

Adapting Tuna-dependent Pacific Island Communities and Economies to Climate Change

ANNEX 06.b: Accountability Grievance Redress Mechanism

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Introduction

Background & Purpose

The purpose of the Accountability Grievance Redress Mechanism (AGRM) is to provide stakeholders with a formal channel to raise concerns, complaints, or grievances related to the project's implementation or outcomes. The Conservation International-GCF Project Agency (CI-GCF Agency) requires that all projects have an operational and accessible project-level AGRM.

The AGRM provides a clear and transparent process, a pathway for raising informed awareness of the Programme and related accountability parameters. It provides an avenue for reporting concerns and the escalation of grievances or concerns to the point where discussions are undertaken and/or mediation processes are facilitated with the key parties and stakeholders affected by the project. Where possible, a resolution that is considered acceptable by all parties is negotiated and achieved to ensure that issues are addressed and resolved effectively.

In the case of the Green Climate Fund (GCF) Regional Tuna Programme (RTP), concerns may involve the use of fish aggregating devices (FADs) by fishermen to enhance their catch, community conflicts about the FADs, suspected damage to coral and reef ecosystems, pollution, or conflicts between fishermen, regulatory authorities or within impacted communities. Where environmental degradation or community concerns are not addressed effectively or equitably, concerned parties can bring these concerns to the attention of the programme to ensure that these concerns are prevented, mitigated or addressed.

The purpose of an AGRM for this RTP is:

- Ensuring that the Programme is fully accountable for funds managed in the delivery of projects across the participating 14 Pacific Island countries;
- Providing a transparent and accessible grievance mechanism for any affected person or stakeholder adversely affected by project decisions and/or actions, especially safeguard concerns;
- Providing appropriate processes and procedures to resolve project concerns in a mutually acceptable way.

The use of the grievance mechanism does not inhibit affected communities or stakeholders' access to legal or judicial recourse processes, including those available at the national level.

AGRM structure for the Regional Tuna Programme

This AGRM follows the structure of the RTP, in that it provides for a regional-level mechanism (operated by the Executing Entity PMU) and national-level AGRMs (operated by national governments). This AGRM provides an explanation of the regional mechanism and provides guidance, recommendations, and minimum requirements for, when needed, developing country specific AGRMs that align with their own local realities. In this way, the regional AGRM links international good practices to local operating realities in a tiered approach with country-level processes feeding into the regional AGRM.

As the figure below describes, a grievant has several options for submitting a formal grievance: (1) to or through a local leader or traditional resolution platform, (2) to the national project entity, the National Fisheries Agency, (3) the Regional AGRM, operated by the PMU (SPC, The Pacific Community), (4) CI, and (5) the GCF Secretariat. This nested approach ensures multiple options for the grievant and the ability to escalate grievances when necessary.

As depicted in the image, a grievant may choose which of the AGRMs to submit concerns to. While it is preferable to manage and resolve grievances close to the issue, there are some circumstances where a grievant may choose to jump to a higher-level mechanism. Some grievances experienced by the community can be dealt with effectively at the community level and need not be referred to any formal AGRM unless village level redress mechanisms fail.

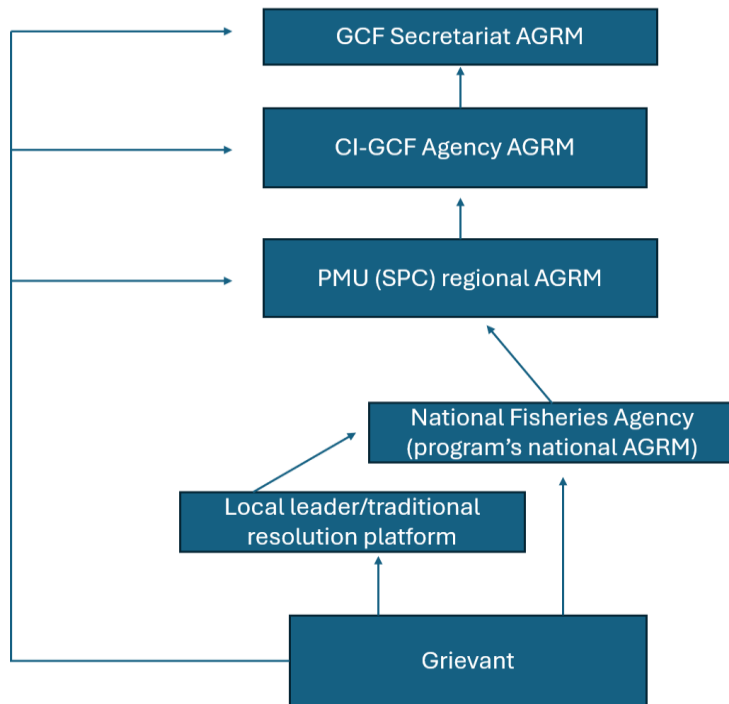


Figure 1: Nested AGRM for the GCF Tuna programme showing escalation options

Key principles of the AGRM

The Programme AGRM follows the following good practice principles:

- **Proportionality** – The project level AGRM is scaled to the size and stage of the project. Grievances are likely to be fewer in the development stages and most frequent during the construction, operation, and closure stages of a project.
 - **Problem solving** – every effort is made to solve the problem before the grievance mechanism is triggered and at the most local level.
 - **Cultural appropriateness** – considers specific cultural attributes as well as traditional mechanisms for raising and resolving grievances. These should inform the grievance mechanism design at the project level and includes:
 - Language;
 - Locations for receiving complaints;
 - Literacy and education levels; and
1. Gender issues, including cases involving SBV and SEAH.
- **Transparency and accountability** – All complaints must be taken seriously and treated fairly and there should be consistency and predictability in the process. The project should commit to a certain timing for responses to grievances and should monitor and share grievance resolutions (where appropriate).
 - **Appropriate protection** – The project must ensure that there is no retribution for use of the grievance mechanism, protect the identity of individuals who file grievances, provide

information on mechanisms to escalate grievances and ensure stakeholders understand their rights to use alternative remedies to resolve their grievances.

- **Alternative terminology to “grievance mechanism”** – if in the specific country an alternative terminology is preferred, this is encouraged to be explored. There may be negative connotations or an overall lack of understanding around the term “grievance” so other names for the mechanism in local contexts are acceptable.

Process and Procedures for the Regional AGRM

This section provides an overview of the regional process and procedures for the regional component of the AGRM. It is designed to align with the PMU's (SPC/The Pacific Community) existing AGRM as that is the main mechanism that will be used for handling and processing grievances submitted at the regional scale.

