

# IUCN SSC Crocodile Specialist Group

## Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination Prevention Policy for CSG-Endorsed Events

### 1. Purpose of the Policy

The purpose of this Policy is to ensure that CSG-endorsed events provide a professional, respectful and harassment-free environment.

All Participants (including CSG members) at CSG-endorsed events are expected to conduct themselves in a professional, respectful, and responsible manner at all times. Harassment, including sexual harassment, bullying, discrimination, and intimidation of any kind, are violations of this policy and will not be tolerated.

The CSG is committed to protecting the dignity and safety of all Participants at CSG-endorsed events and encourages all Participants to come forward if they feel disrespected using the reporting mechanisms provided in the accompanying Procedure (“CSG Bullying, Harassment, and Discrimination Resolution Procedures for CSG-Endorsed Events”) to this Policy.

### 2. Background

The IUCN SSC Crocodile Specialist Group’s (CSG) mission is to assist the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and the Species Survival Commission (SSC) to meet their missions with regard to the conservation, management, and sustainable use of world crocodilians.

All SSC members (and thus CSG members) are bound by the [SSC Code of Conduct for Members of IUCN Commissions](#) (IUCN 2016). A CSG Code of Conduct pre-empted the SSC Code of Conduct, but the former was considered redundant once the SSC Code of Conduct had been finalised. Both codes were fundamentally different to the [IUCN Code of Conduct and Professional Ethics](#) (IUCN 2023), that essentially refers to IUCN interactions between IUCN employees in the IUCN workplace. A claim of harassment within the CSG (in 2018) stimulated the IUCN to formulate guidelines for handling claims of harassment, should they arise, to which all SSC members are now bound.

The SSC Code of Conduct provides guidance to voluntary members, during interactions in which they volunteered to participate, with full knowledge of the diversity of people from different countries, races, religions and cultures with different social ideologies, with whom they would be interacting. CSG members are expected to be professional and respectful, but also to manage themselves with appropriate decorum and tolerance. The underlying premise upon which CSG members are expected to operate is, and always has been, “respect, understanding and tolerance” regardless of an individuals’ characteristics.

Although the CSG operates under the SSC Code of Conduct, and adheres to the IUCN’s [Policy on the Protection from Sexual Exploitation, Sexual Abuse, and Sexual Harassment](#) (IUCN 2019a) and related [Anti-harassment Policy, including bullying and sexual harassment, for IUCN Events](#) (IUCN 2019b), the CSG recognises the need to have its own Policy and Procedures to address incidents of harassment, bullying or discrimination, should they occur, at CSG-endorsed events [eg working meetings, regional meetings, species meetings, virtual meetings (Teams, Zoom)] and other forms of communication.

### 3. Definitions

Characteristic                      a feature or quality that identifies a particular person or group of people. For the purpose of this policy, these characteristics include: race, colour, religious belief, ethnic or ethno-religious background, descent or nationality; sex, intersex (diverse physical or biological sex characteristics); pregnancy, childbirth and breastfeeding; marital, relationship or domestic status; carers’ responsibilities; transgender experience, gender identity; homosexuality (actual or presumed), sexual orientation; disability, which includes physical, intellectual, psychiatric or psychological, learning or cognitive disabilities; any virus or bacteria that can cause disease, such as HIV; and age.

Complainant	person who made the complaint, or in the case of complaints made on behalf of another person, the person who is alleged to have been the subject of bullying, harassment or discrimination
Complaint	includes all ways in which any instances of bullying, harassment and discrimination might be identified, raised or reported including verbally and in writing (including e-mail). [General inquiries, feedback and comments (including on social media sites) will not be considered a complaint. If in doubt, the complainant should be asked to confirm whether they wish to categorise their inquiry, feedback or comment as a complaint.]
CSG	IUCN SSC Crocodile Specialist Group
CSG Chair	one or more Chairs appointed to the CSG by the Species Survival Commission
CSG Member	invited member of the IUCN SSC Crocodile Specialist Group
CSG-Endorsed Event	means any meeting (face-to-face or virtual) or other forms of communication endorsed by the CSG Chair/s or Executive Committee. It does not include meetings between CSG members or Participants outside of CSG-endorsed events over which the CSG has no authority
Executive Committee	Committee including the Chair/s, Deputy Chair/s, and Executive Officer of the CSG
Executive Officer	Executive Officer of the IUCN SSC Crocodile Specialist Group
Host	individual, company or institution hosting a CSG-endorsed event
Investigator	person appointed by the CSG to conduct investigations in relation to matters pertaining to the complaint
Investigating Committee	Committee established to investigate a report of bullying, harassment or discrimination at a CSG-endorsed event
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
Jurisdiction	the jurisdiction in which a CSG-Endorsed Event is held
Participant	a registered or invited individual to a CSG-Endorsed Event
Respondent	the person who is alleged to have engaged in conduct inconsistent with this policy
SSC	Species Survival Commission of the IUCN
SSC Code of Conduct	SSC Code of Conduct to which all CSG members agree to adhere when accepting the invitation to join the CSG
Steering Committee	Steering Committee of the CSG
Support Person	friend, colleague, or any other person chosen by the complainant

