



THE THIN GREEN LINE

NEWSLETTER OF THE INTERNATIONAL RANGER FEDERATION

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OFFICERS REPORTS

President's Report

Dear Friends and Colleagues:

The International Ranger Federation shares with all the shock and horror of the devastating effects of the earthquake and tsunami on the people and livelihoods in Southeast Asia and elsewhere and mourns the tragic loss of life.

To date, we have been unable to make contact with ranger colleagues in the region. An initial analysis undertaken by IUCN indicates that there are a total of 457 protected areas in the region, covering a combined area of 10,800,798 hectares. Although most of these protected areas are in India (mainly in the archipelagos north of Sumatra), most of the total area protected is in Indonesia. Impacts included deaths of park staff and damage to both natural ecosystems and existing park infrastructure.

The World Wildlife Fund (WWF) reports that three marine national park rangers working on the Naucrates Turtle Conservation project on Phra Thong Island in Thailand were among the fatalities, while six other rangers were badly injured. Flora and Fauna International (FFI) reported that the forest protection staff in Sumatra had been 'badly hit.' Fortunately, the rangers on Chumbe Island, off Tanzania, escaped unharmed.

While humanitarian aid to the region is and will remain of great importance for some time, it is now also time to assess the impacts of the disaster on the natural environment as well as on the staff and infrastructure of the parks and protected areas. To this end, the International Ranger Federation is mobilizing to send small, highly mobile teams into the ravaged areas to check on park and protected area staff, to make a preliminary assessment of both the human, environmental and infrastructure damage within the protected areas, and to produce a preliminary needs analysis in order to identify and prioritize future efforts. In this regard the International Ranger Federation is working closely with the World Conservation Union (IUCN) and the international conservation coordinated effort.

IUCN is also working with the IRF in developing a joint twinning initiative that will focus on the practical management support to protected areas directly affected by the tsunami. This would follow on from the initial assessments and would identify protected areas agencies in non-affected countries that could support and contribute to the development of the twinning programme.

In the last issue of *The Thin Green Line*, we reported that armed poachers had shot Daniel Kurday, a ranger in Araucarias Park. Recent reports are that Daniel is not doing too well and that he is completely paralyzed. The Ranger Dependents Fund created during the World Parks Congress would be a vehicle to provide assistance to Daniel in his time of need, but unfortunately the administration and financing of the fund is still in the process of development. For this reason, I would make an urgent appeal to all ranger associations to please make a contribution to help Daniel.

The quadrennial meeting of the IUCN World Conservation Congress (WCC), held in Bangkok last November, was a great success, not only for the IUCN but also for conservation in general and for the IRF. Great strides were made in gaining international recognition and in developing partnerships in furthering the ranger profession and in ensuring that the voice of the ranger is heard.

Cassie Wright, the IRF Youth Development lead, did herself and the IRF proud at this congress and I would ask that you all give your utmost support to Cassie in furthering this important issue. During the WCC, the IRF reinforced and built on a memorandum of understanding with the IUCN to promote the cooperation between the two organizations across all issues pertaining to protected areas and the rangers responsible for their protection, and to jointly raise the professional standards of rangers.

The IRF congratulates Valli Moosa as the newly elected president of the IUCN and looks forward to his term of office, which will recognize the importance, the ranger in the conservation of biodiversity and sustainable development.

Planning of the first Iberoamerican Congress of Rangers, to be held later in 2005, is by all accounts moving ahead well. This will be a landmark event for rangers and something to look forward to.

IRF's 2006 World Congress will be held in Stirling, Scotland, in June 2006. Details of the congress are now available on the website (<http://www.ranger-irfc.com/scotcover2006.htm>). Under the capable organizing team, this promises to be even bigger and better than previous congresses. Book early and make sure you get there.

The IRF website (www.int-ranger.net) has new life and vitality, thanks to David Burns of Australia. Please interact with the website, send comments and information or bits of news to David at babaji@aanet.com.au. Photographs of rangers at work for inclusion in the gallery would also be most welcome.

Until next time, warm regards,

David Zeller, President

Vice President's Report

Dear colleagues:

Another year has begun...

