

## ESPA Ethics Principles and Procedure<sup>i</sup>

The Ecosystem Services for Poverty Alleviation (ESPA) programme is committed to promoting and facilitating the conduct of ethical research and all projects funded by the ESPA programme from 2011 onwards will be required to complete the ESPA ethics review.

The ESPA ethics procedures apply to all projects funded by ESPA. The Ethics Assessment Form is designed to help researchers anticipate issues that might arise in their research, sensitise them to potential sources of ethical conflict, and the dilemmas that may arise in research, scholarship and professional practice. This pro-active approach is designed to anticipate and offset problems and heighten awareness of ethical issues before the research commences. It should be acknowledged, however, that no ethics procedure can anticipate unique circumstances or direct actions in specific situations; individual researchers must be willing and able to make carefully considered ethical choices and be prepared to make clear the assumptions, facts and issues on which these choices are based.

### ***Key principles for research ethics in the ESPA programme***

- PRINCIPLE 1** *ESPA projects will need to meet all obligations and legal requirements both in the countries of study and those of any researchers. This includes requirements required for the approval of research and any institutional or national procedures for ethics review. Where there is doubt, the most comprehensive procedure should be applied for a project.*
- PRINCIPLE 2** *In order to ensure that the perspectives, interests and well-being of those directly affected by specific ecosystem services are properly addressed, all projects will have strong leadership and participation from developing countries.*
- PRINCIPLE 3** *The potential value and relevance of traditional indigenous knowledge is also recognised and should be considered, where appropriate, alongside western scientific approaches and methods.*
- PRINCIPLE 4** *Appropriate data collection, analysis, management and storage protocols should be put in place to ensure the integrity of research findings and their subsequent use within the research team, ESPA programme and eventual wider public domain.*
- PRINCIPLE 5** *The rights, privacy, and safety of people who are the subject of research, whether direct or indirect, are of paramount importance and should be reflected in the research design and execution of all ESPA funded projects.*
- PRINCIPLE 6** *Project leaders and their host institutions are responsible for the health and safety of all researchers and other staff working on their project and project leaders should ensure that the same rigorous standards for assessing health and safety risks are applied to all staff on the project, regardless of origin.*
- PRINCIPLE 7** *The funders are committed to the principle of open reporting of ESPA research findings and open access to ESPA data to all those with an interest*

*in ESPA research outcomes, including local people and communities who may not have been directly or proactively involved in the research itself.*

**PRINCIPLE 8** *Intellectual property rights and associated copyright or patent issues will be agreed between all research partners before a project commences, and will be fair taking into account the respective roles and responsibilities of the partners.*

**PRINCIPLE 9** *To uphold the credibility of findings for non-academic stakeholders, researchers should maintain the independence and integrity of the research process and ensure that they maintain an intellectual detachment from any personal convictions relating to the topic of their research.*

**PRINCIPLE 10** *All research conducted within ESPA should be in the context of environmental sustainability in the medium- to long-term.*

## **The Ethics Review Procedure**

Your completed Ethics Assessment Form should be submitted to the ESPA Directorate within xx months of the wards of an ESPA project.

1. The Principal Investigator should complete either an Ethics Self-Assessment or a Full Ethics Assessment for the proposed research.

An Ethics Self-Assessment will be adequate for most research projects. Please complete the form using the Ethics Self-Assessment Guidance Notes.

A Full Ethics Assessment uses the same format, but requires a longer, more detailed consideration of the ethical issues raised. It is expected that this will only be required for research involving human subjects that addresses vulnerable populations, raises sensitive issues, or uses invasive procedures. It may also pertain to biophysical research that requires extraordinary permission from governments and landowners, involves significant disturbance to vulnerable species or habitats, sampling rare/endangered or harmful taxa/species, and transporting samples/specimens/soil between countries. Please complete the form using the Ethics Self-Assessment Guidance Notes and supplementary Full Ethics Assessment Guidance Notes.

2. The ESPA Ethics Committee will review the form, and flag problems or issues the researchers might consider. The process is intended to help give careful consideration of the ethical implications of research and should facilitate, rather than impede projects. The part of the process may take up to one month.
3. Once the review process is complete the Ethics Committee will return an Ethics Determination form to the Principal Investigator indicating whether the research complies with ESPA Ethics Procedure or if further consideration of ethics/documentation is required.

## ESPA Ethics Self-Assessment Guidance Notes

### **1. Guidance for legal, moral responsibilities and Codes of Conduct**

There are several legal obligations that must be respected in the conduct of research. In addition, there are moral responsibilities that you may want to address.

Legal responsibilities include gaining permission to conduct research in many countries (or obtaining the correct entry visas), the right to access certain field sites (or locations within a country), the requirements for environmental impact assessments, the need to minimise conflicts of interest, and reporting evidence of crime. Issues to consider include:

- Do individual researchers or the research project require official approval before the work commences?
- Does the researcher hold a position of power or authority over research subjects?
- Does the institution with which you are affiliated hold a position of power or authority over research subjects?
- Are research participants truly free to grant consent related to the research (e.g. for an interview or granting access to property)?
- Do any of the sponsors claim proprietary rights to intellectual property or to data collected through the research?
- What steps are required to gain permissions for access to field site(s)?
- What are the rules that govern the field site(s)?

There are specific legal requirements, as well, when researchers become aware of the possibility of criminal activities or abuse. These are always important to respect but are particularly important when the research involves vulnerable groups or properties. Researchers are required to notify the relevant authorities if their research uncovers evidence of criminal activity or abuse of individuals less than 18 years of age.

Conflicts of interest (financial, non-financial or both) can compromise a research project, even if it does not violate legal obligations. Both the [University of Edinburgh](#) (UoE) and the [University of Oxford](#) offer guidance on conflicts of interest. The key question to ask is:

- Will research objectivity or independence be compromised in return for financial or non-financial benefits to the researcher, a relative or friend?
- The responsibility for avoiding a conflict of interest lies with the individual, but potential conflicts of interest should always be disclosed. Failure to disclose a conflict of interest may result in funding being withdrawn.

General information on the Data Protection Act (1998) can be found on the [UK Government website](#) and on the [Information Commissioner's Office \(ICO\) website](#). More specific guidance for researchers can be found on the [UoE website](#). Advice on records managements is provided by [JISC Infonet](#). Information on the law pertaining to bribery is provided by the [UK Bribery Act \(2010\)](#).

If the PI is based outside the UK then a local equivalent to the UK Data Protection Act (1998) or the UK Bribery Act (2010) may be applied but only if it is more stringent than the aforementioned Acts.

If you are collecting personal data in another country and bringing it back to the UK, the data protection considerations are the same. For example, you must be open and up front with individuals when letting them know what you will do with the information you have collected about them, including letting them know where it will be held in the UK. You will also need to take appropriate security measures – these may be different in different countries.

If you are transferring personal data outside the European Union some prior thought and preparation is required. Both the [ICO](#) and [University of Edinburgh](#) offer guidance on data transfer.

