

Workshop 15 : Modern Park Rangers – improving skills for effective Ranger teams

12 participants from 9 countries

1. Main successes and Challenges raised by the participants during the workshop

Successes:

- Rangers need to keep up with new technology, new environmental pressures and challenges. This requires training and openness for continuous personal development by rangers and managers also.
- Found good examples of ranger training and best practices from other countries, e.g. Netherlands, Slovenia, UK, Germany
- we already have ranger training standards we can build on and update, e.g. TOPAS
- Across Europe we need agreed Standards for Ranger Training with flexibility on how training is delivered to recognize differences in geography, politics, society and economy
- Realizing that we have to build up cross-border networks to support each other by exchanging knowledge and good practice
- Clarifying the training needs of Rangers in Europe and the need for support of employing organizations especially managers.

Challenges:

- Review the existing IRF-definition of what a ranger is and promote it's consistent use by rangers and managers.
- Work out an agreed European Ranger Training Standard covering the basic knowledge skills, values and behaviour endorsed by employers.
- Rangers need to keep up to date with new scientific knowledge and practice as well as new technologies for research and communication
- Work with disadvantaged people, e.g. immigrants, disabled people, people with mental health issues
- Employers need to support Ranger Training despite difficult economic conditions

2. What new voices, new visions are needed to be brought in and heard on this topic?

- The voices of rangers themselves (area experts, important experiences,...) as ambassadors for and faces of the protected areas.
- Voices of the youth how to engage them as ambassadors for nature and environment
- Real mutual recognition by rangers and managers of the shared values and visions of protected areas

3. How can EUROPARC enable this "new voices" to be included?

- Growing support of and partnership with the European Ranger Federation.
- Sensitizing politicians, employers and managers to the vital roles played by rangers in managing protected areas and the importance of training for high quality and professional delivery of protected area management.
- EUROPARC can facilitate the dialogue between young people and ERF so that their voices are heard when ranger and volunteer ranger training is being developed.
- Work in partnership with ERF to address new challenges of protected area management for rangers across Europe, e.g. seminars on implementing new technologies