[SPC's Social and Environmental Responsibility Policy](#) is a fair, impartial and independent formal dispute resolution mechanism that specifically protects against the following: Discrimination; Bullying; Harassment; Sexual harassment; Sexual exploitation; Violence; Domestic Violence; Child and vulnerable adult protection; Fraud/Corruption; Retaliation; and Behaviour in the workplace (SPC). The policy states that disputes will be governed by the general principles and supports of international law, such as those governed by the International Labour Organisation Administrative Tribunal (ILOAT).

SPC Regional AGRM Process

SPC has an established and publicly disclosed [Grievance Redress Mechanism for impact on affected communities](#) (GRM) located on their website that will serve as the regional AGRM for this programme. Figure 1 above describes the internal process that SPC follows to address grievances.

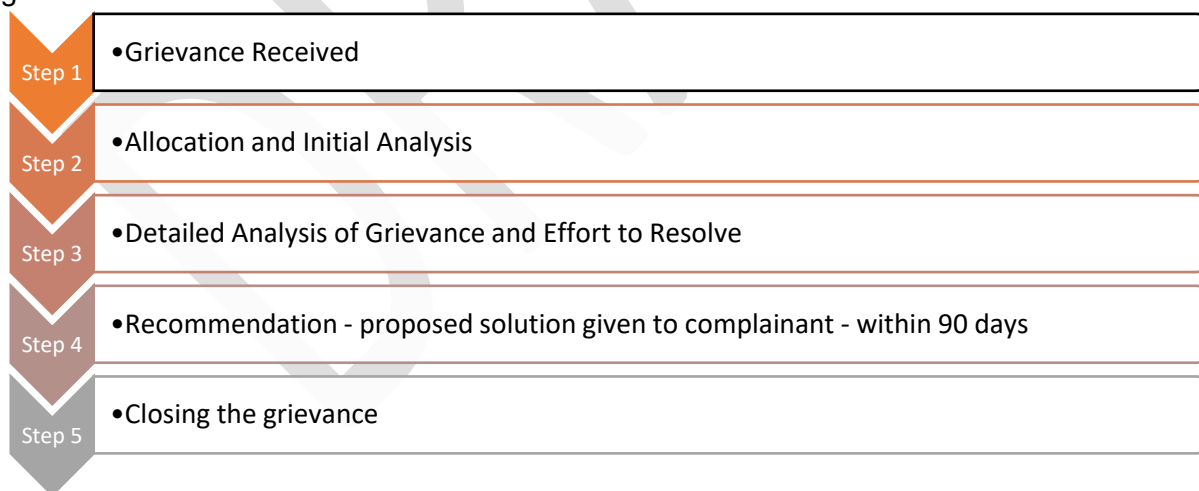


Figure 2: SPC AGRM

1. **STEP 1 (Grievance received):** In the case of the regional AGRM, grievances can be submitted by email to complaints@spc.int. Submissions should include relevant details, supporting evidence, and preferred contact information. Submissions are screened for eligibility upon receipt. Grievances must be communicated to SPC within a period of 2 years from the date the complainant has been adversely affected by the program's activities. A grievance about an event that took place more than 2 years ago is deemed ineligible; and in this case, direct communication with the grievant to relay this outcome will occur. Recording of grievances is centrally managed by SPC's Legal

& Governance team, and more detailed information on this is available in the full SPC GRM policy at the link above.

2. **STEP 2 (Allocation and initial analysis):** Receipt of grievances will be acknowledged by SPC (specifically, by the GESI Officer(s) who sits on the PMU), and a unique identifier will be allocated to the matter by SPC's Legal & Governance team. As soon as reasonably possible thereafter, the Legal and Governance team will request any additional information that may be required and will provide the grievant with the details of who will be managing the grievance, expected timelines and next steps.
3. **STEP 3 (Detailed analysis and effort to resolve):** A detailed analysis of the grievance will be carried out (led by the SPC legal team in coordination with the PMU GESI Officer(s), supported by others at SPC as needed) and SPC will gather additional information, engage with the grievant and all relevant parties, and analyse the situation from all angles and perspectives. SPC will endeavour to identify the root cause of the problem and potential solutions as quickly and effectively as possible, acknowledging that timelines may vary considerably depending on the complexity of the grievance or complaint. When a grievance involves gender-based violence or Sexual Exploitation, Abuse or Harassment, SPC utilizes a more detailed process based on multiple SPC governing policies (see next section below).
2. **STEP 4 (Recommendation):** After working with the grievant and other stakeholders, a proposed solution and timeline will be recommended and communicated to the grievant.
3. **STEP 5 (Closing the grievance):** A grievance or complaint may be closed when:
 - the grievant indicates that the grievance is resolved;
 - the grievant withdraws the grievance;
 - the Director-General determines that the issues are best dealt with as an investigation under legal proceedings;
 - in the case of a workplace grievance, where the staff member is no longer employed;
 - after all reasonable efforts, there is no reasonable prospect of resolving the grievance to the grievant's satisfaction; and
 - if a grievance is not resolved within 90 calendar days from the date of being lodged, it will be deemed as having been closed against the grievant's interests.

A step not noted within SPC's process is the option for the grievance to escalate further (via the CI-GCF Agency) or directly to the GCF Secretariat. For example, if the grievant does not agree with the proposed resolution, the grievance will escalate to the CI-GCF Agency (using the [Ethics Hotline](#)). If it can still not be resolved, it will be escalated to the [GCF Independent Redress Mechanism](#).

Gender Based Violence (GBV) and Sexual Exploitation, Abuse or Harassment (SEAH)

At an organisational level, SPC has a comprehensive framework in place to manage and respond to grievances, including grievances that are SEAH-related. This is set out in [Chp XII: Investigations and Disciplinary Action policy](#) and the [SPC grievance redress mechanism](#) (also linked below figure 1). SPC also has Senior level staff who are trained in responding to grievances involving GBV and SEAH. The SPC GRM is targeted at external parties, or members of the community in which SPC projects are being undertaken. Our GRM specifies that all grievances including SEAH related grievances can be lodged a number of ways i.e.

through project managers, focal points or directly to the complaints inbox: complaints@spc.int that SPC's legal team manages.

At the start of project implementation, the SPC team or project management team are expected to train and conduct capacity building on SPC's requirements in respect of the project including the GRM process and SPC's contractual framework i.e. requires SEAH reporting, fraud reporting, child protection etc. This capacity building will take place within the programme planning period before implementation (2024-2025) and within the first 6 months of project implementation.

