

ADOPT A RANGER

Text version of the Adopt A Ranger website

<http://www.adopt-a-ranger.org>

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Currently on-line versions are available in English, German, Chinese and Spanish.

Este documento es una versión de texto de la Página Web: <http://www.adopt-a-ranger.org/espanol/espanol.htm> . En línea está disponible en Español.

Diese Sondergutachten ist eine Tekstversion der Website: <http://www.adopt-a-ranger.org>. <http://www.adopt-a-ranger.org/deutsch/deutsch.htm>.

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ADOPT A RANGER

invites YOU to join the most important movement ever to protect nature and combat climate change at the same time:

1. **Help finance salaries of park rangers for management of national parks, nature reserves and protected areas;**
2. **Raise money for "your own park ranger" in your favorite national park;**
3. **Offset your carbon emissions;**
4. **Slow down the greatest specicide in the history of our planet and save millions of species;**
5. **Protect nature and help rural communities at the same time;**
6. **Join Adopt A Ranger in the most important effort ever made to rescue nature;**
7. **Join the Adopt A Ranger fundraiser incentives programme and receive a reward for your time and effort;**
8. **Talk with a ranger on line.**

IN A NUTSHELL

The United Nations' reported that climate change is leading to global warming, sea level rise and severe weather events. For nature this will have devastating effects and many species of plants and animals will unavoidably disappear forever. The United Nations has made it very clear that climate change is caused by human actions. This makes mankind jointly responsible for the extinction of millions of species, which makes it "a mass specicide". There are no scientific prediction models to estimate what percentage of species will disappear due to climate change, but we know it will be a considerable percentage. Just a few examples:

- *Tropical rainforests, the species richest places on earth, are expected to become hotter and dryer, and the millions of species that can't survive in dryer conditions will vanish forever;*
- *As sea levels rise, coastal marshes will disappear under water and many species that depend on them will lose large parts of their living space.*
- *Coral reefs die when exposed to higher temperatures, and if the temperature of the oceans disappear permanently, they many coral reefs will disappear.*

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→ *The World Institute for Conservation & Environment, WICE has calculated that between 10 and 12 % of the land, theoretically can protect about 70% of the species of the world.*

However, less than half of the protected areas in in those countries have any field staff at all. Without rangers, these areas become invaded, forests are felled and nature becomes transformed into agricultural fields. It is probably safe to assume that half of the protected areas in developing countries will be converted into agricultural land over the next 20 years or so if they will be left without rangers. This would reduce the world's species to no more than 50%. That would be the situation without the effects of climate change. But it is probably safe to assume that another 10-20% of the world's species will disappear due to climate change. IF both climate change and protected areas transformations take place without measures, we are probably facing a species disappearance of 60-70% during the 21st century, all due to human actions. This would be the most massive specicide¹ in the history of our planet. With effective protection, we may be looking at "only" 40 - 50 % species loss.

According to the data of the United Nations Protected Areas database, there are almost one billion (1,000,000,000) ha of protected areas in developing and transition² countries; about as much as Brazil and Peru together. If without sufficient rangers, half of those areas would disappear, the forests would disappear in half a billion (500,000,000) ha. That is more than 100 times of what could be planted as forest plantations over the same period of time, a measure that is promoted under the Kyoto protocol against climate change. Planting new forest easily costs \$1,000 - \$5,000 per ha and like nature reserves, planted forests need to be protected by rangers, while additionally they need to be managed at least during the first 10 years. Compared to protected areas, forest plantations are small and therefore their cost per ha can be as much as 100 times more expensive than those of natural protected areas. So protecting nature reserves may be several hundred times cheaper than planting new forests, while it is far more effective in preventing CO₂ production than forest plantations are in reducing CO₂ from the air. Protecting nature reserves helps reduce the onslaught of life on earth, whereas forest plantations contribute very little to species conservation. If you feel you want to do something that REALLY helps against climate change, you can be sure that adopting a ranger is one of the most effective ways. By adopting a ranger, you help prevent hundreds of millions of hectares of forest turn into Carbon dioxide (CO₂) over the next twenty years, while you help protect the millions of species that would disappear with the forests.

1Specicide is the deliberate eradication of a species. Knowingly allowing this to happen without making a concerted effort to stop this makes it a mass specicide.

2The "transition" countries are the former communist countries whose economies are now in transition.

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The world needs to re-focus its conservation aid programmes and refocus its strategy on how to protect nature effectively and reduce the combined effects of the climate change and the conversion of natural lands. We cannot stop climate change, but we can stop the destruction of natural lands in protected areas. Actually, it is quite easy, affordable and socially beneficial.

WICE has calculated that worldwide about 140,000 rangers are needed for the protected areas in developing and transition countries. There are no data on how many rangers are employed at the moment, but probably no more than one quarter of the real need. This means that there is a worldwide ranger deficit of 105,000 rangers in the developing and transition countries.

Adopt A Ranger has been created to raise funds for the most imminent danger for nature on earth: national parks and nature reserves without park rangers. [Read here why financing rangers is the single most cost effective way to protect nature.](#)

We will also work with international donor organizations to make their programmes more effective for conservation and advise international organizations like the International Monetary Fund on how they can contribute to the conservation of life on earth.

OUR MISSION

Did you know that GLOBAL WARMING and CLIMATE CHANGE are NOT the most immediate threat to the conservation of nature. While Al Gore and Tony Blair battle for saving the world from the disaster of climate change, the world is unaware for the most immediate crisis for the conservation of nature: More than half of the world's rainforests risk disappearing within 2 decades because there are no park rangers and wardens to manage them. Without those multi functional custodians of national parks and nature reserves, most wild animals are without protection from poachers and rainforests will be invaded and cut down for agriculture or other production purposes.

Let's just give you some examples:

- ✓ A recent inventory of WICE, TNC and the Brazilian Environment Ministry, showed that only about 60 of the about 245 federal nature and forest reserves of Brazil, had any field staff at all, being about one third of the areas and representing less than a quarter of the area of protected land;
- ✓ Our good friend, Alberto Paniaguas, the director of PROFUNANPE in Peru, one of the world's most successful trust funds for protected areas, told us that only 50% of the protected areas in Peru has field staff;
- ✓ Victor Archaga, former director of the protected areas agency of Honduras and current regional coordinator for the Nature Conservancy, told us that there are less than 30 people assigned to Honduras' 100 protected areas;
- ✓ Renee Gonzales, the director of the Mexican Protected Areas Fund, FANP showed us that only 60% of the protected areas of Mexico have field staff;
- ✓ The director of the protected areas agency in Angola told us that he had to defend his enormous system against poachers armed with AK47 automatic machine guns with about 500 staff, including the administrative staff.

✓ The last remaining Mongolian Saiga Antelopes are unprotected from poachers who sell their horns on medicinal markets in China.

So what is the problem? Are all those generous donors like the World Bank, the United Nations, and countries like the USA, Germany, the Netherlands, just to name a few, not making generous contributions? Yes they are. They finance very good and useful studies and infrastructure. However, their efforts could be even more beneficial, if they would finance actual workers in the field to manage the protected areas.

The western world has asked the developing and transition* countries to set aside about 10% of their land as nature reserves, and over the last 20 years, they actually did that! But the conservation world has never properly addressed the consequences of such an increase in protected areas: the need for more staffing. As 2/3 of the costs of a protected area are the cost of the salaries of park wardens and rangers, there is a vast shortage of rangers worldwide. The West hardly contributed anything at all to share in the increased costs to pay for field staff. Abandoned nature reserves everywhere are the result. With the effects of climate change becoming more and more visible they need rangers to protect them from forest fires, poaching, illegal tree cutting, etc. Moreover, they also need to be socially integrated with local communities, so that people will respect and appreciate the nature reserves. This can only be achieved if the protected areas are staffed with enough park rangers and wardens. If the world fails to foresee in the need for park wardens and rangers in the next two decades or so, we fear that a great deal of the progress the world has made over the last decade or so, will be lost after all.

The effects of Climate Change on nature will be severe, and if we don't immediately start protecting the last remaining wild areas in the world , probably less than half of the wild plant and animal species of the world will have gone extinct before the end of this century. We must take all the measures possible to prevent climate change from getting worse. But what is already in the air, we can't take out and

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many people believe that climate change already is a [fact](#)³. The only way we can reduce the effects of climate change on nature and wildlife is by having the 10% of the world's land mass set aside as protected area, effectively managed and protected. This is only possible when each and each protected area has sufficient and properly trained field staff.

