

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

Intervention on

Staff Regulations**Access the document:** <https://www.greenclimate.fund/document/gcf-b42-15>

We overall appreciate the effort to improve staff benefits and provide greater equity and clarity regarding their employment. These matters are important for protecting and ensuring the well-being and equal treatment of the Secretariat staff who conduct the work of the Fund, and have been doing so for years at dozens of people less than the staff cap, with only 314 people currently achieving so much across a vast portfolio.

We understand the premise of a one-time adoption of the staff rules, but would note the adoption itself loses its signalling power under this set-up of update without Board oversight.

We support the inclusion of additional costs for dependency support and childcare, which seem to be necessary investments in staff well-being, and in the case of childcare, necessary given the GCF's gender commitments and the disproportionate burden of childcare falling to women. We also acknowledge the importance of the GCF recognition that children with special needs cannot have age limits applied and urge the GCF to consider how this understanding could lead to revisions in providing for elder care and other family responsibilities related to care and care coordination.

We do think we are missing an opportunity to better position the staff council, currently in the form of the Personnel Council, to self-direct its work with management engagement. As in our written comments, we think an additional provision should ensure consultations at the request of the staff council for issues beyond the staff rules, noting that many other issues and even Board documents are relevant to staff. While the response is that this role is "consistent with the practice of other benchmarked international organizations," we remind the GCF its goal should be to set best practice standards.

Oddly, the Unit of Professional Conduct was only detailed in the Staff Rules. Given the role of the Board in the Staff Regulations, and how significantly this unit is centered in addressing core inadequacies in staff management, having it be Board approved would be an important endorsement of this approach.

We remain concerned about the preference shown for informal resolution over formal reports to the IIU. Any such preference can send the signal that certain behaviors should be given the benefit of the doubt as workplace conflict but not misconduct, and can create an environment in which behavior is first conceptualized as workplace conflict or differences in approach instead of identified as misconduct, ultimately creating a chilling effect in staff members

reporting fully and directly to the IIU. We have learned so much in recent years about the power dynamics and psychology of harassment and abuse, particularly when gendered, and victims do not even report the incident to avoid re-living the nightmare. To not provide the utmost of protections ensuring that harassment and abuse are likely to be identified as such, including by those experiencing it, seems like shirking the responsibility of the GCF for its staff.

While the idea of catching issues early with informal resolution, as the Secretariat presents this idea, sometimes has merit, some behaviors are misconduct and are misconduct in their first instance. There is no such thing as “people being people”, the importance of having an avenue to escalate a concern should not be preempted by shifting the burden to the victim’s capacity to determine whether misconduct actually happened. Ultimately, staff should not be encouraged to use the informal process first, but presented both processes without preference.

Correspondingly, we want to reiterate the importance of ensuring comprehensive orientation of new staff and regular refresher trainings and workshops on these provisions, particularly the grievance processes available.