



GREEN  
CLIMATE  
FUND

Independent  
Redress  
Mechanism

# 2023

## Delivering Results

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Independent Redress Mechanism –  
2023 Annual Report



## DELIVERING RESULTS

### Independent Redress Mechanism – 2023 Annual Report

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Independent Redress Mechanism**

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# MESSAGE FROM THE CO-CHAIRS OF THE BOARD

The IRM continues to play a critical role in upholding accountability at the GCF, fostering the application of environmental and social safeguards and internationally accepted standards in GCF-supported projects.

With the recent appointment of a new Head, we are confident in IRM's renewed commitment to providing impartial, independent, and transparent leadership on issues relating to accountability and redress to the GCF. We also welcome the IRM's important contribution to the wider accountability community.

We look forward to the IRM's continued success and to working together in 2024 to uphold and strengthen accountability at the GCF.

**Milagros de Camps German & Sarah Metcalf**  
Co-Chairs of the Board of the GCF in 2024





# MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



The effectiveness of climate action is closely linked to accountability. As the new Executive Director of the Green Climate Fund (GCF), this is what I believe and this is a foundation of GCF's mission as we strive to achieve significant impact through our investments.

The Independent Redress Mechanism (IRM) is a key partner in this pursuit. The IRM provides an impartial, independent channel for communities and beneficiaries of our climate finance support to voice concerns and have a seat at the decision-making table. The IRM is one important way to ensure that GCF consistently champions social inclusion and procedural justice, and supports the most vulnerable in its investments around the world.

This latest annual report demonstrates the IRM's effectiveness in handling complex cases and conducting thorough investigations. In 2023, the IRM team concluded two important cases, including its first compliance review case. Insights from these efforts are informing and will continue to inform our operations and maximising our impact in countries we serve.

Another highlight of the IRM's work last year included collaborating with 23 Direct Access Entities (DAEs) in developing countries. This partnership has bolstered local capacities to address grievances and ensure our growing network of DAEs operates effectively.

Likewise, the Board appointment of Sonja Derkum as the new head of the IRM was a welcome milestone in 2023. Sonja brings fresh perspectives and leadership to an important position, and I look forward to working with her to amplify local voices and strengthen the transformative impact of our investments.

Looking ahead, GCF remains committed to learning, evolving, and scaling up our efforts to meet the aspirations of developing countries with integrity, inclusiveness, and the highest impact.

**Mafalda Duarte**  
Executive Director, GCF





# MESSAGE FROM THE HEAD OF THE IRM



In 2023, the IRM underwent its first major transition. I would like to thank the two ad interim Heads, Ibrahim Pam and Paco Gimenez-Salinas, who played important roles in sustaining the IRM's operations. Subsequently, following my appointment by the Board at B.35, I commenced my tenure as the new IRM Head in August.

This year, there have been important developments on case work. In January, the IRM concluded its monitoring of IRM Case C0002 Peru, following the successful completion of all agreed upon activities. Following a decision taken by the Board in July, the IRM published its final compliance review report on IRM Case C0006 Nicaragua.<sup>1</sup> In December, the IRM successfully facilitated parties reaching a Problem Solving Agreement in IRM Case C0009 Egypt.<sup>2</sup>

The IRM continued to strengthen its critical role in building the capacity of grievance redress mechanisms (GRMs) of GCF DAEs. A significant undertaking for the IRM was the joint capacity-building and outreach workshop in Rwanda, jointly with the Independent Integrity Unit (IIU). This workshop served as a platform to unite over 30 participants from grievance redress mechanisms of GCF DAEs and civil society organisations (CSOs), fostering a unique environment conducive to vibrant and participative discussions. The IRM also further enhanced the Grievance Redress and Accountability Mechanism (GRAM) partnership by actively facilitating virtual discussions on pertinent community-related topics.

Further, the IRM officially launched its board game, formed the "IRM CSO Network" following a workshop in Rwanda and localised its outreach efforts through a CSO advocacy grant.

These achievements were made possible through unwavering support from many key stakeholders, including the GCF Board, the Ethics and Audit Committee, the GCF's Executive Director and Secretariat, the Independent Integrity Unit (IIU), the Independent Evaluation Unit (IEU), CSOs, and other accountability and redress mechanisms.

Above all, the diligent efforts and resolute commitment of the IRM staff during this transition year were indispensable in ensuring the IRM fulfilled its mandate, work programme and planned activities.

2023 brought about significant institutional advancements within the GCF, marked by a successful replenishment and the introduction of an updated strategic plan (USP-2). With these pivotal developments and the anticipated surge in DAEs with funding proposals, the IRM is prepared to continue building the capacity of GRMs. As we embark on the journey into 2024, I eagerly anticipate fostering deeper connections with key IRM stakeholders, driven by the shared goal of advancing our collective pursuit of accountability at the GCF.

**Sonja Derkum**  
Head of the IRM, GCF

<sup>1</sup> IRM Case C0006 Nicaragua: <https://irm.greencclimate.fund/case/c0006>

<sup>2</sup> IRM Case C0009 Egypt: <https://irm.greencclimate.fund/case/c0009-egypt>





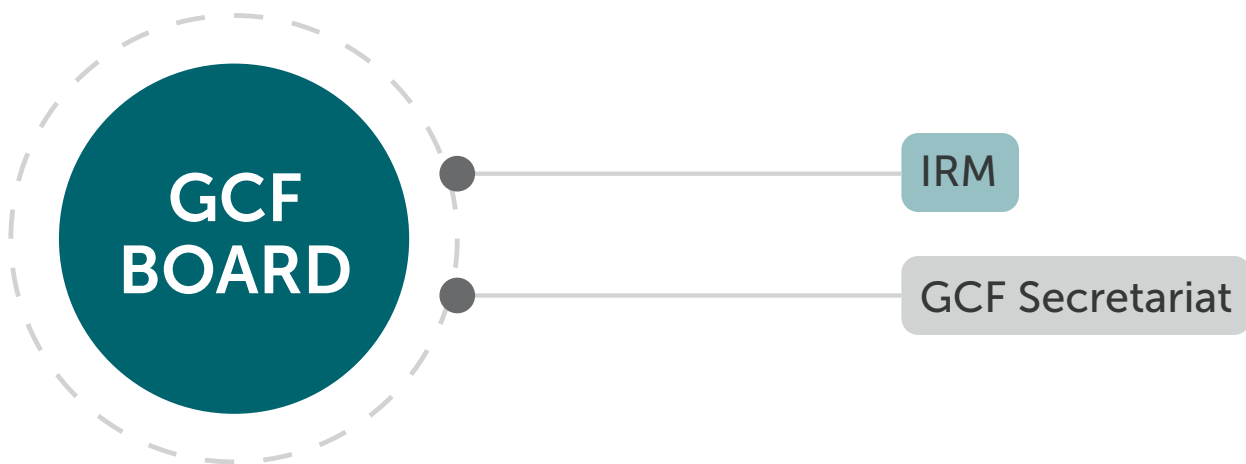
# WHO WE ARE

Our mission is to provide recourse to affected people in a way that is **FAIR, EFFECTIVE and TRANSPARENT.**

The Independent Redress Mechanism (IRM) addresses complaints by people who believe they are or may be negatively affected by projects or programmes funded by the Green Climate Fund (GCF). The IRM also accepts requests for reconsideration from developing countries whose funding proposals have been denied by the GCF Board. The IRM aims to provide recourse to affected people in a way that is fair, effective and transparent, and enhances the performance of the GCF and its projects and programmes. The IRM creates reliable forums for affected communities to enable them to raise their concerns and to ensure that they can make their voices heard.

