

Safety manual for work in the tropics



Department of Biology
Aarhus University
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Introduction

The purpose of this field guideline for employees and persons affiliated with the Department of Biology, Aarhus University, is to:

- Ensure the necessary theoretical background to be able to work safely in the field
- Ensure common high standards for safety related activities during field work regardless of the location
- Increase the general awareness of safety during field work

in order to prevent accidents to the greatest extent possible.

This manual is containing relevant information regarding safety issues related to working in the tropics.

General rules

All employees on work related travel to the above areas are required to familiarize themselves with the contents of this manual as well as [the general safety instructions for working in the field](#) and follow the instructions given.

Prior to starting work, employees on work-related travel to Africa must determine whether legislation exists and the kind of work intended to be performed in the country.

Be aware that some of the materials you need to use in connection with fieldwork in the tropic regions may be 'dangerous goods' in connection with transport to and from the country. [See the general instructions for fieldwork.](#)

We recommend that you inform the Danish embassy/consulate in the country you are visiting of how long you intend to stay, where you are planning to stay and for which purpose you are visiting. This can be done by e-mail and is an extra safety precaution to register with a public authority, in case a critical situation occurs in the country.

Diseases:

In the tropics, you must pay attention to whether there is a risk of becoming infected by disease during fieldwork. Take special note of whether mango flies and malaria are present. If there is a risk of contracting a bite from a mango fly, you may not dry your clothes outdoors unless you iron them or treat them with heat afterwards.

Some diseases (yellow fever, malaria, Dengue fever) are mosquito-borne, so make sure to take precautions to avoid bites, i.e. cover up as much as possible with clothing and apply mosquito repellent on bare skin. Yellow fever and malaria can be prevented through medicine, but there is no vaccine for Dengue fever, so it is important to prevent mosquito bites.

If you sleep with open windows or doors, it is recommended that you use mosquito netting. If possible, use air-conditioning and mosquito netting. Pay particular attention to mosquitos at sunrise and sunset.

Be careful of dehydration. When you are in the heat, it is important drinking plenty of water, to avoid dehydration. It is recommended only to drink water from the original bottles with label and preferably with carbon dioxide added.

If you are working outdoors, it is highly recommended to use sun protection in the form of appropriate clothing and sunscreen.

We have had several cases where employees have become ill while staying in the tropics. Therefore, consider your limits before you travel and whether you have brought the necessary preventive equipment / medicines with you (contact your own doctor). For example, roads and cars may be in poor condition, you may be affected by bad weather, or you may get a stomach infection.

[Check the general instructions for additional information on the subject.](#)

Appendix: Acknowledgement – to sign before traveling

Acknowledgement

I, the undersigned, hereby confirm that I have read the "Safety manual for work in the tropics" as well as the general safety manual for fieldwork. I am aware of the fact that I am required to know and follow the rules and also follow the directions given by the field supervisor, project supervisor or any other supervisor at the Department of Biology.

Place/Date

Name (capital letters).....

Signature

Closest relative (write legibly)

Name

Address

Phone number

This acknowledgement must be handed in/sent to the daily EHS manager