

ASLA Code of Environmental Ethics



Preamble

As stewards and designers of the natural and built environments, landscape architects play a significant role in shaping the world. Working across multiple scales and dimensions, landscape architects make decisions every day which impact the health and vitality of the Earth and the communities that inhabit it. The American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA) is committed to responsible ecological stewardship in planning, design, management, and policy, and offers this Code of Environmental Ethics as a framework to guide members' professional practice.

Foundational Values

At the heart of environmental ethics is a recognition that the natural world has inherent value in and of itself. Given that its systems and processes are deeply interconnected with those that drive human social and economic endeavors, care for the former will care for the latter. Through this Code of Environmental Ethics, the Society encourages members to:

- advocate for environmental protection, conservation, and restoration;
- promote equitable enhancement to quality of life for all individuals through nature; and
- support the resilience and sustainability of Earth's systems, resources, and services.

More specifically, the ASLA Code of Environmental Ethics recognizes the following values and rights:

- Planet Earth in its totality is priceless. The abiotic and biotic resources, inhabitants, and systems it supports are categorically and empirically valuable and precious.
- Future generations have a right to be able to experience environmental health, social wellbeing, and economic prosperity. Therefore, prioritizing these in practice and policy is a fundamental responsibility of landscape architecture.
- Affected peoples have a right to participate in decision-making for natural and built environment interventions. Therefore, inclusion and consideration of stakeholders is a prerequisite of environmentally just landscape architecture practice and policy.

Ethical Standards

As members of ASLA, we have an ethical responsibility to:

ES1 Base our planning, design, and management decisions, as well as policy advocacy on awareness of the inherent value of the environment and understanding of the interconnectedness of ecological health, social wellbeing, and economic prosperity.

ES2 Ensure our environmental interventions enable future generations to experience a healthy environment, social wellbeing, and economic prosperity.

ES3 Consider the complement of communities affected by environmental interventions proposed and implemented through our professional practice and policies.

ES4 Seek constant improvement in our ecological knowledge; our understanding of the interrelationships between environment, society, and economy; and our skills for successful management of these via educational institutions and professional organizations.

For guidance on specific topics, members are encouraged to refer to ASLA's [public policy statements](#).

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