Adopt A Ranger, AAR is an innovative initiative to draw worldwide public attention to the most urgent problem that conservation is facing in developing and transition countries: protected areas without field staff. Very specifically, it will contribute to solving the problem by fund raising to finance rangers in the field. It will also help to assess realistic staffing needs and staffing strategies for protected areas.

Adopt A Ranger has as its mission to support the conservation of nature worldwide, particularly by:

- A) *financing the salaries and operational costs of "national park rangers" and comparable officials whose task it is to protect natural areas and to serve the stakeholder public of the protected area to which they be assigned; and*
- B) *promoting public interest in the conservation of protected areas in developing countries.*

There is no doubt that protected areas in developed countries also suffer from ranger deficits and we would like

3 There is a growing concern that the emission of Carbon Dioxide (CO₂) and other so-called greenhouse gasses are the main cause of climate change. While the number of governments and followers of this concern is growing, a considerable number of citizens have raised well documented doubts about the validity of such effect. Adopt A Ranger respects the opinions of both sides and wants to work with everybody, irrespective of his or her opinion on the effects of CO₂ on the climate. Click below to read how Adopt A Ranger hopes to unite the concerns of both supporters and opponents of this issue.

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to mention the severe shortage of all European Mediterranean countries, that have the highest biodiversity in Europe. While Adopt A Ranger focuses on the needs of developing and transition countries, any individual or organization can use Adopt A Ranger to finance rangers for any protected area in any country of the world!

SPONSOR NATURE: ADOPT A RANGER

Register

Showing your interest in itself is very important. You can do so by registering at the [forum](#) for free. That way you will receive periodic updates. It will be very helpful if you leave messages in support of adopt a ranger in the forum. So please don't leave our site without registering at the forum and leave a supportive message.

Help spread the word

By helping spread the word, you can make a major contribution to Adopt A Ranger by sending your friends and acquaintances an email about the initiative.

Become a sponsor

By becoming a sponsor you will be making the most significant contribution to conservation in your life. You will help protect the last remaining homes of the world's wild animals, plants and nature, by paying for those people that actually protect them in the field: the rangers. Anybody who make a donation of \$25 automatically becomes a contributing member. Membership is important, because the more members we have, the more weight we have in convincing authorities of the importance to manage and protect nature reserves worldwide with sufficient field staff and equipment. Your sponsorship really makes a difference!

Ranger support groups

Adopt A Ranger will encourage and help people and organizations to unite and organize support groups for national parks and other protected areas or for entire

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countries. We will set up on-line communication facilities in which people can lobby for support for their favorite nature reserve. We like to use your enthusiasm and try to help with any creative idea that can raise money to put more rangers in the field.

Fundraising incentive programme

Fundraising costs time effort and even some investment. We encourage people to raise money and receive an incentive for their effort. Click here for the incentives programme.

PARK RANGERS FOR FIRE PREVENTION, NATURE EDUCATION AND LOCAL COMMUNITIES

Park rangers spend most of their time in the field, helping people, educating children and making sure that both people and animals are safe. They are friendly, helpful people, who always try to make you feel welcome in a national park or nature reserve. Modern park rangers have a wide variety of tasks in protected areas, and without park rangers, nature has little chance to remain in good condition. Park rangers are the real conservation workers! Let's look at what keeps a park ranger busy.

Park rangers for nature education and assistance to visitors

Park rangers help visitors to find their way in the national park, they give great talks on nature and they educate thousands of school children. They help visitors with information on making their visit an enjoyable and enriching experience. They hold campfire talks, they help in visitor centers, they organize excursions and they answer questions from visitors. Without park rangers, visitors get much less enjoyment from their visit to a national park.

Park rangers for prevention and combat of forest fires

One of the effects of climate change is that many regions with warm climates or summers are becoming dryer and hotter. This has resulted in a tremendous increase in forest

fires in nature reserves in many parts of the world. During the driest months of the dry season, the skies of Honduras and Nicaragua are completely covered with smoke. Without park rangers to extinguish those fires in time, enormous areas lose their forests and many wild animals that live in them. Over the last decade, Australia has been battling with the largest bush fires in its history.

Park rangers are crucial for combating fire. Not only by extinguishing wild fires when they occur, but also by setting fire to the vegetation when it still is moist at the end of the rainy season: so called "prescribed burning". Fires in moist forests burn much less hot and do much less damage. The trees survive, but the lose vegetation that is drying up, disappears and when the area has dried up during the dry season, there is far less risk that such area starts burning later during the hot season.

Also, park rangers give talks in the local communities on how to prevent forest fires. You can imagine that such programs are extremely important for keeping nature in protected areas in good shape.

Park rangers for local communities

Local communities around and in nature reserves are almost always poor. In fact, the communities around protected areas, usually are among the poorest in the country. This is because protected areas are usually in remote regions where the development and infrastructure still has not come. When you are poor, you try to do everything to feed your family and to earn some money. Having a protected areas nearby is a temptation for many local communities, particularly if they don't receive any benefits.

Park rangers spend much of their time working with local communities helping them to get benefits from the protected areas. They help communities to make and sell souvenirs that can be sold to visitors to the national park. They give talks on nature during community meetings and at schools and they organize environmental education classes and excursions to the reserve for school children. Through such educational programmes, the park rangers help local communities get benefits from the park and they

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turn local communities into friends of the reserve in stead of threats to nature.

Park rangers enforce the law

Of course there will always be some people who don't respect the law and go out poaching animals and cutting down the forest. It has been shown that in any nature reserve with sufficient park rangers, that poaching and illegal cutting of trees decreases enormously, even if they spend most of their time doing many tasks that have nothing to do with patrolling. In fact, in Latin America, rangers hardly ever have to give a fine and most of the time they don't carry a weapon.

Of course, in some protected areas, particularly in Africa, poaching is a very important problem, and when needed, park rangers go out in patrolling raids in defense of animals. In some countries rangers have to fight real battles against poacher gangs armed with automatic rifles. Besides being helpful, park rangers are very brave people when necessary. During the last 5 decades of conservation history, many have lost their lives battling organized poaching, particularly in Africa.

Park rangers are the eyes and ears of the national park services

As they work in many places in and around the national parks, the park rangers see and hear what goes on in their area. In fact, they become the eyes and ears for the directors of nature reserves, as they get to talk to everybody and are continuously observing what goes on. An important task of a park ranger is to make notes of what goes on and to write down their observations of rare animals: they monitor wildlife. Monitoring of rare animals becomes very expensive if you have to have it done by biologists. Rangers, who are in the park anyway, can monitor animals at almost no extra costs to the park.

Park rangers are multipurpose officers

So if you ask an experienced national parks director what for him or her is the most important officer of the national

park, he or she will always tell you that it is the park ranger! Rangers are the real conservation workers. They are "jacks of all trades", and by working with local communities and visitors:

- Park ranger make the parks safe and pleasant to be in;
- Park ranger help local communities to combat their poverty;
- Park ranger educate children and;
- Park ranger protect nature and wild animals.

Adopt A Ranger provides development cooperation and nature conservation combined

When you donate to Adopt A Ranger, you not only finance conservation of nature, you also finance help to some of the poorest communities in the world and you help educate poor children. By donating to Adopt A Ranger, you finance HOPE

- HOPE for nature;
- HOPE for wild animals; and
- HOPE and progress for local communities

OFFSET YOUR CARBON EMISSIONS WITH NATIONAL PARK RANGERS

A carbon offset credit is a service that tries to reduce the net carbon emissions of people or organizations by compensating their carbon emissions with measures for absorbing greenhouse* gases. A wide variety of offset actions are available; forest planting is the most common. Also popular are credits from renewable energy and energy conservation, as well as greenhouse emissions trading.

The intended goal of carbon offset credits is to combat global warming. The appeal of becoming "carbon neutral" has contributed to the growth of voluntary offsets, which often are more cost-effective alternatives to reducing one's own fossil-fuel consumption.

