

This support was critical in ensuring all delegates enjoyed their time and experienced a full level of support.

This is a grand tribute to the International Ranger Federation family.



## Connections

It was fantastic to see once again local rangers hosting mid- Congress and post-Congress journeys for our visiting colleagues from Byron Bay to Eden and beyond. These relationships and efforts that are created from and continue after such events, exemplify the value of the network in professional development, personal rapport and ongoing friendships.

The level of inspiration injected from the likes of these events is palpable. We all look forward to seeing the motivation and enthusiasm generated, flow into our work. From the experience of this Congress, I am reassured, "Yes, we can!"



*Hanging out with the IUCN red-listed "big cats" of Russia in a traditional Krygyzstan hat*

## Member Association & Other Reports

### Portugal

Francisco Semedo

[francisosemedo@gmail.com](mailto:francisosemedo@gmail.com)



#### Portugal: Junior Rangers birdwatching at VBA

The second year of “Junior Rangers Project” of D. Fernando II School (Sintra/DCNFVT/ Sintra-Cascais Natural Park) was celebrated with a birdwatching at VBA - Visitation and Birdwatching Area, Lezíria Sul, Vila Franca de Xira.

The Project “Junior Rangers” is supported by DCNFLVT (Department of Nature Conservation and Forestry of Lisbon and Tagus ). The study of birds is one of the subjects included in the program.



This thematic visit enabled the students to learn birdwatching techniques. It had the essential collaboration of the Rangers João Correia (Tagus Estuary Natural Reserve) and Sandra Raposo (Sintra-Cascais Natural Park).

The twenty-nine students who participated of the activity had the opportunity to apply and consolidate some of the acquired skills. This motivated even more of them to know and discover Nature.



### Special Thanks

Thanks go to Leonel Delgado of Costa Rica who translated the Spanish edition of Vol 26



## Meet a Park Ranger

Tegan Burton

Secretary IRF & Member Protected Area Workers Association of NSW

<mailto:secretary@internationalrangers.org>

On Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> of November 2014, the Protected Area Workers Association (PAWA) and the International Ranger Federation (IRF) hosted the “Meet a Park and Protected Area Ranger” side event at the World Parks Congress (WPC) in Sydney. Congress delegates were invited to join Rangers from around the world to hear of the challenges they face in their work and engage in frank and lively discussion as to what is required to meet the conservation goals of the worlds protected areas.

The evening was opened by Sean Willmore acknowledging the work of rangers on the front line, and the difficulties they face doing the job they love, protecting the wild places of this planet. Sean observed that rangers are receiving greater acknowledgment around the world but there is still more to do and rangers the world over are struggling for the resources required to do their jobs, a recurring theme throughout. All speakers expressed their love of being a ranger and their dedication to the profession, but day-to-day make it difficult to adequately protect the parks and reserves under our care.



*Luigi on patrol*

Barry Batchelor, Australia, shared the common tale in Australia of a wonderful protected area system being managed with less staff on the ground, more areas to look after, and increased levels of policy, procedure and bureaucracy impacting our ability to manage protected areas.

Daniel Sambu, Kenya, works for “Big Life”, a successful program near Amboseli National Park working with local Masai to link conservation with community benefits. There are over 270 community rangers who have seen remarkable success with the local lion population rebounding from just 10 animals to over 100. However they also face big challenges - 86% of Masai children do not go to school and the community rangers lack basic equipment. Conflict between government policy and the ability of community rangers to arrest and prosecute poachers is also hampering conservation efforts.

Jeff Ohlfs, a ranger in the United States for over 37 years, loves his job and recalled the



*Luigi & team on patrol*



## Continued...



### *Panel speakers*

time he hosted a couple of NASA Astronauts who claimed that whilst most kids want to grow up to be astronauts, astronauts growing up wanted to be rangers. The US is seeing similar patterns to Australia – reduced staffing, reduced budgets, doing more with less. Jeff manages a 900,000 ha park with 1.5 million visitors per year. Increasing problems such as graffiti, removal of cactus from the park and other crimes are not being adequately addressed. Many staff are part time and do not receive health insurance and as problems increase some staff are walking away.