Even though December and January are months of little movement for IRF, my feelings for it are kept very high. People send sincere hopes and everybody is wishing everyone else all the best. Like most rangers in southern hemisphere I also find myself in the busiest season, and barely have time to see my family and write some words...

Guido Baldi from Italy told us that Italian Rangers made a blood donation last December in another way to help society. In Uruguay, the Macá Agency, a boat agency that transports visitors to my park, is donating something like two percent of the price of each ticket sold as a contribution to the Dependents Fund. In March, at the end of the visitor season, they will give the money to me, and I will send it to IUCN. Can you imagine how that fund would grow if a lot of tourist companies in the world follow their example?

Augusto Martínez, our contact in Cuba, told us that rangers there still want to become members of IRF, but are not allowed to form an association. Meanwhile, some park staff from Cuba will stay some time receiving training in Argentina this southern summer.

For too many years, Latin American rangers have had very few training regarding what I consider the most important part of our job: halting or stopping poaching. Too many rangers were sent to do the job without explanations on how to deal with those nervous criminals we call poachers. I believe a lot of rangers' blood would be saved with good training and advice. It is very likely that Daniel Kurday, a ranger from Argentina who was badly wounded in the back, would still be in service if he had received good training. But, to be realistic, we have to admit that training will never stop many of the problems that many of our colleagues frequently must deal with.

When IRF sent uniforms to Ivory Coast, nobody knew that country would be divided one more time in a civil war in which rangers would be used as soldiers.

The Democratic Republic of Congo still has problems of violence, which have been relayed to us by our good friend Jobogo Mirindi, the man who always reminds us that gorillas are our cousins.

Next September, Alaska will host the Wilderness Congress, a congress devoted to the importance of keeping wilderness options alive. I can't imagine the sense of living in a world without wild places, and doubt that the phenomenon of life would last long after all wilderness was tamed. But now, more than ever, a lot of people simply ignore the fact that we are all sons and daughters of wilderness and of evolution. I wonder how many rangers in the world have never had a wilderness experience. And rangers, I believe, should be the main defenders of wild lands.

Last year, I began to guide small groups of people along two wetland areas in Uruguay. The experience proved to be very useful for the participants and also was very enriching for me. When people stay three days seeing capybaras, armadillos and other local wildlife, walking on tall grass, and crossing marshes and streams, they get closer to the thousands of generations who walked a planet without roads. The world is going too fast, too fast to meet something we ignore, and the "wild walks," as we call them, help participants stop a while and realise it...

I could not end this message without saying something regarding the tsunami disaster. Gordon Miller sent a message of concern a couple of days after the disaster. Even if we think only about protected areas, the stress of each of the countries affected is so big and lasting that there is no possibility that protected areas will not be affected. When a country loses so many souls, and so many infrastructures is affected, protected areas, always competing for funds, are very likely to receive less attention than in normal times. And many families were destroyed, and more people will depend on poaching to survive. It is incredible how quickly the picture can change sometimes.

Rangers in the affected countries will have to work in worse conditions than prior to the tsunami, no matter the waves affected their parks directly or not.

Sean Willmore, who I was lucky to host in my park, has ended his year long travel around the world, visiting parks and rangers in 22 countries. He performed a great job, and I hope he can make a very good film to help us show to the world what we are, what we do and how we do it.

Colleagues and friends, we will always have to fight against the forces that destroy animals, plants, ecosystems and landscapes, but remember this: we already did it. I say we did it, because this world would be very different without rangers. Yes, protected areas do not work on automatic pilot; if parks are here, there and everywhere, it is because rangers are there all the time.

Best regards from the marshes of Uruguay!

Juan Carlos Gambarotta, Vice President

Executive Director's Report

Members of the Federation are by now well aware of the serious situation facing many of our colleagues in conflict zones of the world like the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). At the IUCN World Parks Congress in Durban in 2003, Jobogo Mirindi from DRC and John Makombo from Uganda gave graphic accounts to delegates of the plight of those rangers protecting the gorillas and other wildlife in the Virungas of Uganda, DRC and Rwanda. The impact of these presentations was exceptional and the WCPA announced at the congress that a joint fund would be set up with IRF to help dependants of rangers killed while on duty.

