



NOTIFICATION

Date: **13 March 2021**
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GCF statement on governance, workplace culture and management

GCF is aware of an article that has been published making allegations related to the governance, organisational culture and management of the Fund. As a young organisation the GCF is open to critical views and is committed to continuously improving its performance and work environment to scale up climate action in developing countries. This statement aims to provide further information on these related issues.

GCF's governance arrangements are grounded in the principles of inclusion, with equal representation of developing and developed countries, and country ownership. GCF has formulated a strong set of policies and practices to support developing countries design and implement high impact climate project and programmes. All projects must comply with GCF's policies, including world-leading [environmental and social safeguards](#), [gender](#) and [indigenous people policies](#), and are subject to rigorous review and appraisal before going to the Board for consideration. The Board's final determination on the example given in the article demonstrates the robustness of this system. GCF continues to strengthen its policies and procedures related to the project cycle, which have been documented in our [Programming Manual](#). Further details on our overall approach to bring value to developing countries' efforts to raise and realize their climate ambitions, including through a diverse set of modalities and financing instruments, may be found [here](#).

GCF has a zero tolerance to any forms of abuse and discrimination, and is committed to ensuring a safe workplace, based upon our core values of respect, responsiveness, trust, innovation, and commitment to climate action. There are numerous channels for staff to raise their concerns and ensure that we live up to these values. All allegations of misconduct must be reported to the GCF's [Independent Integrity Unit \(IIU\)](#). The IIU investigates such allegations in line with GCF's policies, including policies on [Prohibited Practices](#) and the [Protection of Whistleblowers](#), as well as in line with international best practices. The Secretariat has also taken action to establish and improve its internal grievance resolution system, notably by offering conflict resolution and mediation services through the Ombuds, Senior Ethics Advisor, Staff Council, mediators and Appeals Committee.

Whilst the overall complaint rate in GCF is within the range of similar institutions, there has been an unusual rate of alleged misconduct being investigated. A key reason is that in the early years of GCF workplace disputes among personnel and between management and personnel were often referred to the IIU for investigation in the absence of internal dispute resolution mechanisms. As a result of the actions taken to ensure that there are informal channels to resolve workplace disputes in a timely and fair manner, the number of cases opened by IIU dropped from 24 in 2019 to 17 in 2020. From 2018 to 2020, there have been three cases of substantiated misconduct. In all instances immediate action was taken against the perpetrators.

The article refers to a recent case where misconduct by a former staff member was substantiated for violation of the GCF Staff Rules of Conduct and the Prohibited Practices Policy. Allegations of retaliation by the former staff member were not substantiated by IIU and he chose to resign before the completion of the investigation. The investigation report with all evidentiary findings from IIU have been made available to him.

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In terms of management, GCF undertakes regular staff surveys to improve employee engagement, respond to feedback, and contribute to making GCF a safe and respectful place to work. Our latest survey continues to show the critical need to improve levels of confidence in our Senior Management Team. We are having open and honest conversations with staff about the impact of past initiatives and how to better address their concerns.

2020 brought unprecedented challenges for the world due to COVID-19. It increased the workload and placed a heavy burden on staff, as we strove to support developing countries' climate ambition during the pandemic. With its partners, GCF approved 37 projects with a total value of almost USD 5 billion to foster a low-emission climate resilient recovery in developing countries in 2020. It is thanks to our staff's commitment that the GCF was able to deliver on its mandate.

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