



**GREEN
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Report on the activities of the Independent Redress Mechanism

Summary

This report provides an update on the progress made with regard to the activities of the Independent Redress Mechanism (IRM). The reporting period is from 1 June 2019 to 9 October 2019. The document summarizes the activities of the IRM based on the work plan and budget of the IRM for 2019 adopted by the Board at its twenty-first meeting.

I. Introduction

1.1 Background

1. The Independent Redress Mechanism (IRM) is mandated in paragraph 69 of the GCF's Governing Instrument. This paragraph states that "(t)he Board will establish an independent redress mechanism that will report to the Board. The mechanism will receive complaints related to the operation of the Fund and will evaluate and make recommendations." The IRM performs a key function within the GCF's accountability mechanisms. The IRM reports directly to the Board and is subject to the decisions of the Board. It is independent of the Secretariat of the GCF.

2. The report on the activities of the IRM provides an update on the progress made by the IRM. The report covers key priority initiatives identified in the Work Plan of the IRM for 2019, approved by the Board at B.21.¹ The reporting period is from 1 June 2019 to 9 October 2019.

3. The work plan of the IRM identified the following overarching goals to help guide the work of the IRM for 2019:

- (a) Operating the IRM (2019); and
- (b) Processing grievances and complaints (including those that are self-initiated), and requests for reconsideration of funding decisions.

II. Operating the IRM

2.1 Progress on operating the IRM

4. **The implementation of the work plan and budget:** The terms of reference (TOR) of the IRM requires it to consult with the Ethics and Audit Committee (EAC) on the implementation of its work plan, as appropriate. As decided by the EAC, the IRM submits quarterly reports to the EAC regarding its work and the EAC provides valuable feedback.

5. **Staffing the IRM:** The IRM is currently staffed with two full time staff members, the Head of the IRM, and the Registrar. As previously reported, the IRM's Compliance and Dispute Resolution Specialist (CDRS) resigned with effect from 19 July 2019. Her replacement has been recruited and will take up the position in Songdo in November 2019. In July, the IRM had a rotation of interns, with the two interns who commenced in January completing their 6-month contract, and two new interns commencing their 6-month contract for the second half of the year.

6. **Options for Board consideration of IRM reports:** While adopting the Procedures and Guidelines (PGs) of the IRM at B.22 in February 2019 the Board requested that the Head of the IRM, in consultation with the EAC, consider options to facilitate the Board's consideration of reports from the IRM containing its findings and recommendations relating to requests for reconsideration and grievances or complaints. The Board requested the IRM to prepare appropriate guidelines for consideration by the Board by its twenty-fourth meeting. The IRM has been developing such a guideline for consideration by the EAC. The IRM has been advised by the Co-Chairs that, given the accumulation of items for the Board's consideration at B.24, this item will be deferred to 2020. The IRM has nevertheless continued to develop this guideline in preparation for B.25 and has already consulted with the Office of General Counsel (OGC) on a draft.

¹ Decision B.21/10

7. **Supporting Operating Procedures (SOPs) for the IRM:** The SOPs are being piloted and tested in daily use before they are fine-tuned, finalised and issued. The TOR, PGs and SOPs together form the mandate, legal framework and procedural content of the IRM's institutional role and set down the manner in which it will conduct its business. The SOPs were revised to bring them into harmony with the Board approved PGs and in keeping with the experience gained in implementing them so far. The IRM has also sought input from OGC in relation to each module. OGC has provided feedback, to which the IRM has responded. The IRM and OGC will discuss the few remaining items before finalizing this current version of the SOPs.