In July, a small mission representing the IRF visited Uganda and the DRC. The main purposes of the visit were to assess ways in which we could ensure direct help to dependants, to see the problems 'on the ground,' and, as representatives of rangers throughout the world, to give encouragement to the exceptionally dedicated rangers in this war-torn part of the world.

The team consisted of Elaine Thomas and Mick Keenan from the Victorian Rangers Association, Australia, Linda Nunn from the Countryside Management Association in UK, and Gordon Miller, IRF director. The team came together in Kampala, Uganda, where John Makombo and the Uganda Wildlife Authority were excellent hosts. An early meeting with the embryonic Uganda Conservators Association introduced the team to rangers from all over Uganda. The UCA are hoping to apply for IRF membership shortly. An evening dinner and meeting hosted by the Director Mugisha of the UWA and his senior staff, including Moses Mapesa Wafula, director of field operations, was very useful in indicating potential ways in which we could provide support for rangers. Subsequently, arrangements were made to send body armor and other equipment from a US source provided through Clare Libbings of the Discovery Channel.

In the company of John Makombo, the team then traveled to Lake Mburo National Park, where we had a meeting with staff about the benefits of an association and the IRF. Continuing on beyond the equator, we arrived at Bwindi Impenetrable National Park, in spite of a broken steering pin nearly bringing the mission to a premature end. Thanks to an emergency call to John Bosco Nuwe in Queen Elizabeth National Park, we arrived intact.

The visit to Bwindi NP, managed by the mercurial and ever-smiling John Makombo, was memorable. The opportunity was taken to track gorillas, visit some excellent local community initiatives and to meet the local rangers. Bwindi was headlined throughout the world in 1999 when a number of tourists were abducted and killed by insurgents from Rwanda and all tourists are currently escorted by two armed soldiers, even on guided walks, in order to ensure security and to allay fears of potential visitors. The team continued on to Mgahinga NP, a park that is contiguous

with the Virunga parks in Rwanda and Congo, and, together with Bwindi, is home to the world's remaining 650 mountain gorillas. An overnight stay in Kisore allowed for a visit to caves used by pygmies in the last century.

A drive to Isoro brought us to the border with DRC and after farewells we were passed across the border to Jobogo Mirindi in Bunagana. We were met by a ranger 'guard of honor' consisting of 12 armed rangers who were to provide our security during the stay in DRC.

We continued on to Goma, the capital of North Kivu Province, where a volcanic eruption recently devastated half the town with large losses of life in surrounding refugee camps. Further meetings followed an initial meeting with Provincial Director Kajuga of ICCN, the Congolese wildlife conservation agency, during the stay with Therese Hart, Wildlife Conservation Society (US), who is working in the Okapi Reserve, and her colleague, Robert Mwinyi Hali. Later we also met with Robert Muir and Helen Haig of the Frankfurt Zoological Society. Robert has since proved to be an invaluable friend and advocate of IRF. We enjoyed the hospitality of Jobogo's family and the following day met ICCN Administrative Director Bakinahe and gave an interview for DRC radio broadcast about the purpose of our visit. We were then invited to meet the North Kivu Province Governor Serufuli in his 'palace,' where we appealed for his support in giving the rangers better protection – the governor was installed by the Rwandan Hutu rebels who control much of this province with the tacit consent of the DRC government in Kinshasa – but that's another story!

The following day we were taken on a walk to track gorillas and were treated to an experience of a lifetime as we watched a gorilla family at close quarters, ample compensation for the dangers of the visit. Some of the rangers from the Virungas, who had not seen gorillas, joined us, and it was heartening to see the pleasure that they found in the experience. The latest addition to the gorilla family had been named after Boniface Kwibesha, a ranger killed by rebel insurgents 10 days before our visit. We later visited the grave of Boniface to pay our respects and to meet family members. We also visited a graveyard and memorial to 23 rangers killed some years ago in a single incident during the civil war. At a meeting with a number of ranger widows, we presented lengths of cloth to the widows and expressed our regret and that of rangers throughout the world at their personal losses. Throughout our visit the dedication and courage of the rangers working in this volatile area was extraordinary and made us feel quite humble in the safe environments in which so many of us live and work.

