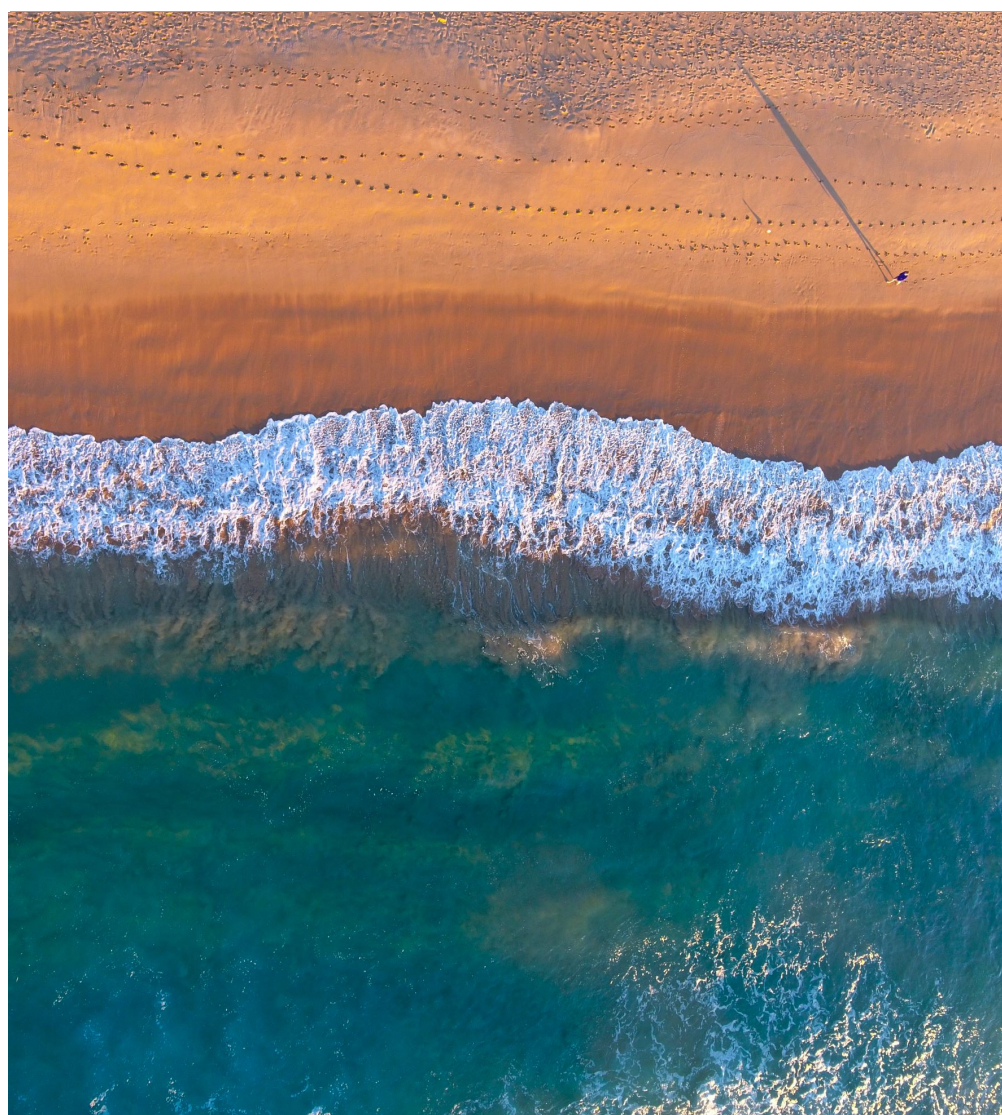


CODE OF ETHICS AND PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

Version 01 | OCTOBER 2022

**ICES GUIDELINES
AND POLICIES**



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ICES Guidelines and Policies

Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct

Version 01 | OCTOBER 2022

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International Council for
the Exploration of the Sea
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i Introduction

This Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct outlines existing as well as newly defined ICES principles, guidelines, and practices for key areas of organizational activity.

