



GREEN  
CLIMATE  
FUND

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# Travel Policy

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**GCF/B.08/30**

3 October 2014

**Meeting of the Board**

14-17 October 2014

Bridgetown, Barbados

Agenda item 27

## Recommended action by the Board

It is recommended that the Board:

- (a) Take note of the information presented in document GCF/B.08/30 *Travel Policy*;
- (b) Adopt the draft decision presented in Annex I to this document.

## Travel Policy

### I. Introduction

1. At its March 2013 meeting, by decision B.01-13/02, the Board requested the Interim Secretariat to present to it at its September 2013 meeting a working document. This document sets out a draft Travel Policy for the Fund, for approval by the Board, to be applied for funding the travel of Board members, alternate members, advisers, active observers and staff of the independent Secretariat.
2. At its fifth meeting, the Board considered the draft Travel Policy submitted by the Secretariat (GCF/B.05/15) and agreed on most of the elements of the proposed policy. However, a consensus was not reached, particularly on the matter relating to the eligibility criteria for supporting Board members, alternate members and advisers from developing countries.
3. At its sixth meeting, the Board considered a slightly amended draft (GCF/B.06/17). The Co-Chairs requested a small group of the Board members and alternate members to conduct consultations on this matter and report back to the Board. The group subsequently presented to the Board a proposed draft decision. Board members raised a number of questions, which were responded to by the group and the Secretariat. Given the number of questions raised, however, the Board decided it could still not adopt the Travel Policy.
4. Recognizing the need to establish the Fund's Travel Policy as soon as possible, the Board decided to include this item in the agenda for its eighth meeting. Building on the discussion made so far, the Board may wish to consider the draft decision and the draft Travel Policy presented as Annexes I and II<sup>1</sup> to this document, respectively.

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<sup>1</sup> Annex II is the same version that was considered at the sixth meeting.

## Annex I: Draft decision of the Board

The Board, having considered document GCF/B.08/30 *Travel Policy*:

- (a) Adopts the Travel Policy, as set out in Annex II;
- (b) Authorizes the Executive Director to issue the guidelines complementing the Travel Policy; and
- (c) Notes that the report relating to support for travel will be provided by the Secretariat in the context of the implementation of the administrative budget of the Green Climate Fund.

### **Or**

- (a) Notes the Travel Policy as set out in Annex II; and
- (b) Requests the Secretariat to maintain the status quo in supporting the travel of Board members, alternate members and advisers from developing countries.

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## Annex II: Draft Travel Policy

### I. Introduction

1. The Secretariat recognizes that travellers on official business act in the best interest of the Fund. However, in doing so, travellers should be prudent and cost-conscious with respect to business travel practices and should also bear in mind that travel expenses represent a significant component of the Fund's administrative costs. Travellers are therefore also responsible for controlling travel expenses and adhering to the policies and procedures outlined in the Travel Policy.
2. The Travel Policy is not intended to cover every possible situation. Instead, it is meant to guide the travellers and the staff administering the travel in making appropriate judgments about the use of the Secretariat's travel funds. It does not preclude the Fund to make, on a competitive basis, comprehensive arrangements with one or more airlines to provide services to the Fund, if such arrangements respond to the needs of the Fund and are conducive to incurring savings.
3. Complementary guidelines will be issued covering all sections of the Travel Policy.

### II. Principles

4. The Travel Policy is based on the following principles:
  - (a) Cost-efficiency and minimization of transaction costs;
  - (b) Consistency in the application of travel rules; and
  - (c) Environmental sustainability of travel.

### III. Scope

5. The provisions of this Travel Policy apply to the travel of Board members, Alternate Board members, advisers, active observers and staff of the Secretariat.

### IV. Eligibility criteria for funded travel

6. The following persons are eligible for funding of travel from the administrative budget of the Fund:
  - (a) Board members and alternate members from eligible<sup>1</sup> developing countries, for participation at any in-person Board meetings, including any informal consultations preceding such meetings, and at any in-person meetings of committees, panels or groups of which they are members;
  - (b) The Co-Chairs, other Board members or alternate members, if designated by the Board to represent the Fund in external events;
  - (c) Board members' advisers from eligible developing countries (one adviser of each eligible developing country Board member and alternate member);

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<sup>1</sup> Eligibility will be defined by separate decision of the Board.

- (d) Active observers, to the extent that their participation at Board meetings has been authorized by the Board (generally, only the representatives from civil society organizations and private sector organizations from national or sub-regional non-governmental organizations) located in eligible developing countries may receive funding); and
- (e) Staff of the Secretariat.

## **V. Travel authorization**

7. The Secretariat will issue letters of invitation to Board members and alternate members for their participation at Board meetings, including any informal consultations or other meetings preceding Board meetings, as well as for travel to meetings of committees, panels or groups eligible to be funded in accordance with the Travel Policy.
8. Where the Board has authorized the travel of the Co-Chairs, other Board members or alternate members to represent the Fund on Fund-related business, such travel will be funded in accordance with the Travel Policy.
9. Funding for the travel of advisers will be provided on the terms and conditions as set out in the letter of invitation issued by the Secretariat. The letter will outline the extent to which advisers are eligible for funding under the Travel Policy and whether their participation has been endorsed by the eligible developing country Board member or alternate member concerned.
10. Active observers, to the extent that their travel has been approved by the Board, and based on the terms and conditions as set out in their letter of invitation, are authorized to travel.
11. Travel of staff of the Secretariat, when travelling on Fund-related business, is subject to the authorization by the Executive Director (ED) or by a person designated by the ED.

