

# **Global Islands Network**

## **Code of Ethics**

### **Preamble**

The Global Islands Network (GIN) promotes culturally appropriate, ecologically sound, economically sustainable and socially equitable development on islands worldwide. The Directors and staff of GIN are committed to advancing the interests of islanders and islands in diverse situations at various levels over time, primarily through electronic communication, but also via face-to-face interactions, print, and other means. Ours is a non-profit organisation and a charitable company limited by guarantee, controlled by members rather than shareholders, and governed in accordance with a Memorandum and Articles of Association under the laws of the United Kingdom. Our particular objectives include:

- facilitating the capacity of islanders to acquire, disseminate and utilise knowledge resources;
- improving access to existing data and generating original information about islands;
- providing technical assistance and supporting initiatives which further integrated development on small islands;
- encouraging collaborative projects and comparative studies between and among islands;
- fostering cooperation by sharing good practices and offering a forum for discussion; and
- strengthening the voice of island communities as well as their representatives in intergovernmental and policy making bodies.

The following ethical precepts guide our affairs.

### **Care of GIN**

We observe the full legal requirements of the Memorandum and Articles of Association of the Global Islands Network.

We strive for excellence, honesty, transparency, accountability, diversity, inclusiveness, empathy, the protection of necessary confidences internal to the organisation, and the highest levels of professionalism in all of the workings and all of the dimensions of our work for GIN, in how we represent GIN to others, and in our treatment of each other.

Where such efforts require staff development and/or appropriate assistance to the Board and/or Directors and/or other means to enhance the management of our individual and collective performance, within the capacities of the organisation to meet them we seek such development, assistance, and other means.

We manage GIN's funds responsibly and prudently, and spend those funds only in pursuance of GIN's objectives.

### **Care of Others**

In pursuing GIN's objectives, we seek to promote the public good in all of our activities.

We meet all the terms and obligations of any contracts in which we are engaged, and ensure that the terms of our contractual arrangements and agreements are consistent with this code of ethics.

Given the communications orientation of our organisation, to the very best of our ability and within the limitations of our organisational structures and framework, we will provide to and seek from members/subscribers, island peoples, affiliate organisations, and others the most current and accurate information, and attendant high quality service, that is possible to secure and transmit within the organisation's capacities.

We respect the confidentiality of clients, subscribers, affiliates and others with whom we associate, disclosing sensitive information only with formal consent or when legally required.

In determining whether to enter into relationships with other organisations, we assess the goals, ethics, and governance of those organisations. Our own reputation is affected by the reputation of the organisations with

which we deal. We will not enter into relationships with any organisation that, in our judgment, fails to:

- comply with applicable legal standards;
- provide responsible and socially useful products or services;
- provide a safe and healthy work environment for its employees;
- hire and promote women and minorities;
- minimize its environmental impacts;
- engage in fair labour practices;
- respect human rights;
- respect indigenous peoples' rights;
- engage in sound and honest business practices; or
- be a good citizen of its community.

### **Care of Earth**

We acknowledge and seek to advance the foundational and process principles of sustainability in all the work and all the dimensions of GIN. The foundational principles of sustainability include striving for long-term economic health; equity and human rights; biodiversity and ecological integrity; settlement efficiency and quality of life; net benefit from development; ethical treatment of communities and their regions, sense of place and heritage; and common good from planning. The process principles of sustainability include integration of economic, social, and environmental values; precaution; accountability, transparency and engagement; and hope, vision and symbolic and iterative change.\*

### **Our Marketplace**

The Global Islands Network (GIN) offers its marketplace for the promotion of island products and services and of goods and services of particular utility or interest to islanders. We strive to represent those vendors whose products and/or services have been produced and packaged, sourced, distributed, and advertised in ways that advance the interests of island peoples and island places while being mindful of the principles of fair trade and economic responsibility, social justice and equity, and environmental care.

Persons and organizations offering notices for inclusion in the GIN marketplace must agree to adhere to the GIN Marketplace Code of Ethics. GIN will not include in its marketplace notices that violate the GIN Marketplace Code of Ethics. The principles of the GIN Marketplace Code of Ethics are:

1. **Legality.** Each notice must comply with any applicable laws and regulations.
2. **Honesty.** No notice shall be misleading or deceptive or likely to mislead or deceive the consumer.
  1. A notice should not contain any statement or visual presentation or create an overall impression that directly or by implication, omission, ambiguity or exaggerated claim is misleading or deceptive, is likely to deceive or mislead the consumer, abuses the trust of the consumer or exploits his/her lack of experience or knowledge. (Obvious hyperbole, identifiable as such, is not considered to be misleading).
  2. A notice shall not make claims about the origin or content of products in a manner that misleads.
  3. A notice should not use tests and surveys, research results or quotations from technical and scientific literature, in a manner which is misleading or deceptive.

3. **Responsibility.** Each notice should be prepared with a due sense of responsibility to consumers and society, keeping in mind that notices on the GIN website are available on the Internet worldwide, to persons of many different cultures, with different standards of morality, and that notices may be viewed by children.
  1. A notice should not contain anything likely to cause serious or widespread offense.
  2. A notice shall not portray people or depict material in a way which discriminates against or vilifies a person or a community on account of race, ethnicity, nationality, sex, age, sexual preference, religion, disability or political belief.
  3. A notice shall only use language appropriate to the circumstances; strong or obscene language shall be avoided.
  4. A notice should not exploit the superstitious, nor without justifiable reason, play on fear.
  5. A notice should not contain anything which lends support to unacceptable violent behavior.
  6. A notice should not, unless justifiable on educational or social grounds, contain any visual presentation or any description of dangerous or illegal practice or situation that encourages a disregard for safety.
4. **Fairness.** Each notice should respect the principles of free and fair competition generally accepted in business.
  1. All notices must carry the name and location of the sponsor of the product or service available and, when pertinent, the identification of that product or service.
  2. A notice should not denigrate identifiable products or competitors.
  3. A notice shall not exploit community concerns in relation to protecting the environment by presenting or portraying distinctions in products or services in a misleading way or in a way which implies a benefit to the environment which the product or services do not have.
  4. A notice should not contain or refer to any personal testimonial unless it is genuine, current, related to the experience of the person giving it and representative of typical and not exceptional cases; claims in a testimonial should be verifiable.
  5. Unless prior permission has been obtained, a notice should not portray or refer to any person, whether in a private or public capacity, or refer to any person's property, in a way likely to convey the impression of a genuine endorsement.
5. **Advocacy.** Advocacy advertising is acceptable, but it must be clearly distinguishable from factual information. The identity of an advertiser in matters of public interest or political issue should be clear.

This code of ethics is in constant development and may be altered at any time by the GIN Directors.

\* Derived from the Western Australian Government Sustainability Strategy Unit, Department of Premier and Cabinet, 2002.