



Hyères Ranger Declaration, 2024

The 10th **International Ranger Federation (IRF)** World Ranger Congress (WRC) in Hyères from 7-11 October, 2024 organised by the IRF, together with **Gardes Natures de France (GNF)**, hosted 450 rangers and supporters (49% female and 15% Indigenous People and Local Communities) from 88 countries. The WRC concludes at a critical juncture for our planet, as it faces biodiversity declines, accelerating climate change and increased risk from zoonotic diseases. Rangers, as Planetary Health Workers¹, know the vital role they have to play in addressing these crises. They are committed to working with partners to deliver on our shared international targets and goals and to enable the green economic transition. However, achieving these targets remains highly unlikely without a professional, effective, responsible, and inclusive ranger workforce. To ensure the swift and efficient implementation of these targets, we, the ranger workforce representatives and supporters of the 10th WRC endorse the 2024 Hyères Ranger Declaration as follows;

HIGHLIGHTING the progress made by the International Ranger Federation (IRF) since the 9th IRF World Ranger Congress in collaboration with partners like the Universal Ranger Support Alliance (URSA) and many others to implement **The Chitwan Declaration** through raising awareness, developing global standards, and advocating for ranger needs on the international stage.

RECOLLECTING the Declarations and Resolutions adopted at the regional congresses and forums inter alia the Asian Ranger Forum (2023), Oceania Ranger Forum (2023), Latin America Ranger Federation General Assembly (2024), Africa Ranger Congress (2022) and European Ranger Congress (2023).

ACKNOWLEDGING that rangers² are the primary stewards of nature and cultural heritage, safeguarding these resources for future generations, and acknowledging that supporting their invaluable work is essential for protecting our planet's ecological and cultural treasures as vital contributors to planetary health.

RECOGNISING that rangers are a diverse group who have a multiplicity of needs and barriers, we therefore recognise that their individual and collective needs for support should be addressed in an institutional context.

¹https://www.researchgate.net/publication/372381236_Essential_planetary_health_workers_Positioning_rangers_within_global_policy

²<https://www.internationalrangers.org/resource/code-of-conduct-english>

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NOTICING that despite their critical role, the majority of rangers lack access to basic equipment, training, adequate numbers and safeguards needed to perform their duties effectively and safely. The profession often does not receive the due recognition it deserves.

ACCEPTING that many rangers work under difficult political and social environments, which in some cases may impact on their ability to perform their duties effectively and responsibly.

We, the ranger workforce representatives and supporters at the 10th IRF World Ranger Congress **CALL** upon the governments, ranger employers, ranger associations, conservation NGOs, donors, and other stakeholders to undertake following actions;

ROLE RECOGNITION

Despite their critical role, rangers do not receive the recognition they deserve and require, and there is pressing need to;

1. Advocate for recognition of the ranger professions.
2. Acknowledge and promote the crucial role of rangers in safeguarding and delivering ecosystem services essential for human well-being and quality of life.
3. Respect, protect and fulfil the rights of rangers as per the international human rights norms and standards.
4. Recognise rangers as one of the first responders in emergencies that threaten human life, wildlife, or property in and around Protected and Conserved Areas (PCAs) and ensure that they are equipped with necessary knowledge, skills, abilities and tools to perform these duties effectively and safely.
5. Acknowledge the role of rangers in the prevention and monitoring of zoonotic diseases in PCAs.
6. Recognise the dedication of rangers and their families in their commitment to protecting our planet.
7. Advocate for further recognition for the role rangers play in protection and conservation of terrestrial, inland waters, coastal and marine areas.



CONDITIONS

While noting the findings of the State of the Ranger Report³ and acknowledging that rangers often work long hours in difficult and sometimes dangerous conditions, it is critical to:

1. Ensure the occupational safety and health of rangers by implementing **Global Employment and Welfare Standards**.
2. Advocate for the betterment of the ranger working conditions through the implementation and monitoring of recommendations of the State of the Ranger Report.
3. Establish and promote a global platform under the IRF for reporting ranger line of duty deaths.
4. Recognizing the financial limitations in some countries and encouraging the conservation community to work towards securing adequate, appropriate form of insurance for rangers.

