



# European Ranger Federation

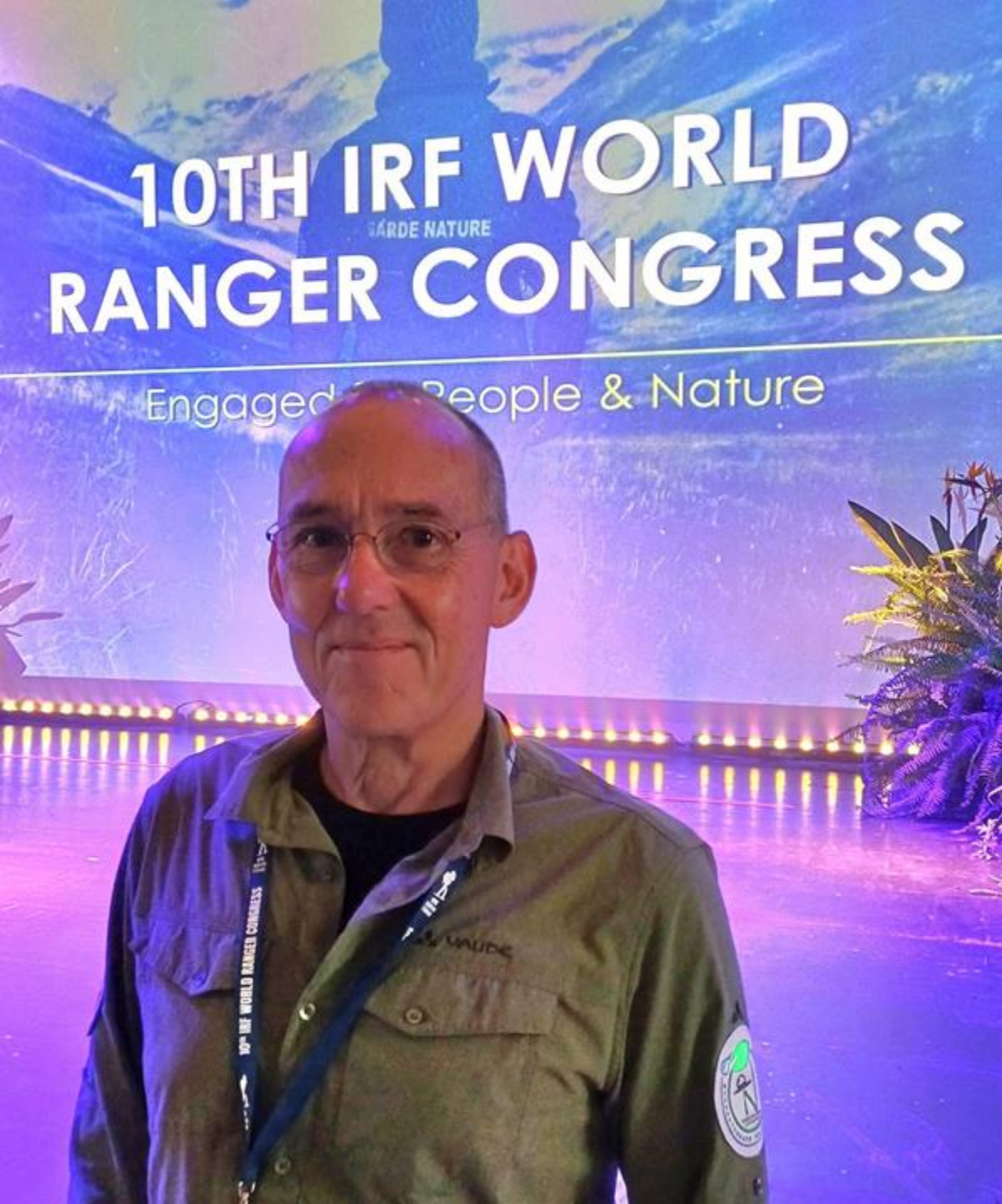
## *Rangers in Europe*



## European Rangers:

**roles, mandates, training, equipment,  
recognition, legal status, protection:**

**examples from the European perspective**



# Michael Grossmann



Studied **Forestry**

Worked for 33 in the **Bavarian Forest National Park** (in almost every department: forestry, science, info-centers and exhibitions, environmental education - and for the last 11 years as a **Head of the Ranger Team**

