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# Code of Conduct

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## **WRI's Mission & Values**

World Resources Institute (WRI) is a global research organization that turns big ideas into action at the nexus of environment, economic opportunity, and human well-being. Our mission is to move human society to live in the ways that protect Earth's environment and its capacity to provide for the needs and aspirations of current and future generations.

Our mission and values define WRI as an institution. Our values are not rules, but shared ideals and understanding that bind us together. Along with our mission, they articulate who we are and what we believe, influence our goals, guide our actions, and help us to explain our aspirations to others.

WRI's values are:

1. Integrity
2. Innovation
3. Respect
4. Independence
5. Urgency

These values underlie all the work we do, and we believe that change in human behavior is urgently needed to halt the accelerating rate of environmental deterioration. However, we will not allow the urgency of our mission to detract from or sacrifice our other values, our responsibilities as a nonprofit organization, nor our commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion in all facets of our work. This Code of Conduct exists for us to use regularly as a practical resource to guide our decisions and actions in a manner that upholds our values and achieves our mission.

## **Purpose**

This Code of Conduct provides a comprehensive set of standards of behavior for all WRI employees, members of the Board of Directors, consultants, partners, interns, independent contractors, secondees, fellows, and agents.

WRI operates in countries around the world and celebrates the diversity of people, thoughts, opinions and practices our broad geographic remit provides. As we learn and follow the different customs of a particular place, we must remain committed to WRI's values, especially in instances where local practices conflict with our Code of Conduct. Only through the consistent application of our values can we truly reflect WRI and its purpose.

WRI's Code of Conduct should also be used to make informed decisions about how WRI and its related projects and initiatives should operate. When faced with a difficult decision, WRI team

members should try to answer the following three questions: (1) is it legal? (2) does it uphold WRI's values? and (3) how should we do it?

Assuming the answers to questions 1 and 2 are yes, then this Code of Conduct and associated WRI policies will provide useful guidance on the best way to move forward. If you are ever unsure about the answer to any of these questions or about how to design an action plan based on the Code of Conduct and our policies, you can ask for guidance from the [General Counsel](#), the primary point of contact for the policy in question, or any member of WRI's leadership team.

## Sustainability

WRI is determined to “walk the talk” in all aspects of our work. Our Sustainability Initiative leverages our expertise in climate, energy, cities, and food, land, and water to reduce the environmental impact of our own operations. Since 1999, WRI has been demonstrating our internal ambitions with open and accessible greenhouse gas (GHG) data and setting ambitious science-based targets (SBT) for absolute emissions reductions (e.g., [WRI's public sustainability dashboard](#)).

To help us achieve our ambitious goals, WRI has implemented several institutional policies and initiatives designed to ensure we all follow sustainable procurement practices (e.g., [WRI's Sustainable Products and Services Purchasing Guide](#), [Catering & Events Policy](#)), minimize waste (e.g., [Zero Waste Guidelines](#)), and reduce travel emissions for business trips and day-to-day commuting (e.g., [WRI's Carbon Tax](#), [Sustainable Travel Policy](#)).

For a full overview of WRI's sustainability initiatives, please review the [Sustainability Page on Banyan](#).

## Our Responsibility to Report

WRI is committed to ensuring that it maintains the highest ethical and legal standards in everything it does. WRI's core value of integrity requires all WRI employees, officers, and directors to conduct their activities in an honest and ethical way.

Any employee who believes that WRI, through the acts of any of its employees or agents, is in violation of the law or our ethical obligations, should report it immediately in accordance with WRI's institutional [Whistleblower Policy](#)<sup>1</sup> WRI does not want individuals to wait until a problem becomes overwhelming, extreme, severe, or pervasive. We are committed to stopping

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<sup>1</sup> For the India Resources Trust office, individuals may report online at <https://wri-india.integritymatters.in> or via email at [report@integritymatters.in](mailto:report@integritymatters.in).

inappropriate behavior as early as possible because the sooner we are able to act, the better we are able to prevent or mitigate harm and to find solutions that align with our values and commitment to cultivating and maintaining [equitable and inclusive working environments](#).

To report, you may contact your direct supervisor, your project manager, a member of the [Human Resources team](#), a member of the [Legal team](#), a member of [WRI's leadership](#), or submit an anonymous report through the [EthicsPoint hotline](#) or [Integrity Matters](#) (India Resources Trust's reporting service).