Scope of Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct

Purpose

ICES vision is to **be a world leading scientific organization, providing the knowledge for sustainable use of the seas**. At the heart of this vision is good cooperation and here we outline the spirit in which we aim to work together in a safe and respectful environment.

Applicability

The Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct applies to anyone partaking in any ICES activity—including staff, officials, members, participants, speakers, volunteers, and exhibitors. Meeting chairs and event organizers are expected to set the tone for inclusive collaboration. The chair/organizer should be especially alert to any bias or discrimination exhibited against others and act to prevent it.

The Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct does not affect the application of other relevant policies, regulations, rules, or laws regulating the premises where the ICES activity takes place.

Other relevant information

- The Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct was approved by the Council October 2022.
- This document being the first version, the Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct should be updated as necessary, with a major review every five years.

1 Core values

ICES seeks to cultivate a welcoming, resourceful, diverse, inclusive, gender balanced, and respectful working environment.

Within ICES, we treat each other with respect. This means that when dealing with others, you are expected to:

- **Embrace diversity** – Value the different views, expertise, and backgrounds which strengthen the long-term success of ICES.
- **Include equally** – Ensure the right of others to equally participate in ICES activities without bias or discrimination based on gender, scientific discipline, family status, age, race, political or religious beliefs, sexual orientation, or disability.
- **Communicate thoughtfully** – Aim to communicate openly and address others with dignity.
- **Avoid harassment** – Use discretion and respect others. Harassment, bullying, intimidation, or discrimination in any form is unacceptable. Harassment includes unprofessional speech or behaviour that is not welcome or is personally offensive. Behaviour that is acceptable to one person may not be acceptable to another, so use discretion to be sure respect is communicated. Harassment intended in a joking manner still constitutes unacceptable behaviour.
- **Promote wellbeing** – Follow and encourage others to uphold a safe and welcoming working environment. Be mindful of your surroundings and colleagues and immediately report any situations that are dangerous or distressing to others.

2 Gender equality, diversity, equity, and inclusion

ICES is committed to achieving gender equality and empowering women, and members of underrepresented groups in our science network.

ICES is committed to achieving gender equality and empowering women, and members of underrepresented groups in our science network. Science is a critical component of a sustainable social–ecological system, and must be equitable and diverse to effectively meet societal needs for impartial evidence on the state and sustainable use of our seas and oceans. To this end, ICES is committed to mainstreaming gender equality, and principles that support diversity, equity, and inclusion broadly in its governance, working structures, programmes, and service delivery.

The Gender Equality Plan is available on ICES website:

<https://doi.org/10.17895/ices.pub.19682604>

ICES Gender Equality Plan aims to make progress across six qualitative descriptors:

- Gender-fair organizational and personnel development
- An inclusive working culture accustomed to discussing issues of gender equality, diversity, equity, and inclusion
- Create a family friendly working environment
- Protection against all forms of harassment and violence
- Professionalization of gender equality work in ICES
- Awareness of sex and gender in research

Quantitative indicators are also proposed to monitor progress on gender equality at both the network/institutional level, as well as in the Secretariat.

3 Good scientific practice

Everyone engaged in ICES activities should comply with the international values and standards of good scientific practice

Good scientific practices are based on fundamental principles of research integrity. As an international intergovernmental scientific organisation, it is critical that everyone engaged in ICES activities follows good scientific practices.

While some variation in standard practices may exist across disciplines, sectors, and countries, basic principles, professional responsibilities and obligations promoting good scientific practices are generally well aligned across the international science community. Below we provide a brief list of guiding principles for ICES community drawn from the *Responsible Conduct in the Global Research Enterprise*¹ by the Interacademy Partnership², with members including science academies of all ICES member countries. This publication describes basic values that underline science and puts forward principles and guidelines. Several published guidelines developed by national and international bodies such as national science organisations, research councils and academies exist. An extended list of these relevant references is provided at the end of this document to help guide scientists in their work as well as in their engagement with the practical, ethical, and intellectual challenges inherent in scientific research and to help give detailed guidance on the conduct of science and procedures in case of misconduct.