We were planning to make a carbon-offset calculator that would allow you to calculate different components of your ecological footprint so that it would calculate with how many "ranger days" you can offset your carbon dioxide footprint by preventing forests from going up in flames. Those are nice internet toys, but unfortunately, the

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real world does not quite work as simple as that. Lets take a look, and decide then what you should do.

The costs of Carbon Offset from Carbon emission avoidance through forest protection

Assume a tropical forest has about [175 metric tons of Carbon](#) in its trees. The carbon is fixed in the tree trunks, leaves and roots. Did you realize that actually lots of carbon is underground in the roots? So, if a hectare of forest gets deforested, the wood may first be used to build houses, furniture or produce paper, but eventually, it will either rot away or be burned. The branches and leaves will often be burned or left in the field to rot away. The roots in the ground will decay by fungi and bacteria, and eventually all the carbon of that forest will be converted into CO₂. The mass of CO₂ is more than [3 times](#) more than that of Carbon, so the 175 tons of carbon will produce more than 500 tons of CO₂.

We are often asked how much does it cost to protect an hectare of natural forest. The answer is: that depends on the size and the location. It costs many times more per ha to protect a few hundreds of ha of natural forest, than to protect a million of ha. The difference may be as much as more than 100,000 more expensive per ha for an area less than 2 ha as for an area larger than 1,000,000. So that is impossible to give a general answer. So, lets assume that we work with an area of 10,000 ha. We like to use the size of an area of 10,000 ha, because it is the same kind of size of many new forest plantations planted for carbon fixation (or sequestration).

In Brazil, the estimated costs of protecting a 10,000 ha natural forests be about \$185,000 per year, including staffing, and all operational costs, such as fuel for vehicles, write of of buildings and equipment, etc. \$185,000 would thus avoid the emission of 500,000 tons of CO₂ into the air.

So, protecting a hectare of natural forest would be about \$18.5 per ha per year. \$18.5 dollars per year would prevent 175 metric tons of Carbon become 500 tons of CO₂. That is less than \$0.04 per metric ton of carbon. You read it well: it

takes less than 4 dollar cents per year to avoid 1 ton of CO₂ to be released into the air as greenhouse gas.

As a comparison, the Carbon fixation through a variety of mechanisms, such as planting new forests, is sold from \$4,00 - \$25 per ton of CO₂. But those calculations are made for planting and maintaining a new plantation for the duration of 1 forest cycle about 20 - 30 years. They don't take into account what happens afterward, so they don't set up an endowment fund to keep the area under forest cover forever.

Now, we only believe in durable avoidance of the emission of CO₂, if the emission avoidance of carbondioxide is really permanent. So in our opinion, you can only avoid the emission of 500,000 tons of CO₂ into the air, if you set up an endowment fund that would generate the interest necessary to finance the management costs permanently. Assuming a 7% return from the endowment fund, it would take about \$2,700,000 to prevent 500,000 tons of CO₂ to be released into the air, which is about \$5 per ton. That is about as much as for the short-term fixation of Carbon through forest plantations, our carbondioxide emission avoidance endowment funds are permanent!

An average American household releases about [15 tons of CO₂](#) into the air. So to compensate that release forever, it would cost a household about \$75 per year to permanently offset its carbon dioxide emission in a natural forest.

Assuming that you would participate in an endowment fund that pays for ALL the costs of an area with natural forests, so that it will be protected forever! But what is even more important, your carbon offset would help the survival of literally thousands of species of plants and animals.

Heaving read all this, do you still want to invest your greenhouse gas emission compensation in the plantation of monocultures? Or would you prefer to participate in a Carbon Dioxide emission avoidance programme? Invest it with us, and we will invest your money in an endowment fund that pays for the EFFECTIVE protection of thousands of hectares of natural forests!

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Now, we have used some very coarse data. There are great variations in the amounts of Carbon per ha. Some natural forests have more, others have less. In reality, most areas that we will be working with, are far bigger than 10,000 ha and therefore the protection costs per ha are much lower. So in reality your carbon emission avoidance contribution will be many times more beneficial than a carbon offset through the planting of a new forest.

MITIGATION AND COMPENSATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS OF PROJECTS ON NATURE AND BIODIVERSITY

Sometimes projects and programmes have permanent environmental impacts on nature and biodiversity. Examples may be a road that needs to be constructed through a forest. That road will have a permanent impact on that forest, as people can now pass through it and pose a threat as for instance hunters now have easy access to places where they could not enter before. As a result, the protected areas agency of the country where this takes place, will need permanently hire additional rangers to protect the area to stop poachers from sneaking into the forest. Often, environmental impact studies prescribe that additional staff be hired during the construction period of the project. But that is not sufficient, because the road will continue to have the impact of increased risks of disturbance and poaching forever. The only durable solution would be to create a trust fund that can finance the additionally needed staff permanently out of the interests of the capital. Thus far, permanent mitigation is not commonly practiced, but it should!

To use the same example of that road, there also is a permanent loss of nature and biodiversity on the location of the road. Where there used to be forest before the construction, there will now be asphalt and a zone of permanent impact along several hundreds of meters along the road, often estimated at 300 to 500 meters on each side of the road. It is a fair assumption that a natural forest will suffer between 50 and 100 hectares per kilometer of loss of ecosystem with the belonging species. Again, environmental impact assessments rarely deal with such a situation in a realistic way. In some cases, a similar piece of

land can be added to a protected area, so that the total area of the protected ecosystem remains the same. But such options are becoming increasingly scarce. A very constructive way of compensating for the loss of ecosystem, would be by permanently providing extra security for the protected area, so that the area as a whole becomes better protected and managed. Under conditions, where most protected areas lack security and management, we would consider that a fair and realistic compensation. For such compensation, additional permanent staff would be needed, which also could be durably financed from the interests from a capital in a trust fund.

Adopt A Ranger specializes in managing such mitigation and compensation funds with conditions that can be defined by environmental protection agencies or protected areas agencies. Adopt A Ranger advises on the mitigation aspects of projects and manages such funds permanently. It uses the revenues for hiring the required field staff - and to finance whatever other conditions defined in the contract through the intervention of local non-profit organizations, while supervises that the conditions set in the contract be properly executed by the local NGO.

HOW MUCH DOES A RANGER COST?

The costs of an individual ranger

The costs of a ranger varies from country to country. As a rule of thumb, Adopt A Ranger targets a salary of double the minimum wage plus the compulsory social benefits in compliance with the national legislation and if necessary, an additional life insurance for the dependents. Additionally, the costs of a uniform and basic field gear.

Typically, this costs somewhere between \$2,000 (€1,600) and \$5,000 (€4,000) per year, depending on the country. Assuming an average 200 working days per year, a ranger costs \$10 - \$25 (€8 - €20) per day.

In some cases, there are financing mechanisms to match the funds raised with other funding, in which case we only need to raise \$5 - \$15 (€4 - €12) per day.

Depending on the recipient country, 50 - 100 people working together can finance a ranger if each makes a contribution of \$50 (€40) per year.

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The efficiency of financing ranger compared to other conservation efforts

A lot of conservation organizations and carbon off-set programmes invest in buying and/or leasing land to create new protected areas. That sounds great, doesn't it? But is it really. Let's take a good look.

First of all, most protected areas in developing countries have been selected for being rather special and often they are very large. The costs to manage a hectare of a large area is many times lower than of a small area. In Brazil, it costs about \$60,000 per hectare per year to manage the smallest nature reserve of 2 ha, while it costs only \$0.45 per ha to manage an area of 1,000,000 ha. This is because there are several costs that have to be made for every area, small or large. Moreover, the ranger density needed in small areas is much higher. So you get much more land protected by protecting large protected areas that already exist.

Buying new protected areas is not enough; after the purchase, you will have to manage and staff them. Newly bought protected areas need rangers just the same as existing protected areas. So by adding land to the pool of protected areas in a country, you just add to the need for rangers. Often your newly created land actually competes for funding. So while your money is being used to buy new land for conservation, officially protected land is being occupied illegally because it does not have any field staff. By the end of the day, the country has much and much less nature, in spite of the land purchased with you money. If that money would have been used to hire rangers that would protect and manage existing protected areas, your money would have protected many more hectares than you could ever have done by contributing to buying land for conservation.