After a visit to a fishing village, we continued on to Ishasha and Jobogo's sector of the Virungas National Park, where the guardians of our tents were a herd of habituated buffaloes! It was an emotional occasion when we came to finally leave our escort and hosts and cross back into Uganda. It was a shock to learn not long after our return that one of our escorts had been killed and another paralyzed following an attack by insurgents. It is it very hard to think of more dedicated rangers than these who constantly put their lives in danger and who for many years, until the UN Foundation stepped in, did not even get paid! They deserve whatever support we can give them. Since our return, UNESCO has held a conference in Paris, which was attended by Jobogo, during which discussions took place on further support for the Virungas and other sites in danger in the Congo.

We were met at the border by John Bosco Nuwe and spent the following days in his Queen Elizabeth NP and then Kibale NP, where we were fortunate to track chimpanzees. A return to Kampala and a farewell dinner on the shores of Lake Victoria completed our mission. Throughout the visit, we experienced wonderful hospitality and friendship that is so often associated with the 'world family of rangers' and we would like to thank all those in ICCN (Democratic Republic of Congo) and Uganda Wildlife Authority who made the visit so meaningful. In particular our thanks go to Jean Pierre Jobogo Mirindi in Congo and John Makombo and John Bosco in Uganda, who made the whole visit possible and who throughout ensured our safe passage and contributed so much to an unforgettable experience.

Some conclusions on the visit follow...

- The need for more and better equipment, particularly in the Congo, where rebels have sophisticated arms, was an obvious need. Many rangers do not have proper uniforms, although Robert Muir and the Frankfurt Zoological Society have been actively addressing that issue. Some redundant body armor is available in the US through Clare Libbings – those who were at the Kruger Congress may remember her interviewing rangers for the Game Rangers Channel. Funding may come as a result of the UNESCO Paris Conference, but there is a need to ensure that this gets to the people ‘on the ground’.
- The administration of aid to dependants of rangers killed in action needs some careful thought in order to ensure that help gets directly to where it is most needed. We discussed ways in which help could be directed and possibilities include providing primary education for a dependant child and potential ‘breadwinner’ at an estimated cost of \$1500 per child or provision of housing for widows at around \$3000 per person. One suggestion since made to me by the Italian Rangers Association is for member associations considering adopting a dependant child and providing for their education. Robert Muir has offered to act as an intermediary in ensuring that help gets to the right recipient and partnerships with likeminded NGO’s could be considered in other parts of the world. Ways in which the IUCN/IRF Dependants Fund is to be administered are yet to be finalized and a request for money-raising ventures by member associations should be considered. To date, the response from member associations has been disappointing with only a few making donations. There is some urgency in this matter as the number of dependants is increasing, not only in this part of the world but elsewhere.
- There is no doubt that our presence in Congo, in particular, was a great boost to the rangers morale and they were strengthened by the knowledge that rangers throughout the world are aware of their plight and what to do something to help them. Letters of support and encouragement from member associations all help to show that they do not need to suffer in silence. I believe we also owe it to them to raise public and government awareness throughout the world that wildlife will only survive if we also give adequate protection and resources to those who protect it.

Following our return from Uganda and the Congo, I was able to bring Jobogo to the UK to give a lecture tour raising public awareness of the plight of both rangers and gorillas in the Virungas. I was helped considerably by Linda Nunn, who has been running a ‘Gearing Up For Gorillas’ website to provide equipment for the Virungas following her attendance at the Kruger Congress. We were able at short notice – with the help of Ian Redmond (formerly an assistant to Dian Fossey) and the Born Free Foundation, Dian Fossey Foundation and the Ape Alliance – to organize a program of talks in England. These included public talks and presentations to students at Oxford University, Imperial College London and a major venue in Bristol with Ian Redmond. The tour was very successful and the issue of ranger protection was an important element of the presentations. Prior to and following the events there was considerable local press and radio coverage of both the Congo visit and the subsequent lecture tour by Jobogo. A meeting with the director and staff of the Dian Fossey Foundation was very useful in introducing the foundation to the work of the IRF. A meeting with the director of conservation at London Zoo had to be cancelled due to the director going to the IUCN Bangkok Congress, but follow-up is intended, as they are to spend some money in the Virungas.