#### 4. What is bullying?

- 4.1. Bullying is **repeated** and **unreasonable** behaviour directed towards a person or group of people that creates a risk to health and safety. **Repeated** behaviour is behaviour which occurs more than once and may involve a range of behaviours over time. **Unreasonable** behaviour is behaviour that a reasonable person, having regard for the circumstances, would see as unreasonable, including behaviour that is victimising, humiliating, intimidating or threatening.
- 4.2. Examples of bullying behaviour include the following: verbal abuse or threats, including yelling, insulting or offensive language; unjustified criticism or complaints; deliberately excluding someone from activities;

withholding information that is essential to perform a task properly; spreading misinformation or rumours; and physical abuse.

- 4.3. The behaviours referred to in subclause 4.2 may occur through any form of contact or communication, including: in person by telephone or e-mail; on social media platforms; through another person; or, by any other means provided that the alleged conduct occurred during a CSG-endorsed event.

*Note: Bullying behaviour can also be directed at a single person or group of people and be carried out by one or more persons.*

- 4.4. For the purposes of this policy, bullying also includes stalking, which includes following, watching or contacting a person without their consent, including by phone, text, e-mail or social media, with the intention of annoying, intimidating or causing them to fear physical or mental harm.

## **5. What is not bullying?**

- 5.1. The following behaviours do not constitute bullying: single incident of unreasonable behaviour, reasonable management practices, and low-level conflict as defined in sub-clauses 5.1.1. and 5.1.2. below.

*Note: Single or one-off incidents of unreasonable conduct can also cause a risk to health and safety and should not be ignored.*

5.1.1. Reasonable management practices include (but are not limited to): a direction to carry out reasonable duties and instructions to achieve the CSG Mission and Vision; setting reasonable goals, standards and deadlines; providing reasonable comment and advice (including relevant negative comment or feedback) on the work or performance of an individual or group; deciding not to appoint an individual for reasonable reasons; providing informal and formal feedback about behaviour and conduct in a reasonable way; implementing organisational change or restructuring; or, terminating a CSG member's membership in accordance with the SSC Code of Conduct.

5.1.2. Low-level conflict is interpersonal conflict or disagreement that is not sufficient to constitute bullying. People can and will disagree with each other.

*Note: Low-level conflict situations should not be ignored and should be resolved, if possible, in accordance with clause 4 of the CSG Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination Resolution Procedures for CSG-endorsed Events.*

## **6. What is direct discrimination?**

- 6.1. Direct discrimination occurs when a person, or a group of people, is treated less favourably than another person or group because of one or more characteristics.
- 6.2. If the criteria in subclause 6.1 are met, direct discrimination can occur in decisions such as those relating to: recruiting and nominating individuals to become CSG members; promoting CSG members; offering particular terms, conditions or benefits as part of membership or office; and determining dismissal.
- 6.3. Direct discrimination can also occur if assumptions are made that result in a person or group being treated differently on the basis of one or more characteristics.

## **7. What is indirect discrimination?**

- 7.1. Indirect discrimination occurs when there is a rule or requirement that disadvantages one group more than another on the basis of one or more characteristics, unless it can be shown that the particular rule or requirement is reasonable in all the circumstances or is required to perform the inherent requirements of the task.
- 7.2. If the criteria in subclause 7.1 are met, indirect discrimination can occur in decisions such as those relating to: having a gender restriction when it is not inherent to the competency requirements to achieve the task; or, requiring an applicant to speak and write fluently in a particular language when this is not required to carry out the essential requirements of the task.