Most of the land in protected areas are among the highest priority lands for conservation still available in the country. Many lands to be purchased by fundraising campaigns are much less important than those already protected by law. Adopt A Ranger very seriously considers the importance of the areas where it works for its conservation importance. So rangers paid from your donations are will protect the best

land available for conservation. In fact, Adopt A Ranger helps assess which of the protected areas are the most important from a conservation point of view, using the MICOSYS programme. So YOUR money always protects the protected areas of the highest priority in the countries where we operate.

Many projects from bilateral aid programmes finance consultancies and studies to help local communities to get more benefits from protected areas. These programmes are quite important, because it is very important to involve local communities in conservation. But as those projects usually don't finance field staff, and particularly fall short in financing rangers, they end up achieving rather little. Adopt A Ranger focuses on hiring rangers, while it also helps with know-how on how to involve those rangers in assisting local communities to get economic benefits from protected areas. This is a far more durable approach than being practiced by many projects financed by development organizations.

NO PARK LEFT BEHIND

WICE maintains a list of all national parks and nature reserves of the developing countries of the world. It calculated the field staff need of the developing countries at: 140,000 park wardens and rangers. In addition, they need about 14,000 administrative and support staff and 14,000 professional staff. WICE estimates that less than half of the protected areas of the world has any staff at all. The national parks and nature reserves that do have field staff, are short by 50% of the needed field staff. So it estimates that the total ranger deficit is 105,000, while other the staff categories are short 21,000. There is no doubt that national parks and nature reserves in developed countries also have ranger deficits and we would like to mention the severe shortages in all Mediterranean countries, that have the highest biodiversity in Europe. Ranger financing for those countries is certainly possible through our programme. But as a whole, the needs of the wealthy countries are relatively small compared to those in the countries of the study.

The numbers are based on individual calculations of each protected area registered in the database of the World

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Conservation Monitoring Center (WCMC) of the United Nation Environment Programme (UNEP) in Cambridge. The field staff needs have been calculated with a specialized programme for protected areas planning, MICOSYS, and is based on a certain relationships between the sizes of areas and staffing needs, certain risk factors, etc. If you like to know the details on about MICOSYS, please click [here](#).

Adopt A Ranger does not pretend it can finance the worldwide park warden and ranger deficit. It has the philosophy that in the long run every country of the world must finance its own game wardens and park rangers and it shall work towards this principle wherever and in any way it can. First of all, almost all countries in the world do have a certain number of park wardens and rangers in the field already. Adopt A Ranger will search ways to contribute to financing the staffing deficit, in part by financing park (and game) wardens and rangers and in part by assessing the staffing needs and advising on realistic staffing strategies.

As a part of this approach, WICE has designed its worldwide protected areas staffing monitoring system, in which it uses the MICOSYS programme to compare needed staff to the available staff, as well as budgetary conditions. It will gradually acquire the information on available field staff and compare progress in this field and report on progress or set-backs.

This will give the world an impression on where we currently are with staffing and financing needs and where the priorities may lie.

In every country where it works, Adopt A Ranger will work with the Protected Areas Management Organization to see how much staff is needed and to make a plan on gradually building up the organization. In the poorest countries, this may take as long as 30 - 40 years, while in the wealthier developing countries this may be solved in the next 5 - 20 years.

By working strategically and with verifiable criteria for assessing staffing needs, Adopt A Ranger hopes to eradicate protected areas without park wardens and rangers over the next 20 years, so that **NO PARK SHALL BE LEFT BEHIND!**

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By working with governmental financing organizations of the wealthy countries (Bi-lateral and Multi-lateral organizations), the protected area management organizations of the developing countries, and the many individual contributors like yourself, Adopt A Ranger will work toward having park (and game) wardens and rangers in all protected areas of the developing and transition countries within the next 20 years. Moreover, it will work towards having sufficient staff for the basic management needs of protected areas in the following fashion:

- A) In 10 years 50% of the surface of the protected areas;
- B) In 20 years 63% of the surface of the protected areas;
- C) In 30 years 85% of the surface of the protected areas;
- D) In 40 years 100% of the surface of the protected areas.

Your contributions will help achieve this goal!

ADOPT A RANGER: MANAGEMENT EFFECTIVENESS, SUPERVISION AND CORRUPTION CONTROL

How is Adopt A Ranger managed? Will my money be used effectively? What about corruption? What about supervision of the rangers? These are legitimate concerns for anyone who considers contributing to the programme.

Management

The Adopt A Ranger "Stichting" (foundation) in the Netherlands, was originally chartered in 1980 to promote the conservation of nature on the Arctic and Antarctic. Taking in consideration the overarching problems in conservation worldwide, the board decided to expand the objectives of the foundations and adapt the name to find better recognition among the public at large. These almost 3 decades of experience of the foundation, provide a solid history and background of professional and effective organizational and financial management. The newly founded US incorporation benefits from that same long experience, since the board members in each of the organizations are the same persons.

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For the management of Adopt A Ranger, we need highly experienced people for management, who know well how protected areas management organizations function, who understand the tasks and problems of hiring rangers. Having such specialists as salaried staff would be extremely expensive and could consume all funds raised or even drive the organization bankrupt. Moreover, the organization needs fundraisers, whose costs would also be considerable if they would be on the payroll.

To avoid high salary costs, while trying to acquire both quality senior management and sufficient fundraisers, we decided to work with a "payment for success" mechanism. Under this mechanism, Adopt A Ranger will always use 75% of the contributions for salaries and equipment for rangers in the field. Thus, our way of working gives maximum management effectiveness.

To achieve this objective, Adopt A Ranger will not hire fundraisers, but remunerate fundraising on the bases of incentives. If fundraisers are successful, they earn rewards to compensate for their time and costs, while in absence of success, AAR can never go bankrupt on them, as there are no salary commitments to be paid. If Adopt A Ranger becomes very effective in fundraising, the management costs can go down considerably, thus raising the effective use of contributions to above 75%.

Supervision

The primary task of supervision will be carried out by highly experienced experts in protected areas management. Adopt A Ranger has contacts in many countries that can help ascertain the satisfactory hiring and use of the rangers paid from your contributions. It will carry out negotiations and supervision missions, request financial reports of execution, directly contact rangers to hear their view on their employment, hear members of local communities, etc.

For countries where it finances a significant number of rangers, Adopt A Ranger will arrange for an annual supervision mission, in which preferably several countries

will be combined during one trip to reduce travel costs. After all, supervision missions are extremely costly and we don't want to spend more money on travel than strictly necessary.

Efficiency

Fundraising, financial control, setting up arrangements for hiring and employing rangers and supervision all cost money. Adopt A Ranger has set it as its target that at least 75% of the money raised will be used to hire and equip a ranger. That is an extremely high target of efficiency, but AAR feels that its donors should have the feeling that their money really is used to put rangers in the field.

Adopt A Ranger will never directly hire a ranger but always hire them through a local organization that will receive the funding. It will select reliable local organizations to hire and supervise the rangers, and if such organization can not be found, no hiring will take place until a suitable local partner can be found. Further, it will always keep close ties with the recipient protected areas management organizations and it shall request detailed financial and technical reports. As the funding is closely related to the hiring of a person, it will be relatively easy to check if indeed a person is being hired. Every ranger will get an email account from Adopt A Ranger, which will facilitate us to check if the person actually is being hired.

Corruption

Let's dedicate a few thoughts on corruption. There are 2 concerns:

1) *The money or a part of it disappears in someone's pocket.*

Daan Vreugdenhil, the director of WICE, has more than 3 decades of experience of working on all continents except Australia. He has evaluated many projects financed by the World Bank and other programmes for development cooperation. Only once has he found serious inappropriate use of funds by field staff. In conservation, usually the amounts of money are so thinly stretched, that whenever someone tries to take something away, it will result in the elimination of a component of the financing programme

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which will be noticed immediately. More importantly however, the work moral and ethics in protected areas agencies (national park services) is incredibly high and most rangers are extremely honest. We have seen so many people work far more than 50 hours per week often for embarrassingly low salaries. We have seen people that use money of their own salaries to pay for equipment for which there is no funding. Protected areas field staff is so dedicated to their work that in most cases, the mere thought of taking money simply does not come up in their minds. Most of these peoples live their lives in dedication to the conservation of nature. As we have said elsewhere, many rangers have died defending the animals and nature entrusted in their custody.

