



# Safeguarding Policy for a Respectful Workplace



*Credit: [Alex Mustard / Ocean Image Bank](#)*

[IUCN](#)

Rue Mauverney 28  
1196 Gland, Switzerland  
Tel: +41 29 99 0001  
Fax: +41 22 999 002



## Safeguarding Policy for a Respectful Workplace

<b>Owner</b>	Chief Human Resources Officer
<b>Approved by</b>	Director General
<b>Effective Date</b>	12 February 2026
<b>Date of last approved review</b>	4 February 2026
<b>Policy Priority</b>	Priority 1: Business Critical
<b>Review cycle</b>	Every 3 years, next review due in February 2029
<b>Scope</b>	IUCN Secretariat personnel hired on a permanent or temporary basis, staff hired on a temporary basis through recruitment companies, secondees, trainees, interns, students, Junior Professionals Officers, and volunteers. This also includes hosted Staff, on employment contract with IUCN.
<b>Purpose</b>	Ensure that IUCN provides a professional, respectful and harassment-free workplace for its Staff and for partners working with IUCN Staff.
<b>Related Documents</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <a href="#">IUCN Staff Rules</a></li><li>• <a href="#">Code of Conduct and Professional Ethics</a></li><li>• Local Conditions of Service (<i>available at HR Management System for each location</i>)</li><li>• <a href="#">Whistleblowing and Anti-retaliation Policy</a></li><li>• <a href="#">ESMS Grievance Mechanism</a></li><li>• <a href="#">Risk Management Policy</a></li><li>• <a href="#">Investigation Procedure</a></li><li>• <a href="#">IUCN Ethics Committee Terms of Reference</a></li><li>• <a href="#">IUCN Ombudsperson Terms of reference</a></li><li>• Anti-Harassment Procedure for IUCN Events</li></ul>
<b>Source language</b>	English
<b>Published in French under the title</b>	Politique de protection pour un environnement de travail respectueux
<b>Published in Spanish under the title</b>	Política de protección para un ambiente laboral respetuoso
<b>Language disclaimer</b>	The original language of this policy is English; French and Spanish translations provided are approximate versions, and in the event of discrepancies, the English version shall prevail.
<b>Contact</b>	<a href="mailto:loyse.bonjour@iucn.org">loyse.bonjour@iucn.org</a>

### Version Control

Version	Date	Description of change	Prepared by
2.0	4 Feb 2026	Replaces the previous SEAH Policy, expanding scope to include abuse, harassment, discrimination, and exploitation. Updated in line with peer organisations and international standards, with clear behavioural examples and redefined roles and responsibilities.	Loyse Bonjour Maria F. Reyes Diaz
1.0	March 2019	First time the policy was approved.	Human Resources Team



## Table of Contents

A.	Introduction and purpose .....	4
B.	Principles and commitments.....	4
C.	Scope and applicability .....	5
D.	Roles and responsibilities.....	5
E.	Prohibited behaviours .....	7
F.	Disciplinary measures .....	8
G.	Prevention and awareness raising .....	8
H.	Reporting incidents and investigation.....	9
I.	Protection and remedies .....	9
J.	Monitoring and reporting .....	9
K.	Effective date and review .....	9
L.	Definitions .....	10

## A. Introduction and purpose

1. The International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN) is strongly committed to the protection of people and the environment and to the prevention of harm, prioritising the well-being and safety of all staff, and others engaged in the delivery of its work<sup>1</sup>. This commitment extends to the health and safety of a larger group of stakeholders who may be affected by IUCN work and projects including but not limited to communities, women or other groups based on gender, especially those who are most vulnerable.
2. IUCN has zero tolerance for any form of Abuse, Discrimination, Exploitation, and Harassment (ADEH). This includes, but is not limited to, sexual abuse and exploitation, abuse of authority, harassment (whether sexual, emotional, or psychological), bullying, and any behaviour that undermines an individual's dignity, safety, or well-being. These behaviours violate human dignity, undermine IUCN's integrity and core values<sup>2</sup>, and may breach international legal standards.
3. IUCN acknowledges that ADEH can stem from factors such as power imbalances, negligence, lack of due diligence and understanding of social contexts, and systemic inequalities among others. To prevent such behaviour, IUCN takes both proactive and corrective measures. These include maintaining clear procedures for responding to incidents, ensuring that all concerns are addressed with thoroughness, confidentiality, and independence, while providing appropriate support to victims and applying consistent treatment across cases.
4. This Policy replaces the previous Policy on the Protection from Sexual Exploitation, Sexual Abuse, and Sexual Harassment, and the IUCN Anti-Harassment Policy for IUCN Events. It outlines clear obligations for IUCN Secretariat's Staff to prevent and respond to ADEH, and to refrain from condoning, encouraging, trivialising, participating in, or engaging in such behaviour. This may go beyond the physical premises and normal business hours of IUCN, such as conduct at meetings, events, workshops, training, or on social media. Those covered by this Policy are expected to uphold its principles in both their professional and personal conduct<sup>3</sup>.

