

This pledge relates to the following topic of the 33<sup>rd</sup> International Conference: Respect for International humanitarian law

**Pledge title:**

*Protection of the Natural Environment in Armed Conflict*

**Pledge for the period 2019–2023:**

A) Introduction

*The natural environment is frequently a silent casualty of armed conflict. Armed conflicts may have dramatic consequences for the natural environment and threaten the well-being, health or even survival of civilians and civilian populations. International humanitarian law contains both general and specific rules that provide protection to the natural environment, which are addressed in the revised ICRC Guidelines for the Protection of the Natural Environment in Situations of Armed Conflict (the Guidelines), and better respect for these could help to lessen the environmental consequences of armed conflict.*

***The Government of Finland and the Finnish Red Cross, according to their respective competences, jointly pledge to***

- *Increase knowledge and awareness of IHL rules on the protection of the natural environment in armed conflicts among the military, government officials, decision makers, the judicial sector, experts and the general public. Attention will be given in particular to the domestic dissemination of the ICRC Guidelines for the Protection of the Natural Environment in Situations of Armed Conflict.*

B) Action plan

*Among the measures that the Government of Finland and the Finnish Red Cross will take as part of the implementation of the above objective are the following:*

- *Incorporate information on the IHL rules applicable to the protection of the natural environment in armed conflict in the military education material, including relevant guidance documents related to the conduct of hostilities.*
- *Compile and distribute dissemination material, organise events such as seminars and/or expert meetings and take other relevant action to increase awareness of the relevant IHL rules and the Guidelines among the military, government officials, parliamentarians, the judicial sector and the general public.*
- *Conduct a national translation of the Guidelines and disseminate them widely.*
- *Collaborate with relevant international organisations, such as the United Nations Environment Programme, on raising international awareness of environmental damage and pollution resulting from armed conflict.*

C) Indicators for measuring progress

- *Incorporation of information on relevant IHL rules in military education material as well as such material and relevant training provided in the military*
- *Dissemination material compiled and actions taken to distribute it.*
- *Seminars and meetings held and other actions taken.*
- *Completion of translation of the Guidelines*
- *Including the topic of protection of the natural environment in armed conflict, relevant IHL rules and/or the Guidelines in Finland's national statements in international fora, for example in the United Nations context*