

## IAVS CODE OF PROFESSIONAL ETHICS

### A. Preamble:

This Code provides guiding principles of conduct for all members of the International Association for Vegetation Science (IAVS) in their professional activities as vegetation scientists, whether in the context of paid employment or otherwise. The Code also establishes standards to be followed in submission of manuscripts for publication in the Association's journals. The goals of the Association include promoting research in vegetation science and its applications, and providing mechanisms and opportunities for vegetation scientists to communicate with each other and with those who might benefit from the work. This Code supports those goals by establishing standards and mechanisms to help ensure ethical practices and reliable, honest communication in the field of vegetation science, particularly, but not exclusively, in the publications and activities of IAVS.

### B. General Guidelines:

IAVS advocates observation of the following principles by all vegetation scientists in their professional affairs, particularly, but not exclusively in their participation in the publications and activities of IAVS.

#### 1. *In relation to the Association:*

- a. Members of IAVS will not represent themselves as spokespersons for the Association unless expressly authorized by appropriate officers of the Governing Board or charged as spokespersons by Council or General Assembly.

#### 2. *In their work as vegetation scientists:*

- a. Members of IAVS will cooperate with other researchers whenever possible and appropriate to ensure rapid interchange and dissemination of their findings.
- b. Members of IAVS 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 of those works and ideas.
- c. Members of IAVS will not fabricate or falsify results, deliberately misrepresent research findings, or otherwise commit scientific fraud.
- d. Members of IAVS will conduct their research so as to 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.

#### 3. *In their professional relationships with others:*

- a. Members of IAVS will not practice or condone harassment of any sort in any professional context; they will not discriminate against others, in the course of their work,

on the basis of gender, sexual orientation, marital status, creed, religion, race, national origin, age, economic status, disability, or organizational affiliation.

b. Members of IAVS 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.

### **C. Publication Guidelines:**

The following principles of ethical professional conduct apply to IAVS members reviewing, editing, or submitting papers for publication in the professional literature in general. They should be seen as applying, where pertinent, to abstracts for meeting presentations and to grant proposals. They will be enforced particularly with respect to all manuscripts submitted to the Association's journals. IAVS subscribes to the general guidelines and best practices in publication ethics laid out by Wiley Blackwell, and incorporates these guidelines in the implementation of the IAVS Code of Ethics."

#### *1. Authorship:*

a. Researchers will claim authorship of a paper only if they have made a substantial contribution. Authorship may legitimately be claimed if researchers:

- i. conceived the ideas or questions addressed by the paper;
- ii. designed sampling or experiments that generated new data reported;
- iii. contributed to new analyses or interpretation of data, or to development of new models or simulations;
- iv. developed new analyses or meta-analyses of data drawn from peer-reviewed publications (such reanalysis or meta-analysis may not require authorship of original authors of data-sets); or
- iv. wrote the manuscript.

b. Submission of manuscripts emerging from committees or working groups should include documentation that all participants have agreed on authorship or are included in the authors list

c. Individuals or organizations funding or otherwise supporting research should be appropriately acknowledged. Both researchers and supporting individuals or organizations should establish a clear prior understanding concerning appropriate forms of recognition.

d. Researchers submitting a manuscript for publication will not include as a coauthor any individual who has not agreed to the content of the final version of the manuscript if practicable; coauthors should be dropped only if they specifically request removal from the manuscript or after lead authors have attempted unsuccessfully to contact them for approval of the manuscript.

#### *2. Use and presentation of data:*

- a. Researchers will not submit for publication any manuscript containing data they are not authorized to use. IAVS assumes that the principal investigator(s) of a research project retain(s) the right to control use of resulting unpublished data unless otherwise specified by contract or explicit agreement. Authors submitting manuscripts using data from data-banks should verify that their use of data is consistent with any restrictions or rules set by that source.
- b. Researchers will not represent research results as new if they have been published or submitted elsewhere, or submit a manuscript for publication while it or a substantial part of it, is under review for possible publication elsewhere. This guideline applies primarily to peer-reviewed publication; prior publication of some aspects of a study in dissertation form, in non-peer-reviewed literature, or in popular media may not be considered previous publication in this context, particularly if data and analyses were not fully described.
- c. IAVS encourages making original data-sets and metadata available through online databases or other forms of data publication. Such publication should not be seen as constraining subsequent and separate peer-reviewed publication by original researchers of new analyses and interpretation using these data-sets.
- d. 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, who must also be explicitly acknowledged. Illustrations or tables from other publications or manuscripts may be used only with permission of the copyright owner and acknowledgment of the source.
- e. IAVS members submitting manuscripts for publication will promptly report to editors any significant errors discovered after submission or publication; this guideline concerns, particularly, errors that might lead to changed interpretation of results.

### *3. Expectations of editors and referees*

- a. Editors and referees will treat manuscripts under review as confidential, recognizing them as intellectual property of the author(s).
- b. IAVS members invited to serve as editors or referees of a manuscript should report any present or past connections with the author or the author's institution that would potentially be seen as preventing objective evaluation of the work; handling or managing editors may determine whether possible conflicts of interest preclude such service.
- c. IAVS members will not purposefully delay publication of another person's manuscript to gain advantage over that person.

### **D. Enforcement, Review, and Amendment:**

IAVS advocates the application of the above principles in the practice of vegetation science generally. All participants in the Association's activities -- including the Association's journals, meetings, and conferences organized or sponsored by the Association, and excursions

and field-trips conducted under Association auspices -- are particularly expected to adhere to the Code and the Association reserves the option of enacting penalties in response to violations of the Code in the context of Association activities.

IAVS will undertake to make its membership and researchers submitting to its journals aware of its Code of Professional Ethics, through references in its publications and on its website and by other means as appropriate. The Association's Governing Board and Chief Editors will develop operating policies and procedures that implement the ethical guidelines stated in this Code. Members or other scientists becoming aware of suspected violations of the Code are encouraged to bring their concerns to a member of the Association's Governing Board or, if the suspected violation concerns the Association's publications, to one of its Chief Editors.

Assessment of and response to possible violations of the Code will be in the hands of the Chief Editors for matters pertaining to the Association's publications or of appropriate members of the Governing Board (excluding the President). Responses to violations might include, but are not limited to: rejection of a particular manuscript; banning, for some term, from publication in Association journals; banning from IAVS membership or participation in IAVS activities; or communication of concerns to the violator's employer.

Appeals of any such actions may be made to the President of IAVS, who may choose to appoint up to two other members of the Association as an *ad hoc* committee to assist him or her in investigating a particular appeal and to make recommendations. The President's decision will be final with respect to IAVS actions.

This Code will go into effect upon adoption by the IAVS Governing Board and Council, and the Governing Board may, at any time following adoption, choose to amend the Code or to appoint a committee to review the Code and propose amendments.