There is often a moral obligation to provide feedback to research participants, either respondents in interviews or organisations and agencies that supported the research in some way (e.g. by granting permission to use a field site or data). Whenever possible, it is a good practice to provide that feedback to research participants.

Researchers by their very presence can often disrupt cultural and social norms/practices. It is important to be aware of the potential for such disruption. Issues to consider here are whether the researchers will be sensitive to this possibility, particularly when doing research outside of the UK. If there is potential for disruption of norms, researchers should take steps to minimize that possibility.

The UK Research Integrity Office's Code of Practice for Research (2009) can be found [here](#). Links to other established Codes of Professional Conduct and ethical guidelines are provided below. Note that the most relevant code of practice from which to seek guidance will be dictated, in part, by the subject and scope of the research being undertaken.

Other codes of conduct include:

- [Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council](#)
- [British Sociological Association \(2004\) Ethical Guidelines](#)
- [Department of Health \(2009\) The Mental Capacity Act – Fact Sheet for Social Scientists](#)
- [Economic and Social Research Council \(2010\) Framework for Research Ethics](#)
- [EdQual \(2008\) Research Ethics in International Collaborative and Participatory Research](#)
- [Forest Research Social and Economic Research Group \(2010\) Research Ethics](#)
- [Natural Environment Research Council \(2005\) Ethics Policy](#)
- [Research Councils UK \(2009\) Governance of Good Research Conduct](#)
- [Royal Geographical Society with IBG \(2006\) Research Ethics and a Code of Practice](#)
- [Social Research Association \(2003\) Ethical Guidelines](#)
- [Sociological Research Association \(2003\) Ethical Guidelines](#)

- [UCL Research Ethics Committee Guidance Note 1: Research Involving Children](#)

Ethical review in the sponsor country is mandatory; however ESPA projects should consider the benefit(s) that might be derived from having the research ethically reviewed/partially reviewed in the host country as well. Host Research Ethics Committees (RECs) may be better placed to comment on issues concerning research priorities, consent, inducements and the protection of research participants/proposed field sites. That said, properly functioning RECs are often absent, ineffective or under-resourced in developing countries.

## **2. Guidance for rights of human subjects**

Research involving human subjects or that might involve the identification of individuals must ensure that subjects know their rights in participation and their right to maintain confidentiality. It is also important that the subjects are capable of providing informed consent. *Any research involving vulnerable groups must go through the Full Ethics Assessment.* This includes young people, and people who may have cognitive disabilities,; in these cases, it may also be necessary to obtain consent from a guardian. In addition, if people might be put at risk by virtue of participating in the study (e.g., there are questions about illegal activity, where retribution might be anticipated, and so forth) the research *must go through Full Ethics Assessment.* Issues to consider:

- Is the research subject capable of understanding what is involved in the study?
- Is sufficient detail about the study provided and in an appropriate format?
- Will research subjects understand the risks involved?
- Will research subjects understand that they can withdraw from the study?
- Will research subjects know who to contact in the event that they are unhappy with the conduct of the study or the researchers?

As a researcher, you should offer research subjects the right to maintain their confidentiality, and if appropriate, that of the organisation or institution they may represent. Issues to consider:

- Will promises to not use names be sufficient to protect confidentiality?
- Will other people beyond the researcher have access to the data?
- Will feedback, and the opportunity to edit responses, be given to respondents?
- Will steps be taken to ensure that individuals are not spatially identifiable?
- Is the research part of an international collaboration which will involve the transfer of personal data overseas? If so, does the receiving country have adequate data protection regulations, or has appropriate contact been made with the recipient of the data which specifies the data protection requirements that must be upheld?
- Will the explicit consent of the participant to be quoted verbatim be obtained during data collection and will they be made aware that their email address may be identifiable?
- Will participants be advised that research data given in confidence does not enjoy legal privilege and may be liable to subpoena by a court?
- Does the funding body require the archiving of data? Will the participants be informed of this when giving consent?

Further guidance on consent can be found in the [ESRC Framework for Research Ethics](#).

The Data Protection Act (1998) applies to all research carried out by, and in association with, members of UK institutions. For research involving human subjects, the key provisions are:

- Individuals have the right to see any personal information you hold about them.
- You must tell people what you are doing with information about them including whom you are disclosing it to.
- You must use appropriate security measures to protect personal data. It is a requirement that all computer hard drives, compact discs and memory sticks holding personal data are encrypted. In addition, it is good practice to encrypt all equipment.
- Do not transfer personal information outside the European Economic Area, including publishing personal information on the internet, without safeguards.
- You must not keep personal data for longer than is necessary unless the funding body specifically requires it.

Further guidance on data protection and data transfer can be found in Box 1 of the ESPA Ethics Assessment Form: Legal and moral responsibilities, and Codes of Conduct.

### **3. Guidance regarding harm, discomfort or stress for human subjects**

As researchers, we have obligations to minimise the stress and harm that may accompany research. Issues to consider include:

- Will the research address sensitive issues? If so, what steps will be taken to ameliorate distress?
- Will the researchers approach research subjects with sensitivity to cultural differences?
- Will the researchers approach the community or area in which research is undertaken with sensitivity to cultural differences? What steps will be taken to minimise the effects of disruption?
- Will the research involve foreseeable physical discomfort or harm? What steps will be taken to minimise or ameliorate these effects?
- Will distressful questions be asked that are only incidental to the research?
- Will the true purpose of the research be concealed from the participants? If yes, what information will be concealed and why?
- What remedies will be available to those who feel harmed or impacted upon by the research?

Guidance on assessing risk can be found in the [ESRC Framework for Research Ethics](#).

### **4. Guidance for effects on environment**

#### *Field work outside the UK*

When planning research outside the UK (particularly in developing countries), researchers will have to refer to international guidelines or conventions, European Directives, national laws or guidelines, guidelines produced by the funding bodies other than ESPA (if appropriate), institutional guidelines, and recommendations from advisory bodies and/or local stakeholders.

Information on various relevant conventions, directives and laws can be found here:

- [The African Convention on the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources](#)
- [EU Environmental Impact Assessment of Projects](#)
- [World Heritage Convention](#)
- [CITES](#)
- [Convention on Migratory Species \(a.k.a. Bonn Convention\)](#)
- [Convention on Biological Diversity](#)
- [Convention on the Protection, Management and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the Eastern Africa Region](#)
- [Convention for Co-operation in the Protection and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the West and Central African Region](#)
- [Environment and Human Rights Advisory](#)
- [Environmental Legislation in China \(Mainland\)](#)
- [EPA – China Environmental Law Initiative](#)
- [Climate Change Convention](#)
- [International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture](#)
- [International Tropical Timber Agreement](#)
- [International Union for Conservation of Nature](#)
- [Ramsar Convention](#)
- [United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification](#)
- [United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea](#)

Please note that this is by no means an exhaustive list.

Check local laws with collaborators from the country who will be more familiar with the legislation requirements. Note that you may also need to obtain prior informed consent from the indigenous or local community as well as the relevant national/local authority.