Guiding Principles for Good Scientific Practice

The principles outlined in *Responsible Conduct in the Global Research Enterprise* are:

Honesty – doing science and communicating scientific results and their possible applications fully and without deception, whether of others or oneself.

Fairness – treating others with respect and consideration, whether in citing a colleague's ideas in a paper or mentoring a student in the proper conduct of science. In science—as in life—scientists and scholars should treat others as they hope and expect to be treated in return.

Objectivity – scientists try to look beyond their own preconceptions and biases to the empirical evidence that justifies conclusions. Scientists cannot totally eliminate the influence of their own perspectives from their work, but they can strive to be as objective and impartial as possible.

Reliability – scientists will follow good scientific practices and FAIR³ guiding principles to ensure that the results are robust and reliable. This includes providing clear documentation of the

¹ <https://www.interacademies.org/sites/default/files/publication/file.pdf>

² <https://www.interacademies.org>

³ Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Reproducible, see <https://www.go-fair.org/fair-principles/>.

methods, approaches, analyses, and experts contributing to the research as well as identifying potential gaps, uncertainties, and biases.

Scepticism – an allegiance to empirical evidence requires that scientists maintain a degree of scepticism toward scientific results and conclusions so that results and explanations are continually re-examined and improved.

Accountability – scientists are accountable to other scientists, to the broader society, and to nature. If challenged, they cannot appeal to authority but must demonstrate that their results or statements are reliable.

Openness – scientists need to be open with others for science to progress. All scientists deserve to work independently as they balance the competing considerations of “what if?” and “what if I am wrong?” But they ultimately need to convey to others their conclusions and the evidence and reasoning on which their conclusions are based so that those conclusions can be examined and extended. Scientists must follow FAIR principles and where applicable CARE⁴ principles.

Authorship

It is important that authorship is discussed throughout all stages of scientific research (from development through to the dissemination stage). Criteria used to determine authorship should be clearly understood and agreed upon by all participants in every ICES activity where outputs are anticipated whether the work is carried out during meetings and/or in correspondence. These outputs include expert group reports, journal publications, scientific presentations, data sets and other products.

General Guidance for authorship of Scientific Reports is given in the Guidelines for ICES groups and most scientific journals provide specific details on their expectations for authorship and other types of attributions (funding, acknowledgements, etc.). The Council of Science Editors’ White Paper on Promoting Integrity in Scientific Journal Publications is also a good starting point for guidance on authorship and acknowledgements⁵ that is regularly updated.

Intellectual property and data

Working together in working groups and workshops means that data, knowledge, and other written or verbal information is shared and used for the work of the group. Scientists must always identify who owns the data and what are the licensing and attribution rules before they can agree to share it with the group. No data, knowledge, or information can be used without the consent of the owner. Data managed by ICES Data Centre is subject to the ICES Data Policy⁶.

⁴ Principles for Indigenous Data Governance, see here <https://www.gida-global.org/care>.

⁵ <https://www.councilscienceeditors.org/resource-library/editorial-policies/publication-ethics/2-2-authorship-and-authorship-responsibilities/>

⁶ <https://doi.org/10.17895/ices.pub.8883>

Misconduct

Misconduct may occur in various forms, including scientific misconduct and behavioral misconduct. We understand that dealing with this can often be complex and stressful. In case of misconduct, please follow the guidance as outlined in section 5.

List of national and international documents:

EU: The European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity⁷ serves the European research community as a framework for self-regulation across all scientific and scholarly disciplines and for all research settings.

The European Commission recognises the Code as the reference document for research integrity for all EU-funded research projects and as a model for organisations and researchers across Europe.

USA: The responsible and ethical conduct of research (RECR)⁸ is critical for excellence, as well as public trust, in science and engineering. The responsible and ethical conduct of research involves not only a responsibility to generate and disseminate knowledge with rigor and integrity, but also a responsibility to:

- conduct peer review with the highest ethical standards;
- diligently protect proprietary information and intellectual property from inappropriate disclosure; and
- treat students and colleagues fairly and with respect.