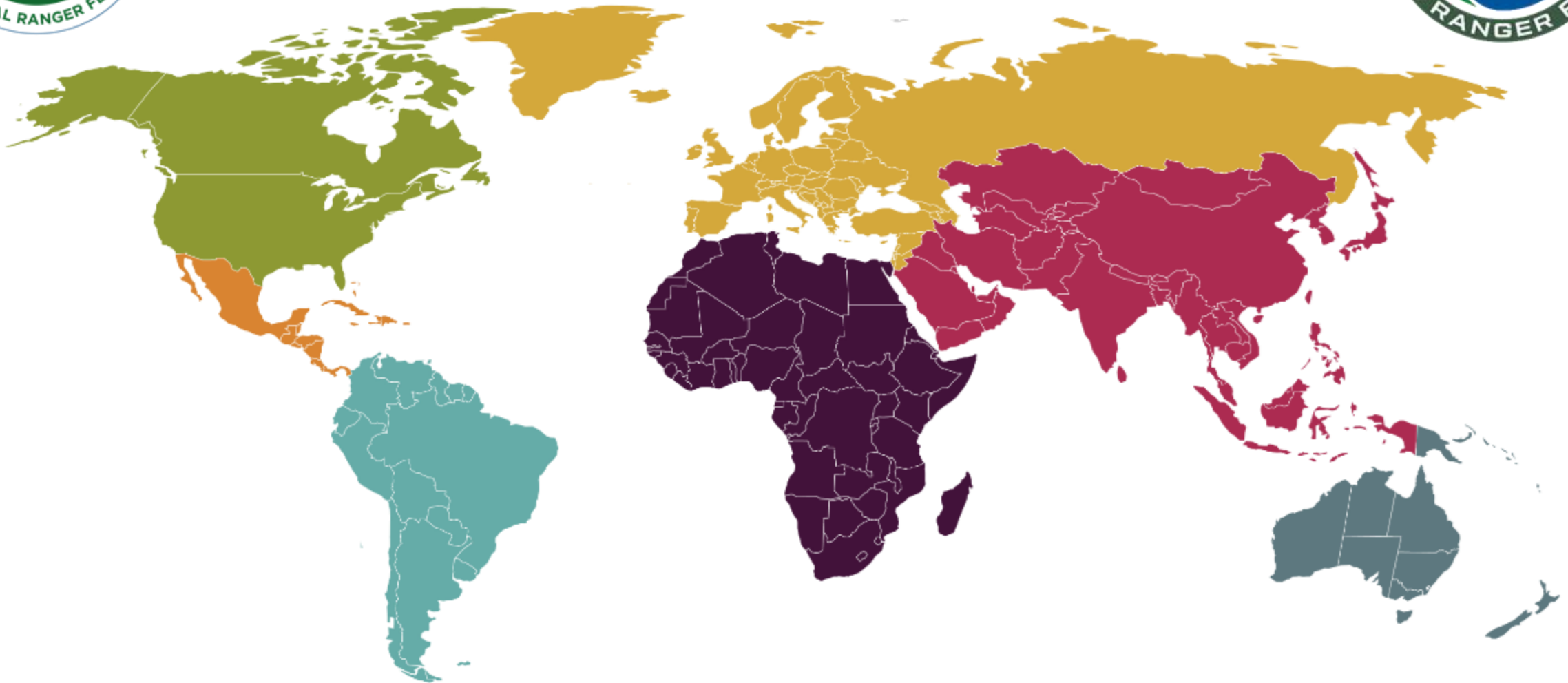
Was the **President of the German Foresters Association**

**Co-founder of the European Ranger Federation (ERF)**

Now - ERF Council and Fundraising support



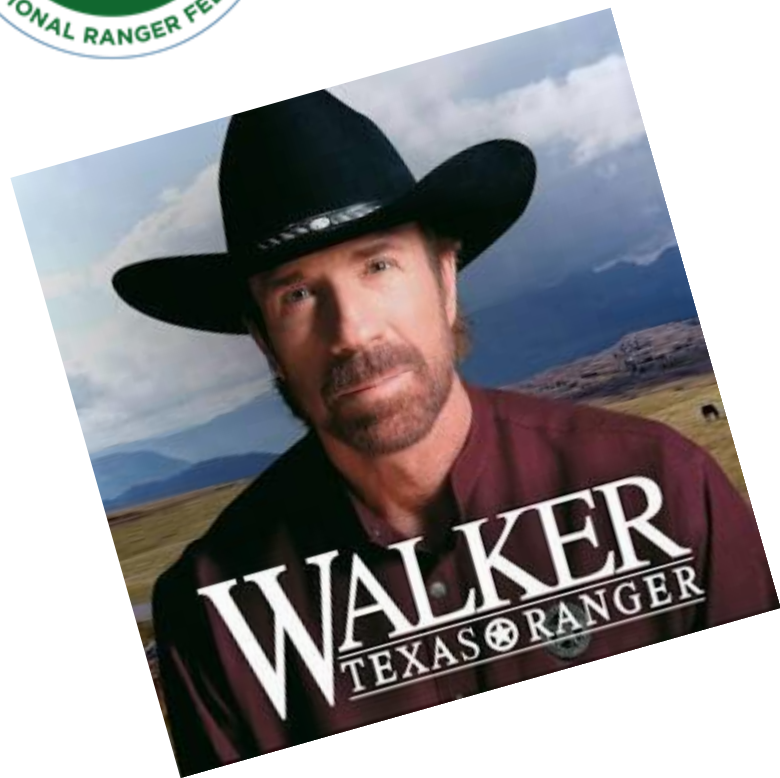
## European Ranger Federation as regional Member of International Ranger Federation







