

# IUCN NL CODE OF CONDUCT AND PROFESSIONAL ETHICS

Based on and in line with the IUCN Secretariat Code of Conduct:

[https://www.iucn.org/sites/dev/files/import/downloads/code\\_of\\_conduct\\_and\\_professional\\_ethics.pdf](https://www.iucn.org/sites/dev/files/import/downloads/code_of_conduct_and_professional_ethics.pdf)

## Table of Contents

1.	Introduction.....	2
2.	Applicability.....	2
3.	Our approach to work.....	2
4.	Our principles and expected standards ofconduct.....	3
4.1.	Integrity, trustworthiness and accountability.....	3
4.2.	Transparency.....	4
4.3.	Reliability and responsiveness .....	4
4.4.	Equality, inclusiveness and respect for the diversity of people .....	4
4.5.	Dignity.....	5
4.6.	Environmental responsibility.....	5
5.	Roles and responsibilities.....	6

*Throughout this document terms referring to persons and staff members in the masculine gender shall apply equally to men and women except where a contrary intention is evident from the context*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

IUCN NL works in a global, multicultural setting that strives to ensure best practice in its everyday operations. Therefore, the highest standards of conduct and professional ethics are expected from its staff.

This Code of Conduct and Professional Ethics (hereinafter referred to as the “Code”) has been developed in order to provide guidance towards compliance with such standards, and to demonstrate best practice in action, consistent with IUCN NL’s core values, Vision and Mission, and statutory instruments (hereafter “Statutes”).

While the Code provides a broad range of guidance about the standards of ethical conduct, it does not (and cannot) address every situation that staff members are likely to encounter. In such cases, each staff member is encouraged to seek and obtain guidance.

## 2. APPLICABILITY

This Code applies to all staff members of the IUCN NL regardless of location. It also applies to volunteers working for the IUCN NL, individuals subcontracted as consultants, and individuals seconded by other organizations to IUCN NL.

## 3. OUR APPROACH TO WORK

IUCN NL brings together individuals and groups from across the globe, and from many different disciplines. We are a highly motivated, creative global team in service to the global Union, and we conduct our business with fairness, integrity and to the highest ethical standard.

We share a common approach to the work and objectives of the organization, which inspires and motivates the conduct of our every-day business along the following lines:

- We value the diversity and integrity of life
- We take coherent and consistent action based on the best understanding of global, regional and national realities, issues and laws
- We welcome all stakeholders willing to work with us under the IUCN NL values, mission and statutes
- We guarantee equal rights for all staff members across the organization according to IUCN NL principles and national law.
- We strive to be results oriented and effective.

The principles and standards of conduct set forth in the Code are integral to a culture where honest and ethical conduct is recognized, valued and exemplified throughout.

## 4. OUR PRINCIPLES AND EXPECTED STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

The Code is organized around the following principles, each of which contains a set of basic standards of conduct:

- Integrity, trustworthiness and accountability
- Transparency
- Reliability and responsiveness
- Equality, inclusiveness and respect for the diversity of people
- Dignity
- Environmental responsibility.

### 4.1. Integrity, trustworthiness and accountability

Staff members must carry out their work in a diligent and professional manner, must avoid potential or actual conflicts between their personal interests and the interests of IUCN NL, and must disclose to their line managers, any potential or actual conflicts between their personal interests and the interests of IUCN NL.

All staff members are responsible for exercising utmost care and judgement to ensure that assets belonging or entrusted to IUCN NL are not misused or wasted. These assets include, but are not limited to, intellectual property rights and other rights, staff time, information and documentation, corporate opportunities and funds.

#### Standards of conduct

- Avoid or, disclose, all ethical, legal, financial, or other conflicts of interest in respect of the organization, regardless whether such conflicts may be potential, perceived or actual. Conflicts of interest include, but are not limited to, the following instances:
  - Self-dealing and competing with the organization,
  - Receiving financial or other significant benefits as a result of the staff member's position in IUCN NL,
  - Offering or accepting payments or special considerations for the purpose of influencing the selection of consultancies or services,
  - Influencing organizational decisions in a manner that leads to personal gain or advantage,
  - Pursuing existing or potential interests that impair or appear to impair staff members' independence and integrity in the discharge of their responsibilities to IUCN NL.
- Refrain from participating in or condoning bribery, nepotism or other forms of corruption,
- Ensure appropriate disclosure to and approval from the line manager when giving or accepting gifts and entertainment,
- Protect the assets and resources of IUCN NL and ensure their prudent, efficient and effective use so as to contribute to its financial health and to its reputation as a respected environmental organization,
- Promote the organization's interests, objectives and values in a diligent and professional manner,
- Respect the organization's assets, resources and property rights and refrain from using them for private purposes,
- Refrain from exploiting any relationship with a donor, volunteer or member organization for the staff member's own benefit.
- Refrain from disclosing privileged or confidential information to unauthorized parties.

