



## **INTERNATIONAL RANGER FEDERATION NEWSLETTER**

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### **IRF News**

#### **President's Report**

First, I would like to thank you for electing me president of the International Ranger Federation. I cannot think of a greater honor for someone who has worked at the field level in the preservation and protection of the world's national parks and equivalent reserves than to serve the rangers to whom we owe so much. I promise you that I will do my best to promote the interests of rangers and to make the IRF a significant voice in conserving the values for which the world's protected areas have been established.

Our Third World Congress was very successful. The host site, Kruger National Park in South Africa, is a spectacular park, surely one of the world's best. The more than 300 delegates from more than 50 countries were treated to a wildlife show that almost exceeds belief. Delegates saw elephants, rhinoceros, buffalo, giraffes, leopards, lions, monkeys, baboons, jackals, hyenas, and an amazing array of birds. One delegate added 200 birds to his life list. We observed South Africa's park management strategies and tactics in operation. In the evenings, we watched local performing groups that gave us a taste of the rich cultural diversity of South Africa.

It was an inspiring visit. We owe the Game Rangers Association of Africa, the staff at the Berg-en-Dahl camp, and the rangers and volunteer rangers at Kruger a huge debt of gratitude for hosting such a successful event. Special thanks also go to Merle Whyte and the staff at Mpumalanga, the congress organizers, and to Ethne Cameron at our official travel agency, Going Africa, for their parts in making our visit to South Africa so memorable.

It wasn't all wildlife and entertainment, though. During the time we spent together, we had ample opportunity to consider the issues related to the congress' theme, "The Role of the Ranger in 2000 and Beyond". Within this general topic, participants discussed three sub-themes: area integrity, communities, and ecotourism. In plenary meetings, delegates listened as keynote speakers introduced each sub-theme. We then broke into small groups to partake in facilitated discussions of the issues of the management of protected areas related to the sub-themes. The facilitators then reported the results of these workshops to the entire group and prepared a statement that captured the results of the workshops.

This statement, which appears at the end of this issue, was subsequently endorsed by all the delegates and will be available on the IRF's website. The delegates also approved a resolution that will be sent to the IUCN in time for the Fifth World Congress on National Parks, now scheduled for Durban, South Africa, in 2003. This resolution details the core competencies that protected area rangers should possess at the full performance level and should serve government and private agencies in the design of their ranger training programs. This resolution will be sent to ranger associations that have affiliated with the IRF.

The organizers of the congress were pleased to see that delegates established informal communication networks with rangers from other countries. It always helps when rangers in one area realize that they are not alone, that others are dealing with similar problems. These networks make it more likely that rangers do not have to reinvent the wheel, but can use strategies and tactics that have proved successful in other parks and protected areas. This is surely one of the greatest benefits of attending IRF's congresses. The professional relationships established in Kruger will last far beyond the end of the congress and will continue to enhance sound conservation strategies throughout the world in the future.

At the end of the congress, we voted to accept the offer of the rangers of the State of Victoria, Australia, and the Australian Ranger Association to host the Fourth World Congress in 2003. Australia will then become the fourth continent upon which the IRF has held a congress. The rangers of Australia are excited that their colleagues from around the world will gather in Victoria to discuss major issues related to world conservation. To obtain more information about the Australian congress, contact me at rsmith0921@aol.com or Andy Nixon at anixon@parks.vic.gov.au. Reserve a place on your calendars in 2003 so that you can attend. Exact dates should soon be available. And remember that the world is rapidly closing in on our remaining wild places. The IRF is the ranger's voice in assuring that these places are protected and preserved.

Your other new officers are Juan Carlos Gambarotta, Uruguay, Vice President, Sue Clark, England, Secretary, and Colin Dilcock, England, Treasurer. The members of the Executive Council are Yvette Ruan, representing North America, Ronald Mora, Central America, Salvador Vellido, South America, Kristen Appel, Australia and Asia, Arrie Schrieber, Africa, and Vlado Vancura, Europe.

In closing, let me say a word about three people who have stepped out of their official leadership roles with the Federation. Gordon Miller, John Forrest and Mike Marshall have guided us through the most difficult time in the history of any organization, the beginning years. They have taken the Federation from three member national associations to almost 40. They gave unstintingly of their time, their energy, and their expertise to assure that the IRF became a factor in world conservation. They have agreed to remain active in our Federation and I, for one, plan to seek their advice and counsel on important issues facing the IRF. Thank you, Gordon, John and Mike, for all you have done and for all you will yet do. Rangers throughout the world salute you.