In conclusion, the visit to the Democratic Republic of Congo reinforced my opinion that the courage shown by rangers in conflict zones deserves our full attention and we must continue our support both material and moral. However only peace in these areas will truly free the rangers to carry on the essential work they are doing to protect some of our most precious wildlife. Raising public awareness in our respective countries to what is really happening on the ground is paramount and can be done by all of us as individuals. As members of the IRF, we can, through our organizations, provide resources such as redundant equipment or sponsorship. We can all seek ways of raising money for the IUCN/IRF Dependants Fund. We should also be aware that while the Congo is one of the most volatile areas in the world with exceptional wildlife, there are other rangers suffering similar deprivation of a safe working environment. We do not, to date, know how many rangers

have been affected by the Asian tsunami, but as a 'world family' we need to harness our collective efforts to help our colleagues.

For additional information on Gearing Up For Gorillas and providing equipment to rangers in need of assistance, go to <http://www.g4g.co.uk>, or email Linda Nunn at mc1@rowans74.freeserve.co.uk

Gordon Miller

Postscript: A serious situation still exists in Garamba National Park, Democratic Republic of Congo. It has just been announced that five northern white rhinos have been flown out of DRC for their safety, as high levels of poaching continue. Only around 10 now remain in the park – the last in the world to remain in the wild.

Youth Development Officer's Report

At the 2003 World Parks Congress (WPC) in Durban, South Africa, Nelson Mandela noted that "there are too many grey heads and few youthful ones" in conservation organizations. In order to more effectively engage younger generations in the management of protected areas, the WPC delegates made recommendations, including one to "increase incentives for engagement of younger generations" and another "to support younger generations in professional capacity building initiatives."

The work of translating these recommendations into action began at the World Conservation Congress (WCC), held in Bangkok last November. As the youth development officer for the International Ranger Federation, I attended the WCC to ensure rangers were represented in the discussions. Thanks to all who sent me information about programs available for young rangers, I was able to work with Kristy Facer (an intern with the IUCN South Africa office) to write a presentation for the World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA) meeting. It spoke of the advantages of including more young professionals in the work of the WCPA and was well received.

At this meeting, the IRF also participated in working groups examining the future of the WCPA, and there was strong support from all groups to expand membership to include young professionals. I subsequently met with David Sheppard, head of IUCN's protected area program, and others to look at where we could involve young professionals in the work of the WCPA. A press release was then drafted, announcing several initiatives, including an annual young conservationist's award that will soon be developed and offered jointly by IRF and WCPA. A second award will be made available through WCPA and the Consortium for International Protected Area Management (CIPAM) giving two training scholarships to young professionals in protected areas each year. Watch the IRF website for developments as they happen. These initiatives are a fantastic start, and we will continue working with the WCPA on developing more ways for young professionals to get involved and hopefully even join the WCPA in the future.

I was also involved with working on the newly formed 'Conservation Leaders for Tomorrow Initiative,' along with many other young professionals from diverse backgrounds. This included participating in various discussions and exchanging ideas on the involvement of young professionals in conservation organizations. I also attended a workshop held by students from Yale University who prepared the 'Capacity Building of Young Professionals' resolution that was subsequently passed by IUCN members. It calls for the IUCN to develop a young professional program, to assist member organizations in developing programs such as internships, exchange programs and mentorship's, and to ensure these are accessible to people from developing countries. There is currently support at high levels to involve young professionals in all IUCN activities, and to put them where the decisions are being made. This led to the contribution of young professionals being highlighted during a panel discussion in the final session of the forum. Two young conservationists spoke with two "old" ones about the most pressing issues of the next ten years, with all agreeing upon global warming.

