
GCF GOVERNANCE POLICY

JUNE 2014 UPDATE

I. Introduction

The GCF's 2009-2010 Joint Action Plan (JAP) establishes the objectives of the GCF and contains three pages focused on GCF Composition, Governance, and Responsibilities.¹ At the 4th GCF Meeting in Santarém, Pará in September 2010, the GCF devoted a full day to the in depth discussion of these and other issues, seeking to gauge member input on, and concerns about, the GCF's objectives, structure, roles and responsibilities, and governance procedures.² The procedures used for the Santarém session and all of the input received from members that day is available in [Appendix 1 \(2010 Business Meeting Governance Summary\)](#), which formed the basis for this GCF Governance Policy.

In Santarém, the members determined that the GCF Secretariat, in coordination with an ad-hoc group of seven volunteer GCF representatives,³ would develop a draft Governance Policy to supplement the Joint Action Plan provisions on Composition, Governance, and Responsibilities. The GCF members identified the following priority issues for coverage in the Governance Policy (in order of importance to the members):

1. General Governance
2. Decision-making Policy
3. Membership Policy
4. Technical/advisory Body Procedures
5. Meeting Procedures

The members added Fundraising Procedures to this list in 2013. In addition, in 2010 the members identified formalizing a stakeholder involvement policy and a developing a fundraising strategy as important. A GCF Stakeholder Involvement

¹ [GCF Joint Action Plan](#) (August 2009), at 8-10; [Joint Action Plan Appendices](#).

² The process was facilitated by Luis Meneses (former GCF consultant) and Paul DeLong (former GCF representative from the State of Wisconsin).

³ Juliane Mello (Amazonas) (not available to assist post-Santarém); Natalie Unterstell (Amazonas) (no longer with the state government); Yakob Ishademy (Aceh) (no longer with the state government); Ilarius Wibisono (Aceh) (no longer with the state government); Arikpo Arikpo (Cross River State); Monica de Los Rios (Acre); and Paul DeLong (Wisconsin) (new Governor of Wisconsin has withdrawn from the GCF).

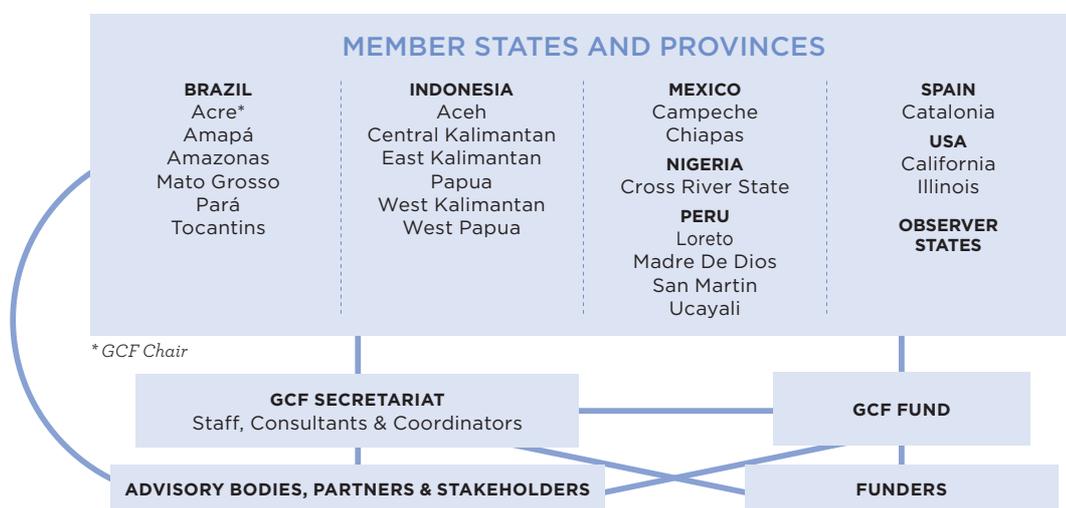
Policy was finalized later that year,⁴ and fundraising efforts focused in 2011-2013 on the development of the GCF Fund.

In August 2011, the Secretariat circulated the draft Governance Policy for review by the members of the ad-hoc group, the Country Coordinators in Brazil and Indonesia⁵ for discussion among those states and provinces, and to the GCF members in the U.S., Mexico, and Nigeria directly. This version incorporates all input received from the members.