The NOAA Scientific Integrity Policy⁹ that intends “to promote a continuing culture of scientific excellence and integrity, and to establish a policy to protect the integrity of the agency’s scientific activities used to inform management and policy decisions. In addition, the intent of the policy is to strengthen widespread confidence - from scientists, to decision-makers, to the general public - in the quality, validity, and reliability of NOAA science. It also denotes this agency’s commitment to a culture of support for its employees, which are its principal science asset.”

Canada: The Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR)¹⁰ sets out the responsibilities and corresponding policies for researchers, Institutions, and the Agencies, that together help support and promote a positive research environment. It specifies the responsibilities of researchers with respect to research integrity, applying for funding, financial management, and requirements for conducting certain types of research, and defines what constitutes a breach of Agency policies.

France: France has the French Office for Research Integrity (OFIS) as part of the High Council for Evaluation of Research and Higher Education (Hcéres)¹¹, providing guidance on good scientific practice.

⁷ <https://www.allea.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/ALLEA-European-Code-of-Conduct-for-Research-Integrity-2017.pdf>

⁸ <https://www.nsf.gov/od/recr.jsp>

⁹ <https://sciencecouncil.noaa.gov/Scientific-Integrity-Commons/SIC-Integrity-Policy>

¹⁰ <https://rcr.ethics.gc.ca/eng/framework-cadre-2021.html#a1>

¹¹ <https://www.hceres.fr/en>

United Kingdom: UK Research and Innovation provide Research Ethics Guidance¹², a framework to help researcher's "consider ethics issues during the complete lifecycle of a project and includes information and guidelines on good research conduct and governance."

¹² <https://www.ukri.org/councils/esrc/guidance-for-applicants/research-ethics-guidance/>

4 Conflict of Interest

ICES wishes to comply with the international values and standards of good scientific practice. This section was agreed by Council Resolution (CM 2018 Del-5).

4.1 Introduction

Given ICES role as a knowledge provider, it is essential that experts contributing to ICES science and advice maintain scientific independence, integrity and impartiality. It is also essential that their behaviours and actions minimise any risk of actual, potential or perceived Conflicts of Interest (CoI). A CoI arises when there is an actual, potential, or perceived possibility that a scientist or adviser makes a contribution to ICES work that is not based on a systematic scientific review of the available information and evidence. An actual, potential, or perceived CoI arises because the decision or outcome of a process may be influenced, or is *perceived* to be influenced, by self-interest, professional-interest, external pressures, and other factors.

ICES has the ambition to be an inclusive organization. This implies that experts are primarily judged by their expertise, behaviours, and contributions, not their affiliations. Experts with a potential or perceived CoI can be included, provided they follow the Code of Conduct (below) and show through their behaviours and contributions to be fully capable of managing the CoI.

To ensure credibility, salience, legitimacy, transparency, and accountability in ICES work, to avoid CoI, and to safeguard the reputation of ICES as an impartial knowledge provider, all contributors to ICES work are required to abide by ICES Code of Conduct below.

ICES Code of Conduct provides guidance on identifying and handling actual, potential or perceived Conflicts of Interest, defines the standard for behaviours of ICES experts contributing to ICES science and advice and sets the responsibilities of those contributing to ICES work.

4.2 Roles of Delegates and Chairs

The National Delegates and Chairs (in the case of “Chair Invited Experts”) are the gatekeepers of the system when nominating experts. It is their responsibility to ensure active adherence to ICES Code of Conduct. This implies that they are responsible for ensuring:

- All experts contributing to ICES work are aware of ICES Code of Conduct.
- Actual, potential, or perceived Conflicts of Interest are identified and assessed prior to nominating experts.
- Experts are only nominated or invited if the nominating Delegate or inviting Chair are confident that the experts have provided adequate evidence that they can and will abide by this Code of Conduct.

4.3 Application of the Code of Conduct

The Code of Conduct applies to scientists participating in ICES Expert Groups, Review, and Advice Drafting Groups and ACOM /SCICOM meetings.

Occasionally, ICES may run meetings which are intended to solicit stakeholder views. For these meetings, explicitly identified by the Secretariat and in advance of the meeting, participants will be asked to represent specific professional interests.