2) *A ranger tolerates illegal activities for a fee*

So, corruption does not exist in conservation? We are sure it does exist, particularly where timber production is involved. There it exists at the level of administrators that provide forestry concessions as well at the level of field inspections. In our case, Adopt A Ranger has nothing to do with granting forestry concessions, but rangers financed by our programmes may "look the other way" for a certain activities for a "fee". Of course, we can never fully guarantee that none of our rangers will illegally ignore the felling of trees and the culling of elephants and rhinoceroses for their tusks or horns. But if we ever hear any rumors of or suspect such practice, we will investigate and according to our findings discontinue this ranger's contract. Moreover, Adopt A Ranger will focus on protected areas without production of wood and/or hunting ([IUCN category I - IV areas](#)). In such areas it is much less likely that illegal

practices take place. But in the end, nobody can guarantee that there will never be a rotten apple in the basket. We feel that that is a risk that we must live with.

INTERNET MARKETING

With millions of websites, it is very difficult to become noticed by Google. To give it more visitation power, we have incorporated the Adopt A Ranger website into the cyber world of Nature Worldwide of WICE. This web system has a common navigation bar in the left border, in which Adopt A Ranger is very prominently positioned. As a result, Adopt A Ranger gets several hundreds of visits per day. But that is not enough. We need thousands of visits per day. To make that possible, the entire system needs continuous support from other websites as well. Therefore we need links from your website and/or blog or "myspace" to our webnet system. We have thousands of pages of information. Therefore we divided different topics over several domains. It would be most beneficial if you could link to the most important domains from your website by copying and pasting the the link table below on the link page of your website. By informing us, we will also link to your site from each of our more than 30 domains!

If you don't have a website or blog, you can help a great deal by sending the following text and link table to 10 friends and acquaintances who might be interested. You only need to put the email addresses in the box at the bottom of this page and click the button and copy the following text into the email:

Hi,

I found on the Web the Website of the Adopt A Ranger Foundation <http://www.adopt-a-ranger.org> that explained the greatest limiting factor in protecting nature in developing countries. It offers a variety of ways in which we all can help by rescuing the majority of the species of plants and animals of the world. There are many ways of contributing:

1. Spreading the word by sending this email to 10 friends and acquaintances who might be interested;
2. Including the links of the websites below on your website or blog if you have one;
3. Donating money;
4. Raising funds and receive a reward;

5. Register on line and leave an endorsement in the forum.

<http://www.adopt-a-ranger.org>

Organization to help finance rangers for nature reserves

<http://www.nature-worldwide.info>

Information on nature and nature management

<http://www.birdlist.org>

Lists the birds and birding info of all countries of the world

<http://www.nationalparks-worldwide.info>

Info on national parks and nature reserves of all countries

<http://www.mammals-worldwide.info>

Lists the mammals and mammal info of all countries of the world

<http://www.monitoring-nature.info>

Methods and tools for conservation monitoring

<http://www.ecosystems.ws>

Information on ecosystems, ecosystems mapping and other ecological topics.

I hope that you appreciated me sending you this email and maybe you can also forward it to 10 people that you think might be interested.

Best wishes,

YOURNAME

SUGGESTIONS FOR FUNDRAISING FOR FAVOURITE NATIONAL PARK OR COUNTRY

We would like to suggest some ideas for favorite country or area fundraising efforts:

Conservationists in developing and transition countries

Groups of conservationists or even Protected Areas Agencies (PAA) in developing and recipient countries can take the initiative to raise funds through AAR. They can approach donors, raise funds at visitor centers in protected areas, etc. and in general market fundraising for their favorite area or country. By opening a favorite area or country account, other donors can join and destine their donations to that particular country or area.

Tour operators

Tour operators are very interesting for fundraising, as they take visitors to protected areas and they can invite them to make a donation for the national park that their ecotourist just has visited.

Service Clubs

Service Clubs like Rotary International, Lions Club and the Round Table have member charters both in developed and developing countries. When a charter of the North teams up with a charter in the South, they can have a great joint project in which they can not only contribute to the protection of an area but also help in supporting the protected areas agency of that country or a specific nature reserve. It is a fun initiative in which entire families of the members can participate in the fundraising, and ultimately, some charters may even like to organize a members trip to go and see the area that they are supporting, as well as those wonderful friends that they have teamed up with. For Rotarians exists a facility, that when 2 chapters in different countries raise equal amounts of money, that the Rotary Foundations matches the funding, thus doubling the amount raised. Fundraising for AAR can become a lot of fun for Service Clubs and very educative for their members and families!

Zoos

Zoos are the great attractors of people interested in animals and nature. Zoos can become very important contributors, particularly because people that love animals are extra motivated to help protect wild animals through rangers.

RANGERS FOR RANGERS

This page is specially for rangers!

The Adopt A Ranger programme has been established to help increase your numbers, particularly in developing and "transition" (ex-communist) countries. Rangers can play a key role in expanding the number of rangers.

Many of you have direct contact with the public and you can explain the importance of rangers as well as their shortage. While visitors attend your national park or nature reserve, you can make them aware of the possibility to make a donation for the hiring of a ranger for the national parks system of your country. To reward you for your important work, rangers will get a special fundraising reward, that is higher than the regular reward percentage for fund raisers.

You can raise funds in a variety of ways. First of all, it is important that you tell the visitors about Adopt A Ranger during your talks and interpretation programmes.

Payment can be made in a variety of ways. Visitors can write a check to Adopt A Ranger and give it to you. They should write on the check that:

1. the check can only be cashed in the bank account of Adopt A Ranger; (This way, the visitor knows that his/her money can only be received by the programme and cannot be taken by anybody else, thus providing confidence);
2. the fundraiser: your name (this allows us to transfer you your incentive);
3. the country for which they like their donation to be used if they have a preference.

You can also help the visitor to go on the internet and make a donation on line with their credit card. There again, the donor needs to fill out for which country the donation is and the name of the fundraiser. It is also possible to raise funds

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collectively and use the reward for the betterment of the work, such as communication equipment, life insurance, etc.

If you are a ranger in a country that would not be on the priority list for Adopt A Ranger funding, like North America, Europe, Japan, Australia, New Zealand, etc., your help would nevertheless be extremely valuable. The national parks and nature reserves are most intensely visited in the wealthy countries and you may be rather effective in raising money for rangers in developing countries. We will shortly place a registration form on line, through which you can register as a ranger fund raiser.

ADOPT A RANGER INVOLVES CHILDREN AND STUDENTS IN FUNDRAISING

The link between children and students and the protection of nature and animals is very important and Adopt A Ranger will make a special effort to involve young people in its activities.

One way of involving children and young people is by having schools participate in the adopt a ranger programme. Students can raise funds to pay the salary of "their own" ranger and learn about the work of the ranger paid through their efforts. They may communicate directly with their ranger. This may be established through a computer - to - computer talk programme, like <http://www.skype.com> or through online messages in the Adopt A Ranger forum. Special discussion groups can be established in the Adopt A Ranger Forum.

- If you are a student, talk to your teacher and try and get a ranger adopted by YOUR school!
- ▣ If you are a biology teacher, talk to your students and their parents, as this can be a very rewarding way to actively involve your students in conservation.
- ▣ Students or teachers can individually register for fundraising and receive an incentive. Alternatively, also schools can register for fundraising and receive an incentive, for instance to pay for school materials or equipment.

TOUR OPERATORS

Ecotourism tour operators can play a vital role in raising funds for Adopt A Ranger. As your tours take your clients to beautiful natural places, their guides have outstanding opportunities to talk with their clients and tell them about the importance of rangers and the possibility to become a member of Adopt A Ranger.

Guides of tour operators are invited to register as fund raiser and receive a reward for fundraising. They can take their clients to the internet and invite them to sign up for membership on line or to write out a check payable to Adopt A Ranger.

Tour operators that commit themselves to raising funds among their clients on their tours will be gratefully listed on this website with a link and logo. Ecotourism guides can individually register for fundraising and receive an incentive.

SPONSORSHIP

Become a sponsor

On this page, we tell you how you can help pay for rangers by becoming a sponsor. There are 3 ways to transfer money:

1. Online by credit card;
2. A Bank to Bank electronic transfer through your bank online facility
3. Checks

Prices Donations are mentioned in Euro equivalents, which currently are a bit more consistent with currency fluctuations a various countries. However, transfers can be made in US Dollars as well as Euros.