All guidance from the JAP is specifically noted where relevant. If not specifically noted, the text below represents new recommendations and requirements.

II. General Governance

A. CURRENT GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE



B. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF GCF GOVERNING BODIES & DELEGATES

1. Governors

The GCF Governors are required to designate two representatives to the GCF (JAP at 8). They are also expected to provide high-level input to the GCF process, ensure the GCF delegates have the time and resources they need to participate in the GCF process, and facilitate a smooth transition to new leadership when relevant.

2. GCF Assembly

⁴ [GCF Guidance Document on Stakeholder Involvement](#) (October 2010).

⁵ The only Coordinators in place at that time.

The “GCF Assembly” refers to the body of GCF state and province representatives, which makes executive decisions on key matters for the GCF (JAP at 9). It is composed of two representatives selected by the Governor of each member state and province (JAP at 8).⁶ Governors may designate individuals from NGOs and other entities to act as representatives for the states and provinces (JAP at 8). Each GCF state/province can designate additional observer, non-voting governmental participants in GCF activities from their state/province (JAP at 8).

Starting in 2011, the Assembly meets once a year and often (more informally) at the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Conference of the Parties. The Assembly is responsible for making major decisions relevant to the activities of the GCF, including establishing GCF priorities, approving GCF policy documents, the admission of new members, and fundamental changes in the role or composition of the GCF. It oversees the work of the Secretariat, Coordinators, and the GCF Technical Advisory Bodies (see below).

The GCF Assembly is led by the Chair state or province who serves for one calendar year (JAP at 8) (see Chair below).

Observer states, provinces, and other government representatives and other stakeholders are permitted to attend GCF meetings and offer input to the GCF and Technical Advisory Bodies, with the exception of closed sessions limited to GCF members (see Observers below).

3. GCF Members & Representatives (see also New Member Policy below)

The GCF members are those states and provinces that were (1) part of the founding member group (signatories of 2008 MOUs and Acre); or (2) nominated by a founding GCF member and approved for formal membership by consensus (see Decision-making below) by the GCF Assembly (JAP at 8-9). Members are expected to:

1. Make executive decisions on recommendations to implement the MOU forest sector provisions (JAP at 10).
2. Work with the other members to share lessons learned and coordinate GCF activities with members from the same country with their respective national governments (JAP at 10).
3. Respond to GCF communications and deliverables.
4. Attend and actively participate in GCF meetings and Technical Advisory Bodies.
5. Engage with stakeholders in their state/province.
6. Nominate stakeholders to provide input to GCF deliverables and participate in GCF meetings and other events.
7. Create and dissolve Technical/Advisory bodies, and approve Secretariat proposals for the hiring of technical consultants to assist with deliverables.

⁶ The founding states and provinces are Acre, Amapá, Amazonas, Mato Grosso, Pará, Aceh, Papua, California, Illinois, and Wisconsin (which withdrew in 2011). The other GCF members as of 2014 are East Kalimantan, West Kalimantan, Central Kalimantan, West Papua, Tocantins, Madre de Dios, San Martin, Loreto, Ucayali, Catalonia, Cross River State, Campeche, and Chiapas.

8. Nominate technical representatives to participate on Technical/Advisory bodies.
9. Assist the Secretariat in identifying needed consultant and expert support.
10. Ensure smooth transitions between administrations or during other time of staff turnover.
11. Disseminate information about GCF activities.
12. Identify institutional and funding support for their GCF activities.
13. Regularly update the GCF members, Coordinators and Secretariat about REDD+ advances in their state/province, including through the GCF Knowledge Database effort.

4. Executive Committee(s)

The GCF members may form an Executive Committee to provide member guidance and oversight to the Secretariat and Coordinators on fundraising, governance, and other organizational issues.

5. Chair

The GCF Assembly is led by a Chair. The chairmanship of the GCF rotates annually and must be held by a different state or province and country every year (JAP at 8). The Chair is selected and voted upon by the Assembly and begins duties on the 1st of the following year. The Chair is expected to:

1. Help to organize and define the agenda for the GCF Assembly Annual Meeting, which may or may not be held in the Chair's state or province.
2. Lead the GCF Assembly Annual Meeting in coordination with the Secretariat.
3. Develop the annual workplan with the Secretariat and members.
4. Identify and secure finances to implement GCF activities.
5. Coordinate with GCF states and provinces through regular meetings (telephone and otherwise).
6. Assist with new member issues and recruitment (particularly from the demand side).
7. Assist with stakeholder/intergovernmental outreach and coordination.
8. Conduct decision-making processes and consulting with the members when there is a need for such actions outside of the GCF Assembly Annual Meeting.

