

6th Session of the Meeting of Parties

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Draft Resolution 6.5

Guidelines on Ethics for Research and Field Work Practices



The Meeting of the Parties to the Agreement on the Conservation of Populations of European Bats (hereafter “the Agreement”),

Recalling that EUROBATS Agreement Article III, especially paragraph 1 and paragraph 7, identifies the requirement to protect bats and to promote, as appropriate, research and collaboration in such research;

Further recalling EUROBATS Resolutions 4.6 and 5.5 on Guidelines for the Issue of Permits for the Capture and Study of Captured Wild Bats (especially 4.6 paragraphs 3, 10-13 and associated parts of the Annex);

Recognising the needs for research, especially where it is of benefit to conservation, or adds to knowledge of a country’s biodiversity;

Further recognising the need to regulate such research, including when such research is carried out in a ‘host’ country;

Also recognising the role of a ‘home’ country in managing responsible research within and beyond its territory;

Further recognising the role of a ‘host’ country in enabling responsible research within its territory;

Noting the availability of appropriate Codes of Practice for establishments which are depositories of specimens collected from the wild;

Further noting the availability of appropriate Codes of Practice for establishments under whose auspices research which may disturb live animals, especially invasive research, is being carried out or which will be holders of such animals;

Urges Parties and Range States:

1. That institutes under whose auspices collecting of specimens is being carried out or which will be recipients of the material

- 1.1. Should have an appropriate Code of Practice that addresses the context and legitimacy of acquisition, due diligence, long-term care, documentation and relevance to overriding, institutional aims. Specimens are acquired on the basis that they will be retained in the public domain. In particular, the Institute will not acquire any specimen unless it is satisfied that the specimen has not been acquired in, or exported from, its country of origin in violation of that country's laws;
- 1.2. Should, in accepting ownership of a specimen, be provided with certification that the person from whom the specimen is being acquired is the legal owner with undisputed title to the specimens. In so doing the owner(s) should confirm that the specimen(s) have not been
 - stolen or looted from their rightful owners or country of origin;
 - obtained by violent means (including during an armed conflict in the country of origin);
 - obtained by violation of the legislation of their country of origin;
 - exported illegally or illicitly from their country of origin ('host' country);
 - imported illegally or illicitly into the 'home' country;
- 1.3. Should further be assured that the specimens were collected in a responsible and humane fashion and that the material was the minimum required for the research purposes;
2. That institutes under whose auspices research which may disturb live animals, especially invasive research, is being carried out or which will be holders of such animals;
 - 2.1. Should have an appropriate Code of Practice that addresses the context and legitimacy of its research, animal conservation and welfare, documentation and relevance to overriding, institutional aims. Such a code should be applied whether the research is being carried out in the home country or abroad;
 - 2.2. Should recognise that an increasing number of major scientific journals have an ethical policy with respect to animal conservation and welfare, and to sociology (examples are Association for the Study of Animal Behaviour, the Animal Behaviour Society, Oryx);

- 2.3. Should be assured that the research was justified, will be carried out in a responsible and humane fashion subject to its own Code of Practice, and that the material used will be the minimum required for the research purposes;
3. That field workers who will be taking specimens for retention in museums or other collections ('collecting' and 'whole animal sampling'), or who will be carrying out research which may disturb live animals, especially invasive research (in the field, or while holding wild animals in captivity);
 - 3.1. Should operate within the legal authority and policy of the host country;
 - 3.2. Should operate under a Code of Practice in accordance with those outlined in 1 and 2 above (preferably that of their own institution); the Code of Practice applied should be the more stringent available of those from the home and host countries;
 - 3.3. Should ensure that specimens are only collected and/or killed by the researcher when such collection is essential to the scientific integrity of the research being undertaken;
 - 3.4. Should agree a clear policy before departure as to whether to collect, what to collect, and the destination of collected specimens; the number of specimens collected should be the absolute minimum required for research integrity;
 - 3.5. Should, wherever possible, base research undertaken in a foreign country upon active collaboration with individuals from the host country. Such individuals may be appropriately qualified and experienced, or may be participating to enhance the capacity of scientific and technical staff in the host country;
 - 3.6. Should carry out research in a way that respects local beliefs, economic and cultural interests, and rights;
 - 3.7. Should communicate their results;
 - 3.8. Should, as appropriate, include researchers from the host country as co-authors of all relevant publications, and copies of any reports and publications resulting from the research shall routinely be provided to all relevant institutions in the country where the research is being undertaken;
 - 3.9. Must be prepared to be able to answer satisfactorily the ethical requirements for submission of papers to journals that have an ethics policy; to this end they may consider

- the justification for the research: through a cost (to the animals)/ benefit analysis;
 - an ethical review (be up-to-date, discuss proposals with peers, consider all options, justification, obtain relevant legal authority and adopt best practice);
 - refining the project to improve welfare of each experimental animal;
 - reducing the number of animals exposed (using power analysis to identify minimum requirements);
 - replacing the use of wild animals where possible;
 - developing a Code of Practice for each procedure.
4. That a 'host' country regulating activities of visitors from abroad to within their domain;
- 4.1. Should have established policies on the lines of 1 and 2 above, which apply to people carrying out research on bats in their own country and which can be applied to those visiting from elsewhere;
- 4.2. Should have a readily accessible contact point(s) for enquiries about carrying out research in its country;
- 4.3. May ask to see a copy of an appropriate ethics policy for any visiting scientists.

The Meeting of Parties further urges:

The Secretariat to ensure that the contact details for the national Competent Authority and Scientific Focal Point for each Party and Range State is kept up-to-date through the EUROBATs website.