As a priority, the IRM as an independent unit, enables the GCF to be faithful and accountable to its own policies and procedures, especially those dealing with environmental and social safeguards, gender and indigenous peoples. In delivering its mandate, the IRM is guided by principles of fairness, equity, independence, transparency, effectiveness and justice.

**FIGURE 1. THE IRM IN THE GCF STRUCTURE**



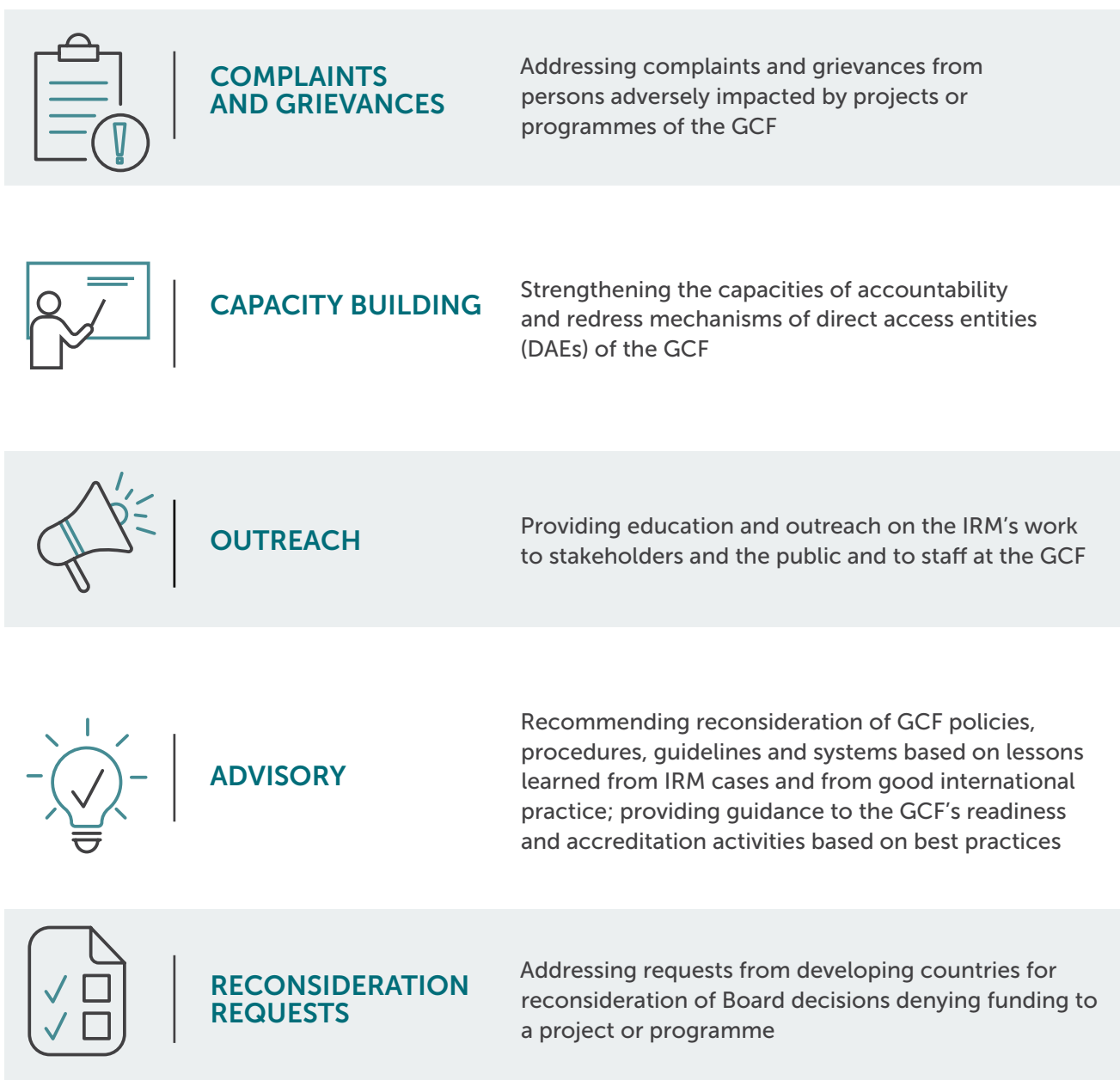
The Board of the GCF is composed of 24 Board members – 12 from developed countries and 12 from developing countries.

The IRM reports to the Board, and actively consults with the Ethics and Audit Committee (EAC), a sub-committee of the Board.

Grievance mechanisms like the IRM offer significant benefits both for the projects of the parent institution and for potentially affected people and other stakeholders. Grievance mechanisms provide a forum for resolving disputes relatively quickly and can help to avoid project delays and costs associated with conflict. Grievance mechanisms also provide a cost-effective method for reporting complaints and a structure for accessing a fair hearing and appropriate remedies.

The IRM is independent of the Secretariat of the GCF and reports to the Board of the GCF on all substantive matters.

FIGURE 2. THE IRM PLAYS FIVE ROLES IN ORDER TO ACCOMPLISH ITS MISSION.



# 2023: DELIVERING RESULTS

For the IRM, 2023 was a significant year. After the departure of the IRM's first Head, Lalanath de Silva, in August 2022, the IRM finally welcomed its new Head, Sonja Derkum, in August 2023. During this year-long interim period, two ad interim Heads, Ibrahim Pam and Paco Gimenez-Salinas, led the team.

The IRM concluded its first compliance review case, C0006 Nicaragua, with a final decision by the GCF Board at B.36 in July 2023. IRM staff travelled to Egypt on several occasions to oversee mediation discussions for C0006 Egypt, which is now in the monitoring phase for community-related aspects,<sup>3</sup> following the signing of a Problem Solving Agreement by the parties.

As in previous years, the IRM attended all three board meetings, including B.37, which was hosted by the government of Georgia in Tbilisi in October 2023.

The IRM also organised its first significant in-person event since COVID-19. The joint capacity building and outreach workshop in Rwanda was organised in collaboration with the IIU and brought together GRMs and CSOs. The IRM also attended two Independent Accountability Mechanism network (IAMnet) events in London, the Annual Meetings and an Accountability Talent Training.

The IRM is pleased to report that it has delivered on its mandate and all the commitments made in its 2023 Work Plan and Budget.<sup>4</sup> To further strengthen the IRM's mandate in 2024 and beyond, the Board of the GCF approved the IRM's 2024 Work Plan and Budget.<sup>5</sup> In 2024, the IRM will hire two new staff members - a Senior Compliance Specialist to lead the IRM's work in compliance investigations as well as a Compliance Case Associate to assist the IRM with its compliance work.



<sup>3</sup> The case is ongoing for employment-related issues, which are being handled by the Compliance Advisor Ombudsman of the International Finance Corporation and the Independent Review Mechanism of the African Development Bank.

<sup>4</sup> Green Climate Fund (2022), Independent Redress Mechanism Work Plan and Budget for 2023 (GCF/B.34/20/Rev.01). <https://www.greenclimate.fund/document/gcf-b34-20-rev01>

<sup>5</sup> Green Climate Fund (2023), Independent Redress Mechanism Work Plan and Budget for 2024 (GCF/B.37/19). <https://www.greenclimate.fund/document/gcf-b37-19>

# IRM ROLE AND FUNCTIONS: 2023 PROGRESS REPORT

## PROCESSING COMPLAINTS AND REQUESTS FOR RECONSIDERATION

In 2023, the IRM did not receive any new complaints. It processed three ongoing complaints and considered six pre-cases. A pre-case is a communication from an external party to the IRM that is registered in the Case Management System as a pre-case and may or may not mature into a complaint.

