

The IPS council proposes the following guidelines, for the purpose of providing a public document regarding IPS standards for the use of non-human primates in research. These guidelines are also intended for the guidance of the Editor-in-Chief, Editorial Board, reviewers and authors of the International Journal of Primatology. They cover some of the main issues requiring consideration from an ethical point of view when studying non-human primates. The guidelines are not intended to be exhaustive, but are designed to encourage primatologists to reflect on their procedures.

These guidelines work in conjunction with the existing IPS code of practice regarding the acquisition, care and breeding of nonhuman primates<sup>1</sup>. They should be seen as a step towards a more systematic set of manuals, codes and guidelines for the most important issues, as proposed by Linda Fedigan (Fedigan 2010).

### **Principles for the Ethical Treatment of Non-Human Primates**

The International Primatological Society (IPS) was created to encourage all areas of non-human primatological scientific research, to facilitate cooperation among scientists of all nationalities engaged in primate research, and to promote the conservation of all primate species. The Society is organized exclusively for scientific, educational and charitable purposes.

The Society is organized around an interest in primates rather than a specific discipline. IPS members should abide by the specific guidelines for the use of animals developed by discipline-based organizations such as the American Psychological Association<sup>2</sup>, American Society of Mammalogists<sup>3</sup>, Animal Behavior Society/Association for the Study of Animal Behaviour<sup>4</sup> and the Society for Neuroscience<sup>5</sup>. These various guidelines are generally applicable to primatological research. However, the specific recommendations developed by these societies may not address the special considerations that apply to working with nonhuman primates completely.

IPS members should adhere to the following general principles:

1. We accept the responsibility of stewardship for non-human primates, and this responsibility must be reflected in our husbandry practices and research protocols whether in field, laboratory, or other setting.
2. The number of non-human primates used in research should be the minimum required for valid research results.

3. Research with non-human primates should avoid pain and distress at every opportunity.
4. In all cases, the potential benefits of any research should be evaluated against the potential risks to the non-human primate subjects.
5. We should make use of information on a species' natural history to improve management and enrich environments, because physical and psychological well-being are essential not only to the health of the animal but also to the validity of the research results.
6. Finally, we recognize that our concern should be extended to non-human primates once they have become "surplus" to our research needs. This obligation entails ensuring quality care to the end of their natural lives whenever possible, and in the case of vulnerable or endangered species, a diligent search for placement that will contribute to their conservation. While recognizing that some professionals believe euthanasia is an acceptable way to deal with surplus animals in some cases, we strongly urge that other solutions be found whenever possible.

Individuals of endangered species should not be collected in the wild for use in biomedical research, unless the research holds promise for improving the health and conservation efforts on behalf of those species. IPS members accept the obligation to abide by relevant international, federal, state and local regulations concerning the welfare of captive animals<sup>6-10</sup>. IPS members can and should be the strongest advocates for the conservation and humane treatment of primates.

### **Ethics and field research on primates**

As noted in a recent special section of the *American Journal of Primatology* on Ethical Issues in Primatology (vol 72, issue 9), research on primates in the field has been subject to less public scrutiny and ethical regulation than laboratory research involving primates. This is particularly the case for observational studies. The "3Rs" of Replacement, Reduction, and Refinement that usually characterize animal care forms are of limited value and relevance for field-based studies, although of course they apply to any animal handling procedures, collaring, and the invasive collection of biological samples. Nevertheless, field projects are subject to complex ethical considerations in relation to both non-human primates and the local human communities that surround them, requiring reflection on the positive and negative effects of the presence of field-workers (Fedigan 2010). This requires us to acknowledge our responsibility to, and respect the wellbeing of, people, as well as animals (see American Association of Anthropology<sup>11</sup>) and places our responsibility

towards our study subjects in the context of the local cultures, societies at large, and the global environment in which we all live (Mackinnon & Riley 2010; Malone et al., 2010). As such, IPS recommends that when conducting primate field studies, researchers consider including some provision for Conservation through Community Involvement whenever appropriate and feasible. See "Guidelines for Conservation through Community Involvement"

([http://www.internationalprimatologicalsociety.org/docs/guidelines\\_conservation\\_through\\_community\\_involvement.pdf](http://www.internationalprimatologicalsociety.org/docs/guidelines_conservation_through_community_involvement.pdf))

In addition to positive implications (including protection from hunting and habitat destruction), field-studies can also entail potentially negative consequences for our study subjects, including disease transmission, the effects of trails and trail traffic on vegetation, the influence of the presence of human observers and habituation on study animals (Strier 2010, Köndgen et al., 2008), and decreased protection from hunting resulting from habituation. Linda Fedigan (2010) gives examples of some of the key ethical questions relevant to the contexts in which field primatologists work.

IPS advocates a risk analysis approach (e.g., Strier 2010), which weighs both the positive and negative impacts when considering the ethical dimensions of a field project.

### **Other relevant guidelines**

1. [IPS International Guidelines for the Acquisition Care and Breeding of Nonhuman Primates, Second Edition](#). 2007
2. [Guidelines for Ethical Conduct in the Care and Use of Animals](#). American Psychological Association, Washington D.C., 1992.
3. [Guidelines for the Capture, Handling and Care of Mammals](#) as approved by the American Society of Mammalogists, 1998.
4. [Guidelines for the treatment of animals in behavioural research and teaching](#). *Animal Behaviour*, 55, 251-257, 1998.
5. [Handbook for the Use of Animals in Neuroscience Research](#). Society for Neuroscience, Washington D.C., 1997.
6. PHS [Policy on the Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals](#). NIH Office for Protection from Research Risks, Rockville, MD, 1986.

7. [The Psychological Well-Being of Non-Human Primates](#). Institute for Laboratory Animal Research, National Research Council. National Academy Press, Washington D.C. 1998.
8. US [Animal Welfare Act](#), As Amended (1966 Act plus all amendments through 1990). United States Code, Title 7, Sections 2131-2156.
9. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service [Endangered Species Act](#) of 1973.
10. [Convention on the International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora \(CITES\)](#). Agreement signed in Washington D.C., 1973; amended in Bonn 1979.
11. Code of ethics of the American Anthropological Association. 2009.  
([http://www.aaanet.org/\\_cs\\_upload/issues/policy-advocacy/27668\\_1.pdf](http://www.aaanet.org/_cs_upload/issues/policy-advocacy/27668_1.pdf))
12. On Being a Scientist: Responsible Conduct in Research. National Academy of Sciences 1995 2nd edition. Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press (2121 Constitution Avenue, NW, Washington, D.C. 20418).  
([http://www.nap.edu/openbook.php?record\\_id=4917](http://www.nap.edu/openbook.php?record_id=4917))

## References

Fedigan, L.M. (2010.). Ethical issues faced by field primatologists: asking the relevant questions. *American Journal of Primatology* 72:754–771.

Köndgen, S., et al. 2008. Pandemic human viruses cause decline in endangered great apes. *Current Biology* 18:1–5.

Mackinnon K.C. & Riley, E.P. (2010). Field primatology of today: current ethical issues. *American Journal of Primatology* 72:749–753.

Malone N.M., Fuentes A. & White F.J. 2010 Subjects of knowledge and control in field primatology. *American Journal of Primatology* 72:779–784

Strier, K. B. (2010). Long-term field studies: positive impacts and unintended consequences. *American Journal of Primatology* 72:772–778.