

# Ecological Society of America Code Of Ethics

As Amended May 2013

**Preamble:** This code provides guiding principles of conduct for all members of the Ecological Society of America and all ecologists certified by the Society. It is the desire and purpose of the Society to support and encourage ecological research and education, and to facilitate the application of ecological science in the management of ecological systems. Towards these ends, this Code is intended to further ecological understanding through the open and honest communication of research; to assure appropriate accessibility of accurate and reliable ecological information to employers, policy makers, and the public; and to encourage effective education and training in the disciplines of ecological science. Individuals aware of breaches of this Code are encouraged to refer to the Society's procedures for addressing violations of the Code, and to communicate with the Society's Executive Director who will explain the code and process.

**General:** All members of the Ecological Society of America and all ecologists certified by the Society should observe the following principles in the conduct of their professional affairs

1. Ecologists will offer professional advice and guidance only on those subjects in which they are informed and qualified through professional training or experience. They will strive to accurately represent ecological understanding and knowledge and to avoid and discourage dissemination of erroneous, biased, or exaggerated statements about ecology.
2. Ecologists will not represent themselves as spokespersons for the Society without express authorization by the President of ESA.
3. Ecologists will cooperate with other researchers whenever possible and appropriate to assure rapid interchange and dissemination of ecological knowledge.
4. Ecologists will not plagiarize in verbal or written communication, but will give full and proper credit to the works and ideas of others, and make every effort to avoid misrepresentation.
5. Ecologists will not fabricate, falsify, or suppress results, deliberately misrepresent research findings, or otherwise commit scientific fraud.
6. Ecologists will conduct their research so as to avoid or minimize adverse environmental effects of their presence and activities, and in compliance with legal requirements for protection of researchers, human subjects, or research organisms and systems.
7. Ecologists will, to the extent practicable, engage meaningfully with the communities in which they practice to promote teaching, learning and an understanding of their study; broaden the participation of underrepresented groups; enhance local infrastructure for research and education; and disseminate results broadly to benefit the local community.
8. Ecologists will not discriminate against others, in the course of their work on the basis of gender, sexual orientation, marital status, creed, religion, race, color, national origin, age, economic status, disability, or organizational affiliation.
9. Ecologists will not practice or condone harassment in any form in any professional context.
10. In communications, ecologists should clearly differentiate facts, opinions, and hypotheses.

11. Ecologists will not seek employment, grants, or gain, nor attempt to injure the reputation or professional opportunities of another scientist by false, biased, or undocumented claims, by offers of gifts or favors, or by any other malicious action.

**Certified Ecologists:** Ecologists certified by the Ecological Society of America are expected to adhere to all sections of the Code; the following principles apply particularly to such individuals.

1. Certified ecologists will present evidence of their qualifications, including professional training, publications, and experience, when requested in connection with their work as a certified ecologist.
2. Certified ecologists will inform a prospective or current employer or client of any professional or personal interests which may impair the objectivity of their work, and, upon request, provide clients and employers with this Code.
3. Certified ecologists will respect requests for confidentiality from their employers or clients, provided that such confidentiality does not require violation of this Code or of legal statutes. Should conflicts arise between maintenance of confidentiality and legal or ethical standards, certified ecologists should advise clients or employers of the conflict in writing.
4. In seeking employment through bids, certified ecologists will describe salaries and fees and the extent and kinds of service to be rendered as accurately and fully as possible.
5. Certified ecologists should use resources available to them through institutional employment, in performance of work contracted independently of their employing institution, only with the full knowledge and consent of the employing institution. Inappropriate use of access to institutional resources should be avoided; the appropriateness of particular uses of institutional resources should be addressed by the employing institution.
6. Certified ecologists will accept compensation for a particular service or report from one source only, except with the full knowledge and consent of all concerned parties.
7. Certified ecologists will utilize, or recommend utilization of appropriate experts whenever such action is essential to solving a problem.
8. Certified ecologists will not knowingly associate professionally with, or allow the use of their names, reports, maps, or other technical materials by any enterprise known to be illegal or fraudulent.
9. Certified ecologists may advertise their services, but may not use misleading, false, or deceptive advertising. If Society certification is noted in advertisement, the level of certification must be included.

**Publication:** The following principles of ethical professional conduct apply to members reviewing, editing, or publishing grant proposals and papers in the professional literature in general, and particularly to all ecologists seeking publication in the Society's journals.

1. Researchers will claim authorship of a paper only if they have made a substantial contribution. Authorship may legitimately be claimed if researchers
  - A. conceived the ideas or experimental design;
  - B. participated actively in execution of the study;
  - C. analyzed and interpreted the data; or

D. wrote the manuscript.

2. Researchers will not add or delete authors from a manuscript submitted for publication without consent of those authors.
3. Researchers will not include as coauthor(s) any individual who has not agreed to the content of the final version of the manuscript.
4. Researchers will not submit for publication any manuscript containing data they are not authorized to use. ESA assumes the principal investigator(s) of a research project retain the right to control use of resulting unpublished data unless otherwise specified by contract or explicit agreement.
5. Researchers will not represent research results as new if they have been published or submitted elsewhere, or submit a manuscript for publication while it is under review for possible publication elsewhere.
6. Editors or reviewers will treat manuscripts under review as confidential, recognizing them as intellectual property of the author(s).
7. When using ideas or results of others in manuscripts submitted for publication, researchers will give full attribution of sources. If the ideas or results have not been published, they may not be used without permission of the original researcher. Illustrations or tables from other publications or manuscripts may be used only with permission of the copyright owner.
8. Ecologists will not serve as editors or reviewers of a manuscript if present or past connections with the author or the author's institution may prevent objective evaluation of the work.
9. Ecologists will not purposefully delay publication of another person's manuscript to gain advantage over that person.
10. Ecologists submitting manuscripts for publication will promptly report to editors any errors in research results or interpretations discovered after submission or publication.