WRI takes all reports seriously. No employee, officer, or director who in good faith reports a violation will suffer harassment, retaliation, or adverse employment consequences for making a report. Any employee who retaliates against someone who has reported a violation in good faith will be subject to disciplinary actions, up to and including termination of employment.

## **Commitment to a Safe, Equitable, and Inclusive Workplace**

WRI welcomes, values, and promotes diversity, equity, and inclusion in its global workforce and across all areas of our work. We believe that integrating these values into every action is morally right. It also increases our impact and fosters an innovative, more collaborative organizational culture, and safer workplace for all.

As such, WRI is an equal opportunity employer and is committed to ensuring equal opportunity and fair treatment of all its business activities without regard to any personal characteristic or status protected under any country, federal, regional, state, or other local law. The [Global Safe, Equitable, and Inclusive Workplace Policy](#) (SEIW Policy) best reflects this commitment and outlines how each of us at WRI is responsible for creating a welcoming work environment for all.

The SEIW Policy applies to all employees throughout all WRI locations and applies to behavior that affects a WRI employee or is carried out by a WRI employee, within or outside of the workplace. The Policy defines permissible behavior regarding interpersonal interactions, in alignment with our "[Greening the Workplace](#)" training, as well as non-permissible, inappropriate behavior, such as bullying, harassment, discrimination, and retaliation. In accordance with our [Whistleblower Policy](#), the SEIW Policy also provides an institute-wide process for reporting and investigating accounts of any inappropriate behavior.

Other matters of institutional equity and safety are also addressed in the SEIW policy, including pay transparency and accommodation for disabilities. If you have any questions about the SEIW Policy or how it is implemented in your office, please contact the [Employee Relations team](#).

## Health, Safety & Security

WRI fundamentally believes that all people deserve respect, and we ensure human dignity, human rights, fundamental freedoms, and every individual's welfare is protected throughout all our work. To effectively protect the populations we serve, the partners we work with, and our staff, we have developed several policies to ensure the health, safety, and wellbeing of everyone within the WRI community.

### Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) & Safeguarding

WRI is committed to preventing all forms of sexual exploitation and abuse and takes special care to safeguard vulnerable communities and any children under the age of 18 against financial manipulation, sexual or emotional abuse, or neglect.

WRI employees, interns, members of the Board of Directors, consultants, partners, vendors, independent contractors, and agents are prohibited from engaging in any form of sexual exploitation or abuse, especially towards any person participating in a WRI or WRI subaward recipient program or project.

WRI's [Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse](#), [Modern Day Slavery and Anti-Trafficking](#), and [Safeguarding Policies](#) provide more information on prohibited behavior of all WRI staff, partners, and contractors, and outlines how anyone can report suspicions or allegations of any kind of abuse or exploitation to the [Human Resources Team](#) or through our anonymous reporting [hotline](#).

### Human Subject Protection (HSP)

WRI has developed robust policies and processes designed to protect the rights, welfare, and wellbeing of human subjects in all our work. Given the nature of our work, these policies and processes focus on protecting personally identifiable information and sensitive information to ensure no information is improperly handled, thereby damaging an individual's social, financial or employment standing. More information about our Human Subject Protections policies, including when/how project teams should consult with the Research Integrity team, is available on the [HSP Banyan page](#).

### Duty of Care

To ensure safe practices and the health and wellbeing of our staff, WRI is committed to acting in the best interests of the people we support. This includes:

- Providing a safe working environment,



- Supporting staff with training, information, and instruction so they can safely undertake their respective roles,
- Listening to and investigating complaints,
- Establishing and maintaining office emergency plans and protocols to address travel-related issues,
- Monitoring the conditions of working environments,
- Conducting risk assessments to identify hazards and risks, and implementing appropriate control measures where needed, and
- Ensuring WRI has adequate insurance policies in place to cover employees and the people our projects support.

WRI's Duty of Care can only function when our team members are equally committed to undertaking their work with care and complying with all instructions, training, and policies provided by WRI. Likewise, we encourage our team members to speak up whenever WRI's working environment or safety procedures could be improved or if you suspect a policy violation. Should an issue arise, you can contact your immediate supervisor, the [Human Resources Team](#), or any member of WRI's leadership team. All staff are strongly encouraged to review WRI's [Whistleblower Policy](#) and the institutional [policy library on Banyan](#).

## Code of Ethics

WRI staff regularly make decisions with ethical consequences, therefore we expect the highest standards of ethical, moral, and professional business conduct from all employees and directors. In a landscape where our work has increasing influence, reach, and impact, it is crucial to empower our teams with the tools and guidance to make informed decisions and to better understand the implications of those decisions.

