

## **WWF-Norway Fraud Report, 2019**

In 2019 the WWF Network continued the work with prevention of fraud and corruption, ensuring both that leaders emphasise zero tolerance, and also in confirming a continued awareness among all staff. This work is firmly rooted in the longstanding Code of Conduct of the WWF Network.

Fraud and corruption is a serious topic in WWF. The negative consequences are extensive and usually affect the people WWF cooperates with and their natural resources. Economic crime of this type also entails misuse of resources set aside for conservation work. WWF-Norway is committed to transparency, and in line with our Code of Ethics, this annual report details the cases involving either WWF-Norway directly, or funds that WWF-Norway has provided, either from the Norwegian government or funds raised from the public.

In the cases below, the investigations identified areas for improvement in WWF's and/or partners internal controls and accounting procedures, and these have been or are currently being implemented. Since WWF operates with natural resource management issues in countries where corruption is often commonplace, WWF will continue to develop its anti-corruption systems and practices.

The 2019 report details the cases that were dealt with during the year.

### **Cases concluded in 2019 – fraud/corruption detected**

The WWF Regional Office for Africa received allegations from a whistle blower that some staff in Tanzania Country Office (TCO) were engaging in kickback schemes, particularly with grants to civil society partners. While the investigation did find shortcomings in systems, mainly related to the procurement processes, evidence was found related to one suspicious transaction with a civil society partner supported by WWF-Norway. The member of staff concerned resigned from WWF Tanzania Country Office before a disciplinary hearing process was concluded. WWF Tanzania Country Office reimbursed WWF-Norway and NOK 15 640 was repaid to Norad.

### **Cases concluded in 2019 – fraud/corruption not detected**

In Madagascar a company that supports farmers to produce seaweed and then purchases this from them, alleged that another company was buying seaweed from 'their farmers', and were supported by WWF staff to do so. Following an investigation, no evidence was found of fraud or corruption, though some areas for improvements were identified for internal WWF controls and procedures and the police dismissed the formal case between the companies due to lack of evidence.

### **Investigations ongoing at end 2019 – conclusions pending**

In late November, during a routine review of a financial transaction in WWF DRC, a suspicion arose around a potential conflict of interest for a member of WWF staff. The review of this is ongoing.

In late November, allegations were received from community members in Madagascar that a local NGO supported by WWF had not made the correct reimbursements to some community members. The investigation of this case started in early December.

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Please note: In 2018 serious allegations of alleged human rights abuse were levelled at WWF globally, related to work implemented by partners supported by WWF. WWF-Norway has not provided any funding to the programmes where these allegations arise. There is an ongoing independent investigation into the allegations. The purpose of this Fraud Report is to detail fraud and corruption cases. More information can be found about the work of the independent panel [here](#).