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## **Association Business**

### **New Member Ranger Associations**

The World Congress was exciting for many reasons, not the least of which was because our membership increased significantly. Six new associations joined, as did representatives from two nations that are interested in starting ranger associations. The associations are:

- The Queensland Rangers Association (Australia, 150 members).
- The Association of Russian Rangers (30 members).
- The Victorian Rangers Association (Australia, 80+ members).
- The Tasmanian Rangers Association (Australia, 84 members).
- The Assam Forest Rangers Association (India).
- The Tamilnadu Forest Rangers Association (India, 1,000 members).

The individual representatives are from the Peoples Republic of China and from Egypt.

IRF's member directory has accordingly been updated and is attached. Please send any corrections or changes to [Bill\\_Halainen@nps.gov](mailto:Bill_Halainen@nps.gov).

### **Web Site**

By the time you receive this, IRF should have its own website. The address is [www.int-ranger.org](http://www.int-ranger.org). If it's not up and running now, keep checking – it should be running shortly.

### **Exchange Bureau/Database**

IRF is establishing an exchange bureau and an expertise database. If you would like to receive the appropriate form to complete to be included in either, please send a note to Mike Marshall ([marshall.i.r.f@btinternet.com](mailto:marshall.i.r.f@btinternet.com)).

### **News About IRF Associations**

#### **Asociace Strazcu Prirody CR (Czech Republic) – Michal Skalka**

The Czech Rangers Association board met on November 3-5 in Spindleruv Mlyn in Krkonose National Park. Members of the Slovak Rangers Association were also there. We discussed and decided upon these matters:

- Czech Ranger Association Newsletter – The newsletter will include a report from the meeting in May in Lyseciny, Krkonose Mountains; a report from the association's board meeting in Prasily, Sumava; the agreement with the Slovak Rangers Association; a list of members; a report from an English-language seminar held in Preston Montford FSC in September; a report from the first international volunteer meeting in May in Morbegno, Lombardy; a report from the youth camp held in Scotland this year; etc. The newsletter will be emailed wherever possible and will be sent in "paper form" to each administrator of a protected area in the Czech Republic, the Czech Environmental Ministry, the Czech section of Europarc, and members of IUCN.
- Leaflet – A leaflet entitled "Who Is A Ranger?" is almost finished and will be handed down to the association chairman Petr Grendziok and vice-chairman Karel Kovarik in electronic and printed form and will be distributed to other members.
- Finances – The association has a fairly ample treasury at present. The money came from member contributions and three management actions in the Krkonose Mountains and Beskydy Mountains. Donors are being sought, and there is some chance of finding them. Two management projects for raising funds are planned for next year (repair of a mountain path in the Beskydy Mountains and liquidation of unwelcome trees in the Krkonose Mountains).
- Exchange Scholarships Catalogue – The catalogue will be finished by chairman Petr Grendziok and distributed with the newsletter or directly to members.
- Patch – A new patch with the association logo has been completed and will be delivered to members.
- Rangers Handbook – There are two new brochures about nature guards. Board member Michal Ulrych arranged for purchase of copies for each member from donated money.
- Poster – Our poster from Kruger NP will be shown in some administrative protected areas. There will be information on it in our newsletter as well.
- International Cooperation – There is some possibility of working with the Danish Ranger Association (project manager Pia Viscor) and there is interest in establishing a link with Triglav NP in Slovenia. Both projects are under development. There's also some possibility of working with the German Ranger Association.
- Meeting – The Czech Ranger Association meeting will be held in spring 2001 in Podyji NP or Ceske Svycarsko NP.

Other business conducted in the board meeting included:

- The representative from the Czech section of Europarc – Doctor Jan Stursa of Krkonose NP – talked about the creation of this section, helping Slovak colleagues, establishing a homepage ([www.europarc.cz](http://www.europarc.cz)), Youth Camp 2001 in the Czech Republic, scholarships, and the Czech section of Europarc's meeting in January in Krivoklatsko PLA. Members of the ranger association were invited to attend.
- Member Olda Pazout talked about the IRF Congress in Kruger NP.
- Tono Potas from the Slovak Ranger Association has started his one week scholarship in Krkonose NP and wants to learn ranger service in the park.

### **National Park Wardens Association (Canada) – Jeanine Elliott**

The NPWA has enjoyed a productive season this year in Canada. Most importantly, the new Canada National Parks Act is now law. This is the most important piece of legislation ever passed governing Parks Canada's mandate to protect and manage Canada's national parks. It ensures that ecological integrity will move to the top of the agenda. Highlights of the act include the release of four park management plans, designation of over 90% of the parks in the Rocky Mountains as wilderness, new guidelines for management of park ski areas, and stiffer fines and jail terms for law breakers.