### Our Core Values

**Integrity, trustworthiness and accountability**

*We act with honesty, responsibility, and good judgment, putting IUCN's mission above personal interest and protecting its people, resources, and reputation.*

**Equality, inclusiveness, and respect for the diversity of people**

*We treat everyone fairly, value different perspectives, and foster an inclusive workplace where everyone can grow.*

**Dignity**

*We respect the dignity, rights, and well-being of others in all our actions, while upholding IUCN's interests with integrity.*

**Transparency**

*We act openly, share accurate information, and support trust and accountability, while respecting confidentiality.*

**Reliability and responsiveness**

*We make realistic commitments and follow through, delivering on what we promise and ensuring others do the same.*

**Environmental responsibility**

*We help societies and communities that depend on nature by promoting the health of ecosystems and making environmentally responsible decisions.*

## B. Principles and commitments

5. IUCN takes all available measures to prevent, mitigate, investigate and remedy ADEH in IUCN-related activities.
6. IUCN endeavours to raise awareness of ADEH across the global Secretariat and among its implementing partners, consultants or any other type of partners involved in IUCN-related activities.
7. IUCN follows a victim-centred approach in ADEH matters, safeguarding the dignity and rights of victims while

<sup>1</sup> Including individuals employed or engaged through third parties to perform work related to core functions of IUCN projects, individuals engaged by the project in public or community work programs or as volunteers.

<sup>2</sup> [Code of Conduct and Professional Ethics](#)

<sup>3</sup> In line with Article 14.1 of the [Staff Rules](#), IUCN staff shall undertake to uphold the highest standards of personal and professional behaviour and to ensure that IUCN's integrity and reputation shall not be jeopardised or compromised by their actions.

ensuring due process and fairness for all parties.

8. IUCN will take steps to encourage partners involved in IUCN-related activities to abide by this Policy or adopt policies and procedures that are consistent with this Policy, with the purpose of preventing and responding to incidents of ADEH in IUCN-related activities.
9. To uphold these principles, IUCN commits to:
  - a. Creating and maintaining a respectful, safe and inclusive workplace across IUCN-related activities and offices, both in-person and online.
  - b. Preventing, detecting, including ADEH considerations into risk assessments and project designs, and responding to ADEH in all IUCN-related activities and offices.
  - c. Assessing all allegations of ADEH fairly, promptly, and with due regard for the rights and the safety of all parties involved.
  - d. Protecting staff members who raise concerns by upholding a strict commitment to non-retaliation.
  - e. Conducting proportionate and legally compliant vetting of all staff and contractors prior to engagement, in accordance with IUCN's contracting and due diligence processes, including reference checks where applicable.
10. Take all reasonable steps, based on the information available, to ensure that IUCN does not engage with any third party that condones, encourages, participates in, or engages in abuse, discrimination, exploitation or harassment.

### C. Scope and applicability

11. This Policy applies to all staff members of the IUCN Secretariat, regardless of location, staff hired on a temporary basis through recruitment companies, secondees, trainees, interns, students, visitors, and volunteers of the IUCN Secretariat. Third parties including contractors (consultants and service providers), vendors, partners, implementing partners, project workers, and grantees of IUCN-related activities are expected to adhere to the standards set out in this policy. This applies to both in-person and online interactions.
12. This Policy complements the general principles established in IUCN Code of Conduct and Professional Ethics for the Secretariat, and clarifies the expected standards of conduct and professional ethics regarding ADEH.

