

Code of Professional Ethics for the Society of Marine Mammalogy

The mission of the Society for Marine Mammalogy (SMM) is to promote the global advancement of marine mammal science and contribute to its relevance and impact in education, science, conservation and management. To meet this goal, all marine mammal scientists should adhere to the following guiding principles¹:

1. Actively disseminate and share information to promote understanding of, and appreciation for, marine mammal science and its relevance to conservation, management and education as well as the broader body of science.
2. Advocate the use of reliable information, rigorous scientific methods, and credible inference in management decisions relevant to marine mammals.
3. Ensure that the uncertainty inherent in science, particularly as it applies to species and their interactions with their environment, is well communicated to those responsible for decisions on management and policy relevant to marine mammals.
4. Recognize their responsibility to scientific honesty, and avoid actions or omissions that may compromise their responsibility to conservation and science. Scientists will not fabricate, falsify, or suppress results, deliberately misrepresent research findings, represent others' findings as their own, or otherwise commit scientific fraud.
5. Clearly differentiate scientifically derived evidence from opinions, anecdotes and hypotheses in all communications. They will work to accurately represent knowledge of marine mammal science and to avoid and discourage, and if necessary correct the, dissemination of erroneous, biased, or exaggerated statements.
6. Scrupulously avoid plagiarism; acknowledge the limitations of their research design, data, and interpretation of results; disclose conflicts of interest; honestly discuss their findings; and attempt to correct misrepresentation of their research by others.
7. Treat their colleagues with respect and fairness and not discriminate against others, in the course of their work on the basis of gender, sexual orientation, marital status, creed, religion, opinion, race, color, national origin, age, economic status, disability, or organizational affiliation.
8. Support the peer review process in a constructive, objective and honest manner and on topics within the scientist's competence.
9. Refuse to allow personal interests, compensation, or personal relationships to interfere with professional judgment or advice.
10. Publish results in a timely manner in order to provide access to the findings to the broader community and avoid repeated experiments, including directly sharing with or making data available to the scientific community or other stakeholders.
11. Claim authorship of a publication or report only when they have contributed substantially to the conception, design, implementation, data collection, analysis, interpretation, and/or writing of the article. Ensure authorship order is reflective of roles in completing a paper.
12. Work to ensure that no colleague is unjustly deprived of his or her job, reputation, ability to publish, or scientific freedom as a result of his or her research efforts and opinions and will not inhibit others in their pursuit of science and management.

13. Protect the rights and welfare of human subjects used in research and obtain the informed consent of those subjects and any necessary legal obligations (e.g. human ethics committees) that may apply in the country in which the work takes place.
14. Obtain research permits as required by the appropriate agency or governing body, and conform to all animal welfare standards provided by such agencies. If no permits are required, or there are no animal welfare standards applicable to the research or researcher, operate under standards acceptable and accountable to the Society.
15. Adhere to the highest standards for treatment of animals used in research in a way that contributes positively to sustaining natural populations and ecosystems.
16. When working professionally, especially outside their region of residence, interact and collaborate with counterparts, confer regularly with appropriate officials, share information, involve colleagues and students in professional activities, contribute to local capacity-building, and equitably share the benefits arising from the use of local knowledge and practices as appropriate.
17. Contribute to the development of the marine mammal science community by sharing knowledge and mentoring scientists during their early careers.
18. Promote the entry of disadvantaged and under-represented individuals into marine mammal science. Seek ways to financially support early career experiences and mentor those who would otherwise be unable to participate in the field.
19. Fairly compensate all individuals involved in ongoing and planned research efforts. Fair compensation can include (but is not limited to) education, facilities support, stipends or salaries, residential provision, per diem, health insurance, travel and other benefits.

¹ This code of ethics has been modified from that of the Society for Conservation Biology (SCB). To learn more about the extensive effort the SCB undertook to compile this and approve this list or to see the original code, please visit <http://www.conbio.org/SCB/Information/Ethics/>