Other points to consider regardless of the location include:

- If plant animal and soil samples are to be transferred between countries, these are likely to be subject to legal control from national authorities in both countries as well as in many cases international agreements.
- If the field work is to be carried out on agricultural or other farm land, could the work cause any distress or harm to crops or livestock or in any way interfere with the work of the farmer or land owner? What steps will you take to discuss this with the farmer and/or land owner?
- Are there any sensitive, rare or endangered flora/fauna in the area (e.g. birdlife, wildlife, plants)? If so, how will you minimise the impact of your work?
- Have you considered making an arrangement with the landowner? If so, what format will this take?

Note that you may need to complete Box 2: Rights of human subjects, if your work requires extensive interaction with local communities, land users or other people in the course of your research.

## **5. Guidance for institutional/agency consent**

Issues to consider when undertaking archival research include:

- Will (and should) the privacy of the individuals who created, or are the subjects of, the archival material be respected?
- Will the process of data collection be fully accountable? Do you accept responsibility for ensuring that good records are made and kept?
- Does the research adhere to ethical and legal obligations in relation to the accurate capture and storage of the data in the record, its 'stewardship' as property, its preservation as an authentic record over time, and to the protection of personal data from inappropriate disclosure?
- If the archival material is considered 'sensitive' have the risks associated with disclosing the identity of individuals been fully evaluated?
- Will your research abide by the rules of the institution within which the archival material is kept?
- Will all possible steps be taken to minimise physical impacts on original material/artefacts?

Issues to consider when undertaking research using data repositories or the research of others include:

- Is it clear who owns the dataset and who has Intellectual Property Rights to it?
- Are there any charges for use or for reproduction of the data?
- Are issues on data handling and consent for use of the data clearly spelled out?
- Is there a requirement to complete and return a signed copy of the terms and conditions/terms of supply/license agreement?
- What are the restrictions on use and further dissemination of the data?
- What are the guidelines concerning acknowledgement for access and use of the data in any subsequent publications? Does the data policy include a standard text to be used when acknowledging the data archiver? Is there also a requirement to acknowledge the original data provider?
- Is there a requirement on you to subsequently report to the data archiver any publications or conference presentations you make, which utilise the data provided?
- Does the dataset contain 'personal data' that may be subject to the Data Protection Act 1998? Is the dataset registered with the Data Protection Registrar?
- What is the obligation on you after you have finished using the dataset for your research (e.g. to destroy your copy of the data)?

You must refer to any data policy, terms of supply or terms and conditions that pertain to the datasets being requested or accessed online. Remember that data held in a repository may have been collected and owned by a third party not associated with the data provider and that the third party may have specified certain rights and obligations on access to and dissemination of the data.

[JISC](#) and the [UK Data Archive](#) (specifically the page on [consent and ethics](#)) both provide guidance on records/data management.



## **6. Collaborative working**

Collaborative working has many benefits, particularly if one of the partners is based in the host country. It is important, however, to have specific contractual agreements and an understanding of everyone's role(s) and responsibilities before the research commences. Issues to consider include:

- Are you aware of the power differentials that may exist between you (as researchers from the sponsor country) and those from the partner institution?
- Have all parties agreed on the nature and degree of collaboration? (e.g. through a contractual arrangement or memorandum of understanding)
- How might collaborating with an NGO or other non-academic organisation impact positively or negatively upon the research?
- What steps will be taken to clarify the roles, rights, obligations of team members in relation to matters such as the division of labour, responsibilities, access to and rights in data and field notes, publication, co-authorship, professional liability, etc? Has this been recorded in writing?
- Will all partners be fully informed about where financial and other resources come from, how their use is planned, and what they have in fact been used for?
- Has provision been made on both organisational and technical levels for all the partners to have sufficient regular contact with each other?
- Will the partners meet regularly to review ongoing work and plan future activities?
- Does the proposed research give due consideration to the social, cultural, political, economic, ecological and technical needs and situation of the partners?
- Have all partners (particularly those who may not have institutional ethics guidance) received appropriate research ethics training?
- Have you thought about the long-term sustainability and implications of the research once the research activities have finished?

Careful selection of field assistants is vital for research conducted in developing countries, especially with small, isolated or geographically distant communities and areas. Team members that are known and trusted by the local community may enable more effective communication. Issues to consider include:

- How will local field assistants be recruited? Will the procedure for employing local field assistants be transparent and non-discriminatory?
- Will adequate training and further capacity strengthening be provided to local field assistants to enable them to do their job effectively and responsibly?
- What steps will be taken to ensure a sound transactional relationship is established with local field assistants? What will the boundaries of this relationship be?
- Have you agreed the responsibilities for the management and supervision of local field assistants?
- Will relevant Codes of Conduct and ethical guidelines be communicated to local field assistants in the local language and in a manner that is understood by all?

## **7. Dissemination**

The timely dissemination of research is usually expected by funding bodies; however, there are a number of issues to consider (particularly if one of the collaborating partner institutions is in a developing country). These include:

- Will Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) on data and results be shared fairly among the academic partners (in accordance with their overall contributions)?
- Will academic partners in the host country be invited to contribute to the writing up and publication of the research findings?
- Will all contributions (including that of local field assistants) to the research be acknowledged?

Note that intellectual property includes, but is not limited to: research data and other findings of research; ideas, processes, software, hardware, apparatus and equipment; substances and materials; and artistic and literary works, including academic and scientific publications. Further information on IPR is provided by [NERC](#).

- Will duplicate sets of all samples/specimens collected, and records of any pertinent information, be deposited in the host country and/or other agreed curators?
- If the research findings, associated publications, and/or data are to be made available where the research took place will they need to be translated into national and/or local language(s)?
- Have plans been made for the dissemination of results to the study participants and local people?
- What format(s) will this take (e.g. debrief, radio broadcasts, leaflets)?
- What might the impact of total or partial disclosure of raw or processed data, or the revelation of their participation, be on research participants, collaborators and local colleagues?

## **8. Benefit sharing**

Potential benefits of the research beyond academic outputs might include access to scientific results, the availability or sharing of the infrastructure required for research activities, the formation of research networks, and continuing education for local scientists. Issues to consider include:

- Will the proposed research activity contribute to increasing the research capacity of all the partners? If yes how?
- Are measures foreseen which will strengthen the partner institutions in the developing countries after the completion of the project?
- Have you come to an agreement as to what benefit sharing means, what it should consist of, and how it should be implemented?
- What benefits, if any, will participants or local communities receive and why?

Further information on benefits sharing is provided by the [Convention on Biological Diversity](#), the [International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture](#), the [Swiss Academy of Science](#) and the [World Intellectual Property Organisation Database of Biodiversity-Related Access and Benefit Sharing Agreements](#).

