

Sexual Misconduct Policy

Research expeditions constitute extreme situations where groups of people are far away from home for an extended period of time, with high pressure to achieve their goals, often under strenuous conditions. Many expeditions are characterized by small group sizes, reduced privacy compared to usual work-relationships, stronger dependencies between colleagues, and fewer options for maintaining personal distance. These circumstances can increase the potential for intentional and unintentional sexual misconduct. However, sexual misconduct of any kind is strictly forbidden.

1. Definitions – what does ‘sexual misconduct’ mean and which behaviour types are included in the term?

- 1.1. **Sexual harassment** is any unwanted, unsolicited and unreciprocated behaviour of a sexual nature. Sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to unwelcome sexual advances, unwelcome requests for sexual favours, and other unwanted verbal, nonverbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Specific work-related issues include those where a person’s submission to such conduct is, implicitly or explicitly, expected as the basis for employment decisions, academic evaluation, grades or advancement.
- 1.2. **Sexual assault** includes rape, inappropriate touching, coercion, and other forms of non-consensual sexual activity.
- 1.3. **Stalking** is repeatedly following, monitoring, surveilling, harassing, threatening, or intimidating someone. This includes telephone, mail or electronic communication, and contact via social media.
- 1.4. **Other forms** of problematic behaviour include, e.g., approaching others with unwanted levels of intimacy. Please be aware that romantic and sexual relationships between expedition members which begin as consensual, may however still lead to instances of unwelcome or prohibited conduct.

2. How to prevent sexual misconduct

- 2.1. **Awareness:** Conducting yourself in a respectful manner towards others and being mindful that behaviour which does not make you feel uncomfortable or threatened may in fact be interpreted or experienced as uncomfortable or threatening by others.
- 2.2. **Consent:** Consenting to sexual activity requires of both persons an affirmative, conscious, and voluntary agreement to engage in this sexual activity. It is the responsibility of each person to ensure they have the affirmative consent of the other to engage in a sexual activity. Lack of protest, lack of resistance, or silence, do not constitute consent (i.e.: not only ‘no means no’, but ‘only yes means yes’).
- 2.3. **Ask-once guideline:** You must immediately respect a person’s wishes, if they turn down an advance and do not reciprocate in a clearly affirmative, conscious way. Lack of positive feedback must be considered a “no” and should not be followed up with further advances.

3. How to behave when you are subjected to sexual misconduct

- 3.1. As a victim, **seek immediate help** from a person of trust. Note that AWI formally names “Persons of Confidence” on all larger expeditions who can help and take care of the subsequent procedures. The Chief Scientist, the Head of Expedition or of Station, or the Ship or Flight Captain must be notified of the incidence. If you don’t want to talk to a member of the expedition, you can also contact Katharina Kramer (katharina.kramer@awi.de; 0049 471 4831-2252) from AWI directorate’s

office, who is in charge of complaints with regard to the [General Equal Treatment Act](#)

- 3.2. The Chief Scientist, the Head of Expedition or of Station, or the Ship or Flight Captain will make sure that the incidence is resolved and that a reoccurrence of the situation is prevented. Depending on the situation, this can constitute **different levels of action**, e.g. ranging from talking to the involved people, banning people from certain common areas (e.g. gym, social rooms), to having people sent home in case of serious violations and/or excluding them from future expeditions. Any illegal actions will be prosecuted according to German Law by the respective authorities.
- 3.3. The most effective way we can prevent harm to any member of our team is by looking out for each other. **It is your duty, as responsible expedition member**, to act when you see something or hear something that makes you uncomfortable. You should speak immediately to the Person of Confidence, or directly to the Chief Scientist, Head of Expedition or of Station, or the Ship or Flight Captain who are responsible for the necessary actions with regard to such situations. No negative consequences will result should you have misinterpreted a questionable situation.