2.2 Communications strategy

8. Outreach activities:

- (a) **Civil Society Outreach:** In June 2019, the IRM participated in the IAMnet Annual Meeting in Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire, which included a civil society organisation forum with participants from the West African region. In August, the IRM organised a side meeting with civil society organisations participating in the GCF's Global Programming Conference in Songdo. Following discussions at this meeting with TEBTEBBA (Indigenous Peoples' International Centre for Policy Research and Education), the IRM has been invited to participate in a workshop to be held in Bangkok, Thailand in late October to discuss issues concerning the implementation of the GCF's Indigenous Peoples' Policy. In September, the IRM also took part in an outreach event led by the World Bank's Inspection Panel in Dhaka, Bangladesh. This outreach event targeted civil society organisations in the South Asia region, and included representatives from Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, The Maldives, Nepal, and Sri Lanka. The IRM also plans to participate in an outreach event in late November in Brazil, which is also being led by the World Bank's Inspection Panel.
- (b) **Communications materials:** In July, the IRM published its first triennial newsletter "Redress Counts".² The next issue will be published in November. The IRM plans to produce two short videos to raise awareness about the work of the complaints function of the IRM and the need for grievance redress mechanisms. The IRM continues to publish its brochure in other languages, including English, Spanish, French, Russian, Arabic, and Bengali.
- (c) **In-reach:** Dedicated half-day workshops were held for the Office of Portfolio Management (OPM) in June, and the Division of Country Programming (DCP) in September 2019. These workshops were the third and fourth such workshops hosted by the IRM and the Environmental and Social Safeguards (ESS) team for GCF staff, aimed at strengthening the GCF's understanding of ESS issues, conflict prevention, and the benefits of having a grievance mechanism. In these workshops, staff also receive training on how to interact with the IRM when complaints and requests for reconsideration are received.
- (d) **Stakeholder engagement survey:** In June 2019, the IRM sent out a general survey to various stakeholders who have been involved in the IRM's activities (i.e. complainants, requesters, civil society representatives, AEs, GCF Secretariat staff, etc.). The purpose of the survey was to evaluate the IRM's performance and identify areas that may need improvement. In July the IRM tallied the results and set about implementing changes to address the feedback received. While the bulk of the feedback received was very positive, with the IRM scoring an average score of 4 out of 5 in each category (5 being exceptional), a few challenges from a stakeholder perspective were identified. One of the

² Available at: <https://irm.greenclimate.fund/documents/1061332/1197271/IRM+Newsletter/75b1cb41-24f2-77de-70b7-664e1858ccd4>

initiatives implemented to address feedback include the IRM's development of a simplified version of its PGs for internal use, in response to a comment made by a GCF Secretariat staff member that a more succinct version of the IRM's PGs should be made available to clarify the process for interaction between the IRM and the GCF Secretariat.

2.3 Providing advice

9. The IRM is developing two advisory reports for the Board based on lessons learned and international good practice, in accordance with paragraph 16 of its TOR. The first note deals with the prevention of sexual exploitation, harassment and abuse (SEAH) in GCF funded projects, and contains learnings and recommendations based on complaints which were filed with the Inspection Panel of the World Bank Group. The draft report has been circulated to the Secretariat and after a formal Secretariat response, will be presented to the EAC for discussion, before being submitted to the Board.

10. A second advisory report was prepared in relation to paragraph 13 of the template accreditation master agreement and accountability gaps. The draft report was circulated to OGC and an informal response was received. The IRM is now in discussions with OGC on the best way forward with this report.

2.4 Capacity building of direct access entities' grievance mechanisms

11. As part of its mandate to increase the capacity of direct access entities and their grievance mechanisms, the IRM is developing learning modules for use in on-line and in-person training. The IRM appointed an experienced and qualified consultancy firm to assist with the preparation of these materials, and to facilitate the in-person training.

12. The in-person training took place in Songdo over three days – Monday, 7 October to Wednesday, 9 October 2019. The IRM sponsored the participation of 14 representatives from the grievance redress mechanisms (GRMs) of GCF direct access entities (DAEs). In addition to sponsored participants, another 4 DAE and AE representatives attended as self-sponsored participants, along with the Vice Chair of the GCF's Accreditation Panel, and 4 members from the GCF's ESS team.

13. The outcomes of this training workshop included equipping participants with an understanding of:

- (a) The rationale for establishing GRMs;
- (b) Core principles for establishing and operating a successful GRM;
- (c) How to set up and customize a GRM;
- (d) How to practically operate a GRM from intake through resolution, documentation, and learning/evaluation;
- (e) The role of project-level GRMs, and determining when a project-level GRM is needed; and
- (f) How to strengthen and oversee project-level GRMs.

