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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 Tuesday, 6 February 2018 to Thursday, 31 May 2018. The document summarizes the activities of the IRM based on the work plan and budget of the IRM adopted by the Board at its nineteenth 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 Independent Redress Mechanism (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 Independent Redress Mechanism (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, approved by the Board at B.19.¹ The reporting period is from Tuesday, 06 February 2018 to Thursday, 31 May 2018.

3. The work plan of the IRM identified the following three overarching goals to help guide the work of the IRM for 2018:

4. Operate the IRM;
- (a) Develop Procedures and Guidelines; and
- (b) Process Complaints and Reconsideration Requests.

II. Operating the IRM

2.1 Progress on operating the IRM

5. **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, quarterly reports were submitted by the IRM to the EAC regarding its work and the EAC provided valuable feedback.

6. **Staffing the IRM:** The IRM is now fully staffed with three full time staff members, the Head of the IRM (appointed by the Board), a Compliance and Dispute Resolution Specialist and a Team Assistant. No further additions to staffing are envisaged in 2018. Two Advisors were contracted as limited term consultants in 2017 and 2018 to support the development of the IRM's procedures and guidelines and internal operating procedures. The IRM also recruited a research intern and a communications intern for a period of six months.

7. **Supporting operating procedures for the IRM:** The IRM has developed and is piloting draft supporting operating procedures (SOPs), to efficiently and effectively implement the TOR and the Procedures and Guidelines of the IRM when adopted by the Board (see section III 3.1 below).

2.2 Communications strategy

8. Outreach activities:
 - (a) **Civil society outreach:** The IRM held its first civil society outreach event in Ulaan Bataar, Mongolia on March 12-13, 2018: The event was hosted with three other

¹ Decision B.19/19.

international accountability mechanisms and gathered 45 participants from Mongolia and the Central Asian region including Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. Sessions were held on access to accountability mechanisms, complaint handling process, and compliance and problem solving. Participants highlighted on several occasions the need for institutional and project information to be made accessible at the local level and in local languages.

- (b) **Communications materials:** The IRM developed materials that would allow its users access to user-friendly information on the IRM. These include a brochure for complainants in Arabic, English, French, Spanish, Mongolian and Vietnamese; template forms for making a request for reconsideration; and complaints, and information sheets on the request for reconsideration and complaint processes.
- (c) **IRM participation in GCF Structured Dialogues:** The IRM participated in two Structured Dialogues to provide information to AEs, NDAs and AOs on accountability, the IRM's mandate and work. An IRM plenary session was conducted at the Africa Structured Dialogue held in Mali on 3-6 April 2018. An IRM plenary session and joint parallel session with the Independent Integrity Unit (IIU) were conducted at the Asia Structured Dialogue in Vietnam on 17-20 April 2018, and led to rich exchanges with GCF stakeholders.
- (d) **Indigenous peoples outreach:** In collaboration with the Environmental and Social team of the Secretariat, a presentation on the IRM and how it relates to GCF's Indigenous Peoples policy and safeguards was featured in the GCF's intervention at the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII) held in New York on 16-27 April 2018.
- (e) **Web page of the IRM:** The interim webpage of the IRM may be accessed at <http://www.greenclimate.fund/independent-redress-mechanism>. A more comprehensive version of the IRM's microsite is being developed with the support of the Secretariat's Communications department. The new version will provide the IRM with unrestricted back end control of the content and will allow for more detailed reporting on the IRM's work as well as the possibility of submitting requests for reconsideration and complaints through online web forms. The IRM microsite is expected to be launched soon, and will be revised and upgraded in line with the IRM's communications strategy and as the IRM's needs evolve.

2.3 Providing advice

9. The IRM has continued to provide the Secretariat with advice on clauses in Accreditation Master Agreements relating to grievance handling and redress mechanisms. The IRM has also provided advice to the Accreditation Panel on the accreditation process.

2.4 Capacity Building of Direct Access Entities' Grievance Mechanisms

10. In its first capacity building exercise aimed at direct access entities and their grievance mechanisms, the IRM led two sessions at GCF's Empowering Direct Access Entities Workshop held in Songdo on Tuesday, 29 May to Friday, 1 June 2018. The IRM focused on highlighting the importance and value of grievance mechanisms for the 84 participants of the workshop, and held an in-depth session on the principles that make for a robust redress mechanism, and practical steps and tools on how to establish and run a grievance redress mechanism that can provide low cost, fast and just redress. The sessions benefitted from the participation of two direct access entities as panellists to share their experiences, and drew on the insights and priorities that resulted from the desk research and survey the IRM conducted last year. The

IRM will continue to develop more formal learning and guidance modules on grievance redress mechanisms and look for opportunities to roll this out to direct access entities on the ground.