Austria has 6 National Parks, and the majority of rangers are employed on three-month freelance contracts. This is challenging not only for managing the parks but also for the rangers who cannot get continued employment and security. Barbara Mertin is one of a handful of full time rangers in Austria who work extremely hard. She has sacrificed much for her love and passion for the job and would not change it even though they also need more resources and staff.

Leonel Delgado is passionate about his job as a ranger in Costa Rica, but also shared that the ranger station where he worked was in terrible condition, had no fresh water, rangers often had to buy their own equipment, and many rangers are near retirement with no new staff being hired. He manages a 200,000 ha park with only 10 staff. It is impossible to protect the park from the myriad of threats such as poachers, illegal logging, killing of green turtles, and problems with narcotics trafficking. The bottom line is that they need more rangers not only in Costa Rica but also across Central America.

These country introductions were followed by open discussion with the audience. Topics included how we can inspire young rangers, the need for positive role models, and for ranger associations to work closely with governments as a means to strengthen protected area management. Chilean rangers have just celebrated their 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary and feel that the best way to contribute to the conservation of nature is through a strong ranger profession.

At this point the evening took an unexpected turn as Sothene Ndong Obiang from Gabon rose to speak. Luckily Diane Chanut, a Northern Territory ranger, is fluent in French and able to translate. He had learnt that morning that three of their rangers had been killed and spoke emotionally about the lost rangers and the situation they are facing in West Africa from poachers.

The rangers in Gabon work under extremely difficult conditions. They contend with armed poachers, vast forest areas with no roads, and 10 to 15 day treks by foot to get poachers from the field to court. The message of hope from the Congress was very important for moral and that even though the central and west African rangers were not exactly sure what the IRF is

## Continued...



*Sothene Ndong Obiang of Gabon*

they are proud to be part of it, feeling like they are with family.

Marius Fuls, Game Rangers Association of Africa, said that he never wants to hear about dead rangers again, but that it will not end. Rangers are becoming soldiers, not because they want to but because they have to. Unfortunately in many cases they also have their families with them, it's like taking your family to the front line. Rangers are in a war, and it's not what we signed up for.

Rangers the world over are struggling but what can we do? Answers offered by the panel and the audience included:

- Rangers need to support their colleagues. Ranger associations have established twinning projects offering assistance to colleagues in other countries, and this is having a positive impact;
- Better policy and laws need to be

developed to assist rangers in undertaking their duties. In Kenya laws have been enacted to recognize community rangers and their work. In Costa Rica rangers are receiving weapons training, have the same status as police, they are respected, and environmental policy supports them;

- Rangers need to communicate with each other and use our spheres of influence to raise our profile and get the message out about the support that is needed. Don't assume that governments and executives know what we do;
- Messages should go out across the globe giving support and recognition to all our ranger family. It may not solve any problems but it will provide moral support to many who feel they are working in isolation.

Sean Willmore closed by stating that the challenges as rangers are ours. We have a support network, the IRF, and we need to support each other. We need to be brave, creative, to find our champions, and get them to support rangers. As Gandhi (and Ben Harper) said, "when the people lead, the leaders will follow".

## Special Thanks

Thanks go to the volunteer translation team who reproduce this newsletter into Spanish and Portuguese. They are:

Miliany Campos

Osvaldo Barassi Gajargo

Rebecca Mencos





*K Clarke : Macropods*



*K Clarke : Arboreals*





# INTERNATIONAL RANGER FEDERATION DIRECTORY

The following is for quick reference only and does not include the names of individual ranger associations.

For a full list of member associations please see [www.internationalrangers.org/members](http://www.internationalrangers.org/members).

For additional information about individual associations please refer to individual websites or contact the IRF Secretary.

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## YOUNG CONSERVATIONIST AWARD RECIPIENTS

**2012** Elisângela Sales Dos Santos **Brazil** [elisangela@actbrasil.org.br](mailto:elisangela@actbrasil.org.br)

**2011** Héctor Antonio Caymaris **Uruguay** [caymaris@gmail.com](mailto:caymaris@gmail.com)

**2010** Alasdair Harris **Scotland/Madagascar** [al@blueventures.org](mailto:al@blueventures.org)

**2008** Edwin Sabuhoro **Rwanda** [esabuhoro@rwandaecotours.com](mailto:esabuhoro@rwandaecotours.com)

**2006** Christian Teran **Ecuador** [cteran2@yahoo.es](mailto:cteran2@yahoo.es)