

WWF-Norway Fraud Report, 2020

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 2020 the WWF Network continued the work with prevention of fraud and corruption, further enhancing our global whistleblowing service through the Whistle B, Whistleblowing Centre, <https://report.whistleb.com/en/wwf>. This update is firmly rooted in the longstanding Code of Conduct of the WWF Network.

In its attempts to avoid internet fraud, WWF-Norway has also strengthened procedures followed when transferring funds abroad. This includes confirming new accounts from different sources and cross-checking via phone/video meeting.

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 2020 report details the cases that were dealt with during the year.

Cases concluded in 2020 – fraud/corruption detected

In late November 2019, 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. Following an investigation, irregularities were uncovered, but none of these related to WWF-Norway or Norwegian funds. The staff member concerned resigned from WWF DRC before the investigation was formally concluded and formal action could be taken.

Cases concluded in 2020 – fraud/corruption not detected

In late November 2019, 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 revealed that allocations to some of the community representatives were not properly justified, and neither was a transportation cost. While mismanagement of funds was verified the investigation did not conclude that this was fraud/corruption, but rather a weakness/failing in the internal procedures of the local NGO supported by WWF. The local NGO reimbursed the amount concerned, and WWF no longer provides funding to this organisation.

Investigations ongoing at end 2020 – conclusions pending

Not applicable

Please note: In 2018 and 2019 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. An Independent Panel was put in place to investigate the allegations against WWF, and their final report and WWF's management response were published in November 2020. More information can be found about the work of the independent panel [here](#). The purpose of this Fraud Report is to detail fraud and corruption cases.