In 2023, there were no reconsideration requests made by developing countries to the IRM regarding Board decisions that denied funding for project proposals.



Complaints & Requests

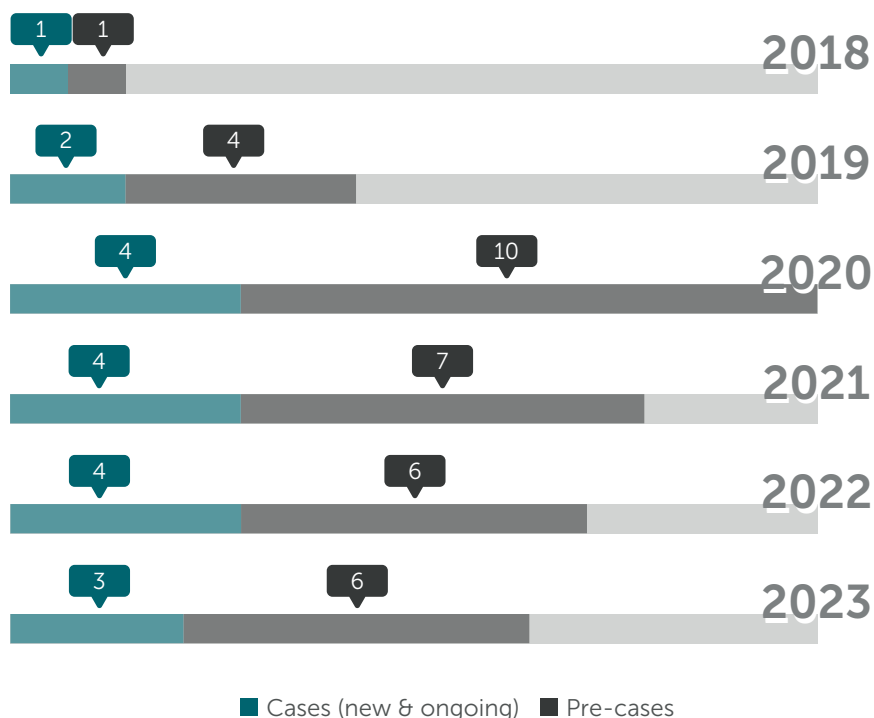
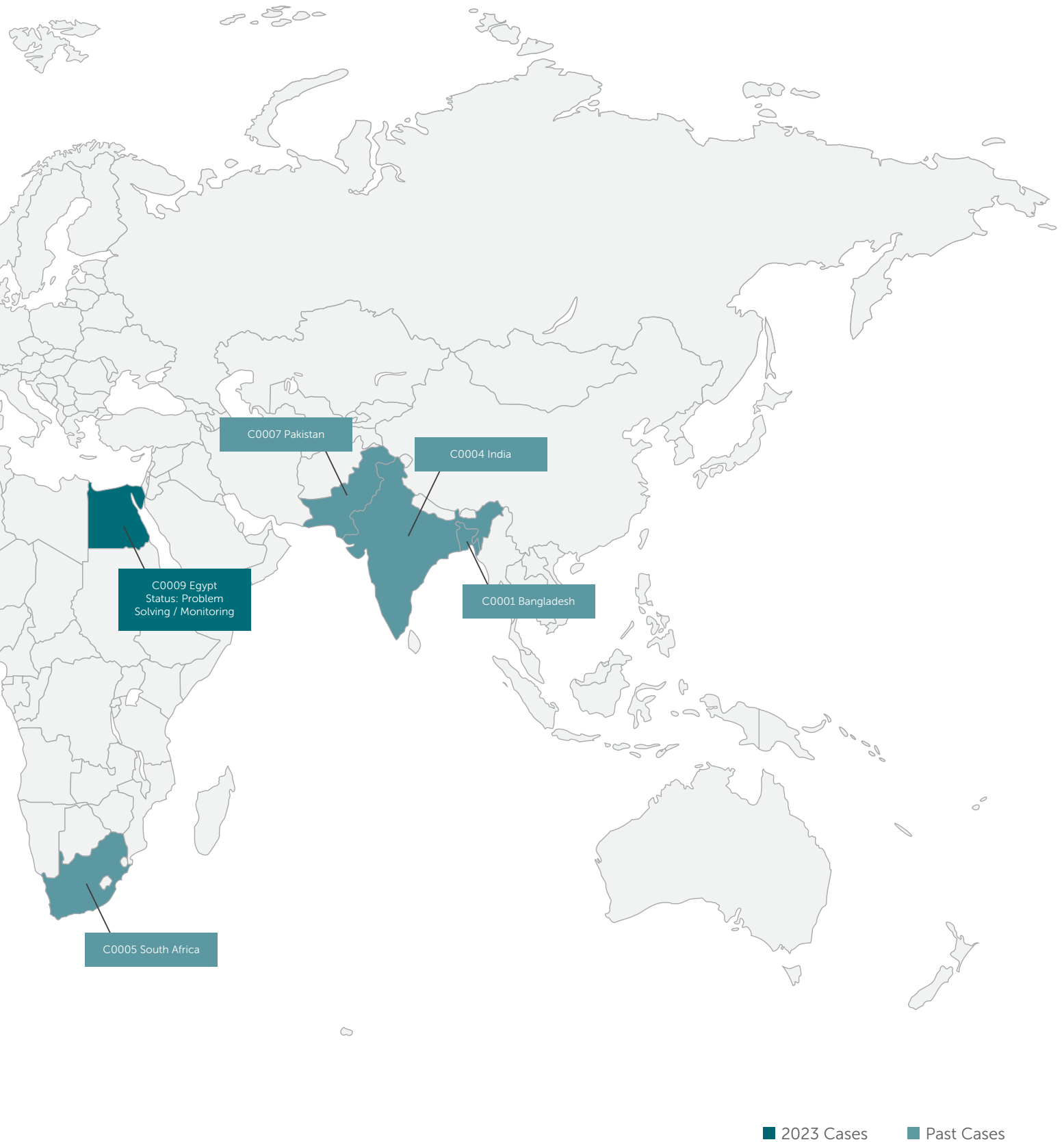


FIGURE 3. GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION OF IRM CASES: 2017-2023









## FP001: Building the Resilience of Wetlands in the Province of Datem del Marañón, Peru<sup>6</sup>

The IRM concluded the monitoring of the outcomes of its 2019 preliminary inquiry into FP001, Peru. A preliminary inquiry is an early phase of an IRM self-initiated investigation. A self-initiated investigation is a proceeding initiated under paragraph 12 of the IRM's Terms of Reference (TOR) if the IRM receives information from a credible source that a GCF project or programme has or may negatively impact a community or person. The IRM concluded its preliminary inquiry into FP001 in early 2019, determining that there was prima facie evidence that the conditions set out in paragraph 12 of the IRM's TOR for initiating an investigation were met. The IRM, however, agreed not to initiate proceedings under that paragraph in view of an undertaking given by the Secretariat on 1 May 2019 to implement several remedial actions.