## **9. Health and Safety, Risk Assessment**

You should refer to your institution's Health and Safety Policy in the first instance, however, specific guidance can be found here:

- [Natural Environment Research Council Health and Safety Policy](#)
- [British Mountaineering Council](#) (for advice on tropical walking, winter mountaineering, avalanche awareness, and dealing with altitude)
- [Health and Safety Executive](#)
- [Suzy Lamplugh Trust](#) (for advice on personal safety, lone working)

Issues to consider include:

- Will the research comply with all requirements of UK legislation and good practice relating to health and safety? If the PI is based outside the UK then local equivalents may be used but only if they are more stringent than the UK legislation requirements or examples of good practice.
- Will the health and safety conditions be the same for everyone involved in the research?
- Will protective clothing (e.g. safety helmets) and safety equipment be provided for all relevant members of the project team?
- Will the packaging/identification labels used to transport specimens/samples (and method of transportation) conform to legal requirements for safe transportation? Will adequate training be provided for those members of the project team responsible for packaging this material?
- If transporting specimens/samples, will you inform the carrier of the nature of the material being transported?
- Does the area/country in which the researchers (and co-workers) will be working pose a significant threat to their personal safety?
- Do any of the tasks the researchers (and co-workers) will be undertaking pose a significant threat to their personal safety?
- Is there a process for reporting accidents in the field?

The [Foreign and Commonwealth Office](#), [Directgov](#) and [British Standards](#) all provide advice on travelling abroad.

A written risk assessment (commensurate with the actual risk that the identified hazards pose in the particular circumstances) must be undertaken for all field work. You should refer to your institution's Risk Assessment Procedure in the first instance, however, issues to be considered include:

- Are all members of the research team familiar with the proposed field site/country?
- What will the research and any associated travel entail?
- What information will you need to have with you?
- Will you have an interpreter/guide with you at the field site?

- Will all members of the research team (including local field assistants) be briefed on the appropriate safety precautions?
- How would you manage an emergency?
- Have you identified local rescue/medical facilities and their contact telephone numbers?
- Who in your institution (your 'base contact') will be informed of your plans? How can you be contacted while you are away?
- Do you or any other members of the research team need any further training before travelling to the proposed field site/country?
- What will your plan of action be in case of the unexpected absence of a co-worker, bad weather, illness, an accident (of varying degrees of severity)?
- Have you (and other members of the research team) obtained the necessary health advice and, where appropriate, vaccinations and immunisations?
- Do all members of the research team have appropriate medical/travel insurance? What about local field assistants? Will additional cover be required?

[Fit for Travel](#) provides travel health information.

Remember that Risk Assessment and management are ongoing processes and may be require adaptation on arriving at the field site.

## Full URL's Used Within this Document

- Guidance on Conflicts of Interest – University of Edinburgh  
[http://www.docs.csq.ed.ac.uk/HumanResources/Policy/Conflict\\_of\\_Interest.pdf](http://www.docs.csq.ed.ac.uk/HumanResources/Policy/Conflict_of_Interest.pdf)
- Guidance on Conflicts of Interest – University of Oxford  
<http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/researchsupport/integrity/conflict/policy/>
- Data Protection Act - UK Government website  
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/29/contents>
- Data Protection Act - Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) website  
[http://www.ico.gov.uk/for\\_organisations/data\\_protection.aspx](http://www.ico.gov.uk/for_organisations/data_protection.aspx)
- Data Protection Act - UoE website  
[http://www.recordsmanagement.ed.ac.uk/InfoStaff/DPstaff/DP\\_Research/ResearchAndDPA.htm#For%20whom%20guidance%20intended](http://www.recordsmanagement.ed.ac.uk/InfoStaff/DPstaff/DP_Research/ResearchAndDPA.htm#For%20whom%20guidance%20intended)
- Records Management - JISC Infonet  
<http://www.jiscinfonet.ac.uk/partnerships/records-retention-he/managing-research-records>
- UK Bribery Act (2010)  
[http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/23/pdfs/ukpga\\_20100023\\_en.pdf](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/23/pdfs/ukpga_20100023_en.pdf)
- Guidance on Data Transfer Outside the European Union – ICO Website  
[http://www.ico.gov.uk/for\\_organisations/data\\_protection/the\\_guide/principle\\_8.aspx](http://www.ico.gov.uk/for_organisations/data_protection/the_guide/principle_8.aspx)
- Guidance on Data Transfer Outside the European Union – University of Edinburgh  
<http://www.recordsmanagement.ed.ac.uk/InfoStaff/DPstaff/TransferringInformation/DataTransfers.htm>
- The UK Research Integrity Office's Code of Practice for Research (2009)  
[http://www.ukrio.org/sites/ukrio2/the\\_programme\\_of\\_work/code\\_of\\_practice\\_for\\_research.cfm](http://www.ukrio.org/sites/ukrio2/the_programme_of_work/code_of_practice_for_research.cfm)
- Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council  
[http://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/web/FILES/Policies/good\\_scientific\\_practice.pdf](http://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/web/FILES/Policies/good_scientific_practice.pdf)
- British Sociological Association (2004) Ethical Guidelines  
<http://www.britsoc.co.uk/equality/Statement+Ethical+Practice.htm>
- Department of Health (2009) The Mental Capacity Act – Fact Sheet for Social Scientists  
<http://www.screc.org.uk/files/mcafactsheet.pdf>
- Economic and Social Research Council (2010) Framework for Research Ethics  
[http://www.esrc.ac.uk/images/Framework\\_for\\_Research\\_Ethics\\_tcm8-4586.pdf](http://www.esrc.ac.uk/images/Framework_for_Research_Ethics_tcm8-4586.pdf)
- EdQual (2008) Research Ethics in International Collaborative and Participatory Research  
[http://www.dfid.gov.uk/r4d/PDF/Outputs/ImpQuality\\_RPC/ethicalguide.pdf](http://www.dfid.gov.uk/r4d/PDF/Outputs/ImpQuality_RPC/ethicalguide.pdf)
- Forest Research Social and Economic Research Group (2010) Research Ethics  
[http://www.forestresearch.gov.uk/pdf/SERG\\_Statement\\_of\\_Research\\_Ethics\\_SEPT\\_2010.pdf/\\$FILE/SERG\\_Statement\\_of\\_Research\\_Ethics\\_SEPT\\_2010.pdf](http://www.forestresearch.gov.uk/pdf/SERG_Statement_of_Research_Ethics_SEPT_2010.pdf/$FILE/SERG_Statement_of_Research_Ethics_SEPT_2010.pdf)
- Natural Environment Research Council (2005) Ethics Policy  
<http://www.nerc.ac.uk/publications/corporate/ethics.asp>