4.4 Code of Conduct

1. The purpose of this code is to ensure transparency and accountability in ICES work and to safeguard the reputation of ICES as an impartial knowledge provider.
2. The Code of Conduct applies to all contributors to ICES work and all contributors to ICES work must abide by the Code of Conduct.
3. All contributors to ICES work are expected to conduct themselves in a manner consistent with scientific independence, integrity, and impartiality and to declare any Conflicts of Interest.
4. All contributors to ICES work must actively support ICES vision and mission.
5. All participants at the meeting, including the Chair, are required to declare any Conflicts of Interest and their commitment to abide by the Code of Conduct before their work commences. It is the responsibility of the Chair to ensure these declarations are made.
6. In cases of uncertainty as to whether an action of activity constitutes an actual, potential or perceived Conflict of Interest, it is expected that all persons engaged in ICES work will err on the side of caution and identify, disclose and manage the actual, potential or perceived Conflict of Interest. In situations of actual, potential or perceived Conflict of Interest, all those involved in the discussions are expected to actively seek feedback from one-another, in an open and transparent discussion and in line with the expectations outlined in this Code of Conduct.
7. In cases of actual, potential, or perceived Conflict of Interest an expert can still contribute to ICES work if the National Delegate and Chair involved are satisfied that the independence and objectivity of work to be carried out are not at risk, or will not be perceived to be at risk, and that long-term confidence in the impartiality, vision and mission of ICES will not be diminished.
8. In cases when there is an actual, potential or perceived Conflict of Interest of the Chair, the Chair can still contribute to ICES work if the National Delegate and Secretariat are satisfied that the independence and objectivity of work to be carried out are not at risk, or will not be perceived to be at risk, and that long-term confidence in the impartiality, vision and mission of ICES will not be diminished.
9. Chairs should ensure that the full range of available data, evidence and scientific opinions are considered in their groups and that any differences are identified and explored before reaching conclusions.
10. All contributors to ICES work should present and review data, scientific evidence, theory or interpretation honestly and accurately and no contributor to ICES work should knowingly mislead, or allow others to be misled, about scientific matters.

4.5 Action in case of a perceived or actual breach of the Code of Conduct

1. The expert involved must seek feedback, from the meeting Chair and participants, on how to resolve the breach and ensure the Code of Conduct is followed.
2. If the discussion (1) does not resolve the issue, the Chair should consult the Secretariat before deciding on the participation of the expert, either excluding the expert for the

entire meeting or for the period during which the issue leading to the perceived or actual breach is being addressed. In this case the Secretariat will inform and if necessary, consult ICES Bureau about the decision within 24 hours. Council acts as the final arbiter in the case of an ongoing dispute.

3. To record perceived or actual breaches of the Code of Conduct and to ensure that the Code is being applied in a consistent and transparent manner, the Secretariat will provide Council with an annual report listing breaches and the actions taken to address them.

5 Environmental responsibilities

ICES Secretariat is committed to responsible use of resources.

Aware of the impact that ICES Secretariat activities have on the environment and mindful of the importance of using scarce resources responsibly, this policy statement forms an integral part of ICES Secretariat Plan and describes how the Secretariat strives continually to reduce its environmental footprint and communicate this to ICES partners, suppliers, employees, and the public.

ICES Secretariat is committed to using resources responsibly and efficiently. The Secretariat monitors and evaluates its activities and consumption of resources and aims to minimise waste. Staff are encouraged to continually maintain and further develop methods to minimize the use of resources.

5.1 Transportation

ICES headquarters is located in central Copenhagen, near good public transport links. Staff and visitors are encouraged to travel by public transport, bicycle, or on foot. The Secretariat provides covered and secure storage for bicycles and has parking outside the building restricted to three automobiles. More than 90% of staff use public transport or bicycle for their daily work commute.

Travelling to and from meetings is an unavoidable part of the Secretariat's work, and ICES has instituted measures that help reduce the impact of such travel. Business travel costs are only refunded for the use of public transport, and where practicable, train travel is preferred over air transport. The Secretariat has invested in Web conference and hybrid meeting facilities to reduce ICES-related travel.

