

Final 9.12.2019

This pledge relates to the following topic of the 33rd 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 Nordic Governments and the National Red Cross Societies of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden have consistently stressed that armed conflicts may cause serious damage to the natural environment and have severe and long-lasting consequences both to the nature and to populations that depend on natural resources for their survival. Protection of the natural environment is necessary to effectively protect civilian populations in times of armed conflict. International humanitarian law contains several provisions that provide direct or indirect protection to the natural environment, and better respect for these could help to lessen the environmental consequences of armed conflict.

Furthermore, we are also aware that the operational humanitarian response in situations of armed conflicts may also have a negative impact on the natural environment. Increased awareness of the environmental aspects of humanitarian operations efforts and adaption of the operations to protect the natural environment is therefore crucial.

The Nordic Governments and the National Red Cross Societies anticipate the publication of the revised ICRC Guidelines for the Protection of the Natural Environment in Situations of Armed Conflict in 2020.

The Governments of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden and the respective National Red Cross societies, according to their respective competences, hereby pledge:

To support both nationally and in the UN context the dissemination of IHL and other relevant international law related to the protection of the natural environment in armed conflict.

To promote a green humanitarian response including by ensuring that environmental and climate-related considerations are taken into account in operational humanitarian response.

B) Action plan

- *Include references to IHL and other relevant international law and the need to ensure protection of the natural environments in armed conflicts in national as well as Nordic statements in the UN context*

- *Seek to ensure increased focus within the UN context on the protection of the natural environment in armed conflicts*
- *Take action to increase knowledge and awareness of IHL and other relevant international law, as appropriate, through publications, organization of events and other activities*
- *Support the Movement in choosing sustainable and more environmentally friendly solutions for their humanitarian operations.*

C) Indicators for measuring progress

- *Number of Nordic or national statements addressing IHL and other relevant international law*
- *Number of other actions, e.g. statements, seminars, publications, expert exchanges on the topic of IHL and other relevant international law.*