Sponsorship options

Silver Sponsorship

We would like you to help us pay for one or more workdays of a ranger in the field. A typical workday of a ranger costs about €20. It is also the, cost of compensating for the emission of 5 tons of CO₂. which is produced by an average household every 4 months.

Junior Ranger Sponsorship

To all the children and students of the world: We are very happy so see that you are visiting our web page. Many animals are dying because we don't protect them. At Adopt A Ranger, we think that children and students like you are needed to help protect them by becoming a Junior Ranger. Your help is very important! As a Junior Ranger, you support a real ranger in the field and you help support Adopt A Ranger to convince politicians that more rangers are needed to protect nature. Even when you are young, politicians listen to your voices, when you unite and tell them what is important to you.

Golden Sponsorship

The golden membership is €60 Euros, the equivalent of 3 workdays of a ranger, as well as the costs to compensate for the emission of 15 tons of Carbon Dioxide, which is produced every year by an average household.

Platinum Sponsorship

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The platinum membership is €100, the equivalent of one workweek of a ranger, as well as the costs to compensate for the emission of 15 tons of Carbon Dioxide, which is produced every 20 months by an average household.

Flexible Sponsorship

Of course, if you want to make any a contribution of any other amount, that is very welcome as well.

Corporate Sponsorship

A corporate sponsorship pays for the costs of about a 20 days of the salary of a ranger. It also sets off about 100 tons of CO2!

Your "OWN" Ranger Sponsorship

With a donation of €4,000 you can sponsor a ranger for a full year and compensate the release of 1,000 tons of Carbon Dioxide.

Favourite country or project

Sponsors or groups of sponsors may adopt a ranger for a country or nature reserve of their choice. Use this option if you find it very important that your money should be used for a specific country or nature reserve programme. Setting up a preferred programme requires a long-term commitment of a minimum of 3 years for the hiring of at least one ranger and we can't start a programme until we have enough funds available. If 2 years after your donation, we still don't have enough funds to initiate a programme, we may opt for using your donation for a different programme.

If you pay by credit card, on the second payment page of the secure server, you will find a box "Message to seller", where you can indicate in which country or nature reserve you like your donation to be used. If you pay by check or make a bank to bank transfer, you can indicate your preference in the announcement field.

New initiatives

Of course you may initiate a new country or preferred nature reserve programme. Once a new programme has been established, other donors may join the preferred nature reserve programme, thus expanding the financing initiative

beyond the original programme. This can actually be a lot of fun, because groups of people can organize themselves to help protect their favourite nature reserve. If you chose to initiate a new country or preferred nature reserve programme, you would do best to announce your initiative on the forum page. It would also be a good idea to contact us by email to discuss if we should set up a special page for your initiative.

INCENTIVES FOR FUNDRAISING BY VOLUNTEERS AND RANGERS

The participation of thousands of volunteers in fundraising is essential to rescue the thousands of nature reserves and national parks in developing countries. Adopt a Ranger needs your help to raise the necessary funds to bridge close overcome the park ranger deficit. We realize that fundraising costs time and effort and we believe that everybody benefits if we grant a financial incentive to make you a fundraiser for Adopt A Ranger.

We will be paying percentile incentives according to the following annual amounts raised:

- a) 3% for amounts of \$1,000 to \$9,999;
- b) 4% for amounts of \$10,000 to \$99,999;

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- c) 4,5% for amounts of \$100,000 to \$ 999,999
- d) 5% for amounts of \$1,000,000 to more.

Fundraisers can register themselves online and sponsors can indicate which person was their fundraising contact, so that the fundraiser in question receives his/her incentive.

Fundraisers can only collect funds through online payments from this website or by accepting checks that state on the backside that the amount on the check must be deposited in the bank account of Adopt A Ranger.

COUNTRY PROGRAMMES

We are talking with the nature conservation institutions of several countries on how we can work together. For a number of countries we already have programmes, which we are showing to our left. As more information comes in from our partners, we will continue to tell you more about our progress.

ECUADOR

Ecuador is the smallest among the Andes countries, but it is blessed with some of the greatest varieties of plants and animals in the world. With more than 1600 species of birds, it ranks among the world's top 5 nations for numbers of bird species. Moreover, Ecuador is the proud owner of the world's laboratory of evolution: Galapagos with many species only occurring on Galapagos. But the real wealth of its species can be found in the tropical rainforests of the lowlands and in the cool cloud forests of the Andes. Adopt A Ranger will start raising funds for some of the highlights of Ecuador: Galapagos National Park, Cuyabeno Wildlife Reserve and Cotopaxi National Park

Galapagos National Park

Galapagos National Park is sufficiently known.

Cuyabeno Wildlife Reserve

With more than 600,000 ha, the Cuyabeno Wildlife Reserve is Ecuador's largest nature reserve. It reaches from the Andes foothills with cool nights to the marshlands at eastern border with Peru. The differentiation of the terrain, varying from the low hills near the Andes to swamps lagoons and rivers, make this area extremely rich in species of plants and animals.

With 7 lakes in the heart of the reserve, reachable by car and motorized canoes and close to the Lagoagrio airport with daily flights from Quito, the reserve is one of the most accessible Amazon parks in all of Latin America. You can have your breakfast in your hotel in Quito and be in the reserve by noon. Its birdlist is approaching 600 species and it has 9 monkey species, while being home to practically all the other mammals the Amazon region is famous for, like peccaries, jaguars, pumas, deer, sloths, giant anteaters, tapirs, freshwater dolphins, manatees, etc. Equally rich is its

fish populations with 2 meter long catfishes, piranhas, and many colourful tropical fishes, while giant anacondas, boa constrictors, crocodiles, enormous land tortoises and aquatic turtles, green iguanas all call Cuyabeno home.

The Ecuadorian Condor Bioreserve

Ecuador has a fabulous representation of the different ecosystems of the country and one of the most interesting regions of the country is a complex of protected areas referred to as the Condor Bioreserve which combines famous areas like Cotopaxi and Llanganates National Parks, Cayambe Coca, Antisana and Paschocha nature reserves.

The Andes is characterized by a great variety of climates, which not only vary by elevation, but also very much to the prevailing winds. As a result, one can find many very different climates over very small distances. Obviously, as one travels from the Capital Quito to the coastal and Amazon lowlands, one sees the temperatures go up. But what is much less known in the variety of rainfall at similar elevations. Some mountains are exposed to humid winds and one can see them covered with exuberant growth. Even at short distances, one may find entire valleys in the rain shadow and they may be covered with semi-desert vegetation. The western Andes of Ecuador are the transition zone of from the wettest climatic conditions on earth in Colombia to the desert conditions of the Peruvian coastal lowlands.

All this variation, leads to extraordinary richness in species that often are unique for the country. A traveler to Ecuador will always be fascinated with the fabulous volcanoes, some of which can be reached relatively easily like the Cotopaxi in Cotopaxi National Park

MEXICO

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Mexico has 158 protected areas that together span 22 million hectares or more that 11% of the total territory of the country. The diversity of Mexico is enormous and the country is listed among the world's 10 most diverse countries in the world. This diversity finds its origin in the great variety of climates and landscapes of the country: In the north one can still find rather cold continental conditions with snowfall in the winter, while in the south, one can find the most northern tropical rainforests of the Americas. High mountain chains harbour beautiful oak and pine forests, while different deserts show a wide variety of very diverse desert species.

Mexico is also a key country for marine life. Small isolated islands both in the Gulf of Mexico and in the Gulf of California shelter breeding colonies of hundreds of thousands of marine birds and thousands of sea lions. The last individuals of a very rare black and white porpoise (dolphin), "Vaquita Marina" live near the estuary of the Colorado river, where it lives off the also rare endemic Totoaba fish species. Just off the coast of Baja California, yearly hundreds of Blue whales give birth to their calves in the month of February.

Over the past fifteen years, Mexico has made great progress in setting aside protected areas and bringing increasingly more under effective protection. However, the ranger deficit still is very significant. Of 1250 employed by the Protected Areas Management Organization in Mexico, about 800 functions involve rangers or ranger-like staff (Mexico does not use the term rangers). AAR has calculated that the number of rangers needed for the protected areas system is about 2,400, leaving a ranger deficiency of 1,150 rangers.