6. Secretariat

The GCF Secretariat is comprised of a small paid professional staff currently based at the University of Colorado. The Secretariat of the GCF has the authority to coordinate the work of the GCF, keep the efforts of the GCF running smoothly, and ensure the continuity of the GCF's efforts. The Secretariat is responsible for:

1. Communicating with the GCF Chair and Assembly members (in part through the Coordinators where relevant) using methods that keep lines of communication clear and open.
2. Implementing decisions and strategic planning approved by the members.

3. Ensuring that work products are completed and deadlines are met by any GCF Technical Advisory Bodies and consultants.
4. Working with members to produce and review background documents for the GCF meetings and other GCF reports.
5. Interfacing with GCF members, donors, NGOs and other stakeholders and partners on behalf of the GCF.
6. Assisting in outreach and coordination with the broader REDD policy community.
7. Keeping the GCF informed of relevant issues in the broader REDD policy debates that could impact the GCF process.
8. Overseeing the GCF process, grant administration, and project management, including coordinating all technical and financial reports to the donors, coordinating and helping facilitate meetings and activities amongst the states, consultants, and stakeholders, and retaining Technical/Advisory Body consultants.

7. Technical/Advisory Bodies & Consultants (see also Technical/Advisory Body Procedures below)

GCF Technical/Advisory Bodies develop recommendations regarding the regulatory and institutional infrastructure necessary to generate compliance-grade offsets from REDD and other international forest carbon and low emission development activities. In the past, the GCF has had 7 Technical/Advisory Bodies: three Working Groups formed in 2009; and four Task Groups formed in May 2010 specifically to guide activities from the 2010 Annual Meeting in Aceh into 2011. The three Working Groups are currently “dormant” as the GCF continues to focus on the implementation of the four Task Group mandates established by the members at the 2010 Annual Meeting in Aceh (Jurisdictional Frameworks, Financing/Fund, Database, and Communications & Stakeholder Outreach) and the two new activities funded by Norad (Training Program and Support Network). The GCF Secretariat and Technical/Advisory Bodies may organize technical workshops to produce issue-specific technical work, the results of which will be reported to the GCF Assembly. Individuals or organizations may be retained by the GCF Secretariat as Consultants in response to a GCF Assembly or Technical Advisory Body need to prepare specific deliverables for the GCF's consideration.⁷

8. GCF Coordinators

In 2010, the GCF created the positions of GCF Coordinators for the GCF states in Brazil and GCF provinces in Indonesia. In 2013, the GCF added a Coordinator for Mexico and in 2014 one for Peru. The states/provinces are involved in the selection and renewal processes for the Coordinators.

⁷ To date, in addition to Coordinators, translators, graphic design, printers, and vendors associated with the Annual Meeting and other events, the GCF has retained John Nickerson (CAR 2009), Terra Global Capital (Working Group 2, Task 1, 2010), John O. Niles/Tropical Forest Group (Task 1, 2, 2010-2011), Luis Meneses (Task 3 Brazil, 2010), Emerald Planet/Jim Davie & Toby Garrit (Task 3 Indonesia, 2010-2012), Keyvan Izadi (Task 3, Assembly Annual Meeting assistance, Summer/Fall 2011-2012), Hope Consulting (2012), IPAM (Task 3, Database technical review and input, 2011-2012), Michael Dutschke (2013), Markit on Demand (Task 3, Database, 2012-2013), Darren Anderson/Radial Programming (Database, website, Network 2014), and Kate Hamilton (Database, financing, 2013-14) for specific input and deliverables.

The Secretariat develops an individual Scope of Work each year for each Coordinator, but in general GCF Coordinators are expected to:

1. Communicate regularly with the GCF member states to provide input on GCF activities and deliverables to the Chair, Secretariat, and other Coordinators.
2. Facilitate information-sharing opportunities and technical support for the GCF states/provinces.
3. Act as the hub for the states/provinces to collaborate among themselves and with the federal government in an effort to develop a common approach to REDD and low emissions development.
4. Assist in the effort to develop deeper collaborations with new administrations and current and potential partners.
5. Assist in the organization of and state/province participation in GCF meetings.
6. Participate on GCF Technical/Advisory Bodies and provide input and feedback on GCF deliverables.
7. Assist with the development of GCF communications materials.
8. Forward meeting notes and other relevant documents that have been approved by the states and provinces to the Secretariat.

