

**FOUNDATION FOR MARINE ECOLOGY AND TELEMETRY RESEARCH**  
**CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY**

**Article I: Purpose**

The purpose of the conflict of interest policy is to protect this organization's (Organization) tax-exempt status when it is contemplating entering into a transaction or arrangement that might benefit the private interest of an officer or director of the Organization or might result in a possible excess benefit transaction. This policy is intended to supplement, but not replace, any applicable state and federal law governing conflicts of interest applicable to nonprofit and charitable organizations.

**Article II: Definitions**

1. *An Interested Person*

Any director, principal officer, member of committee with governing board delegated powers, or principal investigator of the Organization who has a direct or indirect financial interest, as defined below, is an interested person.

2. *Financial Interest*

A person has a financial interest if the person has, directly or indirectly, through business, investment, or family: (a) an ownership or investment interest in any entity with which the Organization has a transaction or arrangement, (b) A compensation arrangement with the Organization or with any entity or individual with which the Organization has a transaction or arrangement, or (c) A potential ownership or investment interest in, or compensation arrangement with, any entity or individual with which the Organization is negotiating a transaction or arrangement.

*Compensation* includes direct and indirect remuneration as well as gifts or favors that are not insubstantial.

A *financial interest* is not necessarily a conflict of interest. Under Article III, Section 2, a person who has a financial interest may have a conflict of interest only if the appropriate governing board or committee decides that a conflict of interest exists.

## **Article III: Procedures**

### *1. Duty to Disclose*

In connection with any actual or possible conflict of interest, an interested person must disclose the existence of the financial interest and be given the opportunity to disclose all material facts to the directors and members of committees with governing board delegated powers considering the proposed transaction or arrangement.

### *2. Determining Whether a Conflict of Interest Exists*

After disclosure of the financial interest and all material facts, and after any discussion with the interested person, he/she shall leave the governing board or committee meeting while the determination of a conflict of interest is discussed and voted upon. The remaining board or committee members shall decide if a conflict of interest exists.

### *3. Procedures for Addressing the Conflict of Interest*

(a) An interested person may make a presentation at the governing board or committee meeting, but after the presentation, he/she shall leave the meeting during the discussion of, and the vote on, the transaction or arrangement involving the possible conflict of interest; (b) The chairperson of the governing board or committee shall, if appropriate, appoint a disinterested person or committee to investigate alternatives to the proposed transaction or arrangement; (c) After exercising due diligence, the governing board or committee shall determine whether the Organization can obtain with reasonable efforts a more advantageous transaction or arrangement from a person or entity that would not give rise to a conflict of interest; (d) If a more advantageous transaction or arrangement is not reasonably possible under circumstances not producing a conflict of interest, the governing board or committee shall determine by a majority vote of the disinterested directors whether the transaction or arrangement is in the Organization's best interest, for its own benefit, and whether it is fair and reasonable. In conformity with the above determination it shall make its decision as to whether to enter into the transaction or arrangement.

### *4. Violations of the Conflicts of Interest Policy*

(a) If the governing board or committee has reasonable cause to believe a member has failed to disclose actual or possible conflicts of interest, it shall inform the member of the basis for such belief and afford the member an opportunity to explain the alleged failure to disclose. (b) If, after hearing the member's response and after making further investigation as warranted by the circumstances, the

governing board or committee determines the member has failed to disclose an actual or possible conflict of interest, it shall take appropriate disciplinary and corrective action.

#### **Article IV: Records of Proceedings**

The minutes of the governing board and all committees with board delegated powers shall contain: (a) the names of the persons who disclosed or otherwise were found to have a financial interest in connection with an actual or possible conflict of interest, the nature of the financial interest, any action taken to determine whether a conflict of interest was present, and the governing board's or committee's decision as to whether a conflict of interest in fact existed. (b) the names of the persons who were present for discussions and votes relating to the transaction or arrangement, the content of the discussion, including any alternatives to the proposed transaction or arrangement, and a record of any votes taken in connection with the proceedings.