5.2 Stationery and supplies

ICES Secretariat encourages its staff to reduce their use of paper and printing. For inhouse printing, the printers are closely monitored by the suppliers to ensure that they are operating efficiently, and all printers offer double-sided printing to reduce the amount of paper used.

All traditional ICES publications are now available in electronic format and can be downloaded through ICES website. Of the publications that continue to be printed, the Secretariat closely monitors the number of copies that are distributed and the correctness of the recipient list to minimize waste.

5.3 Energy use

The Secretariat uses office and IT equipment that offers the best energy efficiency, and staff are encouraged to switch off all non-critical office equipment when it is not in use. New electric and electronic equipment is purchased on the basis of its green-labelled energy-saving certification. The entire Secretariat building uses low-energy lighting and automatic timers that ensure lighting is only in use when needed.

The building is insulated, and double-glazed windows ensure that as little heat as possible is lost. The building is heated through a steam system provided by the local district heating network. All radiators have individual thermostatic regulation to ensure that the level of heating is optimized for each area in the building.

5.4 Recycling and waste management

All paper, glass, metal, food waste, and printer supplies are collected separately and recycled, through either the supplier or the Danish recycling system.

5.5 Water

Water consumption at ICES Secretariat is generally very low, owing to the nature of the Secretariat's activities. However, ICES is committed to reducing its impact on water resources through low consumption, and therefore, the measurement of consumption and practical initiatives to reduce it are being explored.

5.6 Working with like-minded companies

ICES Secretariat strives to work with like-minded suppliers, and therefore, where possible, uses products and suppliers that are certified by a reputable environmental certification scheme.

Invested in by all employees and the wider organization

All staff are encouraged to follow the principles outlined in this policy and continually review their activities to identify new ways in which the Secretariat can reduce its impact on our environment. This policy is included in the welcome pack for new employees and published on ICES website.

6 Reporting misconduct

Anyone experiencing or witnessing behaviour that violates the Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct is encouraged to report it immediately.

Misconduct may occur in various forms, including scientific misconduct and behavioural misconduct. We understand that this can often be complex and stressful. In case of misconduct, we encourage you to discuss your experience and concerns with any of the following people: expert group chairs, SCICOM members and Steering Group chairs, ACOM chair and vice-chairs, Secretariat staff, General Secretary, and national delegates.

6.1 Try to resolve the issue directly

When appropriate and possible, it can often be most effective to handle a complaint/report by raising it directly with the persons involved or the meeting chair or activity organizer. In this case:

- Try to clearly explain what the issue is and what you expect the outcome to be.
- Write down the names of people you spoke with, when you spoke to them, and what they said and share copies of relevant documents.
- Exercise your right to be heard while maintaining your professionalism.

Anyone experiencing or witnessing a situation which constitutes an immediate or serious safety threat should contact local law enforcement and immediately notify facility security.

6.2 Reporting

If direct action is not appropriate or comfortable in the situation or you are not satisfied with the response, ICES Secretariat Human Resources Officers (HR@ices.dk) are the next point of contact and will raise the issue to the appropriate leadership structure. All reports will be treated seriously and responded to promptly. Confidentiality will be maintained to the extent that it does not compromise the rights of others.

6.3 Consequences for violations

Anyone violating the Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct is expected to begin complying immediately.

Consequences to violations will be recommended to the relevant ICES leadership (e.g. President, Bureau/Council Delegate, General Secretary, or Committee Chair).

Consequences may include one or more of the following actions:

- Immediate dismissal from the meeting/activity without refund
- Reporting the case to your home institute
- Exclusion from any ICES activities for a defined period
- Disciplinary procedures for staff
- If the offense is criminal, law enforcement will be contacted.

Protection from retaliation

Threats, intimidation, or any other form of retaliation against a participant who has made a complaint or provided information in support of a complaint are prohibited. ICES or other entity responsible for an ICES event will take appropriate action needed to prevent and respond to retaliation, in accordance with its applicable policy, regulations, and rules.

Annex 1: Detailed version history

Version	Date	Major changes
1	October 2022	Guidelines approved by Council