- Engage in transparent accounting and reporting and adhere to independent auditing and reporting standards, in financial as well as in other matters connected to your employment duties.

## 4.2. Transparency

Protecting and promoting the free flow of accurate and complete information is essential to serve the interests of our Members and partners. This is a responsibility of line managers towards their staff. Building trust and contributing to informed and responsible decision making entails conducting business in a transparent manner, refraining from deceptive or fraudulent acts and practices, keeping accurate records and making timely and complete disclosure of material information, subject to relevant obligations of confidentiality and data privacy protection.

### Standards of conduct

- Provide clear guidance so that the objectives and desired measurable results are understood by all supervised staff,
- Communicate with supervised staff and team members, sharing relevant work information, including management decisions, in a timely manner, and giving impartial, honest and timely feedback,
- Make decisions known as soon as possible to staff who are materially affected by them,
- Provide honest, relevant, accurate, and timely information to all members and partners and act promptly to correct inaccurate communications,
- Refrain from acquiring information by dishonest or unlawful means,
- Respect privacy and protect confidential information,
- Deal with public authorities and other third parties lawfully and in good faith.

## 4.3. Reliability and responsiveness

Commitments should be honoured. This requires the exercise of sound judgment when making commitments so as not to promise more than one is capable or authorized to deliver, and then the necessary follow-through to deliver on promises, agreements, and other undertakings. This also implies that staff members are expected to ensure delivery of commitments made to IUCN NL by third parties.

### Standards of conduct

- Honour professional individual commitments and agreements, and make all appropriate and reasonable efforts to ensure that commitments and agreements made by others to/with IUCN NL are also honoured,
- Inform partners in a timely and thorough manner when commitments and agreements would not be achieved in accordance with the engagements made previously,
- Deliver products and services in compliance with contractual terms and conditions,
- Pay suppliers and partners on time and in accordance with agreed terms,
- Consider partners' and members' requests, suggestions and complaints,
- Respond promptly to staff members' requests and complaints.

## 4.4. Equality, inclusiveness and respect for the diversity of people

IUCN NL is an organization that values and respects diversity, and strives to achieve its objectives in the firm belief that individuals and groups of people may hold different and diverging views on conservation and development as well as on non-conservation issues.

IUCN NL strives to deal with all partners, members and staff fairly and equitably, and avoids discrimination in employment and contracting. Organizational policies and practices shall be aimed at

creating a workplace where individuals have the opportunity for professional and personal growth, commensurate with their professional capabilities and personal goals.

### Standards of conduct

- Guarantee freedom of association and of expression, promoting a responsible and constructive exchange of views, criticisms and ideas,
- Understand and accept cultural diversity, and provide a tolerant, positive and supportive working environment that fosters respect for diversity,
- Treat no individual less favourably than others because of culture, colour, national or ethnic origin, gender, marital or other family status, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, age, disability, political and/or religious belief or lack thereof,
- Provide equal opportunities in all human resources aspects and comply with relevant laws and regulations,
- Ensure that all staff are evaluated for performance in a fair, uniform and timely manner and that they are recognised, promoted, rewarded, or sanctioned accordingly,
- Identify and remove when reasonably possible those obstacles that prevent the best performance of staff,
- Offer fair and reasonable compensation, according to the labour market and the financial capacity of IUCN NL,
- Deal fairly in all transactions, providing equal opportunity to similarly situated members, partners and suppliers.

#### 4.5. Dignity

Staff members have the obligation to protect and promote the organization's interests, but they are expected to do so with due respect for other peoples' dignity and personal values. Staff members must refrain from infringing the physical and mental health, safety, privacy and human rights of others; refrain from any kind of coercion or harassment; and adopt practices that enhance human value and development in the workplace.