So what can the IRF do now? We can provide opportunities within our country associations and internationally for young rangers to be involved at high levels on committees, etc. This will benefit not only the young rangers, who will gain experience and build networks, but also the ranger associations who will benefit from the enthusiasm, new ideas and up-to-date knowledge that young rangers bring. I will continue to work with the IUCN and others on these issues. The World Commission on Protected Areas is a good place to start, as there is already support to make things happen. I will also stay in touch with the 'Conservation Leaders for Tomorrow' initiative within the IUCN.

To do all of these things I need some help! I will be contacting each IRF continental representative and will ask her or him to nominate at least one keen young ranger who can be involved in this. If you are interested, or know someone who might be, please contact your continental representative or let me know at cassiewright@alphalink.com.au.

Cassie Wright, Youth Development Officer

Continental Representative for Australasia

Obviously the most important piece of news from down under, unfortunately not good news, was the recent devastation caused by the tsunami. The news has been full of the huge loss of life and property throughout the Southeast Asian region. The response from all over the world has been tremendous, but this catastrophe is not limited to purely loss of human life. Large areas of the damaged region are protected areas with a great deal of natural resource value. Although humanitarian aid is of course the primary objective of aid agencies and governments, the Australian Ranger Federation (ARF, working through IRF, is preparing to help our neighboring protected areas in what may be the first sortie of the much talked about "Green Helmets."

A recent ARF teleconference, which involved members from most of the Australian states, showed that Australian rangers (and some of the agencies they work for) were keen to assist our Asian colleagues in whatever way they could. Of course political protocols must be followed and we hope we will not be too tied up in red tape to get off the ground. The plan is to get highly mobile, small teams of rangers (under the banner of the IRF/IUCN) into the devastated regions to do a rapid assessment on affected protected areas and report back to the IRF on what strategies and actions would best be used, in the short and long term, to maintain their integrity and assist field staff. Stay tuned for more information through the IRF.

Locally, the ARF has also been assisting a number of overseas rangers who have requested ranger contacts and suggested places to visit whilst visiting Australia. Each state organization is carrying out its own state business and keeping the ARF up to speed with what is happening through the ARF executive committee and website. I think that most members tend to struggle with devoting enough time and energy towards the organization, as well as carrying out a full time job and having a life, so roll on the 2006 IRF conference in Scotland to get everybody recharged.

Chris Artiemiew
IRF Representative for Australasia

NEWS FROM NATIONS AND NATIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

Dominican Republic

IRF members Juan Carlos Gambarotta, Rick Smith, and their Dominican Republic colleague, Adam Paredes, recently completed another training session for Dominican Republic forest rangers. This course, the latest in a series of six courses for Dominican forest and park rangers, is the result of an agreement between the United States Agency for Development (AID), the Dominican Secretariat for the Environment and Natural Resources, and a US-based consulting firm, International Resources Group. Gambarotta and Smith have found their Dominican counterparts to be eager to learn what constitutes the duties and responsibilities of a modern ranger, and believe that at least one more of these sessions will be held in 2005. They are especially gratified that Adam Paredes, their co-facilitator, is one of the founding members of the newly established Dominican Republic ranger association.

Socios de la FIG, Juan Carlos Gambarotta y Rick Smith, juntos con su colega dominicano, Adam Paredes, recién completaron un taller más de capacitación para guardabosques dominicanos. Este taller, el más recién en una serie de 6 cursos para guardaparques y guardabosques, fue el resultado de un acuerdo entre la Agencia para el Desarrollo Internacional (AID en inglés), la Secretaría del Medio Ambiente y Recursos Naturales del gobierno dominicano, y una compañía estadounidense de consultoría, International Resources Group. Gambarotta y Smith han encontrado a sus contrapartes dominicanos deseosos de aprender cuales son las responsabilidades de un guardabosque/parque moderno. Smith y Gambarotta creen que se realizará en el año 2005 un curso más de esta modalidad. Los dos son orgullosos del hecho de que su co-facilitador para los cursos, Adam Paredes, es uno de los fundadores de la recién establecida asociación de guardaparques dominicanos.

Rick Smith
Past President

England/Wales

The Countryside Management Association's annual seminar and annual general meeting (AGM) was held in November at Bradwell Abbey, Milton Keynes, when over 60 members attended.