The GCF Secretariat serves in this role informally for California, Illinois, Cross River State, and Catalonia.

9. Observers (see also Observer & New Member Procedures below)

Observers are states and provinces interested in learning more about the GCF by participating in GCF activities. Jurisdictions interested in being an observer must complete the steps outlined in Section IV below and be approved as an observer by a consensus of the current GCF members. While there are no formal rules governing participation, it is expected that observers will participate in all sessions of the GCF Assembly Annual Meeting except for closed GCF business sessions. A jurisdiction must be an observer for one year before it can seek membership as outlined in Section IV below.

As a general matter, the GCF does not fund observers to attend the GCF Assembly Annual Meeting.

10. Stakeholders

GCF Stakeholders are non-governmental organizations (representatives from non-state/province entities, including non-profit organizations, academia, the private sector, and inter-governmental organizations) and individuals who have expressed interest in being involved in the GCF activities. This may be in one of several ways, including (1) a GCF member invited them to participate on a GCF Technical Advisory Body; (2) the stakeholder expressed interest in staying informed of the GCF activities; and/or (3) the stakeholder expressed interest in attending the open portions of a GCF workshop or meeting (to date GCF meetings have been open to any interested individuals, limited only by space and resource limitations). More information about stakeholder involvement is available in the [GCF Guidance Document on Stakeholder Involvement](#).

11. Partners/Donors

GCF Partners/Donors include entities that provide support to the GCF, most notably the funders of the project to date: The Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation (2009-2013), ClimateWorks Foundation (2010-2013), the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (2013-2015), and the David and Lucile Packard Foundation (2009).⁸

III. Decision making procedures

1. Each member state and province has one (1) voting member
2. Decisions are made by consensus whenever possible (JAP at 8).
3. If after a first round of discussion, there is no consensus, there is a reply round of discussions at which point, the majority decision of 2/3 of those members present and voting is followed, with dissenting opinions or alternative views noted (JAP at 8).
4. If a 2/3 vote is not achieved, the decision is tabled.
5. Decisions that are within the purview of the members include but are not limited to new members, GCF Chair, establishment of GCF priorities, and establishment of new technical/advisory bodies.

IV. Observer & new member procedures

A. OBSERVERS

1. Observers are states and provinces interested in learning more about the GCF by participating in GCF activities (see above). Becoming an observer is the first step to full GCF membership. Jurisdictions must be an observer for one year prior to seeking full membership.
2. A jurisdiction seeking official GCF observer status must submit a Letter of Interest in Observer Status to the GCF Secretariat and GCF Chair from a high-ranking official in the state/province, which introduces the jurisdiction to the GCF, requests observer status, describes its interest in the GCF, low emissions rural development, and REDD+ and designates a representative for purposes of GCF communication.
3. Observer status must be approved by consensus by the current GCF members.
4. Observers are encouraged to participate in GCF activities, including all sessions of the GCF Assembly Annual Meeting except for closed sessions designated for member states and provinces only.
5. As a general matter, there is no funding to support observer attendance at GCF meetings.
6. Observers with interest in becoming a member shall follow the new member process described below. Observers may also choose to remain as observers.

⁸ In recent years, support from the Moore and Climate Works Foundations has come through the Climate and Land Use Alliance (CLUA).

