

# **Code of Conduct**

## **for the Society for Tropical Ecology (gtö)**

(June 21<sup>st</sup>, 2023)

### **Preamble**

The Society for Tropical Ecology (gtö) promotes research on the ecology and conservation of tropical ecosystems and their unique biodiversity by connecting academics, researchers at all stages of their career, and practitioners from around the globe. We offer a platform for scientific exchange in the form of yearly conferences, an early-career group, an international peer-reviewed journal (Ecotropica), and provide research and travel grants to early career scientists.

In this context this Code of Conduct aims to guide the way in which all Society for Tropical Ecology (gtö) members work together and interact with one another to create a professional environment in which everyone feels safe, welcome and respected. It provides a common understanding of the shared values prevailing in gtö and guiding principles for all members and people participating in our events (such as conferences, student meetings etc.). These principles are relevant in all scientific contexts, e.g., when conducting field work, when organizing and participating in scientific conferences, or when publishing and communicating scientific results. We expect all members of the gtö to adhere to this code of conduct which will be reviewed at regular intervals. By having created this Code of Conduct in a joint effort and living it to the fullest, we aim to prevent any intended and unintended abuse of power by any member of our society.

### **Our values and guiding principles**

#### ***Awareness and openness***

We are aware of differences in cultural, religious, and social backgrounds, appearances, sexual orientations, gender, personal experience and abilities, and thrive for an open and inclusive environment that is reflected in the working atmosphere. We are willing to learn about different forms of discrimination to raise our own awareness. We are willing to continuously reevaluate and fine-tune this Code of Conduct.

#### ***Respect and appreciation***

We respect each individual, voice our appreciation, and in particular, seek to raise the self-confidence of early career scientists. We consider different personalities and personal circumstances in our daily interactions, as well as in all organizational matters of the Society for Tropical Ecology (gtö). We discuss rationally and refrain from demeaning, discriminatory, or harassing behaviour and speech directed to others. We thrive to create an environment where “No” is accepted as a “No”. If discussions are at loggerheads in matters which one or several of the parties involved consider important, we will seek help by a mediating person.

## ***Care***

We talk about and listen to each other's needs and expectations. We are responsive and take actions to offer solutions or support where appropriate and possible. In case of problems between individuals, we facilitate an open dialogue. We are committed to support the career development of young scientists and take their voices into account on all aspects of the Society for Tropical Ecology (gtö).

## ***Transparency***

We are transparent about expectations, regulations and decision-making processes, also by providing accessible information.

## ***Equality and diversity***

Everyone has to be treated equally. Someone's background should not affect how they and their work is perceived. We do not favor people over others and act professionally regardless of personal sympathies in the way we treat our colleagues and students. We thrive to treat everyone with equal kindness, respect and consideration, valuing the diversity of backgrounds, views and opinions (including those we may not share).

## ***Judgment neutrality***

We are aware of potential power imbalances among academics and how they can affect interactions between people. We aim to increase our awareness of the signs of such imbalances and of the damaging consequences of any misuse of power in the context of academic leadership and scientific exchange. Power imbalances should not affect how one and one's work is judged upon.

## ***Safety and Security***

We are committed to a safe, healthy, and violence-free work environment. We actively endeavor to eliminate harassment of all kinds and have no tolerance to it, whether by members of gtö, authors, conference hosts and participants, or by any other affiliation with gtö in the course of its operations.

Information for those potentially affected by breach of this Code of Conduct is made available at the webpage of the gtö and at conferences of the society. Please feel free to contact the early career group representative, mentors, or the person of trust of the society. Those affected by potential violation of this Code of Conduct are provided a safe and trustful environment where they are respected and can talk about their situation without being judged. We thrive to create a safe and trustful environment, where no one has to fear negative consequences for speaking out.

## ***Take action***

When this Code of Conduct is possibly violated, we take the incident seriously and we take action. We encourage everyone in gtö to do the same. In all actions taken, we respect those affected and we do not victimize them. We provide contact information for our person of trust on our webpage.

Where it is found that behavior constituting a breach of the gto Code of Conduct has occurred and is reported to the executive board by consent of those affected, action will be taken. Such action may include the revocation of membership, articles for publication in the society's journal, and awards that have/had been given by the society to individuals.