### D. Roles and responsibilities

13. **Director General** or its delegate is responsible for approving this Policy and for providing leadership that promotes a culture of integrity, accountability across the organisation. With advice from the CHRO and Legal Adviser, the Director General, or their delegate, also takes decisive action in response to any breaches and exercises discretion; where appropriate, in the application of the Policy.
14. **Chief Human Resources Officer (CHRO)** is responsible for ensuring the effective implementation of this Policy and related protective measures throughout the employee lifecycle. The CHRO ensures that commitments are integrated into recruitment, onboarding, training and development, performance management, promotions, and disciplinary procedures. In close collaboration with the Head of Internal Oversight, the CHRO will assess and investigate reported cases.

The CHRO is also responsible for providing guidance about Policy interpretation when needed, ensuring that all staff complete mandatory training at onboarding, participate in regular refresher courses, and receive

ongoing sensitization to the standards outlined in this Policy.

15. **Executive Board (ExBo):** Role model the behaviours expected of all within the organisation to champion an ethical organisational culture, setting the tone from the top, and leads to compliance with this Policy.
16. **IUCN Ethics Committee** reviews allegations and, where necessary, conducts and commissions investigations into cases of misconduct and/or unethical behaviour, upon request from and in agreement with the Head of Internal Oversight Unit. It may make recommendations to the Director General concerning disciplinary action or sanctions, in accordance with applicable labour laws and regulations. The Committee may also propose changes to this Policy, procedural improvements, or actions to address recurring issues and help prevent future misconduct.
17. **Regional, Corporate, and Global Directors and Unit Heads** are responsible for ensuring effective implementation of this Policy within their teams. This includes providing and role-modelling leadership that promotes a culture of integrity, respect, and zero tolerance for ADEH-related behaviour. Ensure that ADEH prevention is integrated into operations, risk management, and project design. Ensure timely reporting, protect those who raise issues, and promote ongoing staff training. Ensure all contractual agreements with partners and vendors that are approved include a provision in which they agree to comply with this Policy in all material respects. Identify and mitigate ADEH-related risks in each IUCN-funded project and adequately capture them in their risk registers.
18. **Head of Internal Oversight Unit** is responsible for addressing ethical issues that are brought to their attention and ensuring that reports of ethical misconduct or unethical behaviour brought to their attention are subject to a formal procedure. They are also responsible for cooperating with the Chief Human Resources Officer in investigating violations of this policy and for providing assurance over this policy and related procedures.
19. **Office of the Legal Advisor** provides legal guidance to the Director General and the Ethics Committee. This includes advice on the legal implications and appropriate measures or actions to be taken before or during an investigation; the involvement of external experts or law enforcement authorities; and the overall conduct of investigations. It also advises on potential legal consequences and remedial actions following the establishment of a concern through investigation, including strategies to restore IUCN's reputation and integrity. Additionally, the Legal Advisor supports the Human Resources team in the recruitment, management, and coordination of external legal counsel and engagement with relevant law enforcement authorities.
20. **Contract owners** are accountable for ensuring that all prospective consultants are vetted prior to engagement in accordance with the IUCN's contracting and due diligence processes, and that all newly engaged consultants are informed and agree to comply with this Policy.
21. **Risk and Assurance Officer** is responsible for ensuring that ADEH-related risks are included in risk registers and for escalating any risks that may pose an institutional threat to the Risk Committee.
22. **Project Managers** are responsible for complying with the principles and commitments outlined in this Policy. Ensure partners/implementing partners are required to promptly inform IUCN of all ADEH-related incidents or complaints that occur within the context of IUCN-funded or supported activities as per the [ESMS Grievance Mechanism](#). All credible allegations of ADEH must be reported to IUCN and partners/implementing partners are expected to fully cooperate with investigations, in accordance with their contractual obligations.