14. As the number of AEs with grievance mechanisms grows, the IRM is also considering ways in which it can provide leadership to a community of second-generation accountability and grievance redress practitioners. In this context, the IRM is planning to host a capacity development workshop of accountability practitioners next year, particularly targeting direct access entities in accordance with the IRM's mandate. As part of providing leadership to this growing community, the IRM is considering publishing good practice notes on 3-5 key areas of

the accountability practice over the next year. The IRM has captured these ideas in a concept note proposing the establishment of a Grievance Redress and Accountability Mechanisms (GRAM) partnership and is reaching out to other well-established accountability and redress mechanisms and other stakeholders that may be interested in collaborating. The IRM has already received in principle support from a number of such stakeholders.

2.5 Case management system (CMS)

15. Since the previous report to the Board, the IRM's new CMS has gone live. The CMS will allow the IRM to track its cases from inception to closure and collect valuable data for its advisory reports to the Board.

2.6 Independent Accountability Mechanisms Network (IAMnet)

16. The IRM has continued to be active within the IAMnet community. The IRM is a member of the Governance Committee of the IAMnet, which is working on governance reforms for the network. IRM staff are also contributing to three IAMnet good practice notes on dispute resolution; advisory functions; and on evidentiary and interpretation standards. As a member of IAMnet, the IRM has been engaging with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner on Human Rights (OHCHR) on its Accountability and Remedy Project. In late October, the IRM will be participating in the Seoul Business and Human Rights Event co-organised by the OHCHR, as a panellist on a session which will consider remedies through non-State-based grievance mechanisms.

III. Processing complaints and reconsideration requests

3.1 Complaints and requests for reconsideration of funding decisions

17. The IRM is fully operational and able to process (a) complaints from persons adversely affected by GCF funded projects or programmes, and (b) requests from developing countries for reconsideration of funding denied by the Board.

18. During the period under review the IRM has not received any complaints or reconsideration requests.

19. As previously reported, the IRM concluded a preliminary inquiry into funded project number FP001, Peru, earlier this year. The IRM found that there was prima facie evidence that the conditions set out in para 12 of the IRM's TORs for initiating an investigation were met but did not initiate proceedings under that paragraph in view of an undertaking given by the Secretariat on 1 May 2019 to implement several remedial actions. These remedial actions have now commenced, and the IRM is monitoring implementation. The Secretariat requested three extensions of time which were granted by the IRM. The IRM's decisions on requests for extensions are published on its website: <https://irm.greenclimate.fund/case-register>. Out of the four undertakings provided, two have now been completed – the issuance of guidance on Free Prior Informed Consent (FPIC) requirements, and on risk categorization for projects involving Indigenous Peoples.

IV. Budget utilization for the reporting period

20. The utilization of the 2019 budget until 30 September 2019 is shown below.

Independent Redress Mechanism Unit Budget Utilization as of 30 September 2019 (in USD)

Items	2019 budget	Actual	Commitment	Sub-total	%
Staff Costs					
Full-time Staff	728,680	505,495	3,000	508,495	70%
Consultants & Interns	121,000	46,055	66,425	112,480	93%
Sub-total	849,680	551,550	69,425	620,975	73%
Travel					
General	95,140	40,819	8,564	49,384	52%
Travel associated with complaints/request	68,850	-	-	-	0%
Sub-total	163,990	40,819	8,564	49,384	30%
Contractual services					
Contractual services	147,550	27,750	44,700	72,450	49%
TOTAL	1,161,220	620,119	122,689	742,808	64%

Notes

- Staff costs includes staff salaries, benefits (including appointment benefits), staff training and development costs
- Consultants costs include consultants' fees and benefits
- Consultant and interns' commitments reflect balances on contracts authorized for interns and consultants
- Travel commitments are authorized travel requests as at September 30, 2019, less actual costs settled as at the same date