

**Statement by the Green Climate Fund to the Seventeenth Session of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues**

19 April 2018  
United Nations  
New York  
USA

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Thank you, Madame Chair, for this opportunity to address this Forum,

The Green Climate Fund or GCF has raised \$10.3 billion from 43 governments to help developing countries limit or reduce their greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to climate change.

The GCF recognises that Indigenous People have an important contribution to make in achieving these aims and strives to ensure that Indigenous People benefit from its activities and are not adversely affected by its activities.

It seeks to promote a paradigm shift to lower emission and climate-resilient development.

The GCF aims for an even balance between mitigation and adaptation and a balanced geographical distribution.

The GCF is part of the financial mechanism of the UNFCCC and as such has an important role in serving the Paris Agreement on Climate Change.

Madame Chair,

The GCF is a partnership of many organisations.

Its Secretariat is headquartered in Songdo, Republic of Korea, near Seoul.

It is governed by a Board comprising of 12 developed and 12 developing countries. The Board makes decisions based on consensus. It has met 19 times so far and usually meets 3 times a year. Its next meeting will take place at the Secretariat in July.

The GCF recognizes the need to ensure that developing country partners exercise ownership of climate change funding and integrate it within their own national action plans. Over 140 developing countries have nominated a National Designated Authority or NDA. These focal points communicate the country's strategic priorities for financing low-emission and climate-resilient development across their economies. They also provide broad strategic oversight of GCF's activities in a country and serve as the point of communication with the Fund.

GCF works with a network of Accredited Entities or AEs, as intermediaries to implement its activities on the ground. AEs are responsible for deploying the Fund's resources at local, regional, national and international levels. This is a growing network of well-established, trusted partners working closely with the Fund. Currently there are 65 AEs, including 37 domestic organisations located in developing countries, known as Direct Access entities.

Projects can come from a variety of sponsors within a country, including public, private and not-for-profit entities. Sponsors work with an AE to develop proposals. The AE assess a proposal's viability, evaluating a variety of considerations including climate change, environmental, social, gender, economic, and financial factors. The GCF Secretariat works with AEs, sponsors and NDAs to ensure that the GCF criteria are met. The GCF Board reviews and approves proposals.

Madame Chair,

I would like to highlight some of the GCF achievements of importance for this Forum.

**Building a portfolio of transformative projects:**

The GCF has approved 76 projects, totalling \$3.7 billion of GCF resources, and mobilising a further \$12 billion from other sources. 33 Projects mention IPs, including projects in Peru, Colombia, Namibia and Tanzania. A further 45 projects in the GCF pipeline mention IPs.

An importance recent development for IPs was in October 2017 when the GCF Board approved a pilot programme for REDD+ results-based payments. This \$500 million programme will run until the time of the last GCF Board meeting in 2022. GCF offers support for REDD+ activities across all phases, namely readiness, implementation and payment for results. While the focus of GCF funding is on reducing emissions, or mitigation, there is also scope to support adaptation. This includes increasing resilience and enhancing livelihoods of the most vulnerable people, communities, and regions; increasing people's health and well-being; enhancing food and water security; and improving the resilience of ecosystems and ecosystem services.

**Strengthening country ownership:**

The GCF provides support for preparatory activities to enhance country ownership and access. This support, known as the Readiness Programme, is operating in 92 countries with a further 40 applications currently being processed. This support has helped Kiribati strengthen its capacity for project management, enabled Colombia to conduct workshops on climate finance, helped Pakistan to strengthen climate information systems, and supported South Africa in ensuring that funding proposals are aligned with national priorities. Engaging in this Readiness Programme and its activities is a key entry point for indigenous people and their organisations.

**Simplifying processes and access:**

The GCF is striving to simplify access to climate finance. One recent effort is the Simplified Approval Process or SAP for small-scale activities, with the last Board meeting approving the first SAP project in Namibia to improve rangeland and ecosystem management practices of

smallholder farmers under conditions of climate change. Simplifying access will hopefully encourage more applications involving Indigenous people.

Implementing safeguards:

At its most recent Board meeting the GCF adopted important policies that protect and promote the rights of indigenous people. These are contained in the newly adopted Environment and Social Policy and Indigenous Peoples Policy. These policies were developed based on the input and support of over 70 different indigenous peoples' organisations. The policies recognise the key roles that Indigenous peoples play in addressing climate change.

The Indigenous Peoples policy aims to ensure that they benefit from GCF activities in a culturally appropriate manner and do not suffer adverse effects from GCF-financed activities.

The IP policy centres around a rigorous free, prior informed consent process, for activities that may have an impact on indigenous peoples. The IP policy also provides tailored standards for indigenous people for information disclosure, stakeholder engagement, grievance redress, capacity building and promoting access to GCF activities.

The IP policy also contains a number of specific measures to ensure that the policy is implemented by the GCF family. These include:

- Developing operational guidelines including a simplified review checklist for funding proposals;
- Engaging a senior indigenous peoples specialist, with responsibility to manage the implementation of this policy. Recruitment of this specialist has already begun;
- Establishing an Indigenous Peoples Advisory Group to assist with implementing and developing the policy;
- Developing activities for awareness building and capacity development; and finally
- Periodic monitoring of the implementation of the policy.

Independent redress mechanism:

GCF has established its independent redress mechanism or IRM to ensure accountability and compliance as well as provide redress to affected or potentially affected indigenous people. The IRM is independent of the GCF Secretariat and reports directly to the GCF Board. To address a complaint, the IRM can provide dispute resolution or mediation services on the ground to resolve issues or conduct an independent investigation into non-compliances of GCF policy and recommend redress.

More information about the GCF is available at our website [www.greenclimate.fund](http://www.greenclimate.fund).

Madame Chair,

In conclusion, I wish to reiterate that the GCF recognises the key role that indigenous peoples play in addressing climate change through their traditional knowledge and sustainable resource management systems and supporting this role is critical in achieving the goals of the GCF. The GCF therefore very much welcomes this opportunity to address

this Forum and looks forward to working with this Forum and indigenous peoples to ensure that this role is fully recognized in the work of the GCF.

Thank you for your attention.