- Research Councils UK (2009) Governance of Good Research Conduct  
<http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/Publications/researchers/Pages/grc.aspx>
- Royal Geographical Society with IBG (2006) Research Ethics and a Code of Practice  
<http://www.rgs.org/NR/rdonlyres/CBD85FFC-9B56-4C2F-A615-7B41DD02C6B8/0/NewResearchEthicsandaCodeofPractice.pdf>
- Social Research Association (2003) Ethical Guidelines  
<http://www.the-sra.org.uk/documents/pdfs/ethics03.pdf>
- Sociological Research Association (2003) Ethical Guidelines  
<http://www.the-sra.org.uk/documents/pdfs/ethics03.pdf>
- UCL Research Ethics Committee Guidance Note 1: Research Involving Children  
<http://ethics.grad.ucl.ac.uk/forms/guidance1.pdf>
- ESRC Framework for Research Ethics  
[http://www.esrc.ac.uk/\\_images/Framework\\_for\\_Research\\_Ethics\\_tcm8-4586.pdf](http://www.esrc.ac.uk/_images/Framework_for_Research_Ethics_tcm8-4586.pdf).
- Guidance on records/data management - JISC  
<http://www.jiscinfonet.ac.uk/partnerships/records-retention-he/managing-research-records>
- Guidance on records/data management – University of Edinburgh  
<http://www.recordsmanagement.ed.ac.uk/InfoStaff/RMstaff/RMguidance.htm>
- Intellectual Property Rights - NERC  
<http://www.nerc.ac.uk/using/business/commercial/intellectualproperty.asp>
- Benefits sharing by the Convention on Biological Diversity  
<http://www.cbd.int/>
- Benefits sharing by the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture  
[http://www.planttreaty.org/texts\\_en.htm](http://www.planttreaty.org/texts_en.htm)
- Benefits sharing by the Swiss Academy of Science  
[http://www.iisd.org/pdf/2006/abs\\_swiss\\_abs\\_good\\_practice.pdf](http://www.iisd.org/pdf/2006/abs_swiss_abs_good_practice.pdf)
- Benefits sharing by the World Intellectual Property Organisation Database of Biodiversity-Related Access and Benefit Sharing Agreements  
<http://www.wipo.int/tk/en/databases/contracts/>
- UK Data Archive  
<http://www.data-archive.ac.uk/>
- Natural Environment Research Council Health and Safety Policy  
<http://www.nerc.ac.uk/about/work/policy/safety/documents/safetypolicy.pdf>
- British Mountaineering Council (for advice on tropical walking, winter mountaineering, avalanche awareness, and dealing with altitude)  
<http://www.thebmc.co.uk/>
- Health and Safety Executive  
<http://www.hse.gov.uk/index.htm>

- Suzy Lamplugh Trust (for advice on personal safety, lone working)  
<http://www.suzylamplugh.org/>
- Travelling Abroad - The Foreign and Commonwealth Office  
<http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/>
- Travelling Abroad - Directgov  
<http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/TravelAndTransport/Foreigntravel/index.htm>
- Travelling Abroad - British Standards  
<http://shop.bsigroup.com/ProductDetail/?pid=00000000030185211>
- Fit for Travel  
<http://www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk/home.aspx>

## ESPA Full Ethics Assessment Guidance Notes

These guidance notes and checklists should be used for any research projects which involve vulnerable human subjects (e.g. children, people who may have cognitive disabilities, invasive procedures (e.g. video-taping without informed consent), questions that address sensitive issues (e.g. the use of protected resources, questions about criminal or unlawful behaviour), or biophysical research that requires extraordinary permission from landowners, involves significant disturbance to vulnerable species or habitats, sampling rare/endangered or harmful taxa/species, and/or transporting samples/specimens between countries. These guidance notes are supplementary to the Ethics Self-Assessment Guidance Notes.

This guidance should also be followed by research which has been identified by the Ethics Self-Assessment Form, the researcher or the Ethics Committee as requiring further review.

**PLEASE USE THE ADDITIONAL STATEMENT BOX ON THE ETHICS FORM TO ADDRESS ANY SIGNIFICANT ISSUES RAISED BY THIS GUIDANCE.** You do not have to submit your answers to the individual questions but please keep a copy for your records as the ESPA Ethics Committee may request to see it.

### BOX 2: RIGHTS OF HUMAN SUBJECTS

#### THE PARTICIPANTS

1. How many participants will be involved in the study?
  
2. What are the criteria for the selection of participants? How will you decide who will be included/excluded from the study?
  
3. Does the research specifically target (tick as appropriate):
  - Children under 18 years of age? YES  NO
  - People known to have special educational needs? YES  NO
  - Anyone who is physically or mentally ill (to the extent that they may not be able to provide consent)? YES  NO
  - Anyone who is vulnerable in other ways? YES  NO
  - Members of a vulnerable or stigmatized minority? YES  NO
  - Anyone who is likely to be interviewed in a language that they are not fluent in? YES  NO
  - Anyone in a client or professional relationship with the researcher(s)? YES  NO
  - Anyone in an unequal working relationship with the researcher(s)? YES  NO
  - Anyone in any other dependent relationship with the researcher(s)? YES  NO
  - Anyone who might have difficulty in reading and/or comprehending any printed material distributed as part of the study? YES  NO

Consider the measures that will be used to protect and/or inform participants. If you have



ticked YES to any of these, be sure to discuss mitigation measures in the Additional Statement box.

4. How will participants be recruited?

- Mail out
- Advertisements
- Contact details obtained from public document (e.g. phone book)
- Recruitment carried out by a third party (e.g. employer)
- Contact details obtained from private sources (e.g. employee list, membership database)
- Recruitment carried out by researchers
- Participants from a previous study
- Personal contacts
- Email
- Snowball
- Telephone
- Other (please specify in no more than 50 words)

- If using advertisements append a copy to the Ethics Form where possible.
- If contact details will be obtained from private sources, have you a relevant approval letter? Please append a copy to the Ethics Form.
- If recruitment will be conducted by a third party (e.g. employer, doctor) have you a letter requesting their assistance, and/or a letter confirming their willingness to assist? Please append a copy to the Ethics Form.

5. Will participants receive any financial or other material benefits because of participation?

Consider what benefits will be offered to participants and why, if it will be appropriate to the local context, and how will you avoid it becoming an inappropriate inducement to accept risks that would not otherwise be considered?

### *PARTICIPANT INFORMATION AND CONSENT*

1. Have you got a Plain Language Statement (PLS) that explains to potential participants what your research is about?

Note that in some contexts the provision of a written PLS will be inappropriate. Nonetheless, a statement such as this should form the basis of any verbal communication with participants about your research objectives. In some contexts it may be appropriate to supplement verbal communication with an illustrated/visual equivalent of the PLS. Please append the document you will use to the Ethics Form.

Does the PLS (or equivalent) include:

- Institution and research unit identification YES
- Details of the project title YES
- Details of the researcher(s) and how to contact them YES
- Details of what the project will require (e.g. involvement in interviews, completion of a questionnaire, audio/film recording), the estimated time of commitment, and any risks involved YES
- The source of funding YES
- Advice that ethics have been considered YES
- Advice about parameters of anonymity and confidentiality YES
- A statement that participation will not effect any ongoing interaction (if the research

- subject(s) is/are in a dependent relationship with the researcher) YES  N/A
- Advice that involvement in the project is voluntary and that participants are free to withdraw consent at any time YES
- Advice as to the arrangements to be made to protect confidentiality of data, including that confidentiality of information may be subject to limitations YES
- Advice as to whether data is to be destroyed after a minimum period YES  N/A
- Advice that if participants have any concerns about the conduct of the research they can contact the Chair of the ESPA Ethics Committee YES  N/A
- Any other relevant information YES

2. If relevant, will the PLS (or equivalent) be translated into the local language?

Note that back-translation may be necessary to avoid misinterpretation of essential information.

