

International Sea Turtle Society
Response to Violations of the Code of Ethical Conduct for ISTS Events and
Business

15th August 2019

- An ISTS Ethics Officer shall be appointed by the ISTS Board of Directors (BoD). The name and contact information for the Ethics Officer will be made available to all Members and included with information about each Symposium.
- Concerns or complaints about actions by any ISTS Member and/or participant in any ISTS event or during ISTS business that are in contravention of this code should be made to the ISTS Ethics Officer or any Member of the ISTS BoD for further investigation.
- Complainants concerned with unethical conduct will be encouraged to address issues in the most relevant forum. For example, if a paper is published without appropriate acknowledgement of a person's contributions, the complainant should first raise the issue with their institution or organization or the publisher of the article.
- Any behavior that is thought by the complainant to be criminal in nature should be immediately reported to the proper authorities first.
- The ISTS Ethics Officer shall coordinate timely, objective and meaningful investigation of complaints in consultation with the ISTS BoD, except when the Ethics Officer is the subject of a complaint or when there is a conflict of interest as determined by the BoD.
- If a complaint is made against a Board Member, including the President or the ISTS Ethics Officer, that Member shall not be involved in the process of responding to a complaint.
- The normal process of responding to a complaint shall be as follows:
 - The complainant informs the ISTS Ethics Officer or other ISTS BoD Member of their concern.
 - If it is determined that the subject of the complaint poses a direct and immediate physical threat to other Society Members, they may be requested to immediately leave ISTS events without the necessity of formal proceedings. Appropriate additional actions, if any, may be pursued at a later time through the normal process.
 - If there is no immediate threat, and the complainant wishes to proceed, they are requested to submit a detailed written complaint to the ISTS BoD.
 - The ISTS BoD will contact the subject of the complaint, inform them of the nature of the complaint, and request a written defense from them within two weeks from the date of request.

- Both the complainant and the subject of the complaint have the right to request individual time to speak to the ISTS BoD at its next regularly scheduled meeting.
 - The ISTS BoD will then deliberate and decide on the appropriate course of action after all information has been obtained from both parties.
- The ISTS recognizes that false allegations of misconduct can damage professional relationships and careers. To ensure the fairest Society response to contraventions of the ISTS Code of Ethical Conduct for ISTS Events and Business, all votes that are taken to determine the appropriate course of action will be decided with a $\frac{3}{4}$ majority of the BoD.
- Individuals who make maliciously false allegations of misconduct will be regarded as contravening the ISTS Code of Ethical Conduct for ISTS Events and Business.
- ISTS Members and/or participants in ISTS events whose actions are determined to be in contravention of the ISTS Code of Ethical Conduct for ISTS Events and Business may receive a verbal and/or written warning, be removed from the Membership, and/or excluded from Society activities depending on the severity and/or outcome of their actions.
- Anyone requested to stop unacceptable behavior, including but not limited to harassment, intimidation or discrimination, at ISTS events is expected to comply immediately.

Acknowledgment- The ISTS Code of Ethical Conduct draws in part upon concepts and language used in the Codes of several other organizations, including the IUCN SSC (MTSG), Society for Conservation Biology, and Ecological Society of America. The International Sea Turtle Society acknowledges, and greatly appreciates, the contributions of these documents as reference materials.