The theme of the seminar centered around the recent government report (chaired by Lord Haskins) into the delivery of services to rural communities and how this might influence the role of rangers and others in the frontline who are responsible for managing the countryside. Speakers discussed the proposed restructuring of the Countryside Agency, English Nature and the Rural Development Service into an integrated agency and how this might affect CMA members in their day-to-day activities.

The seminar was followed by the AGM, at which Mike Woods (Countryside and Heritage Manager for Buckinghamshire County Council) was elected chair and Ceri Daugherty (Senior Countryside Policy Adviser for the Ministry of Defence) was elected vice chair. The 2005 Seminar/AGM is set for September 29th and 30th at Losehill Hall, Peak District National Park, Derbyshire. The theme will be "Integrated Land Management."

Roger Cole
CMA Marketing Group

Bolivia

Como todos ustedes saben he tenido un tiempo muy difícil en este último mes, aún así, no he descuidado mi trabajo ni los asuntos pendiente con los guardaparques por lo que les informamos a todos los compañeros guardas del mundo entero que, En el marco del proceso que se ha iniciado y dentro del plan de actividades que se realizó entre ABOLAC y la Unidad Central del SERNAP se están dando ya algunos resultados. En éste mes y en ocasión del día del guardaparque Boliviano que se celebró el 8 de noviembre se realizaron 3 talleres simultáneos en tres Distritales del país.

El taller tenía como tema central discutir el "Perfil del Guardaparque" con la participación de un buen número de los guardaparques representando a todo el Cuerpo Nacional de Protección, estos Talleres se realizaron en Rurrenabaque, Cochabamba y Santa Cruz, con un éxito rotundo ya que ahora contamos con una propuesta concensuada a nivel nacional que será estudiada y aprobada por el Servicio nacional de Areas Protegidas, personalmente pude estar en Cochabamba el día 7 de noviembre y en Santa Cruz el día 8, no pude estar en Rurrenabaque por que las echas eran coincidentes. Pero la participación fue activa de todos los guardaparques de Bolivia.

También está concensuado hacer una evaluación al Plan Regular de Capacitación para poder continuar y mejorar los contenidos que fueron planteados hace más de 10 años, en ese sentido en los próximos días trabajaremos en la evaluación del Plan Regular de Capacitación con la participación de Guardaparques y los técnicos de la Unidad Central, para poder dar continuidad al Plan desde un enfoque actual y dentro de las necesidades urgentes de los guardaparques en los módulos que faltan. El mes pasado nos visitaron dos guardaparques Paul y Eleanor Collins de Queensland - Australia. Coincidió su visita al Parque Nacional Noel Kempff Mercado con la época seca, cuando hay muchos incendios forestales y que éste año fueron devastadores.

Antes de esta visita con Richard Koch de la Asociación de Tasmania y Chris Artemiew de la oficina Distrital del Servicio de Rescate de Incendios de Queensland habíamos conversado del tema de prevención y control de incendios para coordinar posibles apoyo en la capacitación o en el aporte con equipos para los guardaparques de Bolivia, después que Paul y Eleanor nos visitaron en Bolivia éste tema se ha agilizado y ya los guardaparques de Queensland nos están enviando en los próximos días, equipos en calidad de aporte a la lucha contra los incendios que los guardaparques tenemos y que hasta ahora no contamos con ningún equipo para combatir estos desastres. Agradecemos a nuestros colegas de Queensland - Australia.

Agradecemos a la Unidad Central del Sernap por el agasajo y reconocimiento que se hizo para el día Nacional del guardaparque boliviano, después de muchos años se hizo algo diferente.

Un gran saludo a todos.

Carola

As most of you know, this last month has been very difficult for me, but I have not been ignoring my work with the ranger association. In this regard, we would like to inform our fellow rangers that the process we have begun between ABOLAC (Spanish initials of their ranger association) and SERNAP (Spanish initials of the managing authority for Bolivian protected areas) has begun to produce results. On November 8th, we celebrated the National Day of the Bolivian Park Ranger with three workshops in three different districts of the country.

