

MOTION TO ADOPT REVISED CODE OF ETHICS

To be put to NZIF AGM in Wellington, on Saturday 26th September 2020

Motion:

The AGM **Approves** replacing the NZIF Code of Ethics with the Document set out in the box below:

NEW ZEALAND INSTITUTE OF FORESTRY

(DRAFT REVISED) CODE OF ETHICS

In your role as a forestry professional, you shall:

1. Have regard for sustainability in the practice of your profession.

Practice your profession according to sound ecological, social, economic and environmental principles to the advantage of present and future generations.

2. Treat others with respect.

Treat everyone fairly and with courtesy, politeness and respect; do not harass, bully or knowingly act with malice towards individuals or groups of people; consider cultural sensitivities and foster diversity; be open and transparent in your professional activities, making information and advice as plain and intelligible as possible.

3. Promote safe practices.

Act in such a way to avoid harm to people involved in or affected by your activities; safeguard the health, safety, wellbeing, rights and interests of people involved in or affected by your activities

4. Always provide a high standard of service.

Practice your profession with diligence and care, bringing your expertise and experience to bear upon your work.

Know and act within your limitations. Be aware of the limits of your competence and do not be tempted to work beyond these without adequate supervision and oversight. Only commit to what you can deliver. Be objective at all times. Give clear and appropriate advice.

Maintain your professional competence in areas relevant to your work. Keep yourself informed of changes affecting the profession and broader developments relevant to your work and ensure your knowledge, skills and techniques are up to date. Apply your knowledge for the benefit of society.

5. Disclose and manage conflicts of interest.

Identify and disclose, in writing, any actual or potential conflict of interest and where others might perceive a conflict of interest. Do not act in a manner where such conflict or potential conflict has been identified or should have been identified unless all interested parties have been made aware of the situation and have consented, in writing, to you continuing with the task.

6. Maintain confidentiality.

Do not use or disclose confidential information obtained in the course of your professional activities without the express and informed consent of those entitled to control that information unless required to do so by law.

7. Take responsibility

Take full responsibility and be accountable for all your actions.

Have the courage to make a stand and be prepared to act if you suspect a risk to safety or malpractice of any sort.

8. Promote trust in the profession.

Set a good example and remember your actions could affect your own reputation and that of the Institute and other Members.

Demonstrate and encourage ethical behaviour and high professional standards amongst colleagues.

Report breaches of the Code of Ethics if you have reasonable grounds to believe a breach of the Code of Ethics by another Member.

Comply with legal requirements, relevant professional standards, the rules and regulations of the Institute, and base decision making on sound evidence.

9. Respect the principles of and any obligations arising from the Treaty of Waitangi.

The Treaty of Waitangi creates a unique and valuable relationship between Māori and those who live in New Zealand as Tangata Tiriti (treaty people). Members should have particular regard for the legitimate interests of Māori communities likely to be affected by their work.

Moved by:

James Treadwell, NZIF President

Peter Casey, Chair, NZIF Registration Board

Approval Required:

Adoption of the revised Code of Ethics requires approval by a majority of eligible voters at the AGM. Eligible voters are all financial Members other than Student Members who are present at the meeting.

Explanation

NZIF Rules require the Institute to have a Code of Ethics that, along with the Rules and NZIF Regulations is binding on every member (Rules 54 and 32).

NZIF's current Code, with a few amendments has been in force since 1975. It is largely based on the Code of Ethics of the NZ Institute of Valuers and still has a close resemblance to the Valuer's Code.

During the 2018 NZIF Conference in Nelson, Tim Dare, Professor of Philosophy at the University of Auckland, presented a workshop on ethics (his presentation is available on the 2018 conference page on the NZIF web site). Prof Dare specialises in professional and applied ethics. For the workshop he analysed aspects of the NZIF Code of Ethics and identified some issues with it.

Following the conference, the NZIF Council established a sub-committee convened by David Evison, President and representing the NZIF Council. Other members were Russell Dale representing the Fellows committee and Andrew McEwen representing the Registration Board. The working group sought feedback and assistance from Professor Dare on a number of occasions. It also examined the Codes of Ethics (sometimes called Codes of Conduct) of professional forestry associations in other countries and of professional bodies in New Zealand.

The sub-committee decided to use the format and much of the content of the UK Institute of Chartered Foresters (ICF) Code of Conduct (approved in 2015) as the basis for the revised NZIF Code of Ethics. When developing its Code, ICF had followed a similar process to NZIF in having input from an ethics specialist and researching the Codes of other professional bodies. ICF has agreed that NZIF could use its Code as the basis for the revised NZIF Code. The ICF Code was also used by the Institute of Foresters of Australia (IFA) (also with approval from the ICF) as the basis for its Code of Conduct. Having a similar Code for forestry professionals in all three countries is sensible, given the interchange of forestry professionals between the three countries.

The revised Code, the subject of this motion, has been approved by the NZIF Council and the Registration Board. Approval has been sought from the Ministry of Justice as required under the exemption for Registered Members under the Real Estate Agents Act 2008 (see NZIF Rule 165). If approved by the AGM and the Ministry of Justice, the revised Code will become binding on all NZIF members (Rule 32).

The NZIF Council believes the revised NZIF Code is likely to be consistent with the provisions relating to a possible Code of Ethics for a registered forestry advisor under the Forests (Regulation of Log Traders and Forestry Advisers) Amendment Act 2020.

If the revised Code is approved, the Registration Board is likely to investigate the need to issue a practice note to cover some items in the current code of specific relevance to registered members, but not other members, that do not appear in the revised code (for example professional fees, use of member's name and designation and advertising and promotion).