11. Additionally, the IRM met with the Country Programming Division of the Secretariat to explore collaboration on capacity development for the redress mechanisms of direct access entities and on providing advice and best practices to the accreditation process.

2.5 Case management system (CMS)

12. A custom-built Case Management System (CMS) was provided for in the IRM Workplan and Budget that was approved by the Board at B.19. The CMS will enable the IRM to efficiently, effectively and timely manage complaints and reconsideration requests and analyse data relating to such cases so as to provide advice to the GCF Secretariat and the grievance mechanism of direct access entities based on the IRM's work. The IRM, together with the ICT Department of the GCF Secretariat is developing the CMS for the IRM. A vendor is being competitively chosen based on defined user requirements and technical evaluations, and the procurement process is currently underway. Design and implementation of the CMS is expected to take 4 months.

2.6 Independent Accountability Mechanisms Network (IAMnet)

13. The IRM has continued to be active within the IAMnet community. It is co-leading a working group on collaboration among accountability mechanisms. This working group is documenting case handling arrangements made between accountability mechanisms in the context of parallel complaints and is conducting a survey of such mechanisms to get a better understanding of the challenges and benefits of such collaboration.

14. **Cooperation with AEs' redress mechanisms:** Since the last report, the IRM has consulted with the Ethics and Audit Committee and on its advice discontinued efforts to enter into general memorandums of understanding with all redress mechanisms of accredited entities. Instead, the IRM will pursue making case handling arrangements, if and when a parallel case is filed with the IRM and a redress mechanism of an accredited entity.

III. Developing Procedures and Guidelines

3.1 Procedures and Guidelines of the IRM

15. The Board, by decision B.13/24, requested the Head of the IRM to prepare, with the support of the Secretariat, for consideration by the Board, procedures and guidelines for the IRM (decision B.06/09, annex V, para. 14 (document GCF/B.06/18, annex V, para. 14)) "in close consultation with similar or equivalent mechanisms of accredited entities and other stakeholders". The IRM is giving effect to this decision.

16. Draft Procedures and Guidelines were presented to the EAC in mid-August 2017 for its preliminary consideration. The EAC approved the draft subject to revisions proposed by it in April 2018. The IRM then opened the draft for public consultation on Tuesday, 17 April 2018, with a deadline for comments set for Friday, 15 June 2018. The IRM conducted six webinars in May 2018 of an hour's duration each for NDAs and accredited entities to respond to questions on the draft and to seek feedback. Five webinars were also held for Board members, Alternate Board members and accredited observers in May 2018. Additionally, three informal consultations with GCF stakeholders and civil society are planned in early June 2018 providing yet another opportunity for any GCF stakeholder to participate and provide feedback. These

informal consultations will be held under the auspices of accredited observers. Revisions will be made to the draft based on these consultations and submitted to the EAC for finalization before being presented to the Board for adoption. The IRM expects the draft Procedures and Guidelines of the IRM to be presented to the Board at B.21 in October 2018.

IV. Processing Complaints and Reconsideration Requests

4.1 Complaints and requests for reconsideration of funding decisions

17. The IRM is now 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 stated in the last activity report, the IRM was evaluating the eligibility of a request for reconsideration of a denied funding proposal, number FP057 filed by the NDA of Argentina. However, before the IRM could decide on the question of eligibility, on Thursday, 22 March 2018, the IRM received written notification from the NDA that it was formally withdrawing its request for reconsideration of its funding proposal, opting instead to make adjustments to the project to present to the GCF Board. After confirming the decision with the NDA of Argentina on Thursday, 22 March 2018, the IRM suspended its eligibility process and closed the case. In accordance with interim procedures established by the Board, the IRM informed the Co-Chairs of this decision and requested them to inform the Board.

V. Budget utilization for the reporting period

20. The utilization of the 2018 budget till 30 April 2018 is shown below:

Items	2018 budget	Actual	Commitment	Sub-total	%
Salaries					
Staff	574,824	183,077	-	183,077	32%
Consultants	133,996	3,742	14,500	18,242	14%
Sub-total	708,820	186,819	14,500	201,319	28%
Travel					
General	78,000	2,280	621	2,901	4%
Contractual services					
Other Operating Costs	125,000	5,755	-	5,755	5%
TOTAL	911,820	194,855	15,121	209,976	23%