## Who or what are Rangers NOT?





## The Milestones of Rangers' History



- establishment of the first world National Park - Yellowstone National Park in the USA in **1872** →  
**first Rangers appeared**  
BUT they had mostly the *duties of policemen or soldiers*  
("wilderness guards with weapons")
- during the last 150 years the administrations of Protected Areas around the world recognised that they have to change of approach:  
**not just through strong law enforcement, but through acceptance!**
- modern Rangers are **building a bridge between Protected Areas and Local Communities** through education, raising awareness, nature interpretation





**EXAMPLE:**

**Bavarian Forest National Park!**











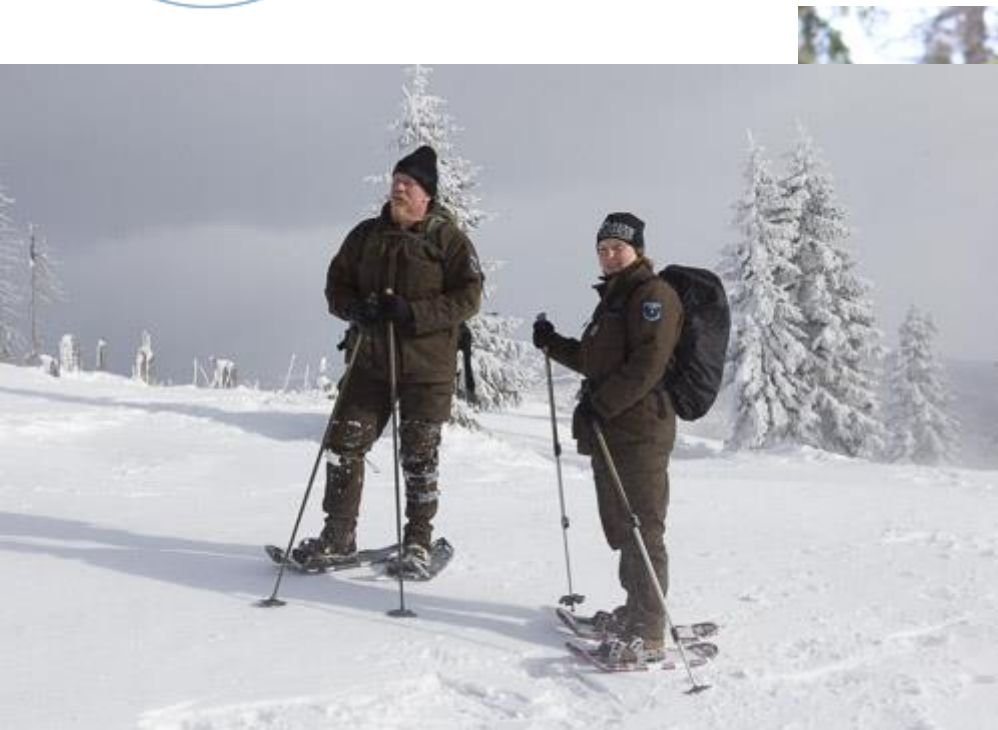
## Rangers in Europe (Continent)



- Approximately 25.000 Rangers in Europe
- 10.000 Members in National Ranger Associations among them









## Rangers and their duties – around the world

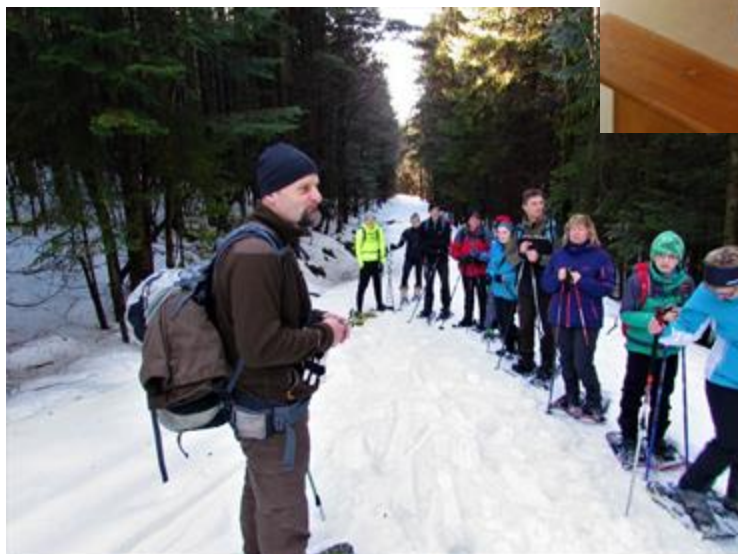


- **Informing** the public (storytelling)
- Protecting nature reserves - **Patrol Activity**
- **Integrating volunteers** (including **Junior Ranger Programs**)
- **Monitoring** - Research work, at least as an assistant
- Renaturation and reintroduction projects for endangered species
- **Environmental Education**
- **Resolving human-wilderness conflicts**
- **Motivating people** to take action
- **Networking** and international cooperation
- **Fire Fighting**
- First Response and **First Aid**





