

Indigenous Peoples Advisory Group

Terms of Reference



GREEN
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Indigenous Peoples Advisory Group

Terms of Reference

Updated based on review by IPAG at its sixth meeting

16 May 2025

I. Introduction

1. At its February 2018 meeting, the Board adopted the GCF Indigenous Peoples Policy 1 through its decision B.19/11.
2. Pursuant to paragraph 81 of the Indigenous Peoples Policy (decision B.19/11, Annex XI) (the “Policy”), GCF will establish an Indigenous Peoples advisory group (the “IPAG”) to enhance coordination between GCF, accredited entities and executing entities, States and Indigenous Peoples in relation to matters concerning Indigenous Peoples.
3. Many intergovernmental organizations form indigenous advisory committees and groups to provide advice and facilitate engagement. The Convention on Biological Diversity, Global Environmental Facility, International Fund for Agricultural Development, United Nations Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, UN Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation, World Bank Forest Carbon Partnerships Facility and Climate Investment Funds are just some of the organizations that have established such bodies and offer lessons for the GCF in relation to its IPAG.
4. As part of its mandate to ensure the effective implementation of the Indigenous Peoples Policy, the Secretariat hereby approves the Terms of Reference for the establishment of the IPAG.

II. Role and functions

5. Pursuant to paragraph 81 of the Policy, the roles and functions of the IPAG are to:
 - a) provide advice to the Indigenous Peoples focal point, national designated authorities, and accredited entities and executing entities on GCF-financed activities affecting Indigenous Peoples;
 - b) review the implementation and monitoring of this Policy, particularly on the appropriate modality to enhance dialogue among Indigenous Peoples, GCF, States, accredited entities and executing entities, and other experts; and
 - c) provide guidance and advice to the Board as may be requested.
6. The roles and functions of the IPAG will be conducted with the support of the Secretariat. Pursuant to paragraph 80 of the Policy, the Indigenous Peoples focal point appointed by the Secretariat (the “Indigenous Peoples Focal Point”) will manage all coordination and communication between the IPAG and other stakeholders, in relation to the activities of the IPAG.

¹ Available at <<https://www.greenclimate.fund/documents/indigenous-peoples-policy>>.

7. Pursuant to paragraph 83 of the Policy, the Secretariat will also consult the IPAG, among other stakeholders, in relation to the development of operational guidelines containing technical and administrative references, best practices, guidance and tools for implementing the Policy.

III. Membership

8. The IPAG will be made up of four Indigenous Peoples representatives, and alternates, from the regions of developing states where the GCF may fund activities. As per the socio-cultural regional groupings of Indigenous Peoples identified by the United Nations, the relevant regions of developing states where the GCF may fund activities include: Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe and Central Asia, Latin America, the Caribbean, and Pacific.

8 bis. Membership of the IPAG shall include both members and alternate members.²

9. To the extent possible, the composition of the IPAG membership should have due consideration given to gender balance.

10. The term of office for members of the IPAG (including alternates) is three (3) years. Members are eligible to serve no more than two (2) consecutive terms. Rotation of the IPAG membership will be considered taking into account the need to preserve the continuity of the roles and functions of the IPAG. Exceptionally the current term of office for members of the IPAG (including alternates) will run until the end of 2026.

10bis. IPAG will play a role in ensuring awareness of the nomination process, and assisting to disseminate the call.³

10ter. Alternate members may come from any of the eligible regions.⁴

10quat. If any member has to step down then they shall nominate their replacement for the consideration of the IPAG.

10quin. Rotation of the IPAG membership will be considered taking into account the need to preserve the continuity of the roles and functions of the IPAG.⁵

IIIbis Quorum and decision making

10sex. A duly constituted meeting of the IPAG requires participation of more than half of the members of the full IPAG.⁶

10sept. Decisions taken at meetings of the IPAG shall be adopted by consensus of the members participating in the meeting.⁷

10oct. A physical meeting of the IPAG requires the participation of at least half the members of the full IPAG.⁸

IV. Competencies and factors to be considered for the IPAG membership

² From the IPAG 1 recommendation on the TORs - RAS 7.

