

Twelfth session of the Assembly
Abu Dhabi, 15 – 16 January 2022

Note of the Director-General

Report of the Ethics Officer on the Implementation of the Policy on Ethics and Conflict of Interest

1. The Assembly, in its decision A/2/DC/7, adopted the Policy on Ethics and Conflict of Interest for the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) to ensure that conflicts of interest are identified and managed in a way that ensures broad public trust and confidence in the decision-making and operations of IRENA, and the highest standard of ethical conduct in IRENA's affairs and the protection of its reputation and integrity.
2. Pursuant to paragraph 9.1 of the Policy on Ethics and Conflict of Interest contained in A/2/13, the Ethics Officer prepares an annual report on the implementation of this Policy. The report was presented to the Director-General to comment upon before delivery to the Assembly. The present report covers the period from **1 October 2020 to 25 September 2021**.
3. The Director-General continues to engage and guide the Ethics Officer towards achieving the highest level of ethical standards in the Agency. He notes the successful implementation of the Policy on Ethics and Conflict of Interest and concurs with the conclusion and recommendations contained therein.
4. The Director-General submits the present report, through the Council, to the Assembly for its consideration.

Report of the Ethics Officer
Implementation of the Policy on Ethics and Conflict of Interest

I. Introduction

1. The Policy on Ethics and Conflict of Interest (“the Policy”) was adopted by the Assembly at its second session through decision A/2/DC/7 and was subsequently promulgated by the Director-General through directive ST/Directive/2012/4.
2. In 2012, the Director-General also promulgated a directive on Disclosure of Interest Forms (ST/Directive/2012/11) to implement Staff Regulation 2.7 (b), the Policy and the relevant provisions of the Code of Conduct annexed to the Staff Rules.
3. This report provides an overview of the activities related to the implementation of the Policy during the period from **1 October 2020 to 25 September 2021**.

II. Operations and Activities

A. Implementation of the Policy on Ethics and Conflict of Interest

4. During the reporting period, the Ethics Officer provided confidential guidance and advice to four staff members on the permissibility of outside activities and the Disclosure of Interest Procedure. The Ethics Officer reviewed eight requests submitted for outside activities.
5. No requests for clarification on matters ranging from the policy on ethical behavior, code of conduct, supervisory relations or performance issues were received during the reporting period.
6. Furthermore, no requests on other issues or any reports requesting protection against retaliation for reporting misconduct were received from Covered Individuals during that period. Therefore, no issues requiring consultation with the Ethics Advisory Board have emerged during the reporting period.

B. Implementation of the Disclosure of Interest Procedure

7. The aim of the Disclosure of Interest Procedure, as administered by the Ethics Officer, is to prevent or manage conflicts of interest and to maintain the public trust in the integrity of the Agency.
8. The Ethics Officer, in consultation with the Human Resources Office, established the list of Covered Individuals required to complete a Disclosure of Interest Form for the current reporting period and subsequently notified them individually on the deadline of submission.
9. At the time of preparing this report, a total of 33 Covered Individuals were required to file the Disclosure of Interest Forms and 94 per cent have complied with the filing requirement. Review of the filed Disclosures of Interest Forms did not reveal any actual or apparent conflicts of interest with the Agency.
10. All submissions are retained by the Agency in a secure location and may be made available for inspection as promulgated in the directive on Disclosure of Interest Forms (ST/Directive/2012/11).

C. Ethics Advisory Board

11. The Council, at its twenty-first meeting in May 2021, appointed Algeria, Germany, and the United Arab Emirates as members of the Ethics Advisory Board for a two-year term, ending at the twenty-fifth Council meeting in 2023.

D. Training and Education

12. The mandatory on-line ethics training course entitled “Ethics and integrity at IRENA” continues to be key in promoting ethical awareness and conduct. The course provides staff with a better understanding on how to apply ethical standards in everyday conduct and activities at the workplace, and how to identify and handle potential ethical challenges. All newly appointed staff are also required to complete the course as a matter of their induction programme.
13. At the time of preparing this report, 94 per cent of active staff completed the online training course. The Ethics Officer will continue to report the compliance rate of the completion of this course to the Director-General on a regular basis.
14. In addition, a dedicated webpage on the Agency’s intranet serves as a fundamental tool for providing relevant information and resources, that is easily accessible for all staff, on ethical values and standards.

III. Conclusion and Recommendations

15. To ensure effective implementation of the Policy on Ethics and Conflict of Interest, continuous efforts are made to ensure that all staff members perform their functions consistent with the highest standards of integrity, efficiency, accountability, and transparency.
16. The Agency is committed to strengthening ethical practices and enforcing ethical management. The issue of ethical standards, values and practices is central to the development and success of its human resources strategy plan, ensuring adherence to the highest standards of ethical and professional behavior.