The following section outlines WRI's key policies and principles on ethical behavior. All staff must regularly review these policies and embody them when conducting work on behalf of WRI. If you are ever in doubt, you can rely on this Code of Conduct to provide appropriate guidance to ensure your work maintains WRI's ethical standards and know that the Institute will stand by you. If you are ever unsure of how to apply this Code of Conduct to your day-to-day work, you are encouraged to speak with your program's leadership or WRI's [General Counsel](#).

## Anti-Fraud

WRI is committed to preventing and detecting all forms of fraud.

Fraud is any wrongful or criminal deception intended to result in financial or personal gain. WRI employees, members of the Board of Directors, interns, board members, consultants, partners, independent contractors, and agents are prohibited from engaging in any fraud or otherwise dishonest activity.

WRI will identify and promptly investigate all suspected fraudulent behavior against WRI or any partner organization. If an investigation proves that fraud occurred, WRI will take appropriate disciplinary actions which may include termination of employment and, if appropriate, legal action.

WRI strongly encourages employees to share any questions, concerns, suggestions, or complaints with their manager. However, if you are not comfortable speaking with your supervisor or you are not satisfied with your supervisor's response, you are encouraged to speak with someone in the [Core Finance Team](#), the [General Counsel](#), [Human Resources](#), or anyone in management you are comfortable approaching. Supervisors and managers must report suspected violations directly to the [Chief Financial Officer \(CFO\)](#).

Violations or suspected violations of this policy may also be submitted anonymously through the [EthicsPoint hotline](#). Reports of violations or suspected violations will be kept confidential to the extent possible, although limited disclosure may be necessary to conduct an adequate investigation or if disclosure is compelled by law. More information about what constitutes fraud and the steps WRI will take to investigate can be found in WRI's [Fraud Prevention and Control Policy](#).

### **Anti-Bribery & Corruption**

WRI staff must not participate in any acts of bribery, corruption, or money laundering.

Bribery occurs when a person offers, pays, seeks, or accepts a payment, gift, or favor to influence a business outcome improperly, or fails to prevent such actions. Facilitation payments are unofficial payments made to public officials to secure or expedite the performance of a routine action and are also considered bribes. All directors and staff are prohibited from accepting or offering any bribes and must report any attempted bribery to the [Chief Financial Officer](#) or the [General Counsel](#).

Money laundering occurs when the proceeds of crime are hidden in legitimate business dealings, or when legitimate funds are used to support criminal activities. All companies are at risk of being exploited in this way and we must be on guard to protect WRI's reputation and ensure we comply with the law. Everyone at WRI must comply with the anti-money laundering laws of the countries in which we operate, as well as all international regulations.



Further information about WRI's anti-bribery, money laundering, and anti-corruption policy is available on [Banyan](#).

### **Ensuring WRI's Independence**

To safeguard against the possible suggestion that WRI's research and recommendations have been unduly influenced or "bought" by corporate interests, WRI must ensure that there is not a clear conflict of interest in accepting funding from a particular company or sector. As such, WRI does not accept funding from coal, integrated Oil & Gas (O&G) majors, or national O&G companies.

Additional details on WRI's approach to handling donations and vetting which organizations we partner with are outlined in the [Corporate Vetting Policy](#) and the [In-Kind Gift Tracking Guidelines](#).

Beyond larger donations to fund specific projects, all WRI staff must be wary of the potential conflict of interest posed by giving and receiving smaller gifts, such as branded promotional materials or meals and other foodstuffs.

If you are ever unsure of how to respond when presented with a gift from another organization, you can contact your manager or the local Operations and Accounting Teams.

### **Conflict of Interest**

All WRI staff are prohibited from using their positions within WRI in any manner that is contrary to the best interests of WRI, or to promote their own business or personal interests, or those of family, friends, and business partners.

The existence or even the perception of a conflict of interest can damage WRI's reputation, effectiveness, and relationships with our funders and stakeholders. An extensive list of potential conflicts of interest a WRI employee could face, as well as WRI's disclosure and recusal procedures, are outlined in the [Conflict of Interest Policy](#).

As always, any questions about what constitutes a conflict of interest can be brought to the General Counsel. All suspected conflicts of interest should be reported to local [WRI management](#), the [CFO](#) or [General Counsel](#), or submitted anonymously to the [EthicsPoint hotline](#).