³ From the IPAG 1 recommendation on the TORs - RAS 12 as revised by IPAG 6.

⁴ From the IPAG 1 recommendation on the TORs - RAS 12 as revised by IPAG 6.

⁵ From the IPAG 6 recommendation on the TORs.

⁶ From the IPAG 1 recommendation on the TORs - RAS 9 as revised by IPAG 6.

⁷ From the IPAG 1 recommendation on the TORs - RAS 9 as revised by IPAG 6.

⁸ From the IPAG 1 recommendation on the TORs - RAS 9 as revised by IPAG 6.

11. In addition to regional representation and balance, membership of the IPAG will also reflect other competencies and factors that aim to ensure appropriate competencies and expertise, as well as adequate representation of the variety and plurality of needs and vulnerabilities of Indigenous Peoples in different regions. As the self-selection process is undertaken, Indigenous Peoples organizations may wish to consider cross-regional coordination in respect to the nomination of candidates. Competencies and factors relevant in the self-selection process for nomination of candidates include -but are not limited to- the following:

- a) An indigenous representative, living in the respective regions and self-identifies as indigenous to a particular group from the regions of developing states where the GCF may fund activities;
- b) An active member of an Indigenous Peoples organization and preferably having a membership to existing regional, sub-regional or national networks/platforms of Indigenous Peoples;
- c) Demonstrated ability and willingness to represent the views of Indigenous Peoples and their organizations in the respective region(s) and globally;
- d) Knowledge of climate change processes and climate change finance, including the UNFCCC negotiations and outcomes related to financing, in particular, knowledge of the Green Climate Fund mandate and architecture, including familiarity with GCF processes within the region and country, as well as knowledge and/or previous engagement in other climate funds;
- e) In-depth understanding of Indigenous Peoples issues, rights and situations in their regions;
- f) Demonstrated ability, transparency and accountability to disseminate information arising from their GCF-related activities back to their respective communities and regional networks;
- g) Willingness and commitment to actively participate in the activities of the IPAG;
- h) Demonstrated commitment to the ideals of consensus and solidarity building among Indigenous Peoples, hence able to function without bias with regards to nationality, ethnicity, gender or organizational and language or any other affiliations or identities; and
- i) Demonstrated good negotiation and diplomatic skills and competence when working with a diverse range of constituencies, including Indigenous Peoples, State parties, UN agencies and civil society organizations.

13. Pursuant to the Information Disclosure Policy of the GCF, the working language of the GCF is English. Accordingly, all official matters and documents of the IPAG shall be in English.

V. Self-selection process for nomination of IPAG membership⁹

14. The Secretariat will formally initiate the regional self-selection process, by issuing a call for nominations inviting Indigenous Peoples to self-select and submit proposals for their representatives from relevant regions of developing states where the GCF may fund activities. The

⁹ As per Paragraph 81 of the Indigenous Peoples Policy, the advisory group members will be selected through an indigenous peoples-led, self-selection process for each region and should be gender balanced.

Secretariat will also establish and manage the stages of this process, including any formal requirements for the submission of nominations and timeframes for each stage.

15. The self-selection process will be carried out by Indigenous Peoples through their regional self-selection processes. To ensure broadest distribution to Indigenous Peoples, the Secretariat will inform international indigenous networks and GCF observer organizations of the call for nominations.

16. The regional self-selection process may be undertaken by Indigenous Peoples in accordance with their respective contexts, utilizing the modalities that best suits them. Nominations from Indigenous Peoples may detail the regional self-selection processes undertaken and may also include a list of indigenous organizations who endorse the nomination and took part in the selection process.

17. In addition to the commitment to ensure that the candidate(s) nominated to the IPAG meet the requisite competencies and factors described above, each region should give due consideration to gender inclusivity.

18. The self-selection period will commence immediately after the Secretariat's publication of the call for nominations and will conclude with the announcement of the relevant IPAG membership, as approved by the Secretariat in accordance with these Terms of Reference, within the timeframes established by the Secretariat, to the extent possible. For avoidance of doubt, the Secretariat will launch and conduct similar processes for the replacement of individual IPAG member(s) whose appointment(s) cease for any reason, as well as for the self-selection of new IPAG membership, in order to ensure the continuity of the IPAG's roles and functions.