The SPC SEAH framework is set out in the [Chp XI Manual of Staff Policies: SPC policy on work culture and behaviours](#) (MoSP). Please note the following key aspects of this policy:

- a. This policy applies to all SPC staff, non-staff, visitors to SPC premises and these principles are incorporated into SPC's contractual arrangements with contractors and implementing partners/grant recipients. When we engage contractors, our general terms and conditions contain requirements to comply with SPC's SEAH principles and when we engage with implementing partners or grant recipients, we also enforce our general terms and conditions but depending on the nature of the project, there can be specific capacity building provided by the project team to the grant recipient to train them in applying SPC's standards as to SEAH, Child protection, fraud and corruption etc.
- b. SPC does not tolerate incidences of SEAH and all incidences will be subject to SPC's investigative and disciplinary measures;
- c. Any allegations of SEAH must be reported as a grievance to, either nominated well-being focal points (appointed by DDG-O&I and/or Director of HR) or directly to the following people:
 - i. Deputy Director-General (Operations and Integration)
 - ii. Director Human Resources
 - iii. Human Resources Manager
 - iv. Human Resources Adviser
 - v. Head of Internal Audit and Risk; and
 - vi. Legal Team
- d. SPC maintains a complaints email inbox that is managed by the legal team where complaints can be directed – further information on filing a grievance can be found at: <https://www.spc.int/accountability>.
- e. SPC reports any allegations of SEAH to our donors in line with the specific reporting obligations outlined in each donor agreement around timeframe for reporting, format of reporting etc.
- f. After proper investigation, SPC may refer SEAH matters to the appropriate national authorities such as the police or social welfare for investigation and prosecution. Depending on the outcome of any investigation, SPC may terminate the working relationship with the offender.

Complaint/grievance eligibility

The SPC GRM provides some examples of eligible grievances that may be received, such as:

- Infringement or potential of SPC's Social and Environmental Responsibility Policy
- Discrimination
- Bullying
- Harassment

- Sexual harassment or Sexual exploitation
- Violence/Domestic Violence
- Child and vulnerable adult protection
- Fraud/Corruption/ Retaliation Behaviour in the workplace

Furthermore, to be eligible, grievances must:

- Be submitted by or on behalf of a project affected person
- Be made in good faith
- Not be frivolous, malicious, trivial, or generated to gain competitive advantage
- Be within the 2-year window since project closing date
- Be within scope of the project (i.e., there are not other organizations/entities that are more appropriate to address the issue)

This submission of complaints will be of no cost to the grievant.

Grievance risk level and escalation

All grievances received will be rated for risk (low, medium, high) according to the following chart:

| | |
|--------------------|---|
| Low risk | Grievance is straightforward, the issue is clear, the solution is obvious, and resolutions can be developed and provided immediately. |
| Medium risk | Grievance with, or with the potential to have, limited adverse impact on, and interaction with, stakeholders. Grievance may need additional information in order to determine risk level. Examples may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relatively minor, but repetitive issues • Evidence of potential negative impact on people or the environment, but not rising to the level of violence or human rights abuse |
| High risk | Grievances with, or with the potential to have, a significant adverse impact on, and interaction with, stakeholders. These may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • repeated, cumulative (not the same) grievances. • clear/strong evidence of (or threat of) violence, loss of life or liberty, attacks on persons; or • clear/strong evidence of illegal activity, victimization, discrimination, degrading treatment or corruption, etc. • gender-based violence, including sexual exploitation, abuse & harassment. • reputational risks to programme entities. |

Risks that are deemed high risk should be escalated immediately to the CI-GCF Agency's Grievance Mechanism.

Grievance recording

Once a complaint is received, it should be systematically recorded and documented, allowing it to be tracked through the resolution process. Following SPC's process, that recording of grievances is centrally managed by SPC's Legal & Governance team, in coordination with the PMU GESI Officers. A duplicate copy is given to the grievant as their record. This includes the procedure that will be followed and reaffirms the grievant rights.

The following information is required:

- Reference number
- Date of complaint
- Name and address of complainants
- Sex of complainants
- Summary of the complaint
- Resolution proposed
- Signature of the complainant(s)
- Date decision conveyed to grievant and how it was conveyed

Communicating / Socializing the AGRM

At the start of project implementation, the SPC team or project management team within the PMU will train and conduct capacity building on SPC's requirements in respect of the project including the AGRM process and SPC's contractual framework i.e. requires SEAH reporting, fraud reporting, child protection etc. This capacity building will take place within the programme planning period before implementation (2024-2025) and within the first 6 months of project implementation.

Guidance for national level AGRMs

At the national level, countries are required to have and operate AGRMs. In the cases countries wish to establish a new process specific to the RTP or need to update their existing grievance mechanisms to meet the requirements of this programme, AGRMs will be designed and implemented by the national entities (e.g., National Fishery Agency) with support from the PMU GESI Officers. A key priority activity at the start of the programme is to support and guide country projects in designing and deploying tailored AGRMs. This section provides guidance and requirements for national level AGRMs.

Links between Local, National and Regional AGRMs

As described above and in figure 1, national-level AGRMs are critical for tailoring the AGRM to local contexts (e.g., languages, accessibility, etc.) and capturing and responding to grievance as close to the issue as possible. They feed into the programme AGRM if a resolution is not agreed upon, and/or if a grievant prefers not to use the national AGRM.

It is always preferable to resolve minor community-based issues at the local community level; some project related grievances experienced by the community can be dealt with effectively at the community level and need not be referred to the national AGRM unless village level redress mechanisms fail.