All four undertakings provided by the Secretariat have now been completed – 1) the issuance of guidance on Free Prior Informed Consent (FPIC) requirements; 2) the risk categorisation for projects involving Indigenous Peoples; 3) the completion of a legal assessment/opinion examining the potential impacts of the creation of the Áreas de Conservación Ambiental (ACA) on collective land rights of indigenous people who are part of the project; and 4) the confirmation that the consent documentation was submitted by Profonampe for the establishment of the ACA.

Following a Secretariat assessment of the consent documentation submitted by the Accredited Entity (AE), the IRM began the process of closing the self-initiated inquiry, given the successful execution of all four undertakings outlined within the monitoring agreement. This decision, available in the IRM's Report on Outcomes of Self-Initiated Proceedings,<sup>7</sup> was published in January 2023.

## FP146: Bio-CLIMA: Integrated climate action to reduce deforestation and strengthen resilience in BOSAWÁS and Rio San Juan Biospheres<sup>8</sup>

In June 2021, the IRM received a complaint relating to FP146. The complainant(s) alleged that the project would harm indigenous and Afro-descendant communities due to 1) alleged failure to conduct proper consultation, including FPIC; 2) a likelihood of increased environmental degradation and attacks by armed non-indigenous settlers; 3) likely non-compliance or inability of the AE and Executing Entity (EE) to comply with GCF Policies and Procedures and the Conditions placed by the Board of the GCF during approval of this project. The complainant(s) requested confidentiality, and the IRM granted confidentiality in accordance with its TOR and Procedures and Guidelines (PGs) and as a result of its retaliation risk assessment.

The complaint was declared eligible on 21 July 2021, and the case proceeded with the Initial Steps phase, where the IRM explored the options of problem solving and compliance review, with the complainant(s) and other stakeholders. After this phase (extended to 180 days from the original 60 days), parties were unable to reach an agreement on substantive matters relating to the framework and process design of

<sup>6</sup> Independent Redress Mechanism of the GCF (n.d.) C0002 Peru FP001: Building the Resilience of Wetlands in the Province of Datem del Marañón, Peru. Independent Redress Mechanism. <https://irm.greenclimate.fund/case/c0002>

<sup>7</sup> Available at: <https://irm.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/case/report-outcomes-self-initiated-proceedings-c-0002-peru-final-web.pdf>

<sup>8</sup> Independent Redress Mechanism of the GCF (n.d.) C0006 Nicaragua FP146: Bio-CLIMA: Integrated climate action to reduce deforestation and strengthen resilience in BOSAWÁS and Rio San Juan Biospheres Independent Redress Mechanism. <https://irm.greenclimate.fund/case/c0006>

a dialogue before the deadline. In these circumstances, on 17 January 2022, the IRM referred the complaint to compliance review for further processing. The IRM undertook its compliance appraisal process culminating in a compliance appraisal report, published on 24 March 2022.<sup>9</sup>

Subsequently, the IRM commenced a compliance investigation to further assess the three issues set out at the end of the compliance appraisal report. As part of the investigation, the IRM conducted in-person and virtual interviews with relevant parties and stakeholders, including but not limited to, the complainant(s), AE, GCF Secretariat, EE and experts on relevant issues. After concluding its investigation, the IRM submitted the final compliance report, with factual findings and recommendations, to the Board on 31 August 2022. During meetings of the Board held in October 2022 (B.34), March 2023 (B.35), and July 2023 (B.36), the Board considered the IRM Compliance Review Report.<sup>10</sup> On 21 July 2023, the GCF Secretariat released a summary of the final Board decision on C0006, the reasons for the decision and the management response to the report.<sup>11</sup> The Board affirmed the rights of the GCF Secretariat to take actions to address issues of non-compliance as determined in the management response to the IRM Compliance Review Report. In light of the steps taken by the GCF Secretariat, the Board decided, through Board Decision B.36/17, to conclude its consideration of the IRM case. The IRM case is now closed.

### FP039: GCF-EBRD Egypt Renewable Energy Financing Framework<sup>12</sup>



BSDA and the Benban community signing the Problem Solving Agreement, December 2023

In September and November 2022, the IRM received two complaints related to concerns over working conditions and access to a grievance mechanism in the Benban Solar Park, with relevance to FP039. The complainants were formerly employed by the company Health and Safety Home, working on various projects in the Benban Solar Park. The complainants raised several allegations regarding working conditions

<sup>9</sup> Available at: <https://irm.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/case/compliance-appraisal-report-publicationc0006.pdf>

<sup>10</sup> Available at: <https://irm.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/case/en-irm-case-c0006-final-compliance-review-report.pdf>

<sup>11</sup> Available at: <https://www.greenclimate.fund/document/board-decision-compliance-review-report-c-0006-nicaragua-bio-clima-fp146>

<sup>12</sup> Independent Redress Mechanism of the GCF (n.d.) C0009 Egypt FP039: GCF-EBRD Egypt Renewable Energy Financing Framework. <https://irm.greenclimate.fund/case/c0009-egypt>

and labour management issues, including the quality of food provided and differential treatment of employees in terms of salary, benefits and promotions, prevention of access to a grievance mechanism, and retaliation for filing complaints. Complainants have alleged a lack of community development in the village (Benban) where the project is based. After the two complaints were declared eligible,<sup>13</sup> the case entered the initial steps phase, during which all parties indicated their willingness to resolve the issues through a problem solving process. In a joint meeting held on 14 and 15 December 2023, the case reached a partial settlement through a comprehensive Problem Solving Agreement,<sup>14</sup> addressing the community concerns and outlining a path forward for collaboration between BSDA and the Benban community. This partial settlement is now in the monitoring phase. Additional complaints related to employment matters are handled separately, led primarily by the Compliance Advisor Ombudsman (CAO) of the International Finance Corporation (IFC), and will be subject to a distinct set of agreements should the Parties reach agreements through problem solving.

### Pre-cases<sup>15</sup>

The IRM processed 6 pre-cases in 2023. A pre-case is a communication from an external party to the IRM and information received by the IRM that is registered in the Case Management System as a pre-case and may or may not mature into a complaint. The list of the IRM's pre-cases, accessible in the Case Register, contains a summary of all the pre-cases registered in the IRM's Case Management System as of 31 December 2023.

## Overview of Grievances Received and Processed by Accredited Entities with the GCF for the Calendar Year 2022

Annual Performance Reports (APR) are submitted by Accredited Entities and document progress on project activities and objectives. At the IRM's suggestion, the APR queried Accredited Entities on (i) activities undertaken to disseminate information about accredited entity or project-level grievance redress mechanisms as well as the Independent Redress Mechanism of the GCF and (ii) the number, status and description of grievances reported.

In the third year of collecting and analysing this data, the IRM notes that accredited entities reported receiving 2,444 complaints or grievances from a total of 162 submitted APRs. This is a significant increase in reported grievances compared to CY2021, when accredited entities had reported 1,236 complaints or grievances from a total of 130 submitted APRs.

Of the reported complaints or grievances received in CY2022, 78.8% were marked as resolved and the remaining were considered 'active' or 'partially resolved'. Grievances have been recorded by both International Access Entities and Direct Access Entities and cover a wide range of topics, including concerns related to project implementation, distribution of benefits, information disclosure and infrastructure, among others. Grievances have been submitted by various stakeholders such as beneficiaries, community members, employees, project partners, local leaders and indigenous community members.