COMPETENCES

Considering many rangers worldwide lack the necessary skills, equipment and training to perform their duties effectively⁴, and given the urgent need to substantially increase both the number and effectiveness of world's protected and conserved areas to achieve the 30x30 target of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework⁵, we must:

1. Ensure that all rangers have access to essential technical skills and competencies aligned with **Global Ranger Competencies**, enabling them to perform their duties effectively, safely, and responsibly.
2. Support and facilitate ranger associations in promoting and facilitating access to relevant learning opportunities through ranger-to-ranger learning programs.
3. Support regional and national ranger training institutions to deliver sustainable capacity-building programs that match local needs and align with Global Ranger Competencies.
4. Embrace the traditional knowledge systems of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs) in effective management of natural renewable resources.
5. Ensure that number of rangers deployed are adequate to address the needs of the sites and threats that they face; where possible establish and work towards national norms for ranger numbers⁶.

³ <https://www.internationalrangers.org/state-of-the-ranger/>

⁴ <https://www.internationalrangers.org/state-of-the-ranger/>

⁵ <https://www.cbd.int/gbf/targets/3>

⁶ <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41893-022-00970-0>

INCLUSIVE WORKFORCE

Recognising the crucial role indigenous peoples, local communities, women and other under-represented groups play in effective protected and conserved area management, there is a pressing need to:

1. Proactively address labour imbalances including representation of women⁷ and Indigenous People and Local Communities⁸ in the sector to create a fairer, diverse and more resilient workforce.
2. Enhance access to equal employment, capacity-building opportunities, fair working conditions, and career advancement, regardless of age, gender, race, caste, class, ethnicity, language, religion, sexual orientation and disability.
3. Acknowledge, promote and support Indigenous People and Local Communities as rangers and stewards of nature.
4. Provide safe spaces for women rangers in their areas of operation, including secure accommodation and adequate welfare support⁹.
5. Support and implement youth engagement and awareness programs to attract the youth to become the next generation of rangers.

CONDUCT

Recognising the importance of accountability and responsibility in the profession, it is imperative to:

1. Recognise and promote the ranger values outlined in the **IRF Code of Conduct** to all stakeholders.
2. Ensure the adoption and implementation of a comprehensive, standardized Code of Conduct, aligned with the IRF Code of Conduct, and committed to preventing misconduct through accompanying Standard Operational Procedures guiding rangers conduct.
3. Strengthen effective accountability and feedback mechanisms for ranger conduct, including anti-corruption measures.
4. Promote access to user-friendly, safe and anonymous channels for rangers to report illegal or unethical conduct.

⁷ <https://www.internationalrangers.org/resource/towards-gender-equality-in-the-ranger-workforce/>

⁸ <https://escholarship.org/uc/item/2754m0kj>

⁹ <https://www.internationalrangers.org/wp-content/uploads/Towards-Gender-Equality-In-The-Ranger-Workforce-SUMMARY.pdf>

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RANGER CONTRIBUTIONS

Recognising the **vital role rangers** play in the effective implementation of global commitments and conservation finance mechanism, there is a need to;

1. Advocate for the inclusion of ranger-specific elements in the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs).
2. Acknowledge rangers' contributions to climate change mitigation, adaptation, resilience, disaster risk reduction and global climate commitments.
3. Ensure rangers are actively involved and included in global biodiversity and climate discussions and conservation decision-making processes through appropriate mechanisms.
4. Highlight and promote rangers' roles in nature-based solutions, carbon credits, biodiversity credits, bankable solutions, and other conservation finance mechanisms.
5. Recognise rangers' contributions to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

ADDITIONALLY, WE CALL UPON the IRF board to develop an action plan to implement the Hyères Ranger Declaration, 2024 in partnership with NGOs, partners, donors and relevant stakeholders.

