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Code of Ethics

Community of Practice

AGREEN

**CROSS-BORDER ALLIANCE FOR CLIMATE-SMART AND GREEN AGRICULTURE IN
THE BLACK SEA BASIN**



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Vision and applicability

This Code of Ethics expresses the ethical principles and values of the Community of Practice (COP) and serves as a guide to the professional conduct of all its members. It includes rules of conduct that follow the generally accepted human and business ethical norms of conduct and is composed to establish clear guidelines for the daily business and ethical conduct.

AGREEN COP is a group of professionals in the Black Sea Basin (BSB) who share interest and expertise in developing all aspects of climate-smart agriculture in the BSB. The group includes individual researchers, practitioners, entrepreneurs and producers as well as their sectoral organizations.

The Code reflects such values as integrity, collaboration, equality, competence and responsibility with an understanding of and respect for the cultural diversity.

The Code of Ethics is divided into sections that contain standards of conduct which are aligned with the above values identified as most important for the successful completion of the project.

Open communication and expression should be guided by the desire for a respectful, safe, and collaborative working environment.

Members of COP have a responsibility to ensure that they are familiar with this Code of Ethics, to understand its application to their professional conduct, and to strive to adhere to its principles and values.

Fundamental Principles of Work

Integrity

COP members should aim to always:

- act morally and ethically and not engage in dishonest behavior;
- treat each other with mutual respect, courtesy, honesty and conduct which shows respect to every person's dignity, regardless of gender, religion, origin or other differences;
- be honest and transparent in their communication and refrain from behavior that is designed to deceive others by making misleading or false statements,



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stating half-truths, providing information out of context or withholding information;

- put best efforts in their work and observe the agreed time-schedule of the project;
- provide accurate information in a timely manner;
- follow through on commitments and promises, namely the development of the R&D outputs and deliverables within the projects;
- be accountable for their actions.

Collaboration

- partners implement all activities in cooperation with each other;
- all information regarding the implementation of the project is shared among the partners so that all partners are able to follow the project development, to comment and to propose improvements;
- constructive feedback is provided if requested through an evaluation or informally by conversation.

Respect for others

COP members will:

- be kind, polite and understanding; respect others' personal space, opinions and privacy;
- avoid engaging in behaviors that might be considered as disrespectful;
- show respect and esteem of the knowledge, experience, capabilities and areas of competence of other researchers;
- recognize the strengths and accomplishments of others;
- value the time and workload of others;
- listen to others' points of views and perspectives, seeking to understand them;
- approach in direct conversation people with whom one might have a disagreement;
- conduct oneself in a professional manner at all times, even when it is not reciprocated;



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- not act in abusive manner towards other partners.

Responsibility and accountability

- perform their official duties and assigned tasks professionally and competently;
- accept assignments according to the project and provide readable and up-to-date texts to ensure that the deliverables presented at the end of the project are useful for the target groups and presentable to outside audiences;
- implement all activities that are planned within the project wisely and in a cost-efficient mode;
- sustain the project on a voluntary basis after its completion by providing consultations if requested;
- participate in the SEC meetings in person or on-line to organize and manage the R&D work in the project;
- come on time and prepared for the meetings;
- aim at enlarging its membership throughout the project with fellow professionals from other institutions;
- maintaining a high level of professional knowledge and skills and striving to upgrade them;
- protect the confidential information that has been entrusted upon them;
- report unethical conduct to the project coordinator.

Norms for Communicating with others

- Emails are preferred tool of communication and should be answered (if required) or acknowledged within 48 hours if no deadline is mentioned.
- The project Coordinator / LP is responsible for the communication with the Managing Authority and the JTS. To that end all the questions, suggestions and requests should be sent from the partners to the LP
- All messages in all partner countries shall follow the visualization requirements of the Black Sea Basin Program, including the incorporation of disclaimers, and shall use the visual brand that is developed for the project.



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- The agenda for the online or in-person meetings should be sent prior to the meeting.
- In their communication with one another, the COP members are equal. The relations between them are based on trust, tolerance, ethics and mutual assistance.
- Personal insults and unfriendly behavior are considered unacceptable and undignified.
- Any arguments, criticism and disagreements are to be settled by means of civilized methods and in open communication.

Norms of Conduct with the other members of COP

- building and maintaining relationships of respect, trust, cooperation and collegiality;
- exchange of information related to the completion of the assigned tasks;
- adherence to the principles of confidentiality when sharing information in the course of the joint professional interaction;
- preventing actions that would damage the prestige and authority of the partners;
- respect for the professional experience of other members;
- willingness to engage with knowledge and experience if partners need them;
- preventing the occurrence of conflict situations, and in the event of a professional conflict with a colleague, requesting assistance from the project coordinator stop it.

Inadmissible Practices

Plagiarism as one of the practices of deliberate fraud, is extremely unacceptable, as in science it is perceived as theft and has severe consequences for research. When publications and/or on-line content are used by COP members, appropriate acknowledgement shall be given to the authors and owners of the content. COP members accept the requirements for merit and



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recognition, insist on the correct use of other people's results and citations, while strongly opposing plagiarism.

The negligence in the research is also inadmissible because it is a deviation from the accepted standards in science - both methodological and ethical.

It is inadmissible due to negligence to violate the methodological norms of the respective research, as well as to present unverified and incorrect information, to sacrifice the quality of the scientific product because of quantity or speed.

All practices that are considered unethical in modern public life and organizational communication are inadmissible - discrimination, violence, abuse of resources, disloyalty, and violation of regulated behavior.

Conflict of Interest

If assigned an official task, the performance of which may lead to a conflict between the official duties and his/her private interests, the COP member performing the activity should promptly notify the project coordinator.

When a COP member has doubts whether an activity is compatible with his / her official duties, he / she should discuss this with his / her project coordinator.

Disciplinary Actions

COP members who repeatedly or deliberately fail to follow the code of conduct will meet an appropriate disciplinary action - reprimand or termination.

Any information about actual and presumed violations is to be submitted to the project coordinator in writing and in a non-anonymous way in order to be analyzed.

Final Provision

The COP Code of Ethics has been developed and adopted by the COP members as per the requirements of the AGREEN Plan for Management and Monitoring.