Design of national AGRMs

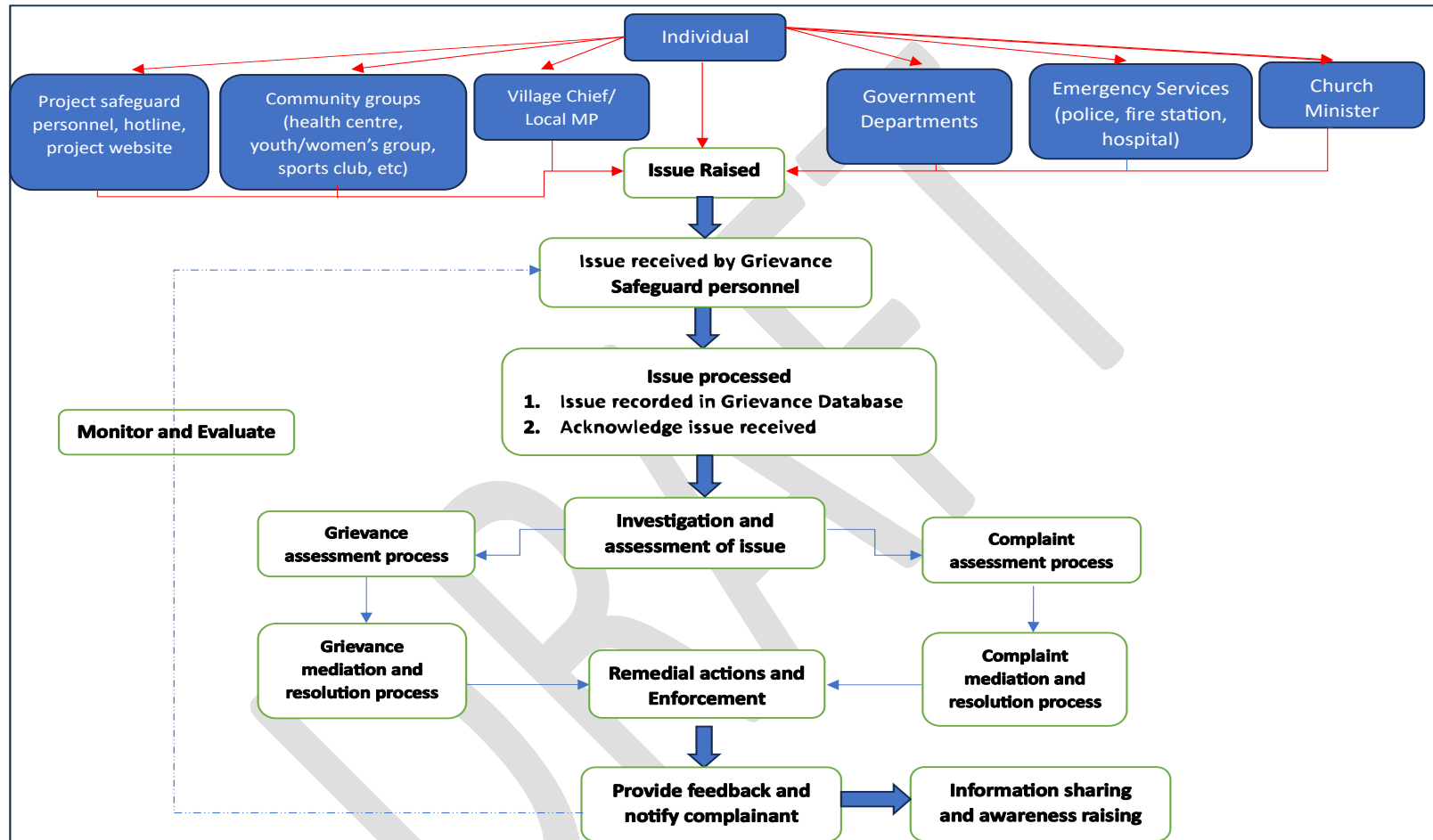
Prior to the commencement of project activities, the PMU GESI Officers will work with national safeguard focal points to identify gaps in existing AGRMs and outline the needs and requirements of the AGRMs.

Minimum requirements for national AGRMs:

- Written description of the internal procedures by which the AGRM will receive and process grievances. Details about the internal procedures can be found below, and a template for this procedure is attached as an annex to this document.
- Tailored communication pieces that are user-friendly and describe (in simple language and graphics) what the process is, how to access it, and what a grievant can expect. This can be in the format of a poster, brochure, or other culturally relevant communication piece. An example can be found [here](#).
- Awareness raising about the AGRM for relevant audiences, including key project stakeholders – e.g., communities where the FADs will be placed (with vulnerable groups including women), partner organizations and government entities, and project staff. Awareness raising of the AGRM is not a one-off activity at the start of the project but should be integrated into engagements so that key stakeholders are frequently reminded of the option to use the AGRM.
- Equip safeguard focal points to lead the grievance response coordination. This person should have access to a secure registry to track grievances and lead/coordinate responses to grievances confidentially following the written protocols.

Figure 3 provides an example of a generic national AGRM process. This can be tailored to individual country projects at the national scale.

Figure 1: National Generic Accountability and Grievance Redress Mechanism



Detailed guidance for the national AGRM procedure

Escalation of grievances within and beyond the national AGRM

Within the written description of the procedure, the national AGRMs should include a succinct description of the steps and escalation process, provided in a culturally appropriate and accessible form and must be accessible for all project stakeholders, such as described in Table 1:

Table 1: AGRM Steps with Additional Levels of Resolution Required

| Steps | Process | Duration |
|--|--|-----------------|
| 1. | Affected Person (AP) submits a grievance, either directly to the national AGRM, or through a project-related person such as a Fisheries Agency staff member, or through a support person – e.g., community leader, church minister, parent, or trusted adult. | Any time |
| 2. | Once the grievance is formally submitted to the national AGRM focal point, it is entered into a confidential record, screened for eligibility, and the level of risk of the grievance is determined. | Within 2 weeks |
| 3. | If the grievance is low level, and easy to resolve, the AGRM focal point will do this directly or with input from relevant project staff. | Within 2 weeks |
| 4. | If the grievance is medium level, and requires further investigation or more information, the AGRM focal point will coordinate information gathering, along with relevant project staff and alert the PMU GESI Officers. If deemed necessary, the grievance committee will be organized to help design a proposed resolution. The AGRM focal point is responsible for communicating the proposed resolution. | Within 2 months |
| 5. | If the grievance is high level (for example, dealing with fraud, violence, or SEAH), the AGRM focal point will immediately alert the Director of Fisheries, PMU GESI Manager and the CI-GCF Agency. Together, these entities will decide how to proceed. | Within 2 weeks |
| Agreement or Escalation | | Duration |
| 5. | If the Affected Person is agreeable to the proposed resolution, this should be noted in the grievance log and is considered closed. If appropriate, the national AGRM focal point reports back to the community (and other stakeholders) that this issue is resolved. | Within 2 weeks |
| 7. | If the Affected Person does not agree to the proposed resolution, and the grievance is unresolved, mediation should be held between the AP, AGRM GESI Officer, relevant project staff, and any relevant community representatives. If this still does not result in an agreed resolution, the grievance should be escalated to the regional PMU AGRM. | Within 2 months |
| 8. | The regional PMU AGRM follows steps for resolution as described above. If still unsuccessful, grievance will be escalated to the CI-GCF Agency and GCF Independent Redress Mechanism as a final resort. | Within 2 weeks |
| If not resolved at any stage, the AP or their representative can take the grievance to the Magistrates Court. | | |

Communication about the national AGRMs

An AGRM is only effective if it is well communicated and trusted. To this end, it is critical that national AGRMs are communicated through consultations to grievants so they have a clear understanding of

the project and how they can get any related issues resolved. This requires dissemination of information to the community and other stakeholders, advising that grievances can be raised directly through the appropriate reporting channels and indirect channels.

During project implementation, local communities and other stakeholders may have concerns about the project's performance. Grievants should be informed through consultations that they have a right to complain and the grievance resolution process. This submission of complaints will be of no cost to the grievant.