#### Leaders' responsibilities

*If you manage or supervise others, you hold a position of trust and with that comes the responsibility to:*

- **Lead by example and be a positive role model to others.**
- **Promote your team's well-being**  
*Stay attentive to concerns, encourage respectful conduct, listen actively, and support.*
- **Raise awareness of the IUCN's values, ethics policies, and make sure those you supervise are equipped with the knowledge and resources they need to comply with them.**
- **Be responsive to anyone who raises an ethics or compliance concern.**

23. **Environmental and Social Management System (ESMS) Team (Global ESMS Coordinator and regional ESMS specialists)** is responsible for ensuring that ADEH prevention mechanisms are operational in projects. Ensure that project managers and project ESMS officers as well as other relevant staff of the executing entity and of other project partners are trained on the ADEH policy; and that culturally appropriate communication material on the project-level grievance mechanism is developed and disseminated among all relevant project stakeholders with procedures for submitting and escalating project grievances (including ADEH cases) to the Ethics Committee.
24. **All IUCN Staff members** are required to adhere to IUCN's Code of Conduct and Professional Ethics, Ethics-related policies and all relevant organisational policies, procedures, and guidelines; to complete all mandatory training related to the prevention of ADEH; to promptly report in good faith any suspected and actual incidents; and to cooperate fully with any investigation or inquiry, in accordance with IUCN's Investigation Procedure.

## E. Prohibited behaviours

25. The following are examples of prohibited behaviours under this Policy. The list is not meant to be exhaustive; any other conduct in breach of this policy may also be subject to disciplinary measures.
- Any form of sexual contact, sexual assault, harassment, intimidation, coercion, or unwanted physical, verbal or non-verbal, including in digital form, conduct of a sexual nature in the workplace is strictly prohibited.
  - Engaging in any sexual activity without freely given and informed consent, including sexual assault, coercion, intimidation, or any form of sexual violence. Consent cannot be freely given when there is a hierarchical, supervisory, or decision-making relationship, and where such relationships create or may create a conflict of interest, or authority or power imbalance.
  - Using a position of trust, power, or authority to solicit sexual favours or engaging in sexual exploitation by offering, withholding, or influencing employment-related opportunities, promotions, or support.
  - Engaging in romantic or sexual relationships where there is a hierarchical, decision-making, or supervisory relationship or function/role without disclosure to IUCN, where it creates a potential conflict of interest or authority or power imbalance.
  - Using one's position to control, manipulate, intimidate or coerce others.
  - Engaging in physical aggression, intimidation, threats or to engage in conduct that causes fear, harm, or an unsafe workplace.
  - Repeatedly following, monitoring, or contacting someone in a way that causes fear, distress, or discomfort. This includes unwanted visits, persistent messages or calls, tracking movements, or any behaviour that invades someone's privacy or personal space, where such conduct lacks a legitimate work-related purpose. Engaging in repeated or serious conduct that demeans, humiliates, undermines, or isolates an individual, whether in person or digitally, privately or during meetings, and that negatively affects dignity, wellbeing, or work performance.
  - Sending or sharing electronic communications, including text messages, emails or social media content, that intimidate, demean, threaten, or deliberately spread false or harmful information.

### Individual responsibilities

*Each of us is responsible for understanding this Policy and is required to:*

- **Stay informed** by learning the standards of conduct that apply to your role and participating in ethics training sessions.
- **Stay true** to IUCN's standards of conduct and apply them in your daily work, setting an example that encourages others to do the same.
- **Seek guidance** with the appropriate person when the course of action is unclear.
- **Raise concerns** if something is not right.