<sup>13</sup> The eligibility reports are available at: <https://irm.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/case/determination-eligibility-c0009.pdf> and <https://irm.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/case/determination-eligibility-c0009-complainant2.pdf>

<sup>14</sup> C0009 Egypt: Problem Solving Agreement - Community-Related Complaint: <https://irm.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/case/irm-c-0009-egypt-community-complaint-final-agreement-web.pdf>

<sup>15</sup> Independent Redress Mechanism of the GCF (n.d.) Case Register Independent Redress Mechanism. <https://irm.greenclimate.fund/case-register#>

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The IRM further notes that approximately 48% of APRs reported proactive disclosure of the IRM as part of information raising activities related to grievance redress mechanisms. The IRM welcomes the increased reporting on grievances handled by accredited entities, demonstrating practically how entities closest to the project can expand and quickly deliver access to remedy and recourse. The IRM continues to collaborate with grievance redress mechanism colleagues in international and direct access entities, to build capacity and improve the operation of mechanisms at every level.



## ADVISORY

The IRM is mandated to recommend to the Board reconsideration of policies, procedures, guidelines and systems based on lessons learned from the IRM's work and from good international practice and provide guidance to the GCF's readiness and accreditation activities based on best practices.<sup>16</sup>

The IRM also works collaboratively with the other two Independent Units (IUs), the Independent Integrity Unit (IIU) and the Independent Evaluation Unit (IEU), and the Secretariat to provide advice and feedback on a range of policy documents and Administrative Instructions (AIs) for GCF staff. In 2023, the IRM engaged with the Secretariat on the draft Environmental and Social Safeguard (ESS) Standards, the draft Governance Manual, and the re-accreditation of AEs, particularly on the negotiation of clause 13.04<sup>17</sup> of the Accreditation Master Agreement (AMA).



## CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT OF DIRECT ACCESS ENTITY GRIEVANCE MECHANISMS

One of the key functions entrusted to the IRM by the Board in the updated 2017 TOR is that of capacity building for the grievance redress mechanisms (GRMs) of Direct Access Entities (DAEs). The GCF currently has 77 DAEs and all of them are expected to have a grievance redress mechanism at the institutional level. The Board mandate to the IRM is critical in ensuring that GRMs are in place, and appropriately structured, so that accountability exists at all levels and conflicts and disputes at the project level can be addressed properly by DAEs.

Furthermore, the GCF's new 2024-2027 Strategic Plan outlines "Doubling the number of DAEs with approved GCF funding proposals through strengthened climate programming capacity and increasing the allocation of GCF resources through DAEs."<sup>18</sup> This increase in funding for DAEs underscores the need for the IRM to further enhance its capacity-building efforts. This is vital to empower DAEs in effectively handling local-level complaints, emphasising the crucial need for sustained support.

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<sup>16</sup> *Green Climate Fund. (2017) Decision of the Board on updated Terms of Reference of the Independent Redress Mechanism (Revised). Independent Redress Mechanism of the Green Climate Fund. <https://irm.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/bbm-2017-10-decision-board-updated-terms-reference-independent-redress-mechanism-revised.pdf>*

<sup>17</sup> *Clause 13.04 clarifies the roles and responsibilities of the IRM and Accredited Entities in handling GCF-related complaints. For more: <https://www.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/ama-template.pdf>*

<sup>18</sup> *Strategic Plan for the Green Climate Fund 2024-2027: <https://www.greenclimate.fund/about/strategic-plan>*



In July 2023 in Rwanda, the IRM and IIU hosted a joint capacity building and outreach workshop for GRMs and CSOs.<sup>19</sup> The workshop, facilitated by an external consultant, brought together over thirty participants from Eastern and Southern Africa. The participation of civil society organisations provided all participants with the opportunity to exchange ideas and learnings.



<sup>19</sup> Available here: <https://irm.greenclimate.fund/news/irm-and-iiu-collaborate-joint-capacity-building-and-outreach-workshop-rwanda>

LESSONS FROM  
THE 2023  
IRM WORKSHOP



<http://bit.ly/3SBRF7g>

Mutuso Liyayo  
Zimbabwe Environmental  
Association



The IRM also hosted virtual capacity building trainings for the Asia-Pacific region as well as the Latin America and Caribbean region. The IRM’s virtual curriculum, paired with interactive and live discussions, provided participants with the opportunity to fully immerse themselves in the basics of operating and managing a grievance redress mechanism. Participants who successfully completed the online learning modules and who attended all sessions were awarded a certificate from the IRM. The workshops received positive feedback from the participants and were rated as being informative and comprehensive. Having concluded five consecutive trainings between 2019 and 2023, the IRM gradually increased the number of DAEs who have participated in an IRM capacity building training.

Additionally, in November/December 2023, the IRM successfully hosted two separate company-community mediation trainings – one for the Asia-Pacific region and another for the Latin America-Caribbean and African regions – to GRM personnel of the GCF’s DAEs who had already completed the basic GRM training. A total of 21 participants completed the training and received certificates.

Lastly, for the third year in a row, the IRM also provided individualised 1-1 consultancy support to GRMs of DAEs.

IRM CAPACITY BUILDING IN 2023				
Capacity building activity	Format	DAEs trained	Individuals trained	Region
Online Training	Virtual	-	113	Global
Rwanda Capacity Building Training	In-person	11	16	Eastern and Southern Africa
Basic Online Capacity Building Training	Virtual	12	31	Asia-Pacific, Latin America-Caribbean
Company-Community Mediation Training	Virtual	13	21	Asia-Pacific, Latin America-Caribbean, Africa
1-1 Consultancy	Virtual	3	-	Global



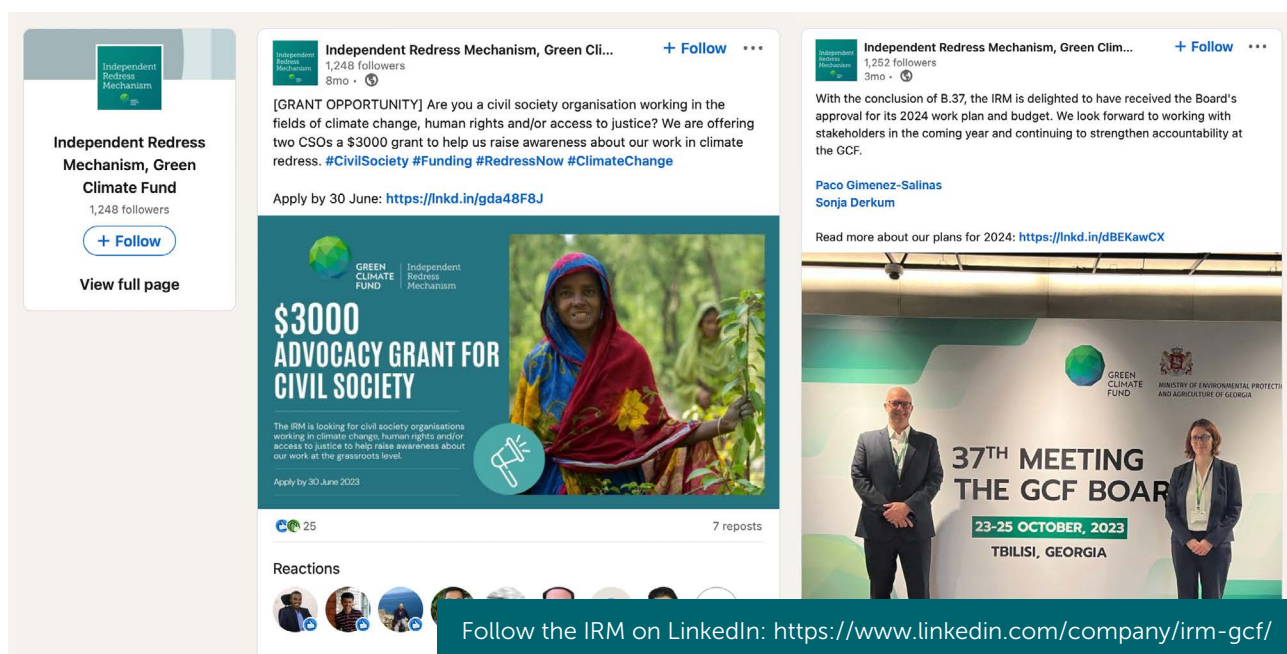
# COMMUNICATIONS AND OUTREACH



Under paragraph 16 and 17 of the Updated Terms of Reference, the IRM has a mandate to provide education and outreach on the IRM’s role and work to stakeholders and the public, including the staff of the GCF.<sup>20</sup>