# Rangers and their duties – around the world







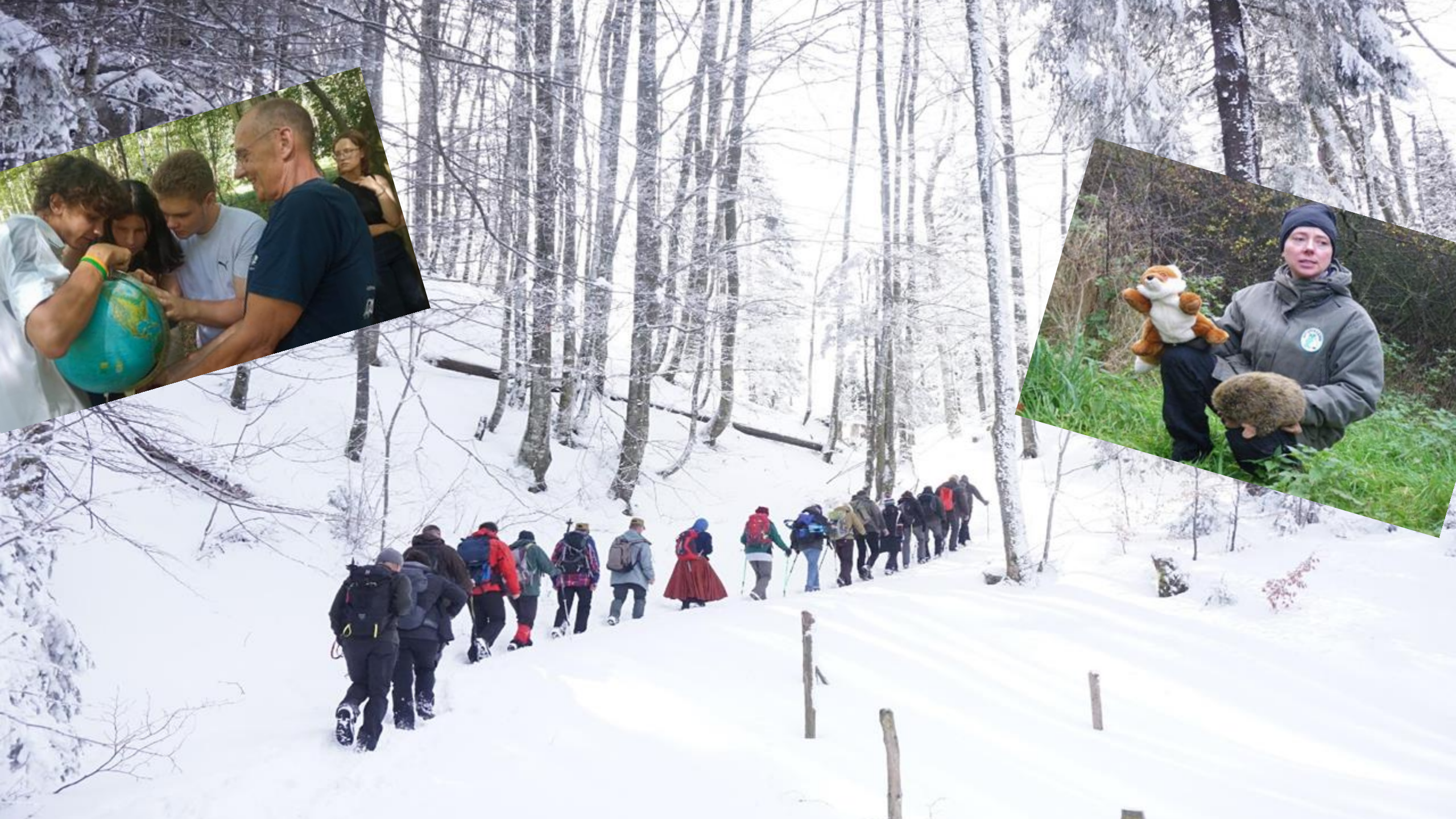
# Rangers and their Jobs – around the world















# Rangering without Borders - Common Initiatives





## How are Rangers organised and employed in different European countries \ regions?



### On different administrative levels:

- Regional rangers
- County rangers
- City / rural rangers
- Private (freelance) rangers  
(for ex. Rewilding projects)
- under Governmental Agencies
- under Public-private partnerships
- Protected Areas rangers →

### In every category of Protected Areas there are Rangers: (paid mostly by state money)

- National Park rangers
- Nature Park rangers
- Nature Reserves rangers
- Natura 2000 rangers
- .....