- **Accessing the grievance mechanism:** National AGRMs should be designed to be a simple, user-friendly process for reporting concerns or grievances. The reporting process should consider local demographics, needs of stakeholders, and provide a variety of avenues for reporting, such as via an online reporting system, a complaints phone line/WhatsApp number, boxes located in the community, or through face-to-face reporting. An individual can report the issue directly through the appropriate PMU social safeguards officer responsible for the AGRM. If they prefer, they can report it through someone they feel more comfortable talking to, such as: a village chief, church minister or doctor who can then report the issue on the grievant's behalf to the AGRM.

Processing grievances

Receiving a complaint: Once a complaint is received, it should be systematically recorded and documented, allowing it to be tracked through the resolution process. All grievances will be recorded in a site register and monitored by the safeguard focal point. A duplicate copy is given to the grievant as their record. This includes the procedure that will be followed and reaffirms Affected Person's rights. A copy of the complaint and actions taken is forwarded to the PMU GESI Officers.

The following information is required:

- Reference number
 - Date of complaint
 - Name and address of grievant
 - Sex of complainants
 - Summary of the complaint
 - Resolution proposed
 - Signature of the grievant(s)
 - Date decision conveyed to grievant and how it was conveyed
- **Investigation and assessment of issue:** Upon receiving a complaint, the safeguard focal point should conduct a thorough investigation. This may involve collecting evidence, interviewing relevant parties, and assessing the impact of the alleged grievances on the environment or fishing communities including those most vulnerable (female headed households and disabled).
 - **Mediation and resolution:** Based on the findings of the investigation, the AGRM may facilitate a mediation process to bring together the parties involved. Mediators, who are impartial and knowledgeable about FAD usage and associated cold chain aspects can help facilitate dialogue, identify common ground, and work towards mutually acceptable solutions.
 - **Remedial actions and enforcement:** When a resolution is reached, appropriate remedial actions should be undertaken.

This may include:

- enforcing stricter regulations
- undertaking environmental clean-up events
- providing compensation to affected parties

- or in some cases, referring the matter to law enforcement agencies or relevant government departments. Adequate enforcement measures should also be in place to ensure compliance with the agreed-upon solutions.
- **Feedback and monitoring:** The project is continuously improving, and thus a feedback mechanism has been established to assess the effectiveness of the AGRM and make necessary improvements. Regular monitoring and evaluation of FAD project implementation and product usage, as well as any impacts on the environment, can help identify emerging issues and proactively address them. Grievances and feedback should be used to adaptively manage the project.
- **Information sharing and awareness raising:** A component of the feedback mechanism involves information sharing and awareness raising to mitigate any further issues of the same nature or identify weaknesses and strengths in the approach undertaken. Subsequent adjustments can be made to prevent further issues and maximise opportunities.

Examples of existing project specific AGRMs in Pacific Island Countries

This section provides several examples of existing AGRM processes in Pacific Island Countries and Territories (PICTs). The following PICT AGRMs are largely similar with variable involvement of traditional institutions at initial levels for minor grievances through to court system resolution for more serious concerns. However, while similar, there will also be customary differences and social norms which may vary and affect resolution outcomes.

Grievance Redress Mechanism in Samoa

Only two (2) respondents in the national survey in July 2023 mentioned that grievances were recorded. Both respondents indicated that grievances in the village are addressed through the village council and through village punishment, however information on the details of the village punishment was not provided.

An example of the key steps in the AGRM process for a project in Samoa is as follows:

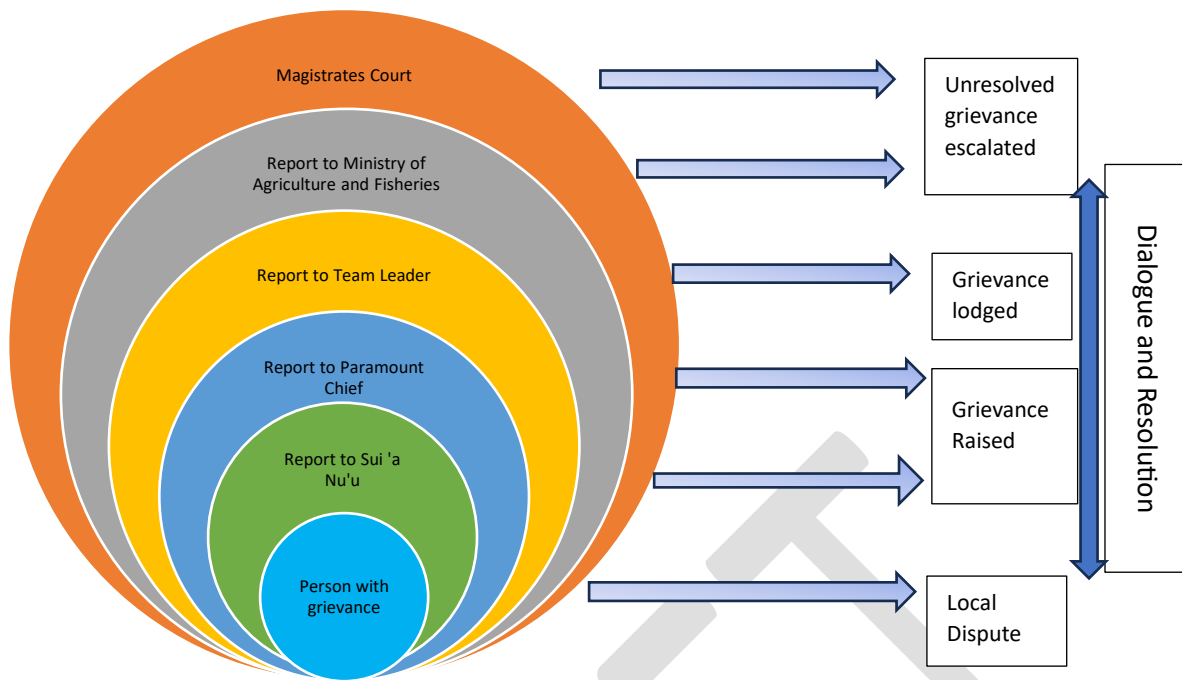


Figure 2: Case Study of an AGRM in Samoa

Grievance Redress Mechanism in Niue

Family decisions are usually made by male leaders of the family, however interviewees indicated that both the husband and wife usually make the decisions for the family together.

Community decisions are often made by the Village Councils (VC). When community members are uncomfortable about a community decision, these were brought to the VC meetings. For example, when someone dies at sea, the VC may close access to the sea for two weeks. Closing access to the sea for some families can be a challenge as families are forced to go without fish for 2 weeks and in these instances, must seek alternative options for food. A decision is usually made by the majority.