In 2023, the IRM continued to carry out its 2021-2024 communications strategy. In particular, the IRM expanded its presence on social media, increased its website visits by 32% and continued to grow its podcast.<sup>21</sup>

For outreach, the IRM held a joint capacity building and outreach workshop in Rwanda, which involved 14 CSO representatives. It also organised two virtual webinars and awarded three CSOs with an advocacy grant. These activities were targeted at regional and national CSOs and community leaders.



Follow the IRM on LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/irm-gcf/>

<sup>20</sup> Green Climate Fund. (2017) Decision of the Board on updated Terms of Reference of the Independent Redress Mechanism (Revised). Independent Redress Mechanism of the Green Climate Fund. <https://irm.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/bbm-2017-10-decision-board-updated-terms-reference-independent-redress-mechanism-revised.pdf>

<sup>21</sup> Redress Now, a podcast by the IRM. <https://anchor.fm/redress-now-irm>

## CSO outreach webinars

### Indonesia<sup>22</sup>

In May 2023, the IRM hosted an outreach event in Indonesia, in collaboration with *Aksi! for gender, social and ecological justice*. This hybrid event allowed the IRM to explain its role in addressing complaints around GCF projects to 70+ participants who work on gender-related issues in Indonesia. The event was simultaneously interpreted into Bahasa Indonesian.



### Rwanda<sup>23</sup>

From 25-27 July 2023, the IRM hosted an in-person workshop in Rwanda, bringing together CSO participants from Kenya, Malawi, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda and Zimbabwe. Following the workshop, the CSOs agreed to become the first cohort of the "IRM CSO network."

RECAP FROM  
THE 2023 IRM  
RWANDA  
WORKSHOP



<https://bit.ly/3HM7QbH>



### Global<sup>24</sup>

On 21 November 2023, the IRM hosted an open virtual outreach webinar. The open-format allowed for anyone interested in grievance redress to learn about the work of the IRM and ask questions about how we process complaints.

<sup>22</sup> IRM outreach in Indonesia: <https://irm.greenclimate.fund/news/irm-outreach-civil-society-indonesia>

<sup>23</sup> IRM outreach in Rwanda: <https://irm.greenclimate.fund/news/irm-and-iiu-collaborate-joint-capacity-building-and-outreach-workshop-rwanda>

<sup>24</sup> IRM Global outreach: <https://irm.greenclimate.fund/event/webinar-accountability-action-responding-grievances-gcf>



### IRM CSO Advocacy Grant

To reinforce the IRM's presence at the grassroots level, the IRM offered three CSOs with a \$3000 "IRM CSO Advocacy Grant."<sup>25</sup>

The IRM collaborated with Young Volunteers for the Environment (YVE) in Cameroon, Chemichemi Foundation in Kenya and Twerwaneho Listeners Club (TLC) in Uganda. The CSOs organised workshops and webinars, distributed informational materials, held consultations with local communities, participated in media interviews and produced radio jingles, all targeted at local populations in GCF project areas. The main objectives included raising awareness of climate change and the importance of redress mechanisms to ensure access to justice, transparency and accountability.



Young Volunteers for the Environment Cameroon talking about the IRM and GCF with local communities.

### IRM Board Game – "Road to Redress"

The IRM officially launched its "Road to Redress" board game.<sup>26</sup> The IRM presented its board game throughout the year to internal and external stakeholders, including members of the GCF's Indigenous Peoples Advisory Group (IPAG), CSOs at B.35, GRMs and CSOs at the Rwanda workshop and the IU Heads Meet and Greet.



<sup>25</sup> IRM CSO Advocacy Grant recipients: <https://irm.greenclimate.fund/news/irm-selects-three-csos-increase-awareness-about-grievance-redress-and-accountability>

<sup>26</sup> "Road to Redress" launch: <https://irm.greenclimate.fund/news/road-redress-irm-launches-new-board-game-demystify-complaint-process>



**Other outreach events**

The IRM was also invited to speak at various events throughout the year, including:

**GCF Regional Dialogue with Asia & the Pacific:** On 10 August 2023, the IRM spoke at the GCF Regional Dialogue with Asia and the Pacific about the IRM’s capacity building mandate and the role grievance redress mechanisms play in helping institutions manage risk.

**UNDRR training:** On 24 August 2023, the IRM spoke with civil society representatives from Mongolia during a Technical Workshop on Integrated Planning and Implementation of Disaster Risk Reduction, held by the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR).

**GCF Watch Webinar Series:** On 8 November 2023, the IRM joined GCF Watch for its third edition, focusing on GCF work on the country level and the institution’s Gender and Indigenous People’s policies. IRM Head, Sonja Derkum, served as a panelist alongside Helen Magata of GCF IPAG and representatives from Women’s Environment & Development Organization (WEDO) to explain the IRM’s role in projects and the importance of having IAMs.

**5<sup>th</sup> Uganda Business and Human Rights Symposium:** The IRM participated virtually in the 5<sup>th</sup> Business and Human Rights Symposium on 9 November in Uganda, with Sonja Derkum serving as the keynote speaker. The session explored how IAMs provide access to remedy for beneficiary communities. Other participating panelists included representatives from the African Development Bank, World Bank, Accountability Council, and Uganda Consortium on Corporate Accountability.



**YVE Cameroon webinar:** On 16 November, the IRM participated in a French-speaking panel discussion organised by YVE Cameroon, an IRM CSO Advocacy Grant recipient, and Germanwatch. The session covered the role of IAMs in development projects, specifically looking at the IRM’s role in Africa. The IRM shared insights on IAMs and contributed to a fruitful conversation on ESS compliance in development and access to redress in the GCF.

**Inreach to GCF Staff**

In addition to its external communications, the IRM continued inreach events with the GCF Secretariat. The goal of these events is to foster collaboration, trust and understanding within the GCF and its staff and to encourage institutional learning. The IRM hosted two events in 2023.

**IU Heads Meet and Greet:** Co-hosted with the IIU on 14 November, the IU Heads Meet and Greet was an opportunity for GCF Secretariat colleagues to engage with the new Independent Unit Heads, Sonja Derkum (IRM) and Karen Ernst (IIU), and to learn more about how these Units work and contribute to the GCF’s mission. This interactive and lively session helped to increase awareness of the Independent Units and foster closer ties with the Secretariat.



**Art of Environment and Social Safeguards: Emerging Trends and Good Practices:** The IRM also held a discussion on the Environmental and Social Safeguard (ESS) Standards and human rights in GCF policy on 28 November. The session explored OHCHR's new Benchmarking Study on Development Finance Institution's Safeguard Policies and the panelists gave their perspectives on evolving safeguard standards related to meaningful consultations in the project-programme cycle. Participants included IRM Head Sonja Derkum, Mac Darrow and Margaret G. Wachenfeld from OHCHR, and James Williams, GCF's Sustainability and Inclusion Manager.