## **8. What is harassment?**

- 8.1. Harassment occurs when a person, or a group of people, is intimidated, insulted or humiliated because of one or more characteristics. Harassment can arise as the result of a single incident as well as repeated incidents.
- 8.2. If the criteria in subclause 8.1 are met, harassment can occur through behaviour such as telling jokes about particular racial groups or based on sexual orientation or making derogatory comments or taunts about someone's race, religion, gender, sexual orientation or disability.

## **9. What is sexual harassment?**

- 9.1. Sexual harassment violates the IUCN "Anti-harassment Policy, including bullying and sexual harassment, for IUCN Events" and will not be tolerated.
- 9.2. Sexual harassment occurs if a person makes an unwelcome sexual advance, either physical or verbal, or an unwelcome request for sexual favours; sending explicit or sexually suggestive e-mails or texts; displaying offensive or pornographic websites or screen savers; or, engages in other unwelcome and non-consensual conduct of a sexual nature towards another individual.

## **10. What is not harassment or discrimination?**

- 10.1. The following are examples of conduct that do not constitute harassment or discrimination:
  - a. a person receives reasonable comment and advice (including relevant negative comment or feedback) on the work or performance of an individual or group;
  - b. a person is not offered a position because, notwithstanding that reasonable adjustments have been made, they cannot meet the inherent requirements of the position;
  - c. another nominee was preferred in a recruitment, selection or promotion process where they have better demonstrated the skills and experience to meet the required criteria of the role;
  - d. the CSG has gained an exemption, or the law otherwise permits the CSG, to target a CSG role at a particular group of people to help redress disadvantages that group may have experienced in the past;
  - e. a gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender person is unsuccessful in their nomination for CSG membership because they have failed to meet the criteria of membership; or,
  - f. a person with a disability is unsuccessful in their nomination for CSG membership because they have failed to meet the criteria of membership.

## **11. Application of other laws and policies**

- 11.1. Incidents of physical, including sexual, abuse or assault may be illegal under criminal law and should be reported to the relevant authority in the jurisdiction in which the CSG-endorsed event is being held.
- 11.2. Bullying, and a person's response to allegations of bullying, may also breach work, health and safety legislation within the jurisdiction in which the CSG-endorsed event is being held.

## **12. Entitlements and responsibilities**

- 12.1. All Participants at CSG-endorsed events have an entitlement to:
  - a. attend and participate in a safe and healthy environment free of bullying, harassment, and discrimination; and
  - b. make a complaint about any bullying, harassing or discriminatory behaviour they are subjected to, or witness, in accordance with the CSG Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination Resolution Procedures.
- 12.2. All Participants at CSG-endorsed events have a responsibility to:
  - a. not promote or engage in bullying, harassment or discrimination;

- b. report any accusation of bullying, harassment or discrimination in accordance with the CSG Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination Resolution Procedures;
  - c. comply with any reasonable instruction given by the CSG Executive Committee regarding the prevention of bullying, discrimination and harassment, including complying with this policy;
  - d. not victimise or retaliate against any person who raises a complaint of bullying, harassment or discrimination in accordance with the CSG Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination Resolution Procedures; and
  - e. not misuse this policy, including making a vexatious or malicious accusation of bullying, harassment or discrimination;
- 12.3. The CSG Executive Committee has an additional responsibility to:
- a. treat CSG members and Participants fairly and reasonably in compliance with the SSC Code of Conduct and to lead by example;
  - b. actively intervene to prevent hostile environments or stop bullying, harassing or discriminatory behaviour where it may occur, whether or not a complaint is received; and
  - c. report any such behaviour in accordance with the CSG Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination Resolution Procedures.
- 12.4. The CSG Executive Committee is responsible for:
- a. monitoring patterns of non-attendance at CSG-endorsed events, CSG member resignations, grievances, and other such records to establish any regular patterns or sudden unexplained changes;
  - b. recognising any changes in relationships between CSG members, Participants, and the CSG Executive Committee; and
  - c. investigating, monitoring, and where appropriate, addressing reports of bullying, harassment and discrimination.
- 12.5. Members of the CSG Executive Committee may hold exit interviews when CSG members resign in order to receive feedback.