Land grievances are addressed by the family, led by their Leveki or caretaker of the land. If matters are not resolved, these are then taken to court. There have been cases where matters were not resolved – one interviewee indicated that this was often due to the matter being a non-issue in the first place.

Fishing related grievances are brought before the VC and are usually resolved if important, however small grievances are not always resolved. Larger grievances that are not resolved by the VC are taken to court or advice is sought from relevant government departments. All decisions are recorded at VC meetings.

An example of managing a grievance within Niue is as follows:

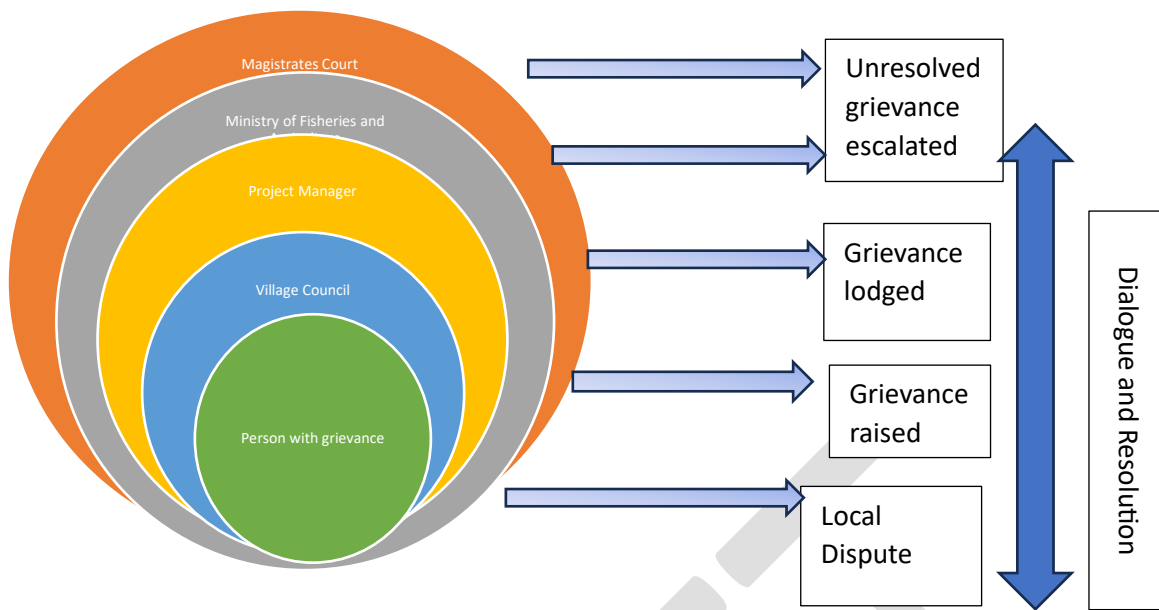


Figure 3: Case Study of an AGRM in Niue

Process of managing grievances

4. Grievances related to the project will be resolved through the following mechanism:

First Level GRM

- Most grievances raised during construction can usually be resolved by either the contractor's representative or Government Project Management Unit (PMU) Safeguards Officer. All grievances will be recorded in a site register and monitored by the PMU Safeguards team. This submission of complaints will be of no cost to the Affected Person (AP).
- A copy of the complaint is forwarded to Community Advisory Committee (CAC) and the Department of Fisheries. Actions taken and status of AP satisfaction is also recorded.

Second Level GRM

- If the AP is not satisfied with the response from the contractor and CAC, they can take the complaint to the government project PMU.
- The PMU safeguards officer will discuss the concern with the CAC and the grievant as required and advise the Ministry PMU Manager.
- The Project PMU Manager has a maximum of 14 days to resolve the complaint and convey a decision to the grievant.
- If the PMU Manager dismisses the complaint, the complainant shall be informed of his/her rights in taking the matter to the next step.
- A copy of the decision shall be sent to the relevant Government department (e.g., Environment Conservation Division if the complaint is environmental in nature, or to the Ministry of Fisheries for relevant concerns).
- A GRM Committee is subsequently chaired by the Ministry and includes the PMU Manager, Project Engineer, Contractor, and an appointed third-party arbitrator.

- If the grievant is not satisfied with the decision, he/she may take the complaint to the PMU who will seek legal advice from the Attorney General's office.

Third Level GRM

- If the grievant is not satisfied with the decision of the GRM Committee, he/she may take further action through an appropriate legal channel such as the local court.
- If a satisfactory conclusion cannot be obtained through this process, the AP can take the matter to the courts (Magistrates Court or High Court). This will be at the APs cost, but if the court shows that the government ministries have been negligent in making their determination, the AP will be able to seek costs reimbursement.

<https://dofa.gov.fm/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/PROP-GRM-June-2020.pdf>

DRAFT

Optional / Example Template for a country-level AGRM

Accountability and Grievance Redress Mechanism

Project site: [Name of Country]

The purpose of an Accountability and Grievance Redress Mechanism (AGRM)¹ is to provide project stakeholders with an effective and efficient process for expressing and resolving concerns and complaints. The AGRM promotes a mutually constructive relationship providing stakeholders with a way to raise concerns, complaints, or grievances related to the project, and for those to be dealt with in a confidential, timely, and constructive manner.

This example template is designed to help site-level projects design the process and procedures of an AGRM. It provides specific guidance on the collection, recording, processing, and resolving of grievances at the site-level. The policies and procedures outlined in this document include the use of best practices to:

- Address breaches of policy and procedure,
- Be independent, transparent, and effective,
- Be accessible to project-affected people,
- Maintain records on all cases with due regard to confidentiality of grievants' identity and information,
- Take appropriate measures to minimize risk of retaliation to grievants.

Roles and Responsibilities

AGRM Coordinator (Safeguard focal point)

The AGRM responsibility will fall within the safeguard focal points at the national level. This person is responsible for overall management of the AGRM process, which includes:

- Close coordination with the relevant government ministry or department that oversees the country level AGRM process,
- Facilitating the project's AGRM process to conduct any information gathering and/or to develop appropriate responses to complaints, when needed,
- Following up with the grievant to inform them of the status of their complaint, what the steps are in the process of addressing the complaint and when they will next be updated,
- Continue to liaise with entity who oversees the AGRM process on behalf of the country and reporting and coordinating with the PMU GESI Officer(s) on the processing of all complaints received.

For [enter name of country], the AGRM Coordinator will be [enter name, title, organization, contact information].

5. PMU GESI Officer(s)

The PMU GESI Officer is responsible for supporting the National project's safeguard focal points to ensure that the country-level grievance mechanisms operate as intended to provide a transparent and open process to resolve grievances. This may include:

- Providing support or guidance to the safeguard focal points; and
- Ensuring that sensitive grievances are elevated appropriately.