# WORKING WITH PARTNERS

## INFORMATION APPEALS PANEL

The Heads of the three Independent Units at the GCF make up the Information Appeals Panel (IAP) established under the GCF's Information Disclosure Policy (IDP) and related Board decisions. Information disclosure requests which are made to the GCF Secretariat under the IDP and which are denied, may be appealed to the IAP. In 2023, the Information Appeals Panel received one information appeal request.

## INDEPENDENT ACCOUNTABILITY MECHANISMS NETWORK

With Board approval, the IRM joined the Independent Accountability Mechanisms Network (IAMnet) in February 2017. IAMnet is a partnership of dedicated practitioners who build institutional capacity on accountability and compliance for improved corporate governance and development impact. There are over 20 accountability mechanisms of international financial institutions and multilateral and bi-lateral development funds, and a significant number of the grievance redress mechanisms of the GCF accredited entities are members of this network. The IRM continues to actively participate in IAMnet, including attending its Annual Meeting and serving on working groups to develop good practices, collaborate on outreach activities, and implement governance reforms. In 2023, the IRM attended the first IAMnet Accountability Talent Training Meeting, which was organised by the Independent Project Accountability Mechanism (IPAM) of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) in London from 21-23 June 2023. The IRM also participated in the IAMnet's 20<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting, which took place between 4-6 October 2023 in London. It was organised by the IAMnet Secretariat (currently held by the World Bank Accountability Mechanism) and hosted by IPAM. In 2024, the IRM will co-host the IAMnet's 21<sup>st</sup> Annual Meeting in the Philippines, jointly with the Accountability Mechanism (AM) of the Asian Development Bank.



IAMnet Annual Meetings, October 2023





## GRAM PARTNERSHIP

In 2019, the IRM formed the Grievance Redress and Accountability Mechanism (GRAM) partnership to offer leadership, a learning and knowledge platform and a meeting space to an increasing number of GRAMs (especially the staff of grievance redress mechanisms of GCF Direct Access Entities) that are emerging in different spheres. In 2023, the IRM hosted a series of three virtual GRAM Partnership webinars, providing increased opportunities for accountability practitioners to share their insights and learnings:

**8<sup>th</sup> GRAM Partnership Webinar:**<sup>27</sup> In March, the IRM convened the eighth GRAM Webinar, on the topic “Flexible sequencing for dispute resolution and compliance review,” looking at the strengths and weaknesses of using parallel processing or hybrid models when managing complaints.

**9<sup>th</sup> GRAM Partnership Webinar:**<sup>28</sup> In July, the Independent Complaint Mechanism of the International Climate Initiative (IKI ICM) hosted the ninth GRAM webinar on the topic “Worker rights and grievance redress mechanisms,” focusing on worker and labour rights in grievance redress mechanisms, accountability in international financial institutions (IFIs), as well as pathways to redress for aggrieved workers.

**10<sup>th</sup> GRAM Partnership Webinar:**<sup>29</sup> In October, the OECD Center for Responsible Business Conduct hosted the tenth GRAM webinar on the “OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises on Responsible Business Conduct,” focusing on the updates to the national contact points and access to remedy.

<sup>27</sup> 8th GRAM Partnership Webinar: <https://irm.greenclimate.fund/news/flexible-sequencing-dispute-resolution-and-compliance-review-gram-partnership-webinar-irm>

<sup>28</sup> 9th GRAM Partnership Webinar: <https://irm.greenclimate.fund/news/discussion-worker-and-labour-rights-context-grievance-redress-mechanisms-9th-gram-partnership>

<sup>29</sup> 10th GRAM Partnership Webinar: <https://irm.greenclimate.fund/news/advancing-accountability-and-equitable-outcomes-insights-10th-gram-webinar-latest-oecd>

# THE FUTURE: LOOKING AHEAD TO 2024

For the IRM, 2023 was a significant year with the arrival of a new IRM Head. In 2024, as the IRM ushers in a new chapter, its commitment remains unwavering. It will persist in addressing grievances, ensuring fairness and efficacy, and fostering transparency in offering recourse to affected individuals. As a major component of GCF's accountability framework, it will continue to play a key role in enhancing the performance of GCF's climate funding.

The IRM remains prepared to tackle the upcoming challenges tied to managing complaints and reconsideration requests, along with fulfilling its other responsibilities. This work will rely on the unwavering support of the Board, the GCF Secretariat, AEs and their GRMs, as well as CSOs. Together, this collaborative effort ensures the IRM is well-equipped for whatever lies ahead.



**Handling cases:** The increase in GCF projects underscores the crucial role of the IRM in effectively handling potential future cases. In 2023, the IRM closed cases related to FP001 Peru and FP146 Nicaragua. The signing of a Problem Solving Agreement by parties in FP039 Egypt in December 2023 will require the IRM to monitor the agreed actions throughout 2024. The IRM stands ready to receive any new complaints and/or reconsideration requests in 2024.



**Capacity building:** The IRM has successfully trained a majority of DAEs on the basics of setting up and operating a grievance redress mechanism. In 2024, the IRM will conduct a three-week virtual capacity-building workshop for DAE personnel based in Asia and the Pacific and Latin America and the Caribbean. The IRM will also continue to offer its training for DAEs in company-community mediation, which will be added to the current curricula and contents of the IRM trainings. For the second year in a row, the IRM will host an in-person capacity building training for GRMs of DAEs. This workshop will take place in Morocco and will be offered to representatives in Northern and Western Africa.



**Outreach:** To expand its accessibility amongst relevant stakeholders in 2024, the IRM will conduct virtual outreach events, organise one in-person outreach event in Morocco and participate in a joint IAMnet outreach event in the Philippines. The IRM will continue to work with civil society in reaching grassroots communities and expand its "IRM CSO network." The IRM will further leverage its "Road to Redress" board game to familiarise stakeholders with the IRM's case handling process.



**Lessons learned:** The IRM will continue to work collaboratively with the other two Independent Units and the Secretariat to provide advice and feedback on a range of policy documents. The IRM will also continue to push for greater transparency in relation to project information and continue to model best practices in information disclosure. Should the Board decide to evaluate the IRM's procedures, operations and activities through a five year-review, the IRM will remain prepared to assist in the process.





# APPENDIX 1

## BOARD APPROVED WORK PLAN AND BUDGET FOR 2024

Please visit this link: <https://www.greenclimate.fund/document/gcf-b37-19>

# APPENDIX 2

## INDEPENDENT REDRESS MECHANISM BUDGET 2023

The IRM's 2023 budget execution will be available in an annex document on the IRM website: <https://irm.greenclimate.fund/resources/publications-documents>

# APPENDIX 3

## IRM TEAM CARBON FOOTPRINT

The GCF reports emissions stemming from both official travel and non-travel related matters to the Greening the Blue (GtB) initiative. These emissions are subsequently offset through the purchase of carbon credits. Given the integration of the IRM into this reporting framework, the IRM has ceased independent reporting of its carbon emissions arising from air travel.