# Rangers in large Landscape Protected Areas or Nature Parks



- High Level of Responsibility and multitasking
- Very low staff density (nearly impossible without Volunteer Rangers)
- Less contacts to administrations
- High standard of training required, especially in the case of communication
- But also in self protection





## Competencies for Natura 2000 Site-managers (from EUROPARC conference 2019)



### **“Technical or specialist knowledge is not enough”**

Effective Natura 2000 management requires:

- Know-how to develop & apply participatory processes
- Ability to engage local communities
- Consideration of socio-economic contexts
- Willingness to think synergistically
- Exceptional communication skills

Core competencies specifically required by Natura 2000 site managers include:

- Biodiversity conservation,
- policy, planning & project management know-how
- Confident working with local communities & respect for local cultures
- Abilities to communicate, collaborate & include & raise awareness to promote Natura 2000 & priorities for nature





## **SUMMARY:**

**Protected Areas cannot survive  
or be efficient enough  
without Rangers!**

**Successful protected areas bring welfare to local communities,  
and Rangers are the Bridge between Local Communities and Nature**



## Unique Role of Rangers



- **practical** nature conservationists
- **wide overview** about nature conservation topics + **storytelling abilities** (transfer knowledge on eye-level to different target groups!)
- **communication with local communities** and their **integration** into nature conservation work
- **"ground" policy-makers and influencers**: talk directly to different groups of people and stakeholders - **drive forward the implementation of environmental legislation / Protected Areas rules**
- Rangers are **in the field** all the time and are **best observers and data-collectors**, first witnesses of changes - and so the first responders to them
- Rangers are the **Face and Ambassadors of Protected Areas** and the goals of regional sustainable development





## Equipment for Rangers



- Equipment adapted to **all weather conditions** (also shoes, backpack)
- Nationwide **uniform with badges** indicating protected areas and ranger associations (this encourages viewers to seek information on the Internet)
- **Binoculars** and High-quality **monitoring set** (e.g., DNA preservation)
- Handy — **GPS, good photo** quality
- **Ranger Apps** (WhatsApp Groups, SMART, EarthRanger, etc.)
- **Body Camera**
- **Satellite phone** in remote, dangerous areas with no cell reception
- **First Aid Set**





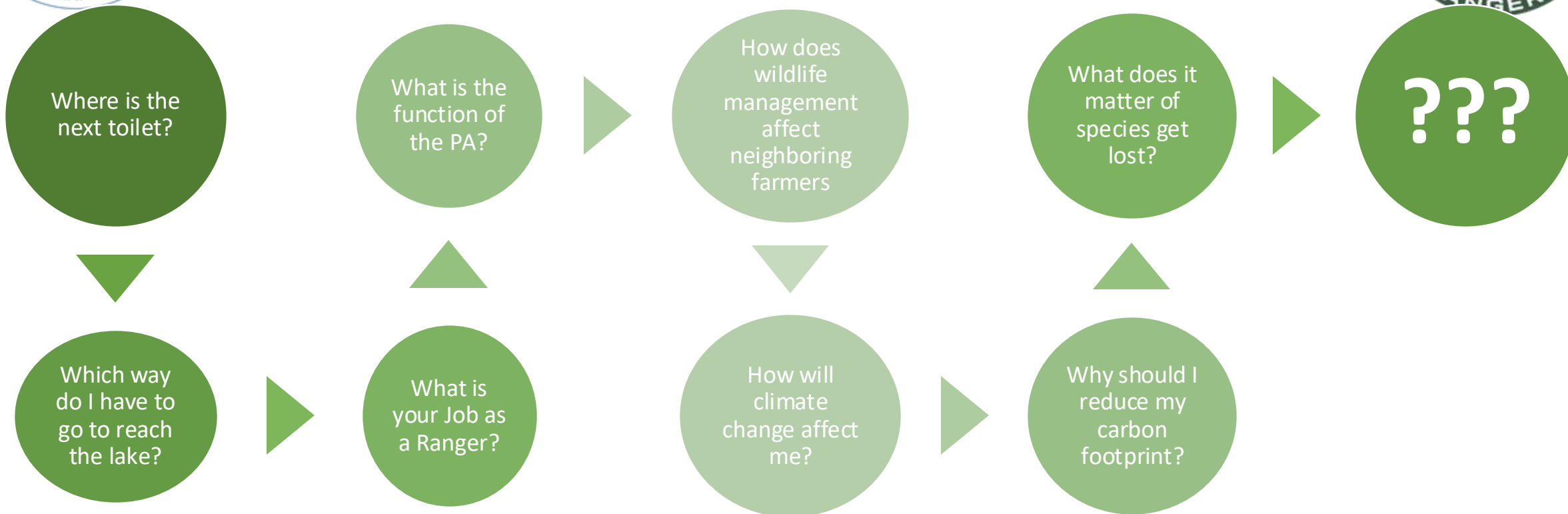


Image of  
Rangers!