B. New Members

1. Jurisdictions interested in becoming a member of the GCF are required to be an observer for at least one year. Once that condition is met, the Governor of the jurisdiction must submit a Letter of Interest in Membership to the GCF Secretariat and GCF Chair. The letter must explain the state/province's interest in becoming a member and its experiences as an observer, confirm its commitment to the GCF's goals and objectives, and identify who its two designated GCF representatives would be.⁹
 - Tropical forest states/provinces are expected to provide background information about their forests, deforestation drivers and rates, experience with low emissions rural development and REDD+, related laws, policies, projects and programs (both existing and planned), what they anticipate contributing and gaining from GCF membership, and any other relevant information.
 - Jurisdictions from developed countries are expected to provide background information about their climate change laws, policies, programs, and activities, what they anticipate contributing and gaining from GCF membership, and their interest in reduced emissions from tropical deforestation and land use.
2. The letter from the Governor must be accompanied by a letter of support from a founding GCF member (California, Illinois, Acre, Amapá, Amazonas, Para, Mato Grosso, Aceh, and Papua) (JAP at 9) that explains why the state/province should be admitted to GCF. Jurisdictions seeking membership are encouraged to participate in GCF activities and interact with GCF members during their time as an observer to help facilitate this process.
3. The GCF Secretariat will present the letters to the GCF members for their consideration before the vote at the GCF Assembly Annual Meeting. The jurisdiction will continue to be an observer during this time period before the vote (see above for more information on observers).
4. Votes on new members must take place at the GCF Assembly Annual meeting, except under special circumstances. It is recommended that a representative from the jurisdiction seeking membership attend the Assembly Annual Meeting at which the members will vote.
5. New members must be accepted by consensus (JAP at 9).
6. New members will have the same rights as founding members, with the exception of the ability to nominate a new member. (JAP at 8).
7. New members are required to adopt all key GCF documents such as the [JAP](#), [Stakeholder Policy](#) and other GCF governance documents and task group deliverables. (JAP at 9).

⁹ There has been discussion in the past about whether there should be additional membership criteria (recruitment, removal/retirement of members).

8. New members are expected to engage as outlined in Section 3 (GCF Members & Representatives) above.

V. Technical/advisory body procedures

1. The GCF Assembly may create Technical/Advisory Bodies by consensus.
2. The GCF Technical/Advisory Bodies may develop recommendations regarding the technical, regulatory, and institutional infrastructure necessary to build jurisdictional programs for REDD+ and low emission development programs.
3. The Technical/Advisory Bodies in coordination with the Secretariat may recruit GCF members, stakeholders, and private consultants to participate on and produce the work products of the Technical/Advisory Bodies.
4. The GCF Technical/Advisory Bodies report to the GCF Assembly and are supervised by the Leads (designated either by the GCF Assembly or by the Technical/Advisory Body members) and by the Secretariat.¹⁰
5. The Lead is responsible for framing the Body's objectives, developing the timeline for its deliverables, dedicating time to completion of the deliverables (including overseeing with the Secretariat any consultants retained by the Technical/Advisory Body for this purpose as well as engaging with the Body's members to provide input), and encouraging the participation and input of stakeholders into its work products.
6. The GCF Secretariat and the Technical/Advisory Bodies may organize technical workshops to produce issue-specific technical work, the results of which will be reported to the GCF Assembly.

VI. Meeting procedures

1. There is one GCF Assembly Annual Meeting per year¹¹ and may be one less formal gathering at the UNFCCC COP (see above).
2. The GCF Assembly Annual Meeting may be held in any location chosen by the members, including a GCF state or province.
3. The agenda for these meetings is developed by the Chair, Secretariat, and Coordinators, with input from the GCF members and any consultants.
4. The Chair runs the Annual Meeting with assistance from the Secretariat and Coordinators.

¹⁰ Currently, the 4 Task Groups are supervised and led by the Secretariat. It has been very challenging to get state/province representatives to participate in these groups substantively and regularly throughout the year. The current approach has been to send news and deliverables for review to the members (via the Coordinators where relevant) when review and input is needed.

¹¹ The GCF Annual Meeting location changes every year, but there are no GCF rules governing this issue. It may be a good idea to leave this flexible because it may even make sense to hold an Annual Meeting outside of the GCF states and provinces for ease of travel or to coincide with another important event or opportunity.

5. Participation is open to stakeholders whenever feasible, but some meetings or sessions have limited capacity and/or are closed for resolution of internal GCF matters.
6. The Assembly Annual Meeting will include a closed business session for the GCF members, Coordinators, and Secretariat to discuss GCF governance, financial, and strategic planning objectives and issues. Minutes reflecting all important decisions taken will be taken and approved at the end of each closed business session.
7. Additional workshops/trainings and meetings occur in the GCF regions, depending on the priorities and funding available for a given year.

VII. Fundraising procedures

1. The GCF Secretariat acts as the lead in submitting proposals for general GCF support to funders.
2. Funding proposals will be aligned with the priorities established by the Members at the GCF Assembly Annual Meeting.
3. The Secretariat will work with the Coordinators to the extent feasible on funding proposals and provide advance notice to the GCF Members of any funding proposals it intends to submit.