- i. Circulating or displaying explicit or discriminatory materials that are sexually explicit or offensive.
  - j. Discrimination based on protected characteristics such as, but not limited to include ethnicity, gender, disability, age, nationality, religion or belief, sexual orientation, pregnancy or maternity, and health condition.
  - k. Discriminatory acts, including but are not limited to repeatedly and deliberately excluding someone from meetings, communications, assignments or work-related activities; ignoring, dismissing, or deliberately undermining an individual's contributions; or improperly denying professional or career development opportunities; where such actions are not based on legitimate, documented operational or financial needs, performance criteria, or established procedures.
  - l. Taking adverse actions against someone for reporting misconduct, refusing inappropriate requests, or participating in an investigation. Such actions include, but are not limited to, demotion, exclusion from projects, negative performance evaluations, harassment, or any other treatment intended to punish, intimidate, or discourage their involvement.
  - m. Using, possessing, or offering illegal drugs or misusing legal substances while at work or in a professional context such as official missions or events outside of working hours; coming to work under influence of such substances.
  - n. Failing to comply with IUCN's Code of Conduct by encouraging, condoning, or minimising behaviours that constitute abuse, harassment or discrimination, or failing to address such behaviours when they occur. Other actions that violate IUCN's principles or policies and result in harm, exploitation, discrimination, or harassment, including dishonest conduct, undisclosed conflicts of interest, or abuse of workplace relationships.
26. Specifically, any persons carrying out activities under IUCN's name or with funds, benefits or privileges accorded by IUCN shall not use their position to sexually abuse, exploit, or harass any individual(s) or communities involved in, or benefiting from IUCN-related activities.

## **F. Disciplinary measures**

27. Any staff member found to have engaged in conduct in breach of this Policy or other serious misconduct will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment, and may be reported to the appropriate legal authorities, as required by law. Other measures may include, but are not limited to:
- a. Suspension: may apply during investigations or as a disciplinary measure, depending on the circumstances and in accordance with local labour laws.
  - b. Oral or written warning: A formal written record of misconduct placed in the staff member's official status file.
  - c. Dismissal with notice: When the misconduct is such that the working relationship cannot reasonably continue.
  - d. Summary dismissal: Immediate termination for gross misconduct in line with local labour laws. The CHRO must be consulted before proceeding.
  - e. Partners misconduct: IUCN reserves its right to terminate a contractual relationship with a partner in case of breach of this policy.

## **G. Prevention and awareness raising**

28. The Human Resources Management Group (HRMG) develops and maintains a training course on this Policy, available to all staff members. HRMG ensures that new hires complete the course and that regular refreshers

are delivered globally.

29. HRMG ensures that this Policy is accessible to all IUCN staff member and to all individuals to whom it applies.

## H. Reporting incidents and investigation

30. **IUCN Staff** must report any suspected or actual ADEH-related behaviour as per the [IUCN Whistleblowing and Anti-retaliation Policy](#). For **projects**, refer to the [ESMS Grievance Mechanism](#). For **Commissions**, refer to the [Process to address a Code of Conduct or SEAH Policy Violation Document for Commission Members](#).

31. Any actual or suspected ADEH-related behaviour occurring **during an IUCN event** will be addressed in accordance with the IUCN Anti-Harassment Procedure for IUCN Events.

If I suspect or witness ADEH-related behaviour, am I required to report it?

*Yes, we all have a duty to report. Even if you're unsure or don't have all the facts, speak up so the appropriate personnel can assess the situation. Staying silent allows misconduct to continue and protects the wrong person.*

## I. Protection and remedies

32. IUCN strives to protect anyone who speaks up in good faith, ensuring their safety from retaliation and supported throughout the process. Appropriate measures, as stated in the [IUCN Whistleblowing and Anti-retaliation Policy](#), are in place to protect from reprisal anyone who reports wrongdoings and makes a good faith report on any suspected ADEH or any other form of ethical misconduct.

33. Any IUCN staff member who is a victim of Sexual Abuse, Exploitation, or Harassment (SEAH) perpetrated by another IUCN staff member, Council or Commission member, or by a Partner in connection with IUCN-related activities, and for whom a report has been made in line with the Reporting and Investigation section of this Policy, may request the following support from IUCN:

- a. In emergency situations, a staff member who is a victim of SEAH perpetrated by an IUCN Staff member or Partner may request immediate medical assistance or other essential services to address urgent harm.
- b. Any person who experiences SEAH on IUCN premises or during an IUCN-hosted or facilitated activity may request the protective measures outlined in this section, provided that the incident has been reported in accordance with the [IUCN Whistleblowing and Anti-retaliation Policy](#).

## J. Monitoring and reporting

34. HRMG will monitor the number of staff trained per region on an annual basis.

35. The Ethics Committee will monitor the relevance of the policy through the number and nature of reports received and determine the need to update it.