## ...but the variety of tasks for Rangers is a big challenge





Where is the next toilet?

Which way do I have to go to reach the lake?

Sometimes too much...



???



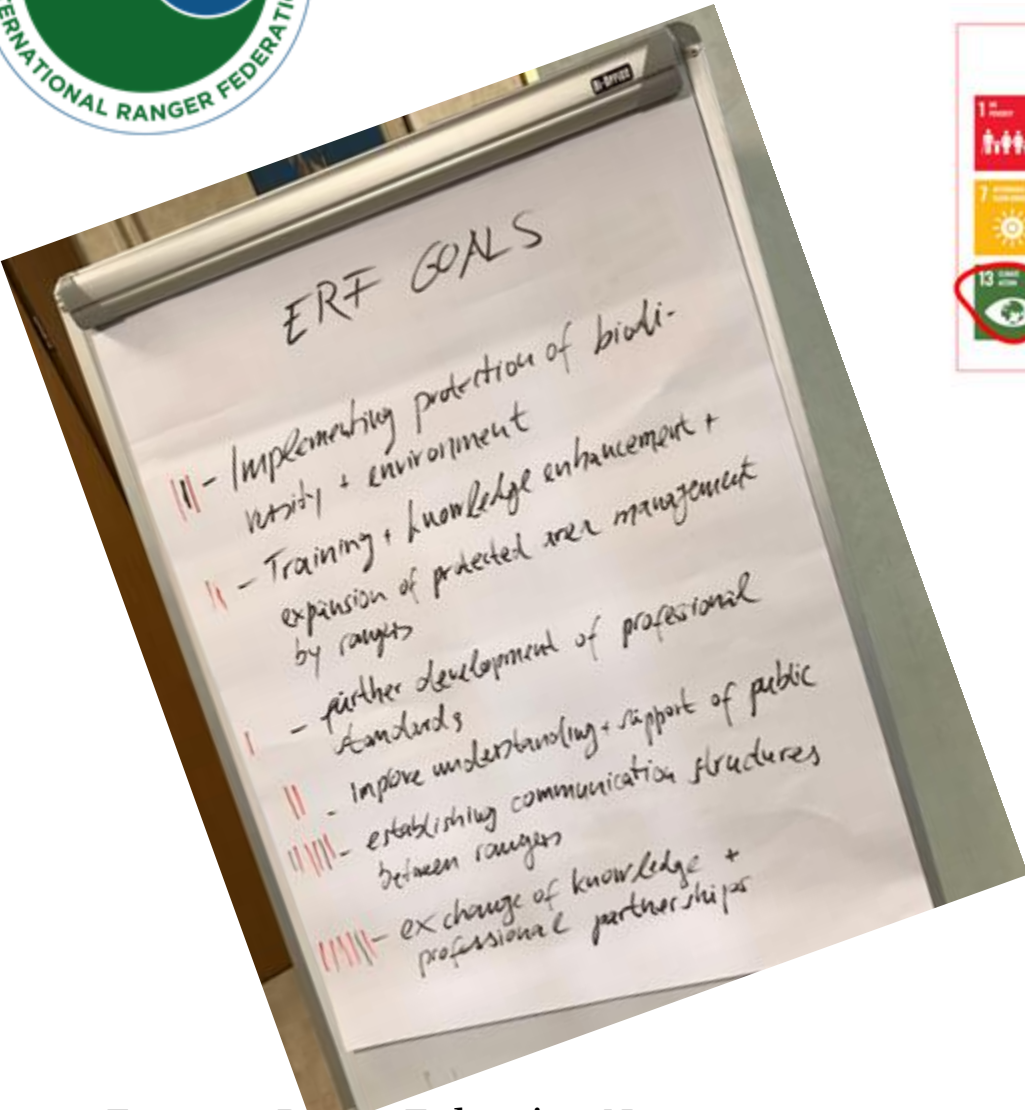