The workshops had as their central theme "A profile of a Park Ranger" with the participation of a good number of rangers representing the protection ranger division. The workshops were held in Rurrenabaque, Cochabamba, and Santa Cruz and were very successful. We now have a consensus budget that will be studied and approved by SERNAP. Personally, I was able to attend the workshops in Chochabamba on the 7th and Santa Cruz on the 8th. I was not able to be in

Rurrenabaque because of schedule conflicts. But, there was active participation by all the park rangers of Bolivia.

We also agreed to evaluate the current plan for ranger training and to continue to try to improve it using suggestions made some 10 years ago. In this regard, we will be working with rangers and with technicians from the Central Office to give the training plan a current focus so that it can meet the urgent needs of rangers with some new training modules.

During the past month, Paul and Eleanor Collins, rangers from Queensland, Australia, visited us. Their visit to Noel Kempff National Park coincided with the dry season, a time of many fires. This year these fires were particularly devastating.

Prior to their visit, we had been discussing with Richard Koch of the Tasmanian Ranger Association and Chris Atremiew of the Queensland District Office of Fire and Rescue about fire prevention and control and possible assistance in training and equipment for Bolivian rangers. After Paul and Eleanor's visit, these discussions have become more urgent and in the next days, rangers from Queensland will be sending us quality fire control equipment which up to now, we have not had in the combat of these fires. We thank our colleagues from Queensland.

We appreciate SERNAP's receptiveness and its recognition of the National Day of the Park Ranger, something that has not always been common in the past.

Warm regards to everyone,

Carola

Editor's Report

The deadlines for the next four issues of *The Thin Green Line* appear below. If you can plan on getting your reports to me by those dates, that will be a great help.

Issue	Submission Due Date	Publication Date
April	Friday, April 8, 2005	Sunday, April 24, 2005
July	Friday, July 1, 2005	Sunday, July 17, 2005
October	Friday, October 7, 2005	Sunday, October 30, 2005
January	Friday, December 16, 2005	Sunday, January 7, 2006

Bill Halainen, Editor

NEWS ABOUT RANGERS

Two Poachers Killed in Gun Battle with Kenyan Rangers

Augusto Atturo from the Associazione Ligure Agenti di Vigilanza Ambientale, the Italian ranger association, has passed along this article from a news service:

Five poachers crossed into Kenya from Tanzania last Monday (January 17th) through the porous border near Lake Jipe. Later that afternoon, however, two of them lay dead at Musoma in the dusty and thorny scrubland of Tsavo West National Park.

Next to them was a battered blue Toyota truck and two bloody eland carcasses. The eland, the biggest antelope in the world, had been shot expertly with what a scene of crime detective believes to be a .404 mm-calibre sport gun, the kind used to fell elephants.

Other than crossing illegally into Kenya, the poachers made two other mistakes: first, they chose, for their sortie, the Kanjaro area in Tsavo West, only 20 km from the Kenya Wildlife Service base at Lake Jipe. But their fatal mistake was to open fire when challenged to stop.

The battle must have been short and furious.

"Two middle-aged poachers died on the spot while three made a hasty escape through the scrubland, leaving their battered pick-up truck with its bloody cargo and a shotgun behind," says Peter Leitoro, KWS deputy director in charge of wildlife security Operations.

KWS rangers suffered no casualties but a .404 caliber bullet fired by the poachers tore through their patrol car and smashed part of the engine to pieces. It had to be towed away, he says. But why would Tanzanian poachers cross the border to shoot wildlife in Kenya?

"Tanzania has stiffer penalties. They actually interpret poaching as an economic crime, and put poachers away for between 15 and 20 years. Here, where poaching is a petty crime, poachers face maybe six months with the option of a fine," he says.

Different policies on hunting between the two countries have not helped matters, either, according to KWS Director Dr Julius Kipng'etich. Tanzania allows hunting, which has been banned in Kenya since 1976.

"Evidently, we need stronger ties. We must harmonise wildlife policies and laws and strengthen cross-border enforcement for efficient wildlife management," said Kipng'etich.

Meanwhile, police in Nyeri are looking for a Kenya Wildlife Service ranger who is suspected to have escaped with gunshot wounds after police gunned down his colleague at Solio ranch.