

Biodiversity Task Force (BD TF)

CODE OF CONDUCT OF THE BIODIVERSITY TASK FORCE

The Biodiversity Task Force (BD TF) is constituted as a technical and advisory body. It functions as a sub-group of the Regional Cooperation Council for the Western Balkans' Regional Working Group on Environment (RWGE). One of primary goals of the BD TF is to promote regional cooperation, so as to enhance regional and joint efforts for the conservation of biodiversity and ecosystems, including progress towards international biodiversity commitments such as the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity and Aichi Biodiversity Targets, the Sustainable Development Goals, and EU biodiversity-related directives.

This document sets out the core principles, norms and practices that are expected to guide the interactions of the BD TF's members (voting and non-voting) and invited experts (collectively referred to as 'members' below). It is the responsibility of all members to read, understand and abide by this Code of Conduct at all times, and to ensure that other members do so.

Terms of reference and mandate

Members undertake to make every effort to ensure that the BD TF adheres to its stated mandate, and that its activities are in the frame of agreed Terms of Reference and contributing to the thematic areas of the workplan. The overriding aim shall be to promote regional cooperation in matters of biodiversity and ecosystem conservation. Members shall at all times seek to support the objectives and operations of the BD TF and consequently RWGE, and to respect the BD TF and accordingly RWGE rules and procedures.

Environmental values and commitment to conservation

All actions of the members, when carrying out BD TF duties and responsibilities, will be governed by respect for the environment, biodiversity and ecosystems and the people that depend on them.

Fairness, respect and freedom of choice

Members commit to show respect to each other and to all others involved in BD TF meetings and events, which shall at all times be conducted in a way that is professional, respectful, and free from any kind of harassment or intimidation. Open dialogue will be encouraged and all views and values be respected, without bias or prejudice. Active efforts will be made to promote gender aspects, diversity, equity and inclusivity.

Integrity

Members will conduct themselves with the utmost honesty and probity in all BD TF dealings and activities, and avoid void fraud, deception or misrepresentation. This includes undertaking not to use or misuse the offices or resources associated with the BD TF and its partners for their own personal gain.

Disclosure and accountability

Members shall take responsibility for their own actions, including disclosure to the BD TF at the earliest opportunity of any information they have or become aware of, that may result in any real, potential or perceived conflict of interest or impropriety. Members also commit to exercising due discretion and if necessary confidentiality in the use and sharing of any privileged information that has been gained in the course of BD TF meetings and other activities.

Any member found violating this Code will be notified by the BD TF Chair, and is expected to cease such behaviour immediately. Members are also expected to report any violations to the BD TF Chair or Secretariat. The BD TF reserves the right to vote to temporarily or permanently withdraw the membership of any member that does not adhere to the Code of Conduct.