#### **Article V: Compensation**

(a) a voting member of the governing board who receives compensation, directly or indirectly, from the Organization for services is precluded from voting on matters pertaining to that member's compensation; (b) a voting member of any committee whose jurisdiction includes compensation matters and who receives compensation, directly or indirectly, from the Organization for services is precluded from voting on matters pertaining to that member's compensation; (c) No voting member of the governing board or any committee whose jurisdiction includes compensation matters and who receives compensation, directly or indirectly, from the Organization, either individually or collectively, is prohibited from providing information to any committee regarding compensation.

#### **Article VI: Annual Statements**

Each director, principal officer and member of a committee with governing board delegated powers shall annually sign a statement which affirms such person: (a) has received a copy of the conflicts of interest policy; (b) has read and understands the policy; (c) has agreed to comply with the policy, and (d) understands the Organization is charitable and in order to maintain its federal tax exemption it must engage primarily in activities which accomplish one or more of its tax-exempt purposes.

#### **Article VII: Periodic Reviews**

To ensure the Organization operates in a manner consistent with charitable purposes and does not engage in activities that could jeopardize its tax-exempt status, periodic reviews shall be conducted. The periodic reviews shall, at a minimum, include the following subjects: (a) whether compensation arrangements and benefits are reasonable, based on competent survey information, and the result of arm's length bargaining; (b) whether partnerships, joint ventures, and

arrangements with management organizations conform to the Organization's written policies, are properly recorded, reflect reasonable investment or payments for goods and services, further charitable purposes and do not result in inurement, impermissible private benefit or in an excess benefit transaction.

#### **Article VIII: Use of Outside Experts**

When conducting the periodic reviews as provided for in Article VII, the Organization may, but need not, use outside advisors. If outside experts are used, their use shall not relieve the governing board of its responsibility for ensuring periodic reviews are conducted.

**FOUNDATION FOR MARINE ECOLOGY AND TELEMTRY RESEARCH  
CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY:  
ACKNOWLEDGMENT AND FINANCIAL INTEREST DISCLOSURE  
STATEMENT**

Our organization follows a conflict of interest policy designed to foster public confidence in our integrity and to protect our interest when we are contemplating entering a transaction or arrangement that might benefit the private interest of a director, a corporate officer, our top management official and top financial official, any of our key employees, or other interested persons.

**Part I. Acknowledgment of Receipt**

I hereby acknowledge that I have received a copy of the conflict of interest policy of the FOUNDATION FOR MARINE ECOLOGY AND TELEMTRY RESEARCH and have read and understood it, and agree to comply with its terms.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name

**Part II. Disclosure of Financial Interests**

The Organization is required annually to file Form 990 with the Internal Revenue Service, and the form it files is available to the public. To complete Form 990 fully and accurately, each officer, director and key employee needs to disclose the information requested in this Part II.

A “conflict of interest,” for purposes of Form 990, arises when a person in a position of authority over an organization, such as an officer, director, or key employee, may benefit financially from a decision he or she could make in such capacity, including indirect benefits such as to family members or businesses with which the person is closely associated.

**Part II** Please check ONE of the following boxes:

- My interests and relationships have not changed since my last disclosure of interests. [Proceed to signature block below. Do not complete the tables.]

**OR**

- I hereby disclose or update my interests and relationships that could give rise to a conflict of interest: [Complete the table below. Use additional pages as needed.]

Family Relationships	Names of those presenting a potential conflict of interest
Include spouse/domestic partner, living ancestors, brothers and sisters (whether whole or half-blood), children (whether natural or adopted), grandchildren, great grand-children, and spouses/ domestic partners of brothers, sisters, children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren	

Type of interest	Description of interest that could lead to a conflict of interest
Transactions or arrangements with the Organization	
Transactions or affiliations with other nonprofit organizations	
Substantial business or investment holdings	
Transactions or affiliations with businesses not listed above	

I am not aware of any financial interest involving me or a family member that could present a conflict of interest that I have not disclosed either above or in a previous disclosure statement.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name