Let's list some of the highlights of the nature reserves of Mexico.

Biosphere Reserve Sian Ka'an

In the Maya language, this means "where the Sky is born" and anyone who goes there immediately understands where. It is a karstic (chalk rich) wetland, where the chalk content in the water causes a azure-blue color of the countless lagoons and creeks. It is one of the few places along the Gulf of Mexico where the beaches are protected, it is a paradise for birdwatchers and sport fishers, while coral reefs

off the coast are included in the area. Countless Mayan remnants are scattered across the area.

Flora and Fauna Reserve Cuatro cienegas

Enclosed between 3 mountain ranges, Cuatro Cienegas has a completely isolated watershed, in which hundreds of pools and creeks rise to the surface in this otherwise semi-desert valley. In these crystal clear deep blue pools, 8 beautiful endemic fish species have developed, as well as a number of tortoises. The landscape is absolutely fabulous, particularly in the gypsum sand dunes, a rare geological phenomenon only found a less than a hand full of other areas in the world.

Biosphere Reserve Montes Azules

This breathtakingly beautiful nature reserve is probably the most species rich of Mexico, giving shelter to some 4500 species of plants and spectacular birds like the Scarlet Macaw, Harpy Eagle, King vulture, etc.. It is located in the North of Chiapas and its climate conditions vary from the tropical rain forests at about 300 m to cool evergreen pine-oak forests at its higher elevations that reach to 1,700 m. Several lakes in this karstic region are of surrealistic shades of blue.

Flora and Fauna Reserve Islas del Golfo

This reserve consists of a series of islands and coastal areas all along the Gulf of California, and is spread over about 800km. It harbours many colonies of marine birds, like brown and masked boobies, pelicans, etc., as well as of the California Sea Lion. Many of the sites can only be observed from a safe distance from boats, in order not to disturb the animals. In collaboration with local communities, no-fishing zones are enforced to protect delicate marine ecosystems.

Reserva de la Biosfera el Vizcaino

This reserve traverses the entire state of Baja California and with 2.5 million ha, it is the largest protected area of Mexico. The land part of the reserve has a desert climate with in the driest parts an annual rainfall of 20 mm. At higher elevations the moisture is a bit higher which can be recognized from the more abundant desert vegetation. This is one of the last places in Mexico where the Pronghorn

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Antelope survives. A very interesting phenomenon is that the Grey Whale enters a large coastal lagoon to give birth. The world population of the Grey Whale, once down to about 1,000 individuals is now up to an estimated 20,000 individuals, many of which are born in the Vizcaino reserve. In addition to the Blue and Grey whales, 3 other baleen whales come close to the coast of the reserve for feeding and resting. Some 10 islands belonging to the

reserve harbour bird and seal colonies, while the ecosystem of the rocky coast shows a marine life that is similar to the wealth of coralline ecosystems without the hard coral.

We are in the process, of describing several other reserves in the Mexican protected areas system, like Tutuaca-PapaGochi, Sierra Gorda, Sierra de Manantlan, Kalakmul, etc.

SAVE THE MONGOLIAN SAIGA ANTILOPE WHILE WE STILL CAN

Until 10 years ago, the Saiga antelope was the symbol for the steppes of Central Asia. This is unfortunately no longer the case. Between 1980 and 2000, the species decreased from more than a million to 90,000 animals and it considered the most threatened large mammal of Central and Middle Asia. There are two subspecies: Saiga tatarica tatarica, which occurs in Kalmykia, (Russian Federation), and in Central Asia (Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan), and Saiga tatarica mongolica, which occurs only in Mongolia (Great Lakes Basin), which makes it an endemic species. All populations decreased dramatically over the last 20 years (1980 -2000) from 1 million to about 90.000 (E.J.Milner-Gullard et.al., 2001).

The Mongolian Saiga is the most threatened subspecies and classified as endangered in the endangered species Red Data Book of the [International Union for the Conservation of Nature](#), IUCN. From 1996-2000, the species made a remarkable comeback thanks to favourable weather conditions and anti-poaching operations supported by WWF Mongolia. This led to a remarkable increase of the Saiga population to about 5000 individuals. Sadly enough, the progress was rapidly lost, when due to lack of funds for anti-poaching activities, summer droughts and severe winters in 2000 and 2001, caused a dramatic crash of the population to about 800 individuals in a short time. Since then, the situation has been desperate: the species now occupies just 20% of its historical range and is close to extinction.

Trading with Saiga horns to China, for use in traditional medicine, is another of the main reasons why the species is so severely hunted. It is crucial to stop this trade at all

levels. Poaching has led to a rapid decline of the population and a dramatic change in the sex ratio, due to hunting of males (females do not carry horns), resulting in much fewer females getting pregnant. WWF Mongolia supported the training of custom officers and cooperates with the Ministry of the Environment to monitor the market, to identify illegal traders and to create awareness. Cooperation has also been established with the Gobi National Park in controlling illegal trade along the border with China.

Reducing habitat competition with livestock: Habitat competition is an other cause for the decline of the species. Poor winter pastures, caused by overgrazing by domestic animals in autumn, has led to mass starvation, in particular during winters with extreme weather conditions. It is necessary to introduce sustainable pasture management in order to improve the Saiga's habitat, especially in autumn and spring. This can be achieved in cooperation with local people, for instance, by paying for compensations for leaving critical Saiga habitats free from livestock. This is being explored right now with the regional authorities and the relevant herder communities.

But most and for all, the anti-poaching operations are essential. With the population of the animal so low, we can't effort losing another animal to poaching. : Illegal hunting in one of the major threats.

Adopt A Ranger targets to raise funds for the salaries and operating costs of Nine Saiga honorary Saiga Rangers. They try their best, but they are completely under funded, operating with their private means (motorbikes for which

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WWF pays the petrol) and without any official status. Equipment needs are: Motorbikes, radios, field equipment (tents, binoculars, and sleeping bags), uniforms, cameras and GPS.

If we want to save the Mongolian Saiga they need to protect the grazing free areas, control illegal trade and for a successful restocking of the population it is necessary to put a halt to the poaching. This can only be achieved by an effective, well trained and motivated anti-poaching operation. Adopt A Ranger targets the funding of the rangers as well as a mobile anti poaching brigade as one of its first financing projects.

If all goes as planned, the funding will have the following results:

1. A well equipped, properly trained and motivated ranger force stops poaching of Saiga throughout the Saiga range.
2. A stable population of the Mongolian Saiga between 3.500 to 4.000 specimen reestablished by 2009.
3. Agreements with herders on livestock free areas throughout the Saiga range are being respected.
4. Illegal trade in Saiga horn is significantly reduced, indicator for this is a well balanced sex ratio of the Saiga population.
5. Local people support Saiga conservation by respecting agreements on livestock free areas and reporting on illegal activities.

DEKUANA TERRITORY, VENEZUELA

The Dekuana people traditionally have lived in an area of about 2,000,000. Due to their exposure to a rapid changing society, their ways of life have changed and much of their wildlife resources are rapidly decreasing. The World Institute for Conservation and Environment, WICE, has been advising the Dekuana people on how to adapt to this changing world.

As part of this long-term commitment, WICE is working together with the Indigenous Peoples support group in Venezuela, "Otro Futuro" in helping the Dekuana in developing a sustainable hunting routine. Traditionally, the Dekuana hunt a variety of animals for their consumption, like peccaries, several species of deer, the Amazon Tapir, capybaras, agoutis, etc. Under new self-imposed hunting regulations, these animals can continue to be an important component in their diets. They are also instituting areas with no hunting at all. As part of this programme, the Dekuana have developed a self-regulatory hunting scheme with their own rangers.

On their own request, a part of the Dekuana territory has been declared national park: the Duida-Marawuaka National Park. It is also very interesting that their territory borders on the Casiquiare River, which originates in the Orinoco and drains into the Amazon River, thus connecting these two great watersheds. Over time, the Dekuana hope to develop a market for ecotourism in their territory, showing to visitors how they manage their wildlife, arranging hikes into the national park and excursions to the split-off of the Casiquiare River.