36. The Head of the Internal Oversight Unit shall submit a report bi-annually to the Director General on the number and nature of ethics cases received and addressed, and shall escalate any concerns as appropriate.

## K. Effective date and review

37. This Policy shall come into effect upon its issuance by the Director General.

38. The Chief Human Resources Officer will review this Policy at least every three years, or more frequently as needed, and recommend improvements to the Policy, related procedures, and controls to reduce risks related to ADEH and ensure compliance by all.

## L. Definitions

39. For the purposes of this Policy, the following definitions apply:

- a. **IUCN staff member:** IUCN Secretariat personnel hired on a permanent or temporary basis, staff hired on a temporary basis through recruitment companies, secondees, trainees, interns, students, Junior Professionals Officers, and volunteers. This also includes hosted Staff, on employment contract with IUCN.
- b. **Implementing partner/partner** is a 3rd party entity that IUCN chooses to work with to implement a project. An implementing partner should be a distinct legal entity, e.g. organization, institution, government agency, company.
- c. **Grantee:** an organisation that receives funds for delivering outputs that they themselves have identified in their grant proposal document, and which IUCN has judged as contributing to the project's intended results, usually through a competitive selection process.
- d. **Contractor (consultant or service provider):** independent contractors whose work is ruled by a service contract, not an employment contract. They are not bound to IUCN HR policies and Conditions of Service, but are expected to adhere to the Code of Conduct and Professional Ethics of the Secretariat and related Ethics & Compliance policies. Consultants can either be individuals or employees of consulting firms.
- e. **Project workers** which include the following: Project workers refer to (i) people employed or engaged directly by the project executing entity to work specifically in relation to the project, (ii) people employed or engaged through third parties to perform work related to core functions of the project, (iii) individuals engaged by the project in public or community work programs or as volunteers
- f. **Perpetrator** is the individual who directly inflicts or supports violence or other abuse on another person against that person's will.
- g. **Victim** is anyone who experiences harm as a result of abuse, discrimination, exploitation, or harassment, described in this policy.
- h. **Safeguarding** is the collective responsibility of IUCN and all those working with or on its behalf, including Staff Members, consultants, contractors and partners to take appropriate and proportionate measures to prevent and respond to any form of abuse, discrimination, exploitation, or harassment arising from IUCN-related activities, programmes, or operations, by promptly reporting safeguarding concerns or allegations through the designated channels.
- i. **Abuse** refers to any form of violence or mistreatment, or neglect that causes actual or potential harm to an individual's health, survival, development, or dignity. It typically occurs in contexts where there is an imbalance of power, trust, vulnerability, pressure, or coercion. Abuse includes but it is not limited to:
  - i. **Abuse of authority** is improper use of a position of influence, power, or authority by an individual to control or manipulate others. It is especially serious when an individual in a position to impact another individual's career or employment conditions seeks favours of any kind such as sexual, personal, errands outside the work context or work functions, distort facts, or break rules, either by offering rewards or threatening negative consequences for refusal.
  - ii. **Sexual abuse:** is the actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions.
  - iii. **Sexual exploitation:** is any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust, for sexual purposes, including, but not limited to, threatening or profiting

A senior staff member begins sending frequent personal messages outside of office hours to a junior colleague. The junior staff member feels uncomfortable but unsure how to respond. What should the junior colleague do?

*This crosses professional boundaries and should be reported. Repeated personal contact from someone in authority, especially after hours, can cause pressure, even if not intended.*

monetarily, socially, or politically from the sexual exploitation of another.

