

# Guidance on the Code of Conduct and Practices for its Implementation 2021–2025

## Preamble

Each SSC member pledges to achieve the high standards of IUCN Commissions, as established in the [Code of Conduct of the members of IUCN Commissions](#), adopted by IUCN Council on 17 August 2016.

This document aims to provide additional guidance for compliance with the Code of Conduct as well as establish practices for its implementation within SSC, in accordance with Article 8 of SSC By-laws 2021-2024.

## 1. On the purpose and scope of the Code of Conduct

1.1. The purpose of the Code of Conduct is to guide the actions of SSC, its leaders, and its members, particularly when acting on behalf of or in the name of IUCN, SSC and/or any of its groups. For purposes of the Code of Conduct, the phrase “the rights and responsibilities of SSC or any SSC member” shall include the rights and responsibilities of groups within SSC. Similarly, where a group has adopted governing documents of the group in accordance with the SSC’s governing documents, they shall be accorded the same respect and obligation as the governing documents of the SSC. Where the Code of Conduct refers to actions or statements by, within or on behalf of SSC, it shall include such actions or statements by or on behalf of its groups; and where it speaks of assets or property of SSC, that reference shall include assets or property of its groups, without implying any independent right of the SSC to control such assets or property.

1.2. The Code of Conduct applies in addition to, and does not alter, any (collective or individual) member shall T



maintain and safeguard the confidentiality of all collegial discussions, including listservers, website discussions on restricted portals, and email exchanges, except with the express agreement of any individual whom a member might wish to quote, paraphrase or name. All members also should comply with the General Data Protection Regulation of the European Union. See more details on this regard in the IUCN policies below.

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- Any person may, within a reasonable time following referral to the Commission Chair or designee, request that the matter be referred to the designated IUCN Vice Presidents who constitute the Ethics Committee of the IUCN Council.
- In their discretion, that Committee may issue guidance regarding the matter, through the Commission Chair as a member of Council, taking into account the authority of the SSC's leadership, as set out in the relevant terms of reference and in the SSC's By-laws and any relevant non-conflicting bylaw, rule, regulation, statute, Council decision or Congress resolution of IUCN.

When a Code of Conduct concern is disclosed, the person receiving the claim should bear the following in mind:

- Listen.
- Empathise with the person.
- Ask who, when, where, what but not why.
- Repeat/ check your understanding of the situation.
- Report to the corresponding SSC group leader, or to the SSC Chair.

Reports can reach the SSC Chair through several routes. This may be in a structured format such as a letter, e-mail, text or message on social media. It may also be in the form of informal discussion. If a SSC member hears something in an informal discussion or chat that they think is a violation of the Code of Conduct, they should report this to their respective Chair or to the Chair of the SSC (or his/her designee).

The person receiving the report should then document the information, using an Incident Report Form (attached as Annex 1). Due to the sensitive nature of violations to the Code of Conduct, confidentiality will be maintained during all stages of the reporting process, and information shared on a limited 'need to know' basis only.

SSC Chair (or his/her designee) will record data relating to the case and create a database of incidents to follow-up, when needed, and to feed into learning for dealing with future cases, as well as being able to detect repeated offences, always guaranteeing confidentiality.

As is mentioned in the Code of Conduct under the heading "Response to Violations of this Code of Conduct" the first action the SSC Chair or his/her designee is called to take is "to request that the person(s) engaging in the violation cease such behavior".

Nevertheless, some breaches of the Code of Conduct could be severe and require harsher penalties, even on a first offence. Major infractions can include acts of violence, threats toward colleagues, theft or abuse of power. In those cases, the SSC Chair or his/her designee will evaluate the case carefully to determine if the action required could be a warning or if further legal action must be taken, and in the most extreme cases, proceed with the termination of the relationship of the person(s) with SSC and its groups.

The SSC Chair's Office will implement a regular communication plan to build awareness and promote adequate implementation of the Code of Conduct across SSC, its groups and relevant stakeholders,

ensuring the SSC members know and embrace the Code of Conduct. The plan will include but is not limited to:

- Making the Code of Conduct, this Guidance and all the material related available on SSC's website.
- Developing a communication campaign to disseminate the Code of Conduct and this Guidance through the different SSC channels and media: annual and quarterly reports, Chair messages, social media, SSC mailing list, etc.
- Engaging SSC Leaders and members to take part in awareness raising and communication activities to disseminate and implement the Code of Conduct and this Guidance widely.

#### [Annex 1 - Incident Report Template](#)

This form should be used by the SSC Chair's Office to record claims of violations to the [Code of Conduct](#) within the SSC.

All the information must be treated as confidential and reported only to the SSC Chair or to any person that has been designated as responsible for such matters. Completing this record should not stand in the way of contacting Police or Social Services in the event of an emergency or urgent safeguarding incident.

[Report form](#)