We have also moved ahead in the establishment of an exchange program. A database of wardens across the country has been established to help encourage exchanges to their parks. Information and requests for exchange partners are flooding in. On their own initiative, Ian Brooker from Dartmoor National Park authority in England has just traded jobs for a year with Chris McCarthy from Gros Morne National Park in Newfoundland, Canada. We regrettably still need to iron out law enforcement liabilities and duties, but hope that their experiences will provide us with a template for future exchanges. We welcome Ian to Canada and hope he enjoys some good "Newfie" hospitality.

There were three representatives from Parks Canada Agency at the Third World Congress in South Africa – Brett Moore, Barb Bertch and Reg Bunyan. They reported that the conference was amazing. NPWA will be working with them to address the issues brought forward in the North American workshop. The two main proposals were to help Mexico establish a ranger association and to provide physical resources to other ranger groups in need. We were also happy to have Felicity Brooke, a ranger from Australia, visiting and volunteering for Parks in Canada on her somewhat roundabout way to the African Congress.

For more information on the National Park Wardens Association in Canada please visit our website at <http://www3.ns.sympatico.ca/npwa>. Or write to NPWA, Box 145, Leamington, ON, Canada, N8H 3W1.

### **Bundesverband Naturwacht e.V. (Germany) – Heike Flemming**

Our association is becoming more and more accepted by both rangers and authorities. It's a good sign that we are asked for our opinion concerning various matters, such as the contents of schedules for further training programs for rangers. Our job now is to develop good public relations. We are working on an image brochure at the moment and of course preparing for our next annual meeting in March. We also plan to establish a website.

At the Congress in South Africa, I distributed 300 CD's with a demo of a ranger's song, or a song for conservationists. The composer, the producer and I had a lot of fun and adventure working on that song. We found some foreign people living in Germany who made up their own lyrics and sang them, making it a multi-national CD. A

little more development is needed. We hope for your help with lyrics from your countries in your own language, or any other ideas. The idea is to create a song for conservationists (rangers are conservationists) to sing all over the world in whatever rhythm – the format is completely open. Please send them either to me ([H.Flemming@t-online.de](mailto:H.Flemming@t-online.de)) or to the address written on the CD cover.

### **Scottish Countryside Ranger Association (Scotland) – Tony Wilson**

There hasn't been much activity in SCRA since the last newsletter, as we were all in South Africa. There was, however, an exchange between one of our members and an Icelander as part of our twinning agreement. We hope to keep this running for many years to come, and also hope to forge stronger links with the rest of Scandinavia, particularly with Norway. Their association has just joined IRF and has approached SCRA for help in setting up their association.

Our professional membership package is nearing its final draft. We hope to present it to our members at the next annual general meeting (AGM). The aim is to raise the professional status of our members, both to other rangers and to employers and other agencies. Thanks are due to England's Countryside Management Association (CMA) for allowing us to copy their work on this subject.

We are planning a joint conference next year with the CMA, Northern Ireland Countryside Staff Association and the Ranger Association of Ireland. It will be held in England to help kick-start more IRF activity in Europe. Updates will be printed in the next newsletter.

### **Slovak Ranger Association (Slovakia) – Vlado Vancura**

The Slovak Ranger Association held its regular autumn weekend October 6-8 in Landscape Protected Area Polana, also a Biosphere Reserve. The association has been in existence for five years, which provided a reason for evaluating what has been done and for developing a vision for at least the next five years. The meeting was actually a quite large international conference, with participants from Hungary, Romania, the Czech Republic, Austria, Great Britain and the United States.

Participants from abroad felt that the conference provided an excellent platform for sharing experiences and developing a unique partnership. There was a very intensive discussion about the potential for mutual cooperation. The cooperative agreement signed by the Slovak and Czech Ranger Associations, which was signed last spring, provided a great example of how two organizations can cooperate.

Paradoxically, Slovak rangers who belong to the energetic Slovak Ranger Association have very limited social and economic status in their own country. During the conference and workshops, they learned that rangers in the Czech Republic, Austria and Hungary had made great progress over the past few years. Rangers in these countries have broader authority and legal support from their governments. Despite excellent training, highly developed skills and many positive results stemming from the work of their association, Slovak rangers still at the bottom of the hierarchy in Slovak protected areas and very poorly paid.

The goal of the Slovak Ranger Association over coming years is to show the uniqueness and importance of the ranger's job and to improve the social status of rangers in Slovak society.