## **VI. Routing**

12. The Fund is committed to the environmental sustainability of its travel, which will guide the choice of routing and mode of travel as set out in the Travel Policy.
13. The official itinerary will be the most direct and economical route. The official itinerary will be determined based on the advice by the Fund's approved/contracted travel agency.
14. The most direct route will normally be the one with the least number of stopovers between the point of departure and the final destination. If there are two or more itineraries with the same number of stopovers, the one with the shortest travel time will be considered the most direct.
15. The most economical route will be the least costly in monetary terms.
16. The traveller will cover the costs in excess of the official itinerary resulting from deviations for personal reasons.

## **VII. Calculation of travel time**

17. Travel time: The hours actually spent in the air and/or on the train via the most direct route to the destination country. (Time spent on the ground to check-in or connect to other flights does not apply.)

18. Relevant elapsed travel time: The total number of hours between the departure time of the originating flight to the arrival time at the destination. (This includes the time spent on the ground to check-in or connect to other flights.)

## **VIII. Mode of travel**

19. The Fund is committed to reducing the greenhouse gas emissions arising from its travel operations. For short-distance travel, the normal mode of travel will be train, whenever the travel time does not exceed six hours. In such cases, the traveller may not choose to select air travel unless there is an exigency, which needs to be authorized as set out in Chapter V.

20. For train travel with a travel time of more than six hours, the mode of travel may either be by air or by train, based on the preference of the traveller and approval of related costs. Travel by train is encouraged wherever this is a viable option.

21. For group travel, transport by bus may be selected as the preferred mode of travel if this presents a cost-efficient and low-emission alternative to other modes of travel.

## **IX. Standard travel entitlements**

22. The class of service will be economy class for travel time of up to nine hours.

23. The class of service will be business class for travel time exceeding nine hours.

24. Travel by train will always be business class or equivalent, regardless of the travel time.

25. Advisers eligible for funded travel will travel least costly (usually economy class), regardless of the travel time.

26. Active observers, to the extent that their travel has been approved by the Board, will travel least costly (usually economy class), regardless of the travel time.

## **X. Travel arrangements**

27. The Secretariat will administer, through the travel agent, all travel arrangements. Associated costs resulting from travel bookings will be compensated by the Secretariat directly to the travel agent, based on actual expenditures incurred.

## **XI. Rest time**

28. Travellers will be entitled to rest time, based on the relevant elapsed travel time.

29. The traveller may decide to forego the rest time entitlement.

## **XII. Accommodation arrangements**

30. The Fund may either arrange through a travel agent or reimburse hotel accommodation based on the cost of the accommodation actually incurred for every night spent on mission.

31. The travel agent will negotiate special rates and guarantee agreements for hotel accommodation, which apply to standard single rooms with bath, in adequate to high-standard quality hotels, taken from a list of accredited/preferred hotels worldwide.

32. The hotel will be located within a safe and reasonable commuting distance from venues of major activities of the mission.

### **XIII. Payment of subsistence expenses**

33. The sections below present the general approach and policy of the Fund's subsistence allowance scheme, whereas detailed figures and procedures for each allowance will be issued by way of complementary guidelines.

#### **13.1 Per diem payment (PDP)<sup>2</sup>**

34. A PDP will be paid based on the location of the mission.

#### **13.2 Transport to and from the airport or train station**

35. Transport to and from the airport or train station, as well as to and from the hotel or venue, should be by the most economical and practical mode of transport.

36. Travellers will be entitled to a flat fee,<sup>3</sup> which includes the costs incurred by the traveller for tolls, parking fees, and the like.

#### **13.3 Travel advances**

37. Board members, alternate members and advisers eligible for funded travel may request an advance payment of the applicable PDP entitlement.

38. Secretariat staff will receive the full amount of applicable PDP prior to the commencement of travel.

#### **13.4 Miscellaneous expenses**

39. Travellers may carry baggage up to the airline's free allowance in the class flown. The traveller will cover any costs for excess baggage.

40. Secretariat staff will be entitled to pre-book additional baggage or receive reimbursement for costs relating to excess baggage, if required to carry official documents, office supplies and/or other mission-related materials that exceed the airline's free allowance and based on the ED's authorization or by a person designated by the ED.

### **XIV. Carbon offset**

41. The Fund will adopt a scheme of special funding for offsetting carbon emissions based on an approach proposed by the Secretariat and approved by the Board.

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<sup>2</sup> A list of PDP rates will be established to be initially based on the applicable Asian Development Bank Daily Subsistence Allowance rates and complemented by applicable World Bank meals, tips, and valet rates, until the Fund has established its own guidelines and PDP rates. The Fund's PDP rates will comprise two lists: standard PDP and increased PDP.

<sup>3</sup> A flat fee for transport to and from the airport or train station, as well as to and from the hotel or venue, will be US\$ 40.

## **XV. General guidelines**

42. All travellers covered under the Travel Policy will be responsible for making their own insurance and visa arrangements. Where, in exceptional circumstances, a traveller does not have proper medical insurance valid at the location of a meeting, he/she may request the Fund to facilitate issuance of commercial travel insurance. In such a case, contractual relations will be exclusively between the traveller and the travel insurance. The Fund does not accept any responsibility regarding any acts performed by, or on behalf of, the insurer.

43. Travellers should ensure that they are fit to travel, based on their recent physical examination, and that the necessary measures for immunization and/or other medical requirements are administered to them accordingly.

44. Notwithstanding paragraph 43, the Fund will not be liable to pay or reimburse any medical or related expenses incurred by travellers for, or in connection with, their participation at Board, committee, panel or group meetings.

## **XVI. Final provisions**

45. The Travel Policy will enter into force immediately upon adoption by the Board, and will be reviewed in due course or when requested by the Board.

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