

SCBO Anti-discrimination, Bullying and Harassment Policy and grievance resolution procedure

1. Policy statement

The Society for Conservation Biology – Oceania (SCBO) is committed to providing a safe, welcoming, respectful, and inclusive environment for its members to participate in Society events and activities that is free from all forms of unacceptable behaviour, discrimination, bullying, harassment, and hostile working environments.

SCBO (“the Society”) will not tolerate any discrimination, bullying, harassment or unacceptable behaviour directed at its members and attendees at Society events and activities. Further, the Society will not tolerate hostile working environments that may occur through any Society events and activities. Appropriate action will be taken against individuals engaging in any such behaviour.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all attendees at Society events and activities, including scientists, students, guests, staff, contractors, and exhibitors, participating in the scientific sessions, tours, and social events of any SCBO conference or event or SCBO sponsored or affiliated event.

Participants of SCBO events and activities are expected to follow the Code of Conduct for SCB Meetings, which should be read in conjunction with this Policy. New Board members will be required to read these two documents as part of their induction process.

SCBO will endeavour to have at least two trained Contact Officers present at SCBO conferences who can be approached by any conference participants who have questions or concerns relating to diversity, discrimination, bullying or harassment. Contact details for SCBO Contact Officers will be provided on the conference website and announced at the conference.

3. Relevant legislation

Society for Conservation Biology – Oceania (SCBO) is registered as an Incorporated Body in New South Wales, Australia. We therefore operate under the Anti-Discrimination and Human Rights Legislation Amendment (Respect at Work) Act 2022 and Commonwealth anti-discrimination and harassment legislation.

Further information:

- Anti-Discrimination Board of NSW:
http://www.antidiscrimination.justice.nsw.gov.au/Pages/adb1_antidiscriminationlaw/adb1_antidiscriminationlaw.aspx
- Australian Human Rights Commission:
<https://www.humanrights.gov.au/employers/good-practice-good-business-factsheets/quick-guide-australian-discrimination-laws>



4. Definitions

Unacceptable behaviour

Physical or verbal abuse of any SCBO member, attendee, speaker, volunteer, exhibitor, Society for Conservation Biology staff member, service provider or other meeting guest. Disruption of talks at an SCBO conference or event or SCBO sponsored or affiliated event.

Discrimination

Unlawful discrimination can occur when someone, or a group of people, is treated less favourably than another person or group on the basis of their sex; race, colour, ethnic background, descent or national identity; age; disability; sexual orientation; gender identity; religious belief; marital or relationship status; family responsibility; pregnancy; breastfeeding; or any other characteristic protected Commonwealth anti-discrimination and human rights legislation.

Bullying

Bullying is unreasonable and inappropriate behaviour that: is repeated, intimidates, offends, degrades, insults or humiliates an individual and is a risk to health and safety. This can be physical or psychological behaviour.

Harassment

Unlawful harassment can occur when someone is made to feel intimidated, insulted or humiliated, because of their sex; race, colour, ethnic background, descent or national identity; age; disability; sexual orientation; gender identity; religious belief; marital or relationship status; family responsibility; pregnancy; breastfeeding; or any other characteristic specified under Commonwealth anti-discrimination and human rights legislation. The Society also does not tolerate harassment based on professional or political differences. The behaviours can be overt or subtle, verbal, non-verbal or physical.

Sexual harassment

Any unwanted, unwelcome or uninvited behaviour of a sexual nature that makes a person feel humiliated, intimidated or offended. It can involve physical contact, verbal remarks or non-verbal contact of a sexual nature.

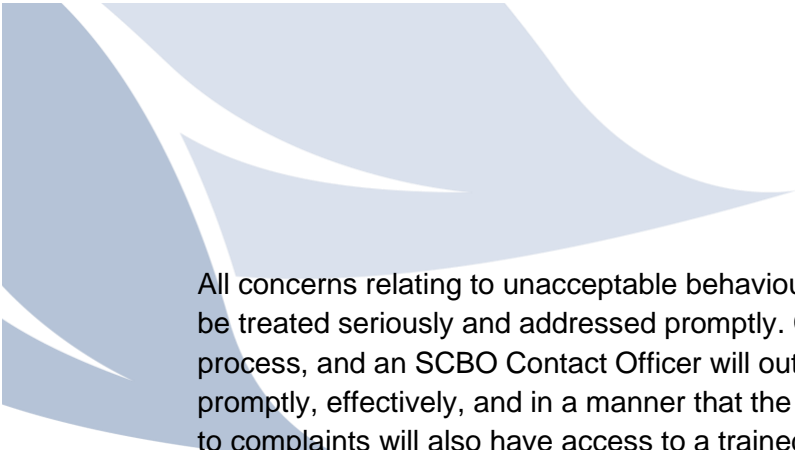
Hostile working environments

Any conduct that subjects another person to a workplace environment that is hostile on the grounds of sex. This may include conduct in the workplace that a reasonable person would regard as being offensive, intimidating, or humiliating to a person by reason of the sex of the person, or characteristics associated with the sex of the person.

