INTERNAL REGULATIONS

TETHYS RESEARCH INSTITUTE

8th of April 2026

Research Integrity

The Tethys Institute is committed to respecting and pursuing environmental, social, and economic sustainability goals aimed at minimising environmental impact, strengthening social cohesion, reducing inequalities, supporting parenthood among researchers by protecting and valuing the role of those with children, promoting the inclusion of people with disabilities, ensuring that these factors do not become obstacles to career development or personal well-being, and fostering cultural growth. The role of the Tethys Research Institute ETS (hereafter TRI) is not limited to the production of knowledge, but also includes the responsibility to ensure that such knowledge is generated through ethical and rigorous practices.

a. Research Integrity Principles

1. Fundamental values

Research results must contribute to the development and well-being of society and to the specific objectives of marine fauna conservation as outlined in the Tethys Research Institute Statute.

In accordance with the European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity, the fundamental values of research are based on four pillars:

- **Reliability**, in ensuring the quality of research, reflected in its design, methodology, analysis, and use of resources.
- **Honesty**, in developing, conducting, reviewing, reporting, and communicating research in a transparent, fair, complete, and objective manner.
- **Respect**, for colleagues, research participants and subjects, society, ecosystems, cultural heritage, and the environment.

- **Accountability**, for research from the initial idea to publication, including its management and organisation, training, supervision, mentoring, and its broader societal impacts.

Research activity is both a right and a duty of researchers, members, and governing bodies of the Tethys Institute, and must be guided by the above values, as well as by fairness, diligence, and transparency.

TRI is committed to ensuring maximum transparency in research activities, with particular attention to the use of research funds and collaborations with other researchers or institutions.

2. Data collection

Tethys Research Institute requires that data collection be carefully planned, documented, and rigorously implemented. Data must be recorded, managed, and stored in a way that allows verification and reproducibility for a defined period, promoting, where possible, the FAIR data principles (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, Reusable; https://www.go-fair.org/fair-principles/).

In planning and conducting research, researchers must ensure:

- the right to privacy and protection of personal data,
- the physical and mental integrity of all involved subjects,
- the right to non-discrimination,
- high standards of health protection, including their own.

Researchers must also consider the protection of ecosystems, cultural heritage, and the environment, responsibly assessing potential direct and indirect impacts of their work.

Data collection methods should prioritise non-invasive techniques, minimising any disturbance to animals. When invasive techniques are necessary (e.g., satellite telemetry or biopsies), they must follow the most up-to-date international guidelines.

3. Scientific publication

Research results are communicated through scientific publications. Publications must provide a **complete and truthful account** of the work carried out. Methods used—including external

services, Artificial Intelligence (AI), and automated tools—must be disclosed in accordance with disciplinary standards and in a way that enables verification or reproducibility.

All sources and contributions, including funding, must be properly acknowledged, and supporting data should be made accessible whenever possible.

All authors must formally agree on the order of authorship, recognising that authorship requires:

1. a significant contribution to research design, data collection, analysis, and/or interpretation;
2. drafting and/or critically revising the publication;
3. approval of the final version;
4. agreement to be accountable for the publication's content, unless otherwise specified.

Authors must be transparent in communication and dissemination, clearly stating assumptions, values influencing the research, the robustness of scientific evidence, remaining uncertainties, and knowledge gaps.

These principles apply to all forms of publication, including subscription journals, open-access journals, and other dissemination formats (e.g., outreach materials, social media).

b. Practices that Undermine Research Integrity

Failure to comply with the above principles constitutes a violation of professional responsibility, damages research processes, compromises relationships among researchers, and undermines trust in the Institute and the credibility of research.

1. Research activities

The following practices are considered detrimental:

- Misusing seniority to encourage violations of research integrity or to advance one's own career
- Delaying or obstructing the work of other researchers
- Manipulating authorship or discrediting others' contributions
- Maliciously accusing a researcher of misconduct

- Ignoring or concealing suspected violations or misconduct
- Concealing the use of AI or automated tools in content creation or publications
- Withholding research data or results without justification
- Fragmenting results to artificially increase publication output ("salami slicing")
- Selective or inaccurate citation

2. Funding

Research funding must be requested, received, and used in accordance with the Institute's legal and fiscal framework. Funds must be reported transparently and accurately, reflecting the research actually conducted.

It is considered a violation of research integrity to allow funders, sponsors, or others to compromise independence, impartiality, or the objective reporting of results.

3. Conflicts of interest

A conflict of interest arises when professional objectivity may be influenced by a secondary interest (e.g., financial, personal, political).

It occurs when any researcher, member, or governing body representative operates in a situation where personal or professional interests may compromise the impartiality required for their role.

All members and collaborators must refrain from activities that generate conflicts of interest or pursue interests contrary to those defined in the Statute. They must abstain from decisions or activities in cases of actual or potential conflicts.

Anyone who believes they are involved in a conflict of interest, or feels influenced by external pressures, must immediately report it to the Board of Arbitrators (i.e., Probiviri), which will inform the Board of Directors.

4. Fabrication, Falsification, Plagiarism (FFP)

Scientific misconduct is traditionally defined as fabrication, falsification, or plagiarism in proposing, conducting, reviewing, or reporting research:

- Fabrication: inventing data or results and recording them as real

- Falsification: manipulating materials, equipment, images, processes, or data to misrepresent research
- Plagiarism: using others' ideas, processes, results, or words without proper attribution

5. Authorship issues

Violations include:

- Gift authorship: including individuals who did not make a significant contribution
- Ghost authorship: excluding individuals who made a significant contribution

The Tethys Research Institute is committed to preventing, discouraging, and addressing all forms of misconduct through training, supervision, mentoring, and by fostering a positive and supportive research environment.