

July 10, 2023

36th Board Meeting of the Green Climate Fund (GCF)

GCF Observer Network of Civil Society, Indigenous Peoples, and Local Communities

INTERVENTION

Intervention on the Report on the activities of the Secretariat

Access the document: <https://www.greenclimate.fund/document/gcf-b36-inf14>

We thank the Secretariat for this update and report on its activities.

We want to remind the Secretariat of its responsibilities to prioritize civil society, Indigenous Peoples, and local community engagement, including through participation at these Board meetings. We ask again, as we have highlighted before to the Secretariat and received assurances regarding, for earlier announcement of meetings to facilitate any necessary visa processes, as well as direct support when necessary. We hope that concrete and substantial actions will be undertaken in anticipation of B.37, to ensure the Secretariat's responsibility is assumed in a timely and just manner. Supporting the full participation of all observers is a vital Secretariat activity to ensure our conversations here truly and justly serve the mitigation and adaptation needs of Indigenous People, and peoples and communities of the Global South.

We were pleased to see the creation of the new Office on Sustainability and Inclusion, and appreciate the centrality with which the GCF emphasizes its commitment to implementing the Environmental and Social Policy, Indigenous Peoples Policy, Gender Policy, and SEAH Policy. We note the indication of 100% compliance with these policies in the latest funding proposals in terms of required assessment and preparatory documentation, and are interested to hear and see more details, especially as we have consistently found compliance lacking in some of the funding proposals, particularly when it comes to the Indigenous Peoples Policy.

Relatedly, we note mention of the long overdue adoption of the GCF's own environmental and social safeguards, as well as the Information Disclosure Policy. We'd like to know the updated timeline for these policies to be brought forth as the ESSs were supposed to come forward earlier this year (though we know the Board has had quite a lot to consider), and the review of the Information Disclosure Policy occurred several years ago yet did not result in any updated policy draft. We look forward to engaging with the Secretariat on the development of an updated IDP as the increased attention to digitalization and streamlining processes, detailed in this report, creates more opportunities for transparency and accountability.

In terms of information facilitating accountability and change, we found it alarming to see in Annex II, Table 4 the discrepancies in review time for private vs. public sector documents. Concept notes from the private sector are reviewed within 30 days at a rate of 90% compared to 37% for public concept notes. Similarly both SAP concept notes and funding

proposals have a 100% on-time review rate for the private sector and only 50% for the public sector. We question this vast disparity and are concerned that it shows a significant bias towards the private sector.

We do fear these review times reflect the prioritization that happens when capacity is limited, and we want to stress the absolute necessity of the Secretariat prioritizing increasing their capacity. While we are glad for the new high of 271 and 291 pending staff, we note the 2023 goal is 35 fewer staff than the approved cap. The GCF needs this additional capacity now to support accredited DAEs in bringing more funding proposals, to share more lessons and best practices on environmental and social safeguards and Free Prior and Informed Consent, to review and then publicly publish reports on how projects and programmes are being implemented on the ground and achieving or struggling with their goals, including those in their Gender Action Plans. For the strong foundation that the GCF has put in place to truly fulfill its promise and potential, for the GCF to fully operationalize an updated strategic plan, adequate staffing to the full 350 person cap is paramount.

Related to staff capacity, we appreciate the update on Replenishment in this document and the work the Secretariat is doing toward a successful and ambitious second replenishment. We strongly believe that the GCF must be the central institution for climate finance and urge developed countries to make ambitious pledges to enable the GCF to implement transformative climate action.

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