### **13. Obligations for event organisers**

- 13.1. To implement this policy, any person responsible for the organisation of a CSG-endorsed event, including but not limited to the Host or CSG Executive Committee, will:
- a. ensure that all individuals involved in the organisation of the event are adequately briefed about this policy; and
  - b. promote the principles of this policy to all Participants prior to and during the event including, but not limited to making the policy easily accessible via the event website (if applicable), including a formal acceptance as part of the registration process (if applicable), and promoting it in pre- and onsite communication (e-mails, newsletters, signage, badges, presentation slides, etc.).
- 13.2. For events with 100 or more Participants, the Host (and event organisers) will, in addition to the points listed under article 13.1(b), identify a focal point responsible for handling harassment cases for the event; prepare a specific reporting procedure for the event and promote it to all registrants; and ensure that all elements, including social events, workshops and field trips of the event have a publicised finishing time and that there is a mode of transport back to the official meeting venue to demarcate the finishing time of the CSG-endorsed event.

### **14. Breach of policy**

The CSG requires Participants to follow this policy at all event venues and event-related social activities.

- 14.1. Consequences of any breach of this policy may include disciplinary action, up to and including termination of membership from the CSG, SSC and IUCN.
- 14.2. Other consequences that may result from a breach of this policy include, but are not limited to, the complainant receiving a verbal or written apology from the respondent with a commitment to cease the bullying behaviour; the parties being required to participate in some form of counselling, mediation or

conciliation; the respondent undertaking training in relation to their behaviour; and drawing up a management plan to document agreed or proposed actions by the parties.

14.3. Specifically for in-person CSG-endorsed events, a breach of this policy may include the following consequences:

- a. if a Participant engages in bullying, harassing or discriminating behaviour, the CSG reserves the right to take any action to maintain a welcoming and safe environment for all Participants during the event. This includes, but is not limited to, warning the offender and asking him/her to stop any inappropriate behaviour immediately; revoking registration with no refund; expulsion from the meeting venue; denial of registration to future CSG-endorsed events; and expulsion from the CSG.
- b. if a speaker or panellist engages in harassing or discriminating behaviour, the CSG reserves the right to interrupt that speech/presentation immediately and to take any other actions necessary to keep a welcoming and safe environment.
- c. if a Complaint is determined to have been made frivolously, in bad faith, maliciously, for personal gain or for revenge, the Complainant may have their registration revoked and be removed from the venue and may be refused registration or participation at future CSG-endorsed events.
- d. the CSG may take any action necessary to redress anything designed to, or with the clear impact of, disrupting the event or making the environment hostile for any Participants.
- e. Participants must comply with all applicable local laws. If an incident is of such gravity that it would appear to be violating local laws, the CSG will report it to the local police unless the Complainant specifically requires that the CSG refrains from doing so and there is no legal or mandatory obligation to report the case. To the extent possible, the CSG will also give appropriate support to an aggrieved person who wishes to report any harassment to the local police.

## 15. No retaliation

15.1. The CSG will not tolerate threats or other intimidation against a person who has made a complaint or provided information in support of a complaint.

15.2. Consequences for retaliation include revoking registration with no refund and removal from the meeting premises; and/or refusal to register at future CSG-endorsed events.

## 16. Literature

IUCN (2016). Code of Conduct of the members of IUCN Commissions. [https://www.iucn.org/sites/default/files/2023-10/code\\_of\\_conduct\\_for\\_commission\\_members\\_en-updated.pdf](https://www.iucn.org/sites/default/files/2023-10/code_of_conduct_for_commission_members_en-updated.pdf)

IUCN (2019b). Anti-harassment Policy, including bullying and sexual harassment, for IUCN Events. <https://www.iucn.org/sites/default/files/2022-05/anti-harassment-policy.pdf>

IUCN (2019a). Policy on the Protection from Sexual Exploitation, Sexual Abuse, and Sexual Harassment. <https://www.iucn.org/sites/default/files/2022-05/iucn-policy-on-the-protection-from-sexual-exploitation-sexual-abuse-and-sexual-harassment-seah.pdf>

IUCN (2023). Code of Conduct and Professional Ethics. [https://www.iucn.org/sites/default/files/2023-11/code\\_of\\_conduct\\_and\\_professional\\_ethics.pdf](https://www.iucn.org/sites/default/files/2023-11/code_of_conduct_and_professional_ethics.pdf)

**For further information, contact the CSG Executive Officer ([csg@wmi.com.au](mailto:csg@wmi.com.au))**