

## **WCC-2016-Rec-103-EN**

### **Establishment, recognition and regulation of the career of park ranger**

CONSIDERING that nature conservation through the creation and maintenance of protected areas is one of the most common and effective ways of conserving biodiversity and ecosystem services efficiently;

ALSO CONSIDERING that without sufficiently professional park rangers to implement development and management plans effectively, it will be hard for protected areas to fulfil their essential role;

CONSIDERING that the term 'ranger' as used below shall be deemed to apply to all frontline protection staff regardless of title, which varies among territories, with common titles including, but not limited to wildlife warden, forest guard, forester, scout, watcher, game scout, and park guard; and

NOTING that:

- a. the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) must expand, as far as possible and in the most appropriate manner, their own system of protected areas, including special measures for conserving biodiversity (as reflected in Article 8 of the Convention – *in situ* conservation);
- b. the park rangers' performance helps achieve several of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, whose purpose is to promote the values of sustainability in society and their incorporation into regional, national, subnational and local agendas (Targets 1 and 2), by implementing strategies for reducing the loss of natural habitats and for controlling overfishing and the exploitation of national resources (Targets 5 and 6), as well as for the effective protection of natural areas and endangered species (Targets 11 and 12);
- c. rangers are key workers for the development and management of all protected areas and, in the field, they assure the effectiveness of environmental protection and maintain relations between public policies and the local communities in which they operate;
- d. it is essential that all States give priority to the recruitment, training, equipment and well-being of park rangers;
- e. the 264 delegates from 40 countries who attended the 7<sup>th</sup> World Ranger Congress (Arusha, 2012), the 1,262 participants from 15 countries who attended the 8<sup>th</sup> Brazilian Congress on Protected Areas (Curitiba, 2015), and the 321 participants from 71 countries who attended the 8<sup>th</sup> World Ranger Congress (Estes Park, 2016), as well as the recommendations from the IUCN World Parks Congress in Sydney (2014), officially pointed out that the actions of park rangers in the conservation of protected areas have been recognised as fundamental;
- f. many countries do not recognise the profession of park ranger as a high-risk occupation, which does not allow the rangers to benefit from minimum safeguards to protect them against possible injuries linked to ecological monitoring activities, nor benefit from environmental education, trails maintenance, or visitation programmes, etc.; and
- g. one of the aspects of the IUCN strategy includes strengthening the career of the park ranger, and this involves the allocation of resources and professional exchange;

### **The World Conservation Congress, at its session in Hawai'i, United States of America, 1-10 September 2016:**

CALLS ON IUCN State and Government Agency Members, as well as governments and organisations of other countries, which do not have a professionalised career advancement system for front-line protected area staff to:

- a. initiate, define and formalise within a regulatory framework, the career profiles of protected area staff, so that they are attractive and exciting;
- b. establish, encourage and maintain training and improvement of protected area field staff, including through specialised technical and university courses, training and programmes that

are compatible with their work;

- c. launch public calls or recruit the appropriate number of protected area field staff for protected areas, following a ratio of 1 ranger per 5 km<sup>2</sup> for public protected areas;
- d. provide incentives for maintaining an adequate number of front-line protected area staff for private protected areas, complementing efforts for public conservation areas; and
- e. facilitate or promote the formation of a working group (or a technical assistance group) to help develop the career of park ranger in countries with limited experience in this area.