¹ Projects may choose to use other terminology, such as Feedback and Grievance Mechanism, or Grievance Redress Mechanism.

PMU GESI Officer: [name, title, contact information]

Project Staff

Project staff engaging with stakeholders are responsible for:

- Disclosing the AGRM to key stakeholders in a manner, language and format that suits local context, including posting AGRM communication materials in appropriate online and physical forums.
- Receiving and then conveying grievances to the AGRM Coordinator,
- Liaise with local point persons to collect any paper grievance submission forms as necessary.

Local Point Persons

Local Point Persons are trusted leaders, identified by local communities and stakeholders, and who have been given basic training on the project's AGM. They can help to communicate about the AGRM and support the grievance process. For example, they may:

- Submit a grievance on behalf of a complainant,
- Store, send and/or transport grievance submission forms to the AGRM Coordinator.

For [enter name of FAD project sites], the following individuals/organizations have been designated as Local Point Persons:

| Individual/Community | Contact Information |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| [enter name of individual/community] | [enter phone, email, local address] |
| [enter name of individual/community] | [enter phone, email, local address] |
| [enter name of individual/community] | [enter phone, email, local address] |

Eligible Grievances

Grievances will be assessed for eligibility. A grievance will be considered eligible if:

- It is made in good faith
- It directly relates to the project
- It is made by, or on behalf of, a person affected by the project
- It is made during project implementation or within 2 years of close

Grievance risk level and escalation

Grievances will be assessed for level of risk, according to the table below.

| Risk Level | Description |
|------------|---|
| Low | The complaint is straightforward, the issue is clear, the solution is obvious, and resolutions can be developed and provided immediately. |

| | |
|------|--|
| Med | The complaint lacks full necessary information and needs to be investigated and may involve engagement with multiple stakeholders; or the resolution of the grievance involves action from a particular stakeholder. |
| High | Grievances with, or with the potential to have, a significant adverse impact on, and interaction with, stakeholders. These may include repeated grievances, clear/strong evidence of (threatened) violence, clear/strong evidence of illegal activity, victimization or corruption, and reputational harm. |

Low-level risks can often be resolved at the local level or by the project safeguard focal points. For higher level risks, or those that can't be resolved, the grievance is escalated as described in the image below. Depending on the choice of the grievant, they may choose to submit their grievance in multiple ways (e.g., local leader, AGRM Coordinator, Project staff, PMU, or CI-GCF Agency).

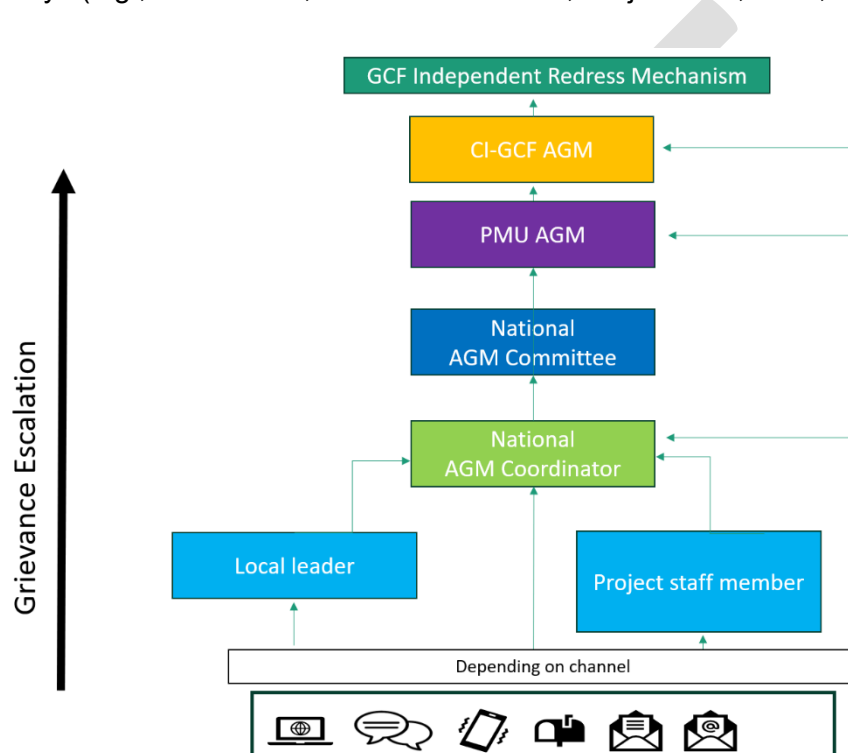


Figure 8 Grievance Escalation in a country-level AGRM

The purpose of the PMU AGRM is to support, mediate and resolve grievances that are unable to be resolved at the country-level.

The CI-GCF AGRM is designed to address high-risk concerns and complaints, such as those that include conflict, fraud or corruption. It is managed by a neutral party (Ethics Hotline) and is empowered to undertake the necessary steps to protect against conflict of interest and maintain the highest standards for transparency. It is one method to submit an anonymous grievance.

Accessibility of the AGRM for key stakeholders

Stakeholders should have multiple methods or avenues to communicate a grievance that are culturally acceptable and in recognition of specific challenges such as literacy, language, and access to technology.

With stakeholder communication needs in mind, grievances for the AGRM may be submitted in the following ways: *[please edit the list below to suit the project]*

- In person via a staff member or Local Point Person
- At the Fisheries Agency office, located at:
- By phone/WhatsApp to the AGRM Coordinator:
- By email to the AGRM Coordinator at:
- By email to the PMU AGRM at: XXXX
- Though a feedback box located in the community and monitored by a Local Point Person
- Other:

Communication & dissemination about the AGRM to stakeholders

An AGRM is only useful if it is understood and trusted. Communication about the purpose, process, and accessibility of the AGRM is critical.

The AGRM will be communicated in the following ways, which are tailored to the needs of key project stakeholders:

- *Please indicate communication method [e.g., website, radio, meetings, posters, etc]*
- *Please indicate communication method*
- *Please indicate communication method*
- ...

Processing and Resolving a Grievance

1. Submit a Grievance

The aggrieved party submits a grievance via any of the communication channels (e.g., in person, email, by phone/WhatsApp, the Ethics Hotline, etc.). The submission of grievances should include the following information:

- Name, designation, address and contact information,
 - If a complaint is made through a representative, the name/s of the person/s on whose behalf the complaint is made,
 - Whether the grievant chooses to keep their identify confidential,
 - A description of the grievance including location and data/time of its occurrence, and
 - A brief description of the impacts of the occurrence.
 - Ethics hotline allows the identity of the grievant to remain anonymous if they wish.
6. An in-person submission through a feedback box located in the community and monitored by a Local Point Person is another method of submitting anonymous grievances.