# Rangers supporting global goals





# The important roles of Rangers



## The many roles of rangers

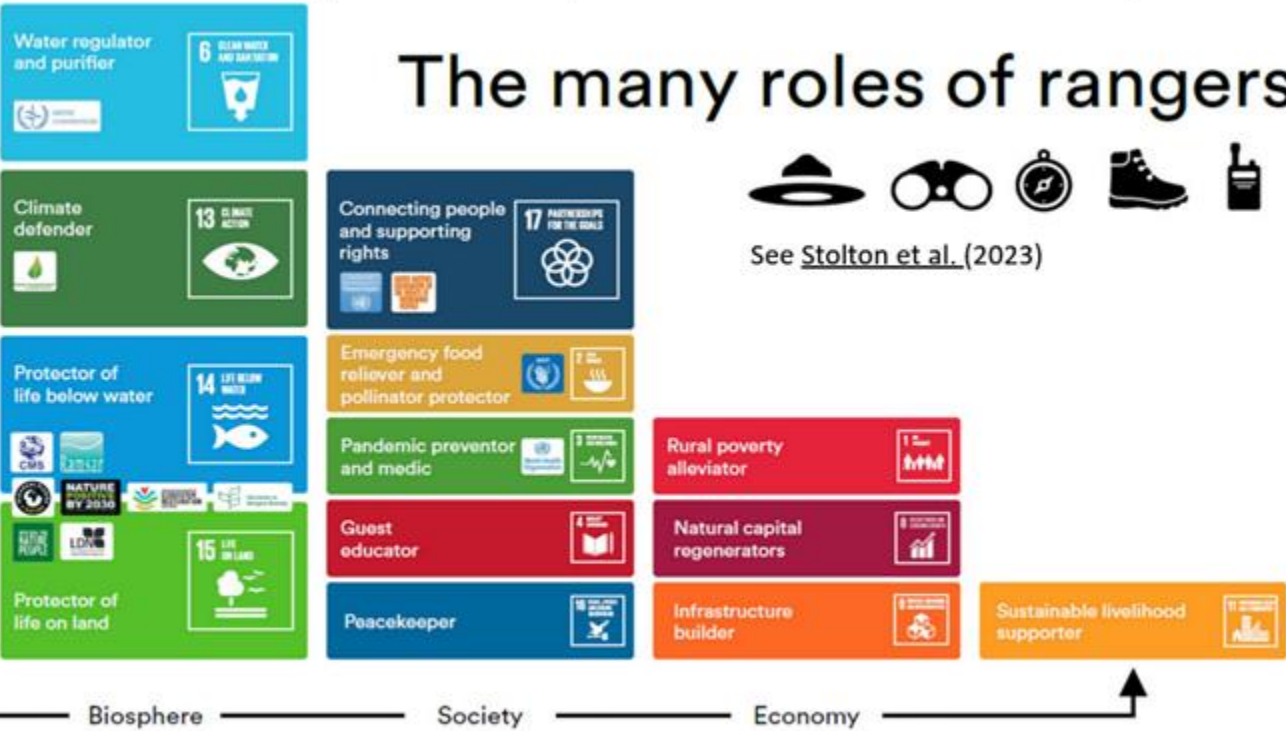


FIGURE 1 The contributions of rangers to Sustainable Development Goals and related global conservation and development policy



