



Attachment A - Coral Restoration Consortium - Code of Ethics

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Introduction

The Coral Restoration Consortium (CRC) brings together diverse restoration practitioners and researchers from many institutions, countries, and cultures. Therefore, in order to fulfill our charge and achieve our goals the CRC must be able to speak with authority, credibility, and a singular voice that places the conservation of corals and their ecosystems first. To achieve these goals, the CRC must have unwavering confidence by the public, politicians, the research and conservation communities and, most importantly, amongst the CRC members themselves. It is a necessity, and therefore an obligation of every individual member from all affiliations to maintain the highest standards of ethical integrity.

One of the goals of the CRC is to promote the exchange of information and ideas from current and future projects that will help advance this field of work to recover depleted coral populations. To achieve this, participants must be confident that the information shared will be utilized in an ethical manner that safeguards the concept of intellectual property, regardless of whether the work was done on behalf of the CRC or another entity. All CRC members must adhere to the following guidelines regarding the appropriate use of shared information.

Member Code of Ethics

Regarding the Organisms and Ecosystems in our Charge

- Assisting in achieving the conservation and survival of species must be the aim of all members of the profession. Any actions taken in relation to an individual animal (e.g. euthanasia or contraception) must be undertaken with this higher ideal of species survival in mind, but the welfare of the individual animal should not be knowingly compromised unless as a potential result of experimental design.
- Recognize the moral responsibilities of the individual and the institution to the animals under our care, as well as to the public, our employees, and our professional associates.
- Minimize and justify any adverse effects your work may have on people, animals, and the natural environment.

- Promote the interests of wildlife conservation, biodiversity, and animal welfare to the public and to colleagues.
- Cooperate with the wider conservation community including wildlife agencies, conservation organizations, and research institutions to assist in maintaining global biodiversity.
- Cooperate with governments and other appropriate bodies to improve standards of animal welfare, protection of natural habitat, and the general welfare of organisms both in our charge and in the wild.
- The CRC feels that more important than restoring ecosystems, we must preserve and protect reef ecosystems that exist today. While mitigation of unavoidable damage to reef environments is critically important, it is not the CRC's goal to facilitate, promote, or otherwise condone mitigation for avoidable reef destruction.

Regarding the public, media, and all stakeholders

CRC members shall:

- Use only legal and ethical means when seeking to influence governmental legislation or regulations.
- Maintain high standards of personal, professional, and business conduct and behavior.
- Not knowingly engage in activities contrary to local, state/territorial, federal, or international law, as such laws relate to our work and profession.
- Encourage research and dissemination of achievements and results in appropriate publications and forums.
- Seek to discuss the issues that our science and conservation work raises for society. Listen to the aspirations and concerns of others.
- Not knowingly mislead, or allow others to be misled, about scientific matters. Present and review scientific evidence, theory, or interpretation honestly and accurately.

Regarding Professional Colleagues

CRC members shall:

- Display the highest integrity, the best judgement or ethics possible, and use of professional skills to the best interests of all.
- Deal fairly with members in the dissemination of professional information and advice, respecting the rights and reputations of others.
- Declare any conflicts of interests promptly and clearly, recusing oneself from further discussion as necessary.
- Keep in mind and appropriately respect that some of the information provided in meetings, on conference calls, and shared during project work may be considered intellectual property.

- Clearly state when a concept or method they are sharing is considered their intellectual property.
- Avoid utilizing or presenting ideas and methods obtained through the CRC without first obtaining explicit permission from the person presenting the information.
- Give full and proper credit to the work and ideas of others that participants gain through the CRC.
- Make every effort to avoid misrepresentation of the work presented by CRC members.
- Avoid making representations about the origins of well-established and widely utilized restoration methods, as these discussions do not provide a useful exchange of ideas.
- Not knowingly misinform others regarding records, information, experimental results, professional information, advice, etc.
- While members may represent their organization as an active member of the CRC, no one member/organization may speak on behalf of the entire CRC, unless in a formal leadership role with a responsibility to do so. It is not appropriate for any member to act, or be perceived to act, as leveraging the skills, resources, network, etc. of the CRC for any specific reason or personal gain, such as grant applications.
- In situations where a member feels it would be appropriate or advantageous to leverage the skills, resources, network, etc. of the CRC for the gain of a group of members or as part of a grant application, that member(s) must explicitly gain the permission of the CRC Steering Committee in writing.

Deviations from CRC's Code of Ethics

The work of the Consortium can only be achieved through the work of its members. Therefore, it is critically important that individual members maintain the highest ethical standards and professional integrity. The CRC is an informal membership group, where membership is entirely voluntary and the acceptance of a prospective member by the CRC is voluntary. Therefore, the Consortium Steering Committee has the right to deny admission, or exercise dismissal, of any member that it feels has violated either the letter or the spirit of the CRC's code of ethics.

References and Resources:

- [Association of Zoos and Aquariums, Code of Ethics](#)
- [International Coral Reef Society General Rules for Topic Chapters](#)
- [IUCN Guidelines for Applying the Precautionary Principle](#)
- [Universal Ethical Code for Scientists](#)
- [World Association of Zoos and Aquariums, Code of Ethics and Animal Welfare](#)

The mission of the CRC is to foster collaboration and technology transfer among coral restoration scientists, practitioners, and managers, and to facilitate a community of practice that will advance coral restoration to keep pace with rapidly changing ocean and environmental conditions.