



OPINION n°2006-14

« SCIENTIFIC FRAUD WITHIN THE CNRS »

Approved at plenary session of 3 april 2006



SUMMARY

RECOMMENDATIONS

The ethics committee recommends setting up an ad hoc committee to study each specific case. Based on the principle that each case of presumed fraud is unique, the ethics committee recommends that this ad hoc committee:

Study the situation in order to ascertain the reality of the charges

Ensure that the rights of the defence are respected (distinguishing between presumptions and evidence): it is a principle in law to base convictions on objective evidence and to give the person suspected of fraud the benefit of a presumption of innocence, not guilt.

(The presumption of innocence is a fundamental rule according to which a person prosecuted for an offence is presumed, a priori, not to have committed it until his or her guilt has actually been established. The defendant must also be given the benefit of the doubt and be acquitted if not proven guilty).

Beyond fraud, examine possible breaches of the implicit or explicit good practices expected of a researcher. The Ethics Committee suggests that one of its members could be an observer on the ad hoc committee.

The ad hoc committee shall deliver its decision to the Management Board, which may — on the basis of this report — refer the matter to the institution's disciplinary bodies in accordance with French civil service regulations.