### Standards of conduct

- Take all necessary measures to protect staff members' physical and mental health and safety while on duty, and provide appropriate insurance coverage,
- Make all efforts to ensure that staff members have an appropriate work-life balance and that working hours and public holidays specified in the Organizational Handbook (*Organisatiehandboek IUCN NL*) are thoroughly respected or that adequate compensation is in place,
- Be respectful to others and refrain from any kind of harassment, bullying, abuse of authority or retaliation,
- Respect, support and protect dignity, integrity and human rights of all staff members and adopt appropriate work practices to that end,
- Refrain from condoning any direct or indirect use of forced labour, child labour and/or any other abusive labour practices, in compliance with the ILO Convention 29 on forced labour as well as the ILO Conventions 138 and 182 regarding child labour,
- Work with partners and suppliers whose employment practices respect dignity, personal values and human rights, international labour standards on health and safety and adhere to the best principles of sustainable development.

#### 4.6. Environmental responsibility

A key component of IUCN NL's mission is its commitment to help societies conserve the integrity and diversity of nature and to ensure the sustainable use of resources. IUCN NL is committed to demonstrating that it is an environmentally responsible organization by actively considering the consequences of decisions, policies and actions on ecosystems and the people who depend on them, and striving where possible to enhance the wellbeing of people and ecosystems and to minimize negative consequences.

## Standards of conduct

- Demonstrate the commitment of the organization towards sustainability and environmental excellence in all business activities by identifying and adhering to environmental best practice, and by leading by example,
- Strive to minimize the environmental impact of all aspects of operations through efficient and effective use of resources, and, as much as possible through the sustainable use of renewable resources,
- Ensure that business decisions, particularly those including procurement and transport, reflect the need to minimize the ecological footprint of the organization, in particular:
  - Give particular attention to environmental standards of companies when buying their products and emphasize this in procurement policy,
  - Try to limit the number of travels to those really needed, avoid multiplying the number of events and reduce the size of delegations to events,
  - Promote the use of teleconference as an alternative to costly physical meetings.
- Work with partners and suppliers whose practices abide by environmentally sound standards and criteria and with those who actively strive towards the adoption of such practices or where IUCN NL sees an opportunity for change, in line with programmatic engagement and delivery.

## 5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

All IUCN NL staff members have the obligation to read and acknowledge the principles and standards of conduct set forth in this Code and to raise any issues and concerns pertaining to the Code through appropriate channels. All line managers have the obligation to consider seriously all reports of ethical misconduct made by staff, and to assist staff members in these matters by providing information and advice and by responding promptly and systematically to staff queries and concerns about ethical issues.

All staff members are responsible for:

- reading, acknowledging and putting into practice the principles and standards established in this Code, and
- when in doubt about the ethical implications of an action or an omission, firstly seeking clarification and advice from their Human Resources officer and/or from the Integrity Officer.

Line managers are also responsible for:

- addressing and clarifying ethical issues,
- leading by example by putting the Code into practice on a daily basis,
- ensuring that their direct reports are aware of the Code's existence and content,
- promoting the application of the Code by their direct reports on a daily basis, and
- ensuring that reports of misconduct or unethical behaviour brought to their attention are properly reported as per the process defined below.

The Human Resource Manager is responsible for:

- ensuring ultimately that staff are aware of the contents and objectives of the Code,
- addressing and clarifying ethical issues that are brought to his attention,
- assisting line managers in the process of staff education and development concerning the Code, and
- ensuring that formal reports of misconduct or unethical behaviour brought to his attention by a formal procedure described in the protocol on misconduct ([hyperlink to doc on the intranet](#)) are properly reported as per the process defined below.

The Integrity officer is responsible for:

- addressing and clarifying ethical issues that are brought to his attention, and

- ensuring that reports of misconduct or unethical behaviour brought to his attention are properly reported as per the process defined below.

The Director has overall responsibility for:

- guaranteeing fair treatment with regard to the application of the Code,
- ensuring the appropriate organizational response in the case of reported or suspected misconduct or unethical behaviour,
- ensuring all reasonable allegations are treated seriously and systematically, and properly investigated, and
- determining the course of action and where appropriate asking the Ethics Committee (*geschillen commissie IUCN NL*) to investigate.