3. Will written consent be sought from participants?

Note that in some contexts written consent may not be obtainable or meaningful. If written consent will not be obtained for some or all participants please explain why circumstances make obtaining written consent problematic or inappropriate.

Does the written consent include:

- Institution and research unit identification YES
- Details of the project title YES
- Details of the researcher(s) and how to contact them YES
- Confirmation that the project is for research purposes YES
- Confirmation that involvement is voluntary and that participants are free to withdraw at any time YES
- Confirmation of the particular requirements of participants YES
- Advice on legal limitations of data confidentiality YES  N/A
- Any other relevant information YES

4. If relevant, will the written consent form be translated into the local language? Again, consider the need for back-translation.

5. Will verbal consent be sought from participants? Consider how this will be recorded and if you will need a witness.

6. Informed consent should be obtained the normal language of participants Consider what arrangements will be made, including where necessary providing a back translation of the consent form.

7. In some cultures (e.g. hierarchical societies) it may be appropriate to obtain consent from a community leader or a 'senior family member' (e.g. father, husband) before approaching a prospective participant; will arrangements be made to obtain the appropriate consent?

Note that this should not be construed as a substitute for individual consent, which must still

be obtained from each prospective participant.

8. In the case of minors participating in the research on an individual basis, will the consent or assent of parents be obtained? Consider how this consent or assent will be obtained.
9. Will the consent or assent (at least verbal) of minors participating in the research on an individual basis be obtained? Consider how this assent will be obtained.
10. In the case of participants with special educational needs, will arrangements be made to ensure informed consent? Consider what arrangements will be made.
11. Will administrative consent be sought?

Administrative consent may be deemed sufficient: a) for studies where the data collection involves aggregated (not individual) statistical information and where the collection of data presents no invasion of privacy and/or no potential social or emotional risks; b) for studies which focus on the development and evaluation of guidelines or programs rather than the study, observation and evaluation of individuals.

12. Will administrative consent be sought in lieu of participants' consent? Consider why individual consent is not necessary (maximum 50 words).

## *CONFIDENTIALITY*

1. Will the research require the collection of personal information (e.g. from educational establishments, employers, other agencies) about individuals without their direct consent? Consider what information will be sought and why written/verbal consent for access to this information will not be obtained from the participants themselves.
2. Will any part of the research involving participants being audio/film recorded or recorded using any other electronic medium? Consider what medium is to be used and how will the recordings be used.
3. Who will have access to the raw data and how will confidentiality be maintained?
4. Will the project involve the transfer of personal data between countries? Consider how confidentiality will be maintained.
5. Will participants be identified? Consider how will their consent to quotations/identifications be sought.
6. Will the data files/audio/film footage be disposed of after the study?
7. How long will the data files/audio/film footage be retained?

8. If relevant, how will the data be disposed of?
9. How do you intend for the results of the research to be used?
10. Will the data collected in this research be made available for secondary use? If yes, what arrangements are in place to ensure the confidentiality and consent agreements?
11. Will feedback of findings be given to participants? Consider how, when and in what format will this feedback be provided.

### ***BOX 3: POTENTIAL HARM, DISCOMFORT OR STRESS FOR LIVING HUMAN SUBJECTS OR NON-HUMANS***

1. Could the research induce any psychological stress or discomfort? Consider the nature of the risk and what measures will be taken to deal with such problems.
2. Does the research require any physically invasive or potentially physically harmful procedures? Consider outlining the procedures to be put in place to deal with potential problems.
3. Does the research involve the investigation of any illegal behaviour?
4. Is it possible that this research will lead to the disclosure of information about child abuse or neglect? Consider the likelihood of such disclosure and your proposed response to this. If there is a real risk of such disclosure triggering an obligation to make a report to the relevant authority, a warning to this effect must be included in the information and consent documents.
5. Is there any purpose to which the research findings may be put that could adversely affect participants? Consider the potential risk for participants of use of this data. Outline any steps that will be taken to protect participants.
6. Could this research adversely affect participants in any other way? Consider the details and outline procedures to be put in place to deal with such problems.
7. Could the research adversely affect members of particular groups of people? Consider the adverse effects and the protection to be put in place against them.
8. Is this research expected to benefit the participants, directly or indirectly?
9. Will the true purpose of the research be concealed from the participants? Consider what information will be concealed and why.

10. Will participants be debriefed at the conclusion of the study? If not, why not?

## **BOX 4: EFFECT ON THE ENVIRONMENT**

### *THE FIELD SITE(S)*

1. How many field sites will be involved in the study?
2. What are the criteria for the selection of the field site(s)?
3. Will prior informed consent to use the field site(s) be sought from the relevant authorities (e.g. government, national cooperation partner)?

Note that informed consent is necessarily sometimes an iterative, progressive process, which benefits significantly from collaboration with local intermediaries and support organisations. Note also that national regulations may require that consent be obtained from additional stakeholders (e.g. indigenous communities).

Will the request for consent include:

- Information about the primary investigator and their affiliation YES
- Information about local partners and their affiliation(s)  
YES  N/A
- Project structure and organisation YES
- Confidentiality policies YES
- Comprehensive information on the source and nature of the resources to which access is sought YES
- Timing and duration of the research activity. YES
- Exact geographic data on the area in which the research is to take place YES
- Purpose and objectives of the research, type of research activity YES
- Potential utilisation of research findings YES
- Definition of the research benefits derived from the purely scientific use of the resources and how they will be shared YES
- Clear and agreed designation of the beneficiaries under the benefit-sharing agreement YES
- Transparent information YES

4. If relevant, will the request for consent be translated into the national/local language?
5. Will the above authorities and/or stakeholders receive any financial or other material benefits for providing access to the field site(s)? Consider what benefits will be offered and why, if it will be appropriate to the local context, and how will you avoid it becoming an inappropriate inducement to grant access that would not otherwise be considered?
6. Will the field site(s) and location(s) be made anonymous?
7. Who will have access to the raw data and how will anonymity be maintained?

8. Will the data collected in this research be made available for secondary use? If yes, what arrangements are in place to ensure the confidentiality and consent agreements?

#### *SAMPLE/SPECIMEN COLLECTION*

1. Are the proposed concepts, methods and techniques of research the most appropriate approach to investigate the region(s) in which the field site(s) is/are located?
2. Will sample/specimen collection be kept to a minimum? Consider what steps will be taken to ensure this.
3. Will the disturbance caused to local residents/wildlife be kept to a minimum? Consider what steps will be taken to ensure this.
4. Will steps be taken to alert the host country about any impending threat to the field site area(s) (e.g. depletion of plant populations, erosion) and to make recommendations for remedial action?
5. Could the research jeopardise access to the field site(s) or country for other researchers in the future?

#### *TRANSPORTATION OF SAMPLES/SPECIMENS*

1. Are you aware of the correct classification of the samples/specimens to be transported?
2. Are the samples/specimens to be transported considered Dangerous Goods?

