

EFG Code of Ethics

A pillar of the European Geologist title



Introduction

The European Federation of Geologists (EFG) is a non-governmental organisation whose main aims are to represent the professions of geology in Europe, contribute to a safer and more sustainable use of the natural environment, protect and inform the public and promote a more responsible exploitation of natural resources.

Among its many activities, the EFG constantly works towards the building of a European community of capable and reliable geologists, notably through its European Geologist title awarded to geologists who have demonstrated the ability to deliver a high quality of services within the practice of geology. This prestigious title is built on four important pillars: Academic Qualifications, Professional Experience, Continuing Professional Development and, finally, the Code of Ethics.

The aim of this "Code of Ethics" is to prescribe acceptable behaviour of each individual member of EFG's national membership associations and to establish a common ground of principles that apply to all - Full Members, Associate Members, Observer Members and all individual European Geologists. The code provides therefore a means of professional self-regulation, necessary condition to guarantee the quality and the legitimacy of the work of geologists. This self-regulation within the profession of geology can only be effective if it is unanimously, and regularly, approved by the profession itself.

Below is the latest version of the code, approved in November 2016 by the EFG Council, that includes a new amendment relating to the working environment, and more particularly to sexual harassment in the field of sciences.

Preamble

Geology is a science that deals with the composition, structure, resources, history and evolution of the Earth and the application of this science. The practice of geology is a profession for those who possess the necessary qualifications and/or professional experience recognised by their appropriate national body or under the law, and whose living comes essentially from that work.

General Principles

1. All geologists following this Code must pay regard to their professional conduct to the standards and to the spirit of the following clauses, so as not to harm the dignity of the profession.
2. The privilege of exercising the profession of geology demands the highest standards of integrity, morality, professional conscience and moral responsibility.
3. The geologist is responsible for the impression he/she gives of the profession in the opinion of those around him/her and of the public at large.
4. The geologist is obliged to maintain professional secrecy, and to protect third parties.





Relations with other Geologists

5. The rules of loyalty and honesty should control the actions of the geologist towards his/her colleagues, his employers and to third parties with whom he/she is in contact. In particular, he/she is required not to divulge information liable to discredit another colleague.
6. The geologist must not put his/her name to anything that is untrue, nor make agreements that prejudice his/her client's position.

Relations with Clients

7. The geologist must always inform his/her client of the true limitations of practical results that might be obtained from a given professional assistance, especially if it implies increased costs for the client.
8. The geologist must avoid any sort of negligence in the practice of his/her profession, especially when this gives rise to risks or of material or moral damage for his/her client or for the environment.
9. The geologist must not alter, or deny the existence of, facts or accepted technical or scientific truths which could thereby favour a client or mislead the public.
10. The geologist must not promise or broadcast specific professional advice that cannot be supported by a genuine, objective possibility, nor seek to publicise professional qualifications that he/she does not actually hold with the aim of keeping his client from going to other professional colleagues.
 - a. The geologist must refer, or advise reference, to the help of other specialists whenever the interests of his/her employer or client are thereby better served. He/she must, in his/her conclusions, distinguish between his/her own work and that of his/her colleagues.
 - b. If, after having given his/her advice, a geologist becomes aware that it will not be entirely followed, he/she should, regardless of his/her own position, inform the relevant person of the foreseen risks.
11. The geologist should not take on the functions of an expert in fields of interest other than his/her own to one of his/her regular clients or one for whom he/she has already given advice.

Working environment

12. A respectful and fruitful working environment is fundamental for maintaining a high level of professionalism. Therefore, discrimination or harassment, either sexual or of any other kind, is unacceptable because it offends the dignity of persons and seriously undermines the atmosphere of trust essential to the work of all geologists. Such actions should be denounced immediately to authorities. It is unprofessional and unethical to condone any kind of discrimination or harassment or to disregard complaints of harassment from colleagues or staff.