### **Association of National Park Rangers (U.S.) – Erik Oberg**

We have been in regular contact with Lucia Penunuri, discussing a plan to bring a Mexican ranger to Sequoia National Park in the U.S. We hope to select a candidate in need of fire management training. Sequoia NP has expressed support for a two to three-week exchanged during fire training classes this coming June. ANPR's goal is to provide some tangible benefits to Mexican rangers to promote the creation of ranger associations there.

A message has been received from Roberto Zolho, head of Gorongosa National Park in Mozambique. He was able to transport all the uniforms donated at the Congress iun Kruger into his country and has distributed them to his staff. We have identified another source of approximately 500 uniform items for donation by Baxter State Park in the state of Maine in the U.S. We still need to work out shipping and customs logistics before sending these items off to another receiving country. Mozambique or Nigeria may be possible recipients. We continue to discuss the drafting of a cooperative agreement to expedite donations from federal agencies to cooperating agencies. Einar Olsen is in contact with World Wildlife Fund (WWF) to explore the possibility of joint shipping of international equipment donations.

If anyone wants to subscribe to our association's journal, Scramble, we will send out copies for £2.50 plus postage (it depends where you're from – if from the UK, it will be 50p per issue; for the rest of the world, it's £1). Anyone who is interested should contact Allison Graham, 83 main Road, Crookedholm, nr Kilmarnock, KA3 6JU, UK or [allison.graham@west-dunbarton.gov.uk](mailto:allison.graham@west-dunbarton.gov.uk) .

Our next conference will be held next year in New Lanark from the April 25th to April 27th. For details check the next newsletter or contact me at the usual address.

### **Upcoming Events**

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|----------------------------------|---|
| November 28-30, 2000             | Ranger Conference, Western Directorate, New South Wales National Parks and Wildlife Service, Willandra NP. The aims of the conference include a chance for rangers scattered over the western two-thirds to meet and network; an opportunity to find out about and discuss the direction of the service in the immediate future, with particular emphasis on ecosystem assessments, aboriginal management, and community relations; and an opportunity to find out about activities which have been happening throughout the Western Directorate over the last few years. |
| March 15-18, 2001                | California Parks Conference, California State Park Rangers Association (U.S.), Holiday Inn-Northeast, Sacramento, California, USA.  |
| April 25 – 27, 2001              | Annual General Meeting, Scottish Countryside Ranger Association, New Lanark, Scotland.  |
| September 3-6, 2001              | Joint Conference: Rangers Association of Ireland, Northern Ireland Countryside Staff Association, Scottish Countryside Ranger Association, and Countryside Management Association, Lancashire, England.   |
| October 29 –<br>November 2, 2001 | 25th Anniversary Rendezvous, Association of National Park Rangers (U.S.), Snow King Resort, Jackson Hole, Wyoming, USA.   |

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**STATEMENT OF THE  
INTERNATIONAL RANGERS FEDERATION CONGRESS 2000  
KRUGER NATIONAL PARK, SOUTH AFRICA**

**1. Context**

Rangers are increasingly required to adapt to fast changing and new conditions in the conservation of protected areas. This change ranges from political uncertainty, to diminishing financial and other resources, increasing pressures on protected areas from people, and global climate change.

The IRF congress of 2000, comprising delegates from 58 countries, deliberated on these challenges. It reflected on the roles of the ranger and of the IRF in general, and specifically on issues of area integrity, communities, as well as ecotourism and business.

With respect to the issue of area integrity, it was noted that rangers play a critical role in the pursuit of area integrity, which is essential for the ongoing function and success of protected areas. A range of institutional challenges, which threaten area integrity, are faced by rangers around the world including a lack of political will, the absence of relevant governmental policy and legislation, limited legal recognition of rangers, as well as difficulties in involving communities in protected area management. A conducive institutional environment based on partnerships involving government, business and communities can contribute significantly to area integrity. Rangers are also confronted by a need for training, mentoring and knowledge to support their efforts to protect area integrity. Inadequate resources, including limited finances and other resources such as skilled personnel, bedevil efforts at ensuring area integrity. Threats to biodiversity pose a further distinct challenge to area integrity. These include global warming, the effects of alien invasive species, fire, and a wide array of human activities and impacts.

In its deliberations on the role of rangers with respect to communities, it was noted that, parks do not exist as “islands in a sea of humanity.” Rangers recognise the need to work with local communities and other stakeholders in planning and managing protected areas to ensure their long-term success. A participatory management approach needs to be put in place to reconcile conflicting activities and to ensure that the benefits from protected areas are shared on a sustainable equitable basis. Ongoing financial support, training and other resources are required to ensure that both rangers and communities can work together effectively. Central to this task is building partnerships that are based on trust, mutual respect and a common understanding of the role and benefits of protected areas.