Note that Dangerous Goods include 'any goods, including articles and substances which may pose a danger to the health and safety of people, or damage to property or the environment during carriage, except where they have been diluted to such an extent that they no longer have the hazardous properties of those goods'. See the [UNECE Recommendations on the Transport of Dangerous Goods, Model Regulations \(Rev. 17\) \(2011\)](#).

3. If relevant, are you aware of the specific legislation for transporting Dangerous Goods by road, rail, sea and/or air?
4. Is there reason to suspect that the samples/specimens to be transported might include infectious substances?

Note that infectious substances are 'substances which are known or reasonably expected to contain pathogens which are defined as micro-organisms (including bacteria, viruses, rickettsiae, parasites, and fungi), plasmids and other agents such as prions, which can cause disease in humans or animals'. See the [WHO Guidance on the Regulations for the Transport of Infectious Substances 2009-2010](#).

5. Do the samples/specimens to be transported contain genetically modified micro-organisms (GMMOs) or organisms (GMOs)? If these GMMOs or GMOs meet the definition of an

infectious substance or are vectors which can transfer genetic material to other organisms, consider how they will be handled.

6. Will there be effective co-ordination between the sender, the carrier and the receiver? Consider the methods of communication that will be used, the partner relationship between, and the responsibilities of each of the three parties.
7. Do any other individuals need to be involved in the transportation arrangements (e.g. Institution Safety Officer)?
8. If relevant, are you aware of the regulations and licensing procedures that cover the import of plants, plant material, plant pests, soil and growing medium into the European Union?

Useful information is provided by [CITES](#), [DEFRA on animal health](#), [DEFRA on plants](#) and [DEFRA on biological translocation policies](#), the [Food and Environment Research Agency](#), and [ECOLEX](#). Some specimens may need a Phytosanitary Certificate or a Plant Health Movement Document.

9. Is there a requirement to repatriate samples/specimens once the research is complete?

END OF THE FULL ETHICS ASSESSMENT GUIDANCE

## Full URLs Used Within This Document

- UNECE Recommendations on the Transport of Dangerous Goods, Model Regulations (Rev. 17) (2011)  
<http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=25058>
- WHO Guidance on the Regulations for the Transport of Infectious Substances 2009-2010  
[http://www.who.int/csr/resources/publications/biosafety/WHO\\_HSE\\_EPR\\_2008\\_10.pdf](http://www.who.int/csr/resources/publications/biosafety/WHO_HSE_EPR_2008_10.pdf)
- CITES  
<http://www.cites.org/>
- DEFRA - Animal Health  
<http://animalhealth.defra.gov.uk/cites/applications/guidance.html>
- DEFRA – Plants  
<http://www.fera.defra.gov.uk/plants/publications/documents/ifindoubt.pdf>
- DEFRA - Biological Translocation Policies  
<http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-1746>
- Food and Environment Research Agency  
<http://www.fera.defra.gov.uk/plants/publications/documents/importersGuide0909.pdf>
- ECOLEX  
<http://www.ecolex.org/ecolex/ledge/view/SimpleSearch;DIDPFDSIjsessionid=DCF0BE74CF1FEDF7453C4487D3A898B6>



## ESPA Ethics Assessment Form

This assessment form must be completed by the Principal Investigator. The assessment addresses many of the *procedural* issues (e.g. obtaining consent and managing data) that are a part of ethical research. It does not, however, include the broad spectrum of research *practices* that are also involved in research.

If the research has been ethically reviewed by another body please tick the appropriate box below and append a copy of the ethics determination to this form.

<b>Title of project:</b>	
<b>Duration:</b>	
<b>Principal Investigator:</b>	
Institution address:	
Email address:	
Telephone:	
<b>Co-Investigators:</b>	
<b>Ethics Self-Assessment</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Full Ethics Assessment</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Reviewed by external body</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Please state:

- Check List:**
- I have read the appropriate Guidance Notes
  - I have completed all relevant check boxes
  - I have included a research abstract
  - I have completed the Additional Statement box (where appropriate)
  - I have appended all relevant documents
  - I have appended a Permission Letter (where appropriate)

**Signature of Principal Investigator\*:**

**Date:**

The completed form (along with additional documents) should be sent to the ESPA Ethics Committee Administrator at [email address].

<b>Office Use</b>	Reference number:
Date received:	Sent for review:
Determination:	Notification sent:

\* Electronic signatures/ typed names are accepted

### **Research Abstract/Summary**

Please include a 250-500 word research abstract/summary. This statement should include a summary of the research methods and techniques.

## **1. Legal, and Moral Responsibilities, and Codes of Conduct**

This box must be completed for all research projects.

- a) Do any special conflicts of interest arise between the researchers, funding bodies, the institution, and/or research subjects/environments? YES  NO
- b) Is the research compliant with the UK Data Protection Act (1998) or, if the PI is based outside the UK, an appropriate form of data protection legislation? YES  NO
- c) Is the research compliant with the UK Bribery Act (2010) or, if the PI is based outside the UK, an appropriate form of bribery legislation? YES  NO
- d) Separate from any legal obligations, is there a moral responsibility to provide feedback or results to the research participants? YES  NO
- e) Are you aware of codes of conduct from professional associations that should guide your research? YES  NO
- f) Will the research be, or has the research been, ethically reviewed in the host country? YES  NO  N/A

*Guidance relating to legal and moral responsibilities and a sample list of relevant Codes of Conduct can be found in the Ethics Self-Assessment Guidance Notes. If applicable, include a statement on how conflicts of interest will be addressed in the Additional Statement box at the end of the form. If the research will abide by a data protection law other than the UK Data Protection Act (1998) please provide details in the Additional Statement box at the end of the form. If applicable, include a statement on why the research will not be ethically reviewed in the host country in the Additional Statement box at the end of the form.*

## **2. Rights of human subjects**

Complete this box *only* if the research involves living human subjects, or if your work requires extensive interaction with land users or other people in the course of your research. If you answer NO to any of these questions a Full Ethics Assessment is required.