5. Reporting an incident

Any individual who has witnessed unacceptable behaviour, or who believes that they have been subject to discrimination, harassment or bullying is encouraged to contact an SCBO Contact Officer by phone, email or in person.





All concerns relating to unacceptable behaviour, discrimination, harassment or bullying will be treated seriously and addressed promptly. Complainants will remain in control of the process, and an SCBO Contact Officer will outline options available to deal with the situation promptly, effectively, and in a manner that the complainant finds most suitable. Respondents to complaints will also have access to a trained Contact Officer who will be available to explain the Society's policy and their rights and responsibilities.

6. Grievance resolution procedure

1. Any individual who has witnessed unacceptable behaviour, or who believes that they have been subject to discrimination, harassment, bullying, or a hostile working environment is encouraged to contact an SCBO Contact Officer. Complainants are not required or expected to discuss the concern with the respondent. Complaints may be lodged up to 24 months following the incident.
2. An SCBO Contact Officer is available to meet with the complainant to discuss the issue in total confidence, and will provide factual information on steps to resolve the issue.
3. At this stage it may be possible to resolve the situation informally, should the complainant feel comfortable with approaching the respondent directly. Alternatively, an impartial third person may assist in conveying information between the complainant and respondent, and to help the parties find a mutually agreeable solution.
4. If an informal resolution is not possible or appropriate, the complainant may file a formal complaint with the SCBO Contact Officer. The complaint should be in writing, and include as much detail as possible, including times, dates and people involved.
5. The SCBO Contact Officer will ask the President of the SCBO to seek advice from the SCB ombudsperson in naming an impartial investigator. Any named investigator who may be perceived to have a conflict of interest should not serve as an investigator.
6. The respondent will be informed of the complaint made against them by the investigator, and to be given the opportunity to respond to the evidence of the complainant and to bring their own evidence.
7. The respondent will also be provided access to an SCBO Contact Officer who can outline policy, procedures, rights and responsibilities.
8. The investigator will then attempt to mediate or conciliate between the two parties to determine if a mutual resolution can be achieved.
9. When the investigation is complete, the investigator should report the findings to the SCBO Board in summary form that protects privacy but ensures learning.
10. All grievances will be resolved within a reasonable timeframe of no more than six months.

7. Consequences

SCBO takes any allegations of discrimination, harassment, bullying or other misconduct seriously and will in the first instance, seek to resolve the issue without an investigation or an attribution of fault. If this is not possible, the Society will take appropriate action against any individuals found to be engaging in behaviour prohibited by *the Code of Conduct for SCB Meetings* and by this Policy.



Should a formal investigation be necessary, the President of the SCBO will seek advice from an SCB ombudsperson in determining the most appropriate action for the situation, which may include (but is not limited to):

- Resolution of the issue without investigation or attribution of fault through advice and mediation
- An apology and undertaking the behaviour will not occur again
- Ejection from the SCBO conference or activity without refund of conference fees or expenses

Serious offenders may be subject to further disciplinary action, such as being banned from participating in future Society meetings or other activities. SCBO holds the right under Section 12 of its Constitution to suspend or expel a member from the Society if it has been found that they have acted in a manner prejudicial to the interests of the Society.

8. Criminal offences

Forms of discrimination, harassment, bullying, and other misconduct can also constitute criminal offences. The SCBO Contact Officer, members of the SCBO Board or SCBO conference local organising committee will act immediately on reports of possible criminal offences by engaging the appropriate authorities under the instruction of the complainant.

9. Appeal & Contacts

In the event that an individual is dissatisfied with the results of an investigation, they may appeal to the President of the SCBO. For questions about this policy, contact an SCBO Contact Officer, the board, or President by email at admin@scoceania.org or phone at +614 7613 7241.

Amendments log

First approved: 8 November, 2023		
First approved by: SCBO Board. Directors present: Micha Jackson, Courtney Melton, Erica Cseko Nolasco, Natalie Forsdick, John Lamaris, Aimee Sato, Andy Mack, Laura Torre, Chris Woolley		
Amendments		
Date	Authorised by	Description of amendment