In discussion of protected areas, ecotourism and business, it was noted that there are diminishing financial resources available to protected areas. There are, however opportunities that exist in creating income from ecotourism, as well as the potential for increasing efficiency through outsourcing non-core functions. Rangers recognise their general lack of capacity in business management. They are also concerned that the primary role of biodiversity conservation may be negatively affected by business interests. The overall consideration is the integration of ecotourism and business into conservation management in a way that protects the resources on which these economic benefits can be attained. Key issues that need to be addressed include: business planning skills, conservation development spatial planning, operational visitor servicing and management, ensuring community benefits, managing partnerships in the involvement of the private sector and communities, and marketing.

## 2. Resolutions

Having noted its changing context, the IRF recognised the critical role of rangers in protected area management. It reaffirmed its mission to empower rangers to deal with new and significant challenges. It reaffirmed that as a federation it needed to continue to play four key roles, namely:

**Leadership:** The IRF must continue to play a leadership role in setting a vision for rangers, providing specific direction through communicating best practice and in building the confidence of rangers to deal with current-day and future challenges.

More specifically it resolved to:

- Promote the status and profile of rangers globally
- Promote the development of national ranger associations
- Emphasize the traditional role of the ranger as a resource protector and educator while adopting strategies to promote the ranger's newer role as a link between his/her area, local communities, and the private sector

**Lobbying:** The IRF must continue to lobby key international and country-based decision-makers to promote the role of the ranger, as well as secure the future and improve the overall status and management of protected areas.

More specifically it resolved to:

- Make use of international forums that promote protected areas, including the IUCN World Parks Conference in 2003, and the World Commission for Protected Areas
- Lobby, where appropriate, national governments to legally recognise rangers and their professional status, as well as accord them appropriate powers in law and decision making at the highest level
- Lobby for political support for the work of rangers
- Promote linkages between national governmental authorities and rangers
- Initiate a diversified communications strategy, including a media liaison strategy and the development of an IRF website
- Petition for representation at CITES meetings to represent field-level personnel

**Training:** The IRF must continue to facilitate the skills development of rangers to enable them to implement best practice.

More specifically it resolved to:

- Establish a set of international standards for ranger training
- Coordinate programmes for the training of rangers, and provide information on training resources
- Seek to extend the European Ranger Training Project globally
- Pursue the establishment of mentoring programmes for rangers
- Encourage the provision of adequate equipment and infrastructure so that rangers can adequately discharge their responsibilities

**Networking:** The IRF must continue to act as a catalyst for continual improvement in protected area management by expanding its current networking function.

More specifically it resolved to:

- Promote linkages with other international organisations engaged in related activities
- Exchange information and knowledge about their work
- Promote and facilitate ranger exchange programmes
- Promote the role of the ranger as an environmental law enforcement agent in those countries in which rangers are assigned such authority

### **Area Integrity**

In an effort to promote and ensure area integrity, the IRF resolved to:

- Endorse and promote international agreements aimed at the protection of biodiversity
- Encourage the monitoring of key indicators of biodiversity
- Facilitate a study to establish the economic value of protected areas
- Promote policies which seek to retain, at source, fees earned within protected areas
- Promote the adoption of international, national and local agreements aimed at preventing habitat loss
- Actively support the promotion of trans-boundary protected areas
- Establish guidelines for the preparation of management plans for protected areas
- Continue to pursue the establishment of a United Nations Green Helmet initiative

### **Communities and the Ranger**

In an effort to promote and ensure that an effective partnership is developed between rangers and local communities and other stakeholders, the IRF resolved to:

- Channel donor funds to park-community projects that are sustainable
- Establish a global fund to finance alternatives to conflicting uses
- Develop and implement a training programme that promotes ranger-community partnerships, with a specific focus on cultural sensitivity and community needs and interests
- Develop and disseminate standards and guidelines for community involvement
- Facilitate the exchange of best practice on community involvement
- Establish an inter-cultural relations support committee
- Lobby for the establishment of strategies to compensate local, traditional people who have been required to discontinue their historical land use practices so that protected areas could be established in areas they once controlled

### **Business and Ecotourism**

In an effort to promote and ensure that ecotourism and business in protected areas meets the objective of sustainable development, the IRF resolved to:

- Communicate the internationally accepted definition of sustainable ecotourism
- Promote park-community-business partnerships
- Encourage the private sector to invest in ecotourism
- Encourage proper planning and evaluation of ecotourism activities