- a) Is confidentiality adequately handled by normal tenets of ethical academic research? YES  NO  N/A

b) Are the research subjects capable of understanding their rights and of providing informed consent? YES  NO  N/A

c) Are the research subjects over 18 years of age? YES  NO  N/A

d) Will the research subjects be informed of your responsibilities to report any evidence of abuse or criminal activity regarding people under-18 years of age? YES  NO  N/A

e) Will research participants be informed about your obligations under the Data Protection Act (1998)? YES  NO  N/A

*Guidance relating to subjects' rights, confidentiality, and the Data Protection Act (1998) can be found in the Ethics Self-Assessment Guidance Notes. If applicable, procedures for maintaining confidentiality and data protection issues must be addressed in the Additional Statement box at the end of the form. If applicable, please also append forms/statements that will be used to obtain informed consent and a Plain Language Statement to the end of the form.*

### **3. Potential harm, discomfort or stress for living human subjects or non-humans**

This box must be completed for all research projects. If you answer YES to any of these questions a Full Ethics Assessment is required.

a) Is there significant foreseeable potential for psychological harm or stress for those involved in your research? YES  NO  N/A

b) Is there significant foreseeable potential for physical harm or discomfort for those involved in your research? YES  NO  N/A

c) Is there significant foreseeable potential for violation of cultural or social norms/practices? YES  NO  N/A

d) Is there foreseeable potential for conflict or discomfort for any humans or non-humans your research will impact upon? YES  NO  N/A

e) Is there significant foreseeable potential for psychological harm or stress to the researcher or other members of the research team (including those recruited locally)? YES  NO  N/A

f) Is there significant foreseeable potential for physical harm or discomfort to the researcher or other members of the research team (including those recruited locally)? YES  NO  N/A

*Guidance relating to the minimisation of harm, discomfort, or stress can be found in the Ethics Self-Assessment Guidance Notes. If applicable, include a statement on procedures to minimise harm or stress or to reduce the potential for violation of cultural norms and practices in the Additional Statement box at the end of the form.*

#### **4. Effect on the environment**

Complete this box *only* if your research involves environmental fieldwork that involves sampling or directly monitoring a site, or if your research will involve movement in sensitive environments. If you answer YES to a, e, f, g or h a Full Ethics Assessment is required.

a) Will the fieldwork be conducted in an environmentally sensitive area YES  NO  N/A

b) Have the appropriate steps been taken to gain permission to access field sites? YES  NO  N/A

c) Does your field site require crossing sensitive or privately held land? YES  NO  N/A

d) Have you made an arrangement with the landowner? YES  NO  N/A

e) Will samples be collected and removed in sufficient quantities to have a negative physical/environmental impact on the site and/or its ecosystem? YES  NO  N/A

f) Will the conduct of the fieldwork significantly disrupt the site and/or its environment? YES  NO  N/A

g) Does the fieldwork involve sampling rare/endangered or harmful taxa/species? YES  NO  N/A

h) Will the research involve transporting samples/specimens/soil between countries? YES  NO  N/A

*Guidance relating to environmental fieldwork can be found in the Ethics Self-Assessment Guidance Notes. If applicable, include a statement on how you will attempt to gain permission in the Additional Statement box at the end of the form. If applicable, append any written agreement with the land owner to the end of the form.*

#### **5. Institutional/agency consent**

This box must be completed for all research projects.

a) Have permissions for research been obtained from national authorities in partner countries (as required) YES  NO  N/A

b) Will all researchers have appropriate permission to work in other countries, including the correct entry visas YES  NO  N/A

- c) Where data are, or have been, obtained from another agency, archive or source, is it clear that the intended usage adheres to their terms of supply? YES  NO  N/A
- d) Where other researchers' data are being used, is it clear that the intended usage adheres to their terms of supply? YES  NO  N/A
- e) Are issues of data handling and consent dealt with adequately and following procedures agreed with agencies, archive, and/or land managers? YES  NO  N/A

*Guidance relating to data protection and consent can be found in the Ethics Self-Assessment Guidance Notes.*

## **6. Collaborative working**

This box must be completed for all research projects.

- a) Will the research be undertaken in academic collaboration with representatives of the host country? YES  NO
- b) Will the research involve collaborating with an NGO or other non-academic organisation/group? YES  NO
- c) Have you a written agreement pertaining to the collaborative relationship? YES  NO  N/A
- d) Will the research involve employing local field assistants (including guides and translators)? YES  NO
- e) Has the local community been involved in the preparation of the research proposal? YES  NO  N/A

*Guidance relating collaborative working and the employment of local field assistants can be found in the Ethics Self-Assessment Guidance Notes.*

## **7. Dissemination**

This box must be completed for all research projects.

- a) Will the findings be reported accurately, honestly and within a reasonable time frame? YES  NO
- b) Have you reached agreements relating to intellectual property, publication and authorship? YES  NO  N/A
- c) Will the research findings, associated publications and, where feasible, data be made available in the country where the research took place? YES  NO

d) Are publications for a wider audience planned as well as scientific papers in national and international journals? YES  NO

e) Have plans been made for the dissemination of results to the study participants and local people? YES  NO

*Guidance relating to dissemination and intellectual property rights can be found in the Ethics Self-Assessment Guidance Notes.*

## **8. Benefit sharing**

This box must be completed for all research projects.

a) Have the potential benefits of the research beyond academic outputs been fully documented in a Pathway to Impact document? YES  NO

b) Has the benefit been linked to the participants and/or local communities (directly or indirectly)? YES  NO

*Guidance relating to benefit sharing can be found in the Ethics Self-Assessment Guidance Notes.*

## **9. Health and safety**

This box must be completed for all research projects.

Are there any health and safety risks associated with this project? YES  NO

Have you completed a risk assessment for this project? YES  NO

*Guidance relating to health and safety and risk assessment can be found in the Ethics Self-Assessment Guidance Notes.*

## **10. Other approvals**

This box must be completed for all research projects.

a) Is the determination of this ethical review required by any other body/organisation? YES  NO  N/A

If YES, by what date is a response required?

b) Does the project require the approval of any other institution and/or ethics committee which has not already been sought? YES  NO  N/A

If YES, by what date is a response required?

**Additional Statement**

If relevant, please add an explanation of how you will address the ethical issues identified above (250-500 words maximum). Full Ethics Assessments can use up to 1,000 words.

**11. Issues requiring attention by the ESPA Ethics Committee**

Please complete this box *only* if a Full Ethics Assessment is required.

The Directorate will convene an Ethics Committee to address any issues.

a) Are there issues which require attention by the Ethics Committee?

YES  NO

If YES, please answer the following questions.

b) What are the issues requiring attention?

c) What will the project do to address these issues?

d) What will the project do to minimise the risk to the funders and the research subjects?

If the project has a more detailed ethics guidance note, please append a copy to this form.

**Annual review:**

As part of the Directorate's on-going management of projects, the Principal Investigator will be asked to assess this form annually and inform the Directorate of any changes. The Directorate will inform the Principal Investigator of any changes to the ESPA Ethics Guidance.



This document has been produced by the Directorate of the Ecosystem Services for Poverty Alleviation ([ESPA](#)) Programme. ESPA is a programme funded by the Department for International Development ([DFID](#)), Economic and Social Research Council ([ESRC](#)) and Natural Environment Research Council ([NERC](#)), as part of the UK's Living with Environmental Change programme ([LWEC](#)).

The ESPA Directorate is a partnership between the [University of Edinburgh](#), [Imperial College London](#), [The University of Oxford](#) and the International Institute for Environment and Development ([IIED](#)). The ESPA Directorate is hosted by [Research into Results](#), a wholly-owned subsidiary company of the University of Edinburgh, responsible for the delivery of research and project management services in the area of international development.

The views expressed here are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent those of the ESPA programme, Research into Results, The University of Edinburgh, other partners in the ESPA Directorate, LWEC, NERC, ESRC or DFID.



A research programme co-funded by DFID, NERC & ESRC and accredited by LWEC