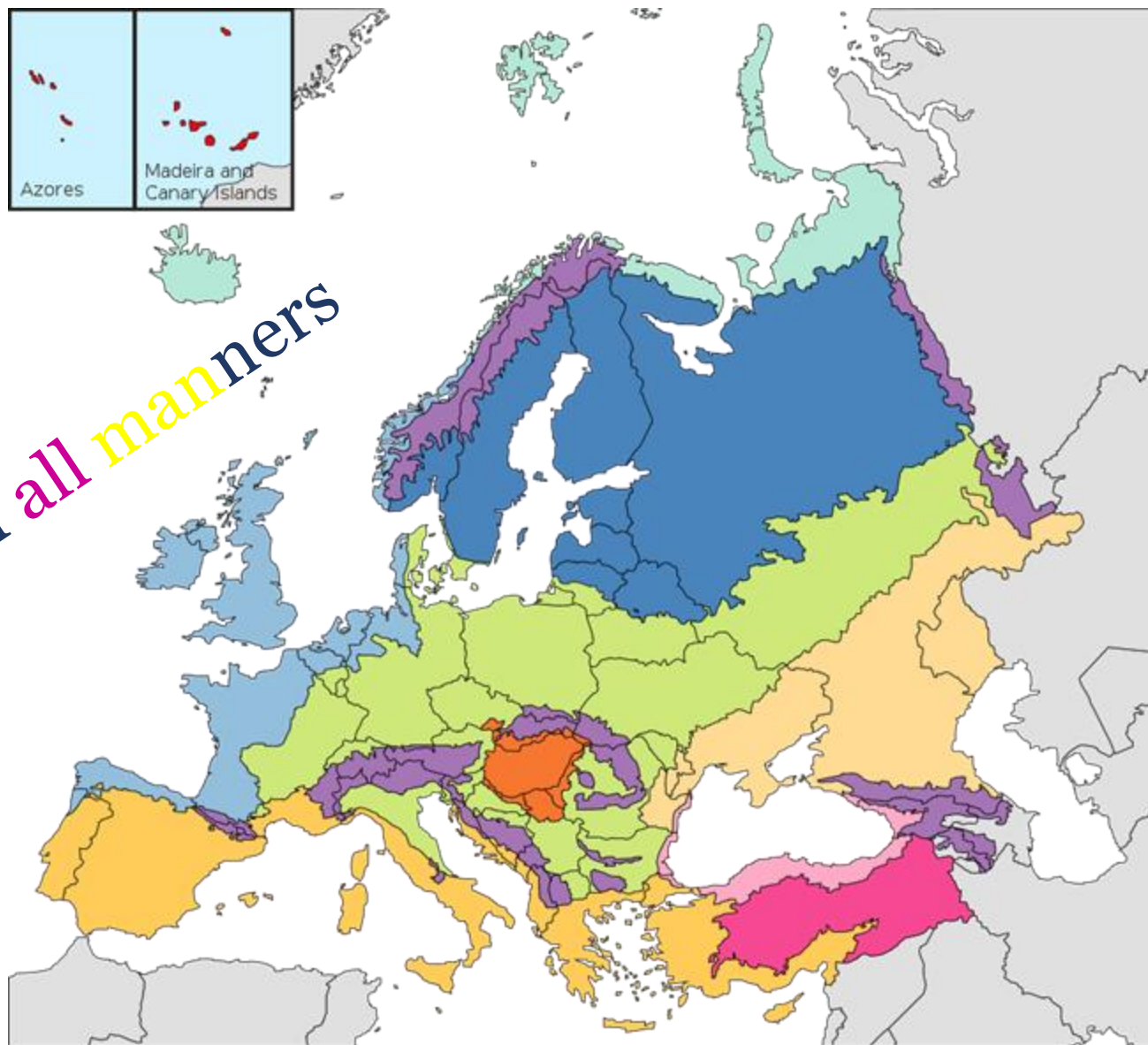


# Convention on Biological Diversity





# Europe's Biogeographical Regions



Biogeographical regions of Europe

- Arctic
- Boreal
- Atlantic
- Continental
- Alpine
- Pannonian
- Mediterranean
- Macaronesian
- Steppic
- Black Sea
- Anatolian

After a map by the European Environmental Agency: [www.eea.eu.int](http://www.eea.eu.int)

Diversity in all manners







# The European Ranger Federation





# The ERF Team - The Board



President



Florin Halastauan (Romania)

Financial Officer



José Maria Jiménez Cañete (Spain)

Project Officer



Vitor Casalinho (Portugal)

Vice-President



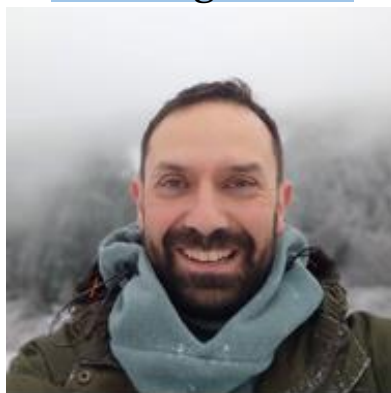
Lars Scharfe (Germany)

Secretary



Maria Gurscaia (Moldova)

Training Officer



Borja Diaz (Spain)

Press Office



Wiebke Bomas (Germany)

Administrative Officer





## The ERF Team - The Council



**Urs Reif, Germany** (*ERF Training Officer 2020-2021, ERF President 2021-2025*)



**Ilan Yeger, Israel** (*ERF Vice-President 2022-2025*)



**Ian Brooker, UK** (*ERF Vice-President 2020-2022*)



**Roger Cole, UK** (*ERF Vice-President 2017-2020*)  
European Ranger Federation, News



**Michael Großmann, Germany** (*ERF Training Officer 2021-2022, ERF Financial Officer 2022-2025, ERF Fundraising volunteer 2025 to present*)<sup>1</sup>



## ERF Initiatives to support Rangers on the continent:



- Trainings (F2F, Webinars)
- Workshops
- European Congresses
- Support National Ranger Associations
- Support individual Rangers under pressure
- Networking (other NGO's, especially International Ranger Federation initiatives)



Romanian ranger training: conservation requires support of locals





# Twinning Projects/Partnerships



- Exchanges
- Skill transfer
- Equipment transfer
- Financial support
- Trainings/Workshops



Twinning Project Germany-Israel



Partnership Germany-El Salvador



## Main contents of our Training Strategy for 2026 - 2028



- Complex Topics of Biodiversity
- Safety and efficiency in ranger work
- Conflict management, Psychological Resilience & Mental Health
- Environmental Education, Nature Interpretation & Storytelling
- Protection of Landscapes and their Natural & Cultural Heritage
- Driving forward ERF's network partners & ERF's special projects





## ERF's Vision 2030



### *General Vision*

***“Connecting Europe's Rangers  
to empower them in their work  
for Planetary Health  
and  
make their voices heard  
as Voice of Nature”***