19. The nominees to the IPAG from each of the regions will be transmitted to the Secretariat through the Indigenous Peoples Focal Point. The Secretariat will notify the Board and Active Observers of the outcome of the regional self-selection process and the appointment of the IPAG members, for the Board's information, and also make such information publicly available.

20. Support to the self-selection process, through organizing either regional or global meetings, may be considered for future selection processes.

VI. Modalities of work

20 bis. IPAG can appoint alternative representation of the IPAG for meetings that none of the IPAG members can participate.¹⁰

21. To support the implementation and monitoring of the Policy, an annual workplan will be developed by the IPAG, in consultation with the Indigenous Peoples Focal Point. Meetings of the IPAG will be held twice a year (either in a physical or virtual settings, as may be determined by the IPAG members and in consultation with the Indigenous Peoples Focal Point) and will be organized and supported by the Secretariat.

22. Outcomes of all discussions and workplan of the IPAG will be provided in a summary of meetings, which shall be shared by the Indigenous Peoples Focal Point.

22bis. Digital recordings of the meetings only for the purposes of Secretariat report-writing are permitted.¹¹

¹⁰ From IPAG 6.

¹¹ From the IPAG 1 recommendation on the TORs - RAS 10.

22ter. Documents and presentations presented at meetings shall remain internal to the full IPAG and should not be shared outside of the IPAG and Secretariat.¹²

22quat. Confidential items shall be decided upon on a case-by-case basis and shall not be included in any publicly disclosed outcomes/summaries.¹³

22quin. Reports of the meeting shall be considered as endorsed on a no-objection basis within one week of distribution to the full IPAG via email. Any issues pertaining to the draft reports can be raised by email copying the full IPAG.¹⁴

22sex. Endorsed summaries of the meetings could be made publicly available.¹⁵

22sept. Reports of its meetings will be transmitted to the Board through the Secretariat's reports on its activities to the Board when applicable.¹⁶

22oct. The Secretariat will support the IPAG to convey the reports of its meeting to the UNFCCC and other relevant meetings.¹⁷

22nov. In light of the Board's decision to review policies on as needed basis, the IPAG will advise the Board when it agrees there is a need for a review of the IPP.¹⁸

23. Observer members, including any personnel of the GCF Secretariat and the GCF Independent Units may be invited by the IPAG via the Indigenous Peoples Focal Point to participate in the non-confidential meetings or sessions of the IPAG as deemed necessary in order to enhance the capacity of its work.

24. Outcomes of the IPAG meetings or activities will be made publicly available by the Secretariat in accordance with the Information Disclosure Policy of the GCF.

25. The IPAG may also develop its own rules and procedures for the activities and functions of the group, subject to and in a manner consistent with the Policy and these Terms of Reference, that are necessary to enhance transparency and effectively guide and facilitate the conduct of its roles and functions, including its meetings. The IPAG will submit to the Secretariat via the Indigenous Peoples Focal Point such additional rules and procedures or revisions thereto for their review and endorsement.

26. The IPAG and its members will be bound by these Terms of Reference.

27. In the event of any conflicts between these Terms of Reference and the Policy in respect of matters set out in the Policy, the Policy will prevail.

VII. Revision and termination of the Terms of Reference of the advisory group

28. The Secretariat may revise these Terms of Reference as necessary in order to incorporate lessons learned, as well as to reflect the evolving needs of the GCF or any revisions adopted by the Board to the Policy.

¹² From the IPAG 1 recommendation on the TORs - RAS 10.

¹³ From the IPAG 1 recommendation on the TORs - RAS 10.

¹⁴ From the IPAG 1 recommendation on the TORs - RAS 11.

¹⁵ From the IPAG 1 recommendation on the TORs - RAS 11.

¹⁶ From the IPAG 1 recommendation on the TORs - RAS 4.

¹⁷ From IPAG 6.

¹⁸ From IPAG 6.

29. The mandate of the IPAG set out in the Policy may be revised by the Board, if deemed necessary.