This sustainable hunting programme is very unique among indigenous people, and we hope that over time, the Dekuana can teach their methods to other indigenous peoples.

The Adopt A Ranger programme in Venezuela will be very unique, as it helps finance a self-regulatory system of indigenous rangers.

ENDORSEMENT BY KENTON MILLER AND OTHER RENOWNED CONSERVATIONISTS

*"The future of our ecosystem services and our heritage depends upon **park rangers**. With the rapidity at which the challenges to protected areas are both changing and increasing, there has never been more of a need for well*

*prepared human capacity to manage. **Park rangers** are the backbone of park management. They are on the ground. They work on the front line with scientists, visitors, and members of local communities. This initiative provides a*

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solid mechanism to get support where it is most needed -- to the rangers, in the parks."

Dr. Kenton R. Miller

Senior advisor IUCN **World Commission on Protected Areas**, WCPA

*"What a superb idea! While so many of us in the international conservation community write about the needs, plan great strategies, seek funding, influence policy, and in the process have endless meetings, the Rangers are the ones out in the field doing the day-to-day work, often against great odds and sometimes even putting their lives on the line. They deserve much better support and we need many more of them. This is the backbone of conservation on the ground --- this is where it happens! So the Adopt-a-Ranger Foundation is **the right idea, at the right time, and for the right reasons**. It deserves hearty support from individuals, from international organizations, from foundations, and from the private sector. This is a simple, straightforward mechanism for getting the job done, where it counts, in the field, **one protected area** at the time!"*

Allen D. Putney, MSc.

Vice Chairperson for the World Heritage of the World Commission on Protected Areas, WCPA
President of the Global Natural Heritage Foundation for the World Heritage Sites.

"I have worked in Central America and particularly in Costa Rica for several decades now, and during my many years as a scientist, I have learned to value the importance of rangers for protected areas. I have seen them work in many different capacities, both socially and as research assistants. I am absolutely convinced that without rangers in a protected area, the areas cannot be durably managed and conserved. Most countries in my region are desperately understaffed, and less than have any field staff at all. I warmly support the Adopt A Ranger initiative and hope that this effort will get the broad support from the conservation community, as well from the Climate change front that it deserves so that we can finally staff each one of the

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***national parks, nature reserves and other protected areas** of the region of Meso-America and the Caribbean."*

Dr. Maarten Kappelle

TNC scientific director for the Meso-American and Caribbean Region

*"After having served the Honduran Forestry Institution for many years, many of which as the head of the Protected Areas Department, I have continuously struggled with the challenge of staffing our **national parks, nature reserves and other protected areas**. While in the mid 1990 we still had about 100 staff for more than 2,000,000 or about 17% of the territory of the country, we were able to raise our staff to about 250 with a donation of the Global Environment Facility GEF. However, this was not structural, and when the GEF funding ended in 2005, we had to discontinue the staff. As a result of the structural adjustment policy negotiated between the Government of Honduras and the IMF, like many other government institutions, COHDEFOR had to reduce its staffing level dramatically, and when the GEF project had ended, there was no more staff at all dedicated exclusively for the management of the protected areas. The current situation in Honduras is desperate. It is a country with a large number of plant species listed for Central America, it has the second largest surface of protected areas in the region, as well as the largest single protected area, but no staff to manage and protect the crucial biodiversity on the transition of Northern temperate to Southern tropical ecosystems. Adopt A Ranger may be our last chance to rescue the biodiversity of our country from being destroyed for ever"*

Ing. Victor L. Archaga

Protected areas specialist with TNC and former director of the Protected Areas department of COHDEFOR

"Over the last 37 years, I have worked in the engineering and development of the conservation movement in Costa Rica in a variety of functions, including and specially, in the building of the national system of protected areas, where I was its general director for almost two decades.

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During this period, the system grew from just one very small area, to a representative system of integrated regional units called "Conservation Areas", and close to 30% of the country's land territory is under some kind of protected status. It is a well known fact, that Costa Rica has the responsibility to protect and manage, in perpetuity, around 4% of the planet's biological diversity.

Costa Rica has made major sacrifices to bring this system under legal protection and public ownership, and we are working hard to continuously improve its management. Nevertheless, the "Achilles Heel" of the entire system, is the number of rangers in the field. Not a single one of our protected areas has the proper number of trained staff, and I estimate our staffing deficiency at around 50%. The Adopt A Ranger initiative is of great importance to Costa Rica and I hope that it will gradually help us and all nations, to bridge the ranger deficiency. Here, we are already raising and receiving funds from neighboring hotels and land-owners to finance rangers for specific parks, and we hope to expand our efforts with contributions from the many visitors to my beautiful country and its unique system of protected wild lands."

Alvaro Ugalde, MSc.

The former director who initiated the famous conservation areas system of Costa Rica

*"As a former director of the **Protected Areas** Service of Bolivia, I strongly support the Adopt A Ranger initiative. Bolivia has a very broad coverage of protected areas, which are all managed in strong collaboration with local communities. Unfortunately, the financing of field staff for all our protected areas has never been possible, and many of our nature reserves are abandoned. Adopt A Ranger is such an important initiative, because it focuses on the most dire needs for our protected areas: it helps us resolve our field staff deficiency!"*

Victor Hugo Inchausti, MSc.

Coordinator of Redes de Conservación,
Former director of the Protected Areas Service of Bolivia

"As the director of the Protected Areas Fund of Mexico, FANP, I have worked for more than 10 years with the National Commission of Protected Areas, CONANP on financing rangers and other field staff for protected areas. In Mexico, slightly more than half of our protected areas has permanent field staff, and many important protected areas merely exist on paper, as there is no staff to work with the local communities who in most cases own the land of the reserves. Mexico is does not stand alone in this problem, as all the countries in Latin America are struggling with an enormous field staff deficit. I very warmly endorse the Adopt A Ranger programme and FANP is collaborating with Adopt A Ranger in jointly financing more rangers in the field."

Renée Gonzales Montagut, PhD.

Director of the Protected Areas Fund of Mexico

*"As a former director of the Directorate of Protected Areas of Peru (Intendencia de Áreas Naturales Protegidas" I strongly endorse the initiative of Adopt A Ranger. Less than half the **national parks, nature reserves and other protected areas** of Peru have any rangers in the field and thus far, it has been impossible for the Government of Peru to budget and assign enough field staff for all the protected areas of the country. Peru is blessed with incredible scenic beauty and is among the ten most species rich countries in the world. However, its economical situation is not strong enough yet to pay for the costs to protect all its protected areas and I am very pleased with the initiative of Adopt A Ranger to address the ranger deficiency worldwide."*

Ing. Gustavo Suarez de Freitas

Former director of the Directorate for Protected Areas of Peru

*"We launched the Adopt A Ranger Initiative to help solve what we believe to be the most pressing problem in nature conservation worldwide: the absence of field staff in the **national parks, nature reserves and other protected areas**, particularly the absence of **park rangers**. When after year*

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of trying to raise attention to this desperate situation, I decided to do initiate an organization that would specifically focus on this problem. I thought it was the right thing to do"

Dr. Ir. Daan Vreugdenhil

Director World Institute for Conservation and Environment
President of **Adopt A Ranger**

DISCLAIMER

Adopt A Ranger makes a great effort to use the funding for the area or country of your preference, but that may not always be feasible for many reasons. As we need to always work with the mandated protected areas agency we may not always be able to work out an agreement right away. It may also take a while before we have sufficient funding to initiate a programme.

Therefore, Adopt A Ranger may need to to change the destination of the funding received, or to convert those funds into a trust until such time that hiring a ranger in the field becomes financially and operationally possible.

WARNING

If you decide to make a contribution to Adopt A Ranger, please always make your payments either by paying electronically: (1) by credit card or Paypoll over the internet, by a bank to bank transfer or by by check, while stating at the back of a check that it can only be cashed into the bank account of Adopt A Ranger. Please never donate cash, because we cannot audit fundraisers and we have no definite control over what happens to your generous contribution. If in doubt, send us an email. Please contact us by email if you are concerned about the legitimacy of one of a fundraiser who claims to work for Adopt A Ranger or the appropriateness of the fundraising methods applied.

Adopt A Ranger cannot be held responsible for any financial payment other than by check payable to one of its official bank accounts or by electronic transfer.