- j. **Discrimination:** any unjustifiable differentiation between individuals or groups or the unjust or prejudicial treatment of different categories of individuals, based on such grounds as a individual's race, gender, religion, nationality, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, disability, age, language, or any other protected characteristic under applicable law. It may constitute a series of events or a one-time incident.
- k. **Harassment:** is any unwelcome or offensive conduct that has had, or might reasonably be expected to have, the effect of: (1) offending, humiliating, embarrassing or intimidating another person(s), and (2) creating an intimidating or hostile workplace and/or unreasonably interfering with another person(s)' ability to carry out their functions at work. It is defined by its impact on the victim, not the intent of the perpetrator. Actions that could reasonably be perceived as offensive, humiliating, or intimidating may be considered harassment, regardless of whether harm was intended. In interacting with others, consider how your behaviour may be perceived and avoid actions that could create a hostile or intimidating workplace. While harassment is usually prolonged or persistent over time, a single, severe act may also constitute harassment depending on the circumstances and the severity of the incident. Harassment includes, but is not limited to, the following forms of misconduct:
- i. **Sexual harassment** is any unwelcome behaviour and practices of sexual nature that might reasonably be expected or be perceived to cause intimidation, offense, or humiliation. It may involve requests for sexual favours, as well as other verbal, non-verbal, or physical electronic conduct. Sexual harassment can occur between individuals of different or same genders, both during and/or outside of office hours.
- ii. **Bullying:** is a repeated offensive, cruel, intimidating, insulting or humiliating behaviour that undermines an individual or a group of individuals. It may be physical, verbal, visual or written. *Mobbing* is a form of bullying where a group of people collectively targets an individual with the intent to isolate, intimidate, or harm their reputation. It may involve psychological abuse. Bullying and mobbing can occur in-person or online during or outside working hours.
- iii. **Emotional or psychological harassment** is harmful, repeated behaviours, whether verbal, non-verbal, or other forms of communication, that cause emotional distress or mental harm. This can include actions like insults, threats, isolation, or intimidation, which damage an individual's mental well-being and self-esteem. Though it does not involve physical harm, psychological harassment can have severe, long-lasting effects on a individuals' mental health.
- iv. **Microaggressions:** are subtle everyday actions, verbal or nonverbal, that whether intentional or unintentional, communicate negative attitudes or biases targeted to a specific individual or group. Though seemingly minor on their own, repeated microaggressions can lead to significant harm, contributing to discrimination and inequality.

In a meeting, a senior colleague makes personal comments about someone's appearance, keeps interrupting him/her, and dismisses his/her ideas without clear reasons. Is this wrong?

*Yes, this is a form of abuse of power, psychological harassment and bullying. And it doesn't contribute to a healthy workplace.*

- l. **Informed consent:** is a voluntary, freely given, and explicit agreement provided by an individual who is legally able to decide, mentally capable, and mature to understand the facts and implications of their decision. It must be given without any pressure, manipulation, or impairment, and it can be withdrawn at any time. Consent cannot be assumed and must be clearly communicated, either verbally or non-verbally. Non-verbal communication, such as body language or gestures, can be easily misinterpreted and should not be relied upon as the sole form of consent. If someone is unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to make an informed decision, they cannot provide consent.
- m. **Victim-centred approach:** engaging with victims in a way that prioritises listening, avoids re-traumatization, and systematically focuses on their safety, rights, well-being, expressed needs and choices, and ensuring the empathetic and sensitive delivery of services and accompaniment in a non-judgmental manner. It values their experiences and input, promotes recovery by empowering them to restore their sense of safety and control, as much as possible. This also includes the development of policies, reporting mechanisms, investigations, and training.
- n. **False or Malicious report** means an inaccurate or misleading report that is made recklessly, or knowingly or deliberately for the purpose of gaining undue advantage or causing harm to a person or entity. Such reports undermine the integrity of the process and will lead to appropriate consequences as applicable.
- o. **IUCN-related activity** means any activity which is financed, administered, or supported by IUCN, either with its own resources or those of others, any activity that materially affects or may affect or otherwise be relevant to IUCN or any activity undertaken under the name of IUCN. It also includes any events – gatherings, forums, conferences, congress – organised by IUCN whether in-person or online.
- p. **Reference checks:** means the part of a selection and employment process whereby checks are performed to verify the accuracy and authenticity of references, statements, or declarations made by external job applicants on their educational, professional, and other background.

A staff member invites a colleague to a one-on-one dinner after a long day of work or at conference. The colleague initially says yes but later messages, saying she's tired and no longer feels comfortable going. Is this change of plans, okay?

*Yes, it's absolutely okay to change your mind. Consent must be clear, voluntary, and without any pressure. Agreeing once doesn't mean it is forever. Respecting a colleague's decision without pressure or guilt is the right thing to do.*