2. Receive and Log Grievance

Project staff should liaise with Local Point Persons on a regular basis to facilitate the timely collection of grievances from the field. Once received, the grievances should be immediately transmitted to the AGRM Coordinator and logged into a secure database. Grievances received by phone or email will be logged in the same way. This secure database will be shared with the GCF Independent Redress Mechanism as appropriate, while ensuring confidentiality as necessary.

3. Eligibility and Risk Screening

The AGRM Coordinator will screen the grievance to determine if it is eligible and its risk rating (as described above). Grievances that are found to be outside the scope of the AGRM will either be directed to other organizations/entities more appropriate to handle the grievance, or, if not, closed out of the AGM. This includes grievances from complainants who provide insufficient or incorrect information. In the case of high-risk grievances, the grievance should be elevated immediately to the PMU AGRM and CI-GCF AGM.

4. Acknowledge Receipt of Grievance

Within [enter number of days, usually 10 is standard] days the Coordinator will contact the grievant using the most suitable method to let them know that the grievance was received, their reference number assigned through the database, next steps in the process, and the point of contact. They will also verify the contact information for the complainant if necessary and ensure that the basic information required to proceed in the AGRM process is provided.

If the grievance is low-risk, and able to be resolved through information sharing or other easy action, the Coordinator will ensure the right information is shared and close out the grievance.

If the grievance is ineligible, the Coordinator should inform the grievant of the reason for ineligibility and direct them to other organizations more appropriate for the complaint if possible.

5. Convene & Assign

The Coordinator will review the grievance and determine the next steps. Based on the type of grievance, the Coordinator will assign persons to spearhead the resolution of the grievance and set an appropriate timeframe to develop resolution and present it to the grievant. Depending on the sensitivity of the grievance, the Coordinator may also stipulate how the assigned persons should engage with the relevant stakeholders. Any necessary resources needed to address the grievance will also be allocated.

6. Development of a Response

After the assigned persons are designated, two potential responses can be considered:

- Direct action based on the available information; or
- Further assessment and information gathering is needed to determine the most appropriate action. This may include
 - engagement/negotiation with the complainant;
 - engagement with other stakeholders; or
 - field visits and fact-finding missions.

Grievance responses, whether direct action or further investigations, should consider the grievant's views about the desired outcomes or process for grievance resolution. The response may suggest a specific remedy or an approach for how to settle the grievance.

Assigned persons should develop a proposed response to the aggrieved party that includes:

- A clear explanation of the response and why it is being proposed; and
- What the grievant's choices are, given the proposed response. For example:
 - Agreement to proceed
 - Further dialogue on proposed action
 - Participation in proposed assessment and engagement process.
- Alignment with local conflict resolution practices/processes and local leaders that should be consulted (as relevant).

The Coordinator is responsible for reviewing and approving a proposed response before it is communicated to the aggrieved party. If the Coordinator and Director of Fisheries are unable to come to an agreement, the grievance is then elevated to the PMU AGRM.

7. Agreement and Implementation of a Response

The Coordinator or representative from the Committee will communicate the proposed response to the aggrieved party within the timeframe designated above. The aggrieved party can choose to agree or disagree with the proposed response. The response is then recorded and logged in a database by the AGRM Coordinator. The Committee is responsible for monitoring the implementation of decisions and agreements made with the aggrieved party.

If the aggrieved party agrees with the proposed response, the Committee can proceed with the proposed response. In cases where the proposed response is to initiate investigations or engage stakeholders, a collaborative process may be conducted by a neutral third party as agreed to by both the aggrieved party and the stakeholders in question.

Whether or not a collaborative process appears viable, the Coordinator will communicate the assessment findings to the complainant and other stakeholders, with a recommendation on how to proceed. A report on the proposed response, and the actions that followed that result will be sent by the Committee to the involved parties.

If the aggrieved party disagrees with the proposed response, the Coordinator will log the disagreement to the response in the AGRM database. Designated persons from the Ministry will draft a review of the reasons for disagreement and suggest another approach. [Enter any site-specific conflict resolution practices/processes and any local leaders that should be consulted in the development of a response and resolution.] This review of the reasons for disagreement and alternative approach should be reviewed and approved by the Director of Fisheries within a designated timeframe before being communicated to the grievant.

If the grievant still disagrees after reviewing the alternative approach suggested by the Committee, the aggrieved party will be informed about other alternatives that may be available, including the use of judicial or other alternative mechanisms for recourse.

Other alternatives (after using the site-level AGRM) available to the aggrieved party include:

PMU AGRM

Address:

XXXX

Email: XXXX

CI-GCF Agency/CI Ethics Hotline: <https://secure.ethicspoint.com>

Green Climate Fund Independent Redress Mechanism:

<https://irm.greenclimate.fund/case-register/file-complaint>

Green Climate Fund Indigenous Peoples' Policy:

<https://www.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/ip-policy.pdf>

The GCF employs a Senior Indigenous Peoples' Specialist who is the focal point with operational responsibility to manage the implementation of the Indigenous Peoples' Policy which can be accessed at the link above – in addition to or instead of use of the Programme ARGM.

Court of Law: If the aggrieved party is not satisfied with the outcome from the GCF they can refer the matter to a Court of Law for redress.

8. Grievance Close Out

In the case of a successful resolution from the proposed response from the Committee, the Coordinator will document the satisfactory resolution. In cases where there have been minor risks, impacts and/or negative publicity, written documentation from the aggrieved party including satisfaction with the response will be encouraged.

In cases of an unusual response to the proposed response from the Committee, the Coordinator will

- document the steps taken;
- document communication with the aggrieved party (and other stakeholders if there has been substantial effort to initiate or complete a multi-stakeholder process); or
- document the decisions made by the Committee and the aggrieved party about referral or recourse to other alternatives, including legal alternatives.

Monitoring & Security

All grievances received will be entered into a secure electronic database to allow for tracking and documenting all steps taken in the AGRM process, managed by the safeguard focal point.

DRAFT

Example Site-Level Grievance Form Template

| | |
|--|--|
| Name of grievant: | |
| Location: | |
| Contact Information and Preferred Way to be Contacted (Phone, email, language preferences, etc.): | |
| If complaint is made through a representative, the name/s of the person/s on whose behalf the complaint is made: | |

Does the aggrieved party wish to keep their identity confidential?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Describe the grievance including the location and date/time of its occurrence, and whether it was one-off or recurring.

Briefly describe the impact of the problem.

How would the grievant like this issue to be resolved?