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# APPENDIX 4

## IRM TEAM PROFILES



### **SONJA DERKUM**

HEAD OF UNIT (AUGUST – PRESENT)

Sonja Derkum is the Head of the GCF's Independent Redress Mechanism. She was previously Head of the Complaints Mechanism (CM) for the European Investment Bank Group (EIB Group) for six years where she successfully managed the EIB's independent public accountability function. She was with the EIB in Luxembourg in different control and accountability functions since 2003. In 2011, she spent a year supporting the Office of Internal Audit (OIA) at the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Sonja is passionate about topics around good governance and accountability and is a strong advocate for independent grievance mechanisms as a necessity to give a voice to affected communities.



### **IBRAHIM PAM**

HEAD OF UNIT A.I. (SEPTEMBER 2022 – MARCH 2023)

Ibrahim Pam was the ad interim (a.i.) Head of the IRM from September 2022 to March 2023. He was previously Head of the GCF Independent Integrity Unit (IIU), an Analyst and Investigator in the Office of the Prosecutor at the International Criminal Court (ICC) and Chief Investigator in the Integrity and Anti-Corruption Department of the African Development Bank (AfDB). Most recently, he has been the chair of the Ad Hoc External Panel on Workplace Culture for the Office of the Prosecutor of the ICC and is a Member of the Independent External Oversight Advisory Committee of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS). Ibrahim holds a Bachelor of Laws from the University of Jos and a Master in Criminal Justice Policy from the London School of Economics and Political Science.



### **PACO GIMENEZ-SALINAS**

**HEAD OF UNIT A.I. (APRIL - AUGUST)**

**COMPLIANCE AND DISPUTE RESOLUTION SPECIALIST**

Paco Gimenez-Salinas was the ad interim (a.i.) Head of the IRM from April to August 2023. He is currently the IRM's Compliance and Dispute Resolution Specialist. Paco Gimenez-Salinas, a lawyer by profession, is specialised in alternative dispute resolution with a focus on mediation. He has participated in cases handled by the Compliance Advisor Ombudsman (IFC) as an external facilitator, as well as in cases managed by the Independent Consultation and Investigation Mechanism (IADB) in the role of its consultation phase coordinator. In México, he spent several years working in the field of community mediation. Amongst other experiences, he has participated in the design and facilitation of several major multi-party dialogues around issues such as air pollution reduction strategies, the impacts of dams and windmill fields, the strengthening of conflict resolution systems of land tenure related conflicts, etc. Paco has undertaken post-graduate studies in the fields of conflict resolution at the University of Barcelona, political analysis at the Mexican University CIDE and community-company mediation at the University of Cape Town.



### **PREKSHA KRISHNA KUMAR**

**REGISTRAR AND CASE OFFICER**

Preksha Krishna Kumar is a researcher with wide-ranging experience relating to accountability and redress mechanisms. She previously worked for an international human rights advocacy organization based in New York, supporting dozens of frontline communities in their efforts to access information and redress. Over the course of her career, Preksha has been immersed in the policies, practices and impacts of development finance institutions – working with diverse stakeholders in countries such as India, Colombia, Malawi and Kenya. Preksha holds a B.A. from Sarah Lawrence College, New York, with a focus on Development Economics and Spanish Literature.



**PETER CARLSON**  
COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER

Peter Carlson is the IRM’s Communication Officer with significant communications experience in education and international development. Prior to joining the IRM, Peter was part of the communications team at the Global Partnership for Education, focusing on digital campaigns and media as well as the OECD, managing communications for the Partnership in Statistics for Development in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (PARIS21) and the Environment Directorate. He has also worked at HEC Paris business school, UNESCO and African Artists for Development. Peter holds Bachelor’s degrees in Marketing and French from Ohio State University and a Master’s degree in International Affairs from Sciences Po Paris.



**SUE KYUNG HWANG**  
DISPUTE RESOLUTION CASE ASSOCIATE

After studying International Affairs and Environmental Studies at the George Washington University, Sue Kyung Hwang pursued her master’s degree in Water Cooperation and Diplomacy, a joint programme held at the University for Peace (Costa Rica), IHE Delft Institute for Water Education (Netherlands), and Oregon State University (U.S.), to learn how different stakeholders in riparian countries co-manage their shared water resources. Her past work experiences involve preparing a database of livestock carbon emissions and using it to educate the public for climate action in a local community in Costa Rica. Sue Kyung served as the IRM’s intern in 2020 and the IRM’s Team Assistant from April 2021 to October 2023. She was appointed as the Dispute Resolution Case Associate in October 2023.





**CHARLENE ANGELA SARDOMA**  
INTERN (JANUARY – MARCH)

Charlene Angela Sardoma joined the IRM team as an intern after earning her master’s degree in Global Affairs and Policy from Yonsei University. Developing an interest in climate change adaptation, Charlene was motivated to switch careers from working in the advertising industry as a digital analyst, to the development sector. Before entering graduate school, Charlene gained experience liaising between international funding agencies and project affected people regarding social and environmental safeguards. Charlene is also passionate about research on economic and environmental migration, voluntary or involuntary.



**JANNEKE KIELMAN**  
INTERN (FEBRUARY – AUGUST)

Janneke Kielman obtained a double BA in law and political philosophy from the Erasmus University Rotterdam. As an avid hiker and backpacker from a young age, her growing interest in solutions to environmental threats was only natural. This passion prompted her to enrol in the LLM in Public International law at the Geneva Graduate Institute, where she followed the specialisation track in international environmental law and governance. Before joining the IRM, she was an intern at the UN’s International Law Commission. This experience fueled her desire to work in the field of international law and cooperation.



## **ROXANNE AMINOU**

**INTERN (MARCH – SEPTEMBER)**

After graduating with a Master’s degree in International Relations from Sciences Po Aix, and with two years of experience in various NGOs in London, Paris, Fort-de-France and Lyon, Roxanne aimed to gain experience in an international organization. Interested by the non-profit and international cooperation sector, she already had some experience living in Korea, as she spent a semester of her Bachelor’s degree studying at Konkuk University, in 2018. She is passionate about defending the rights of minorities and combatting inequalities, especially ones related to gender. This, and a general sense of commitment towards social and climate justice, led her to apply for the position of intern within the IRM.



## **VAISHNAVI PALLAPOTHU**

**INTERN (JULY – DECEMBER)**

Vaishnavi Pallapothu recently graduated from SOAS, University of London with an MA in International Studies and Diplomacy. She is passionate about foreign policy dynamics in the Indian and South Asian context, as it is often an underrepresented geography in global affairs. She is also very interested in the potential for feminist foreign policy to transform the field of international relations. Vaishnavi has experience in online community building and engagement through her work with World Pulse. She has worked on several gender-based international relations research projects. Her previous experience includes working with think-tanks and NGOs in India and the UK, including SCRAP Weapons, the Gender Security Project, the Chennai Centre for China Studies and the Red Elephant Foundation. The confluence of her previous experiences and her education led her to develop an interest in learning how policies translate and affect people on the ground, leading her to intern at the IRM.



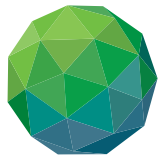
**NICHOLAS KEMBLE**  
INTERN (JULY – DECEMBER)

Nicholas Kemble holds degrees from the University of Wisconsin-Madison and the London School of Economics (LSE). With a keen interest in diplomacy and international politics, he gained valuable experience interning in the US Congress, focusing on the House Foreign Affairs Committee. Subsequently, Nicholas moved to Amman, Jordan, where he completed an internship at the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees (UNRWA). During his time there, he actively contributed to the agency's operations, supporting both policy and supply chain divisions. Drawing from his diverse experiences in international and humanitarian work, he aspires to continue to promote impactful and ethical projects around the world in his future career.



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