



GCF TASK FORCE GOVERNANCE POLICY

2023 UPDATE¹

Background

The Governors' Climate & Forests (GCF) Task Force's 2009-2010 [Joint Action Plan](#) (JAP) established the objectives of the GCF Task Force and included provisions on GCF Task Force Composition, Governance, and Responsibilities. At the 4th GCF Task Force Meeting in Santarém (Pará) in September 2010, the delegates devoted a full day to the in-depth discussion of these issues, seeking member input on the GCF Task Force's objectives, structure, roles and responsibilities, and governance procedures. The process was facilitated by Luis Meneses (former GCF Task Force consultant from Acre) and Paul DeLong (former GCF Task Force delegate from the State of Wisconsin). Details on the Santarém session are available in [the 2010 Business Meeting Governance Summary](#), which formed the basis for this GCF Task Force Governance Policy.

In Santarém, the members determined that the GCF Task Force Secretariat, in coordination with an ad-hoc group of seven volunteer GCF Task Force delegates,² would develop a draft Governance Policy to supplement the Joint Action Plan provisions on Composition, Governance, and Responsibilities. Those delegates identified five priority issues for coverage in the Governance Policy (in order of importance to the members), and a sixth for Fundraising Procedures was added to the list in 2013 at the recommendation of the members:

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

In 2011, this Governance Policy was adopted by the GCF Task Force members along with a [GCF Task Force Stakeholder Involvement Policy](#).

All guidance from the 2009-2010 JAP is specifically noted where relevant. If not specifically noted, the text below represents recommendations and requirements provided and approved by the GCF Task Force Members since 2009.

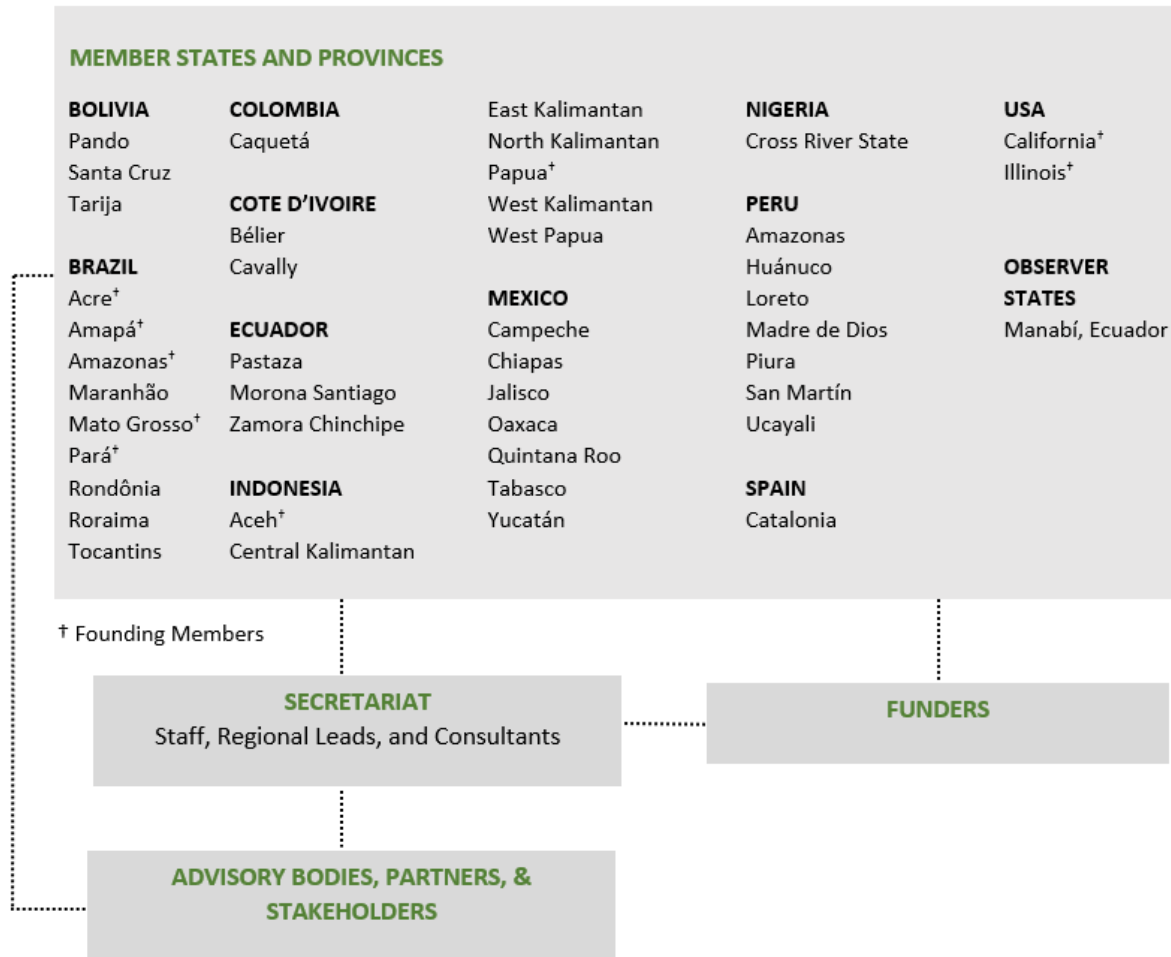
¹ The GCF Task Force Governance Policy was developed in 2011 and updated in 2014, 2018, 2022, and 2023.

² Juliane Mello (Amazonas) Natalie Unterstell (Amazonas); Yakob Ishademy (Aceh); Ilarius Wibisono (Aceh); Arikpo Arikpo (Cross River State); Monica de Los Rios (Acre); and Paul DeLong (Wisconsin).



I. General Governance

A. CURRENT GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE



B. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF GCF TASK FORCE GOVERNING BODIES & DELEGATES

1. Governors

The GCF Task Force Governors are required to designate two representatives to the GCF Task Force (JAP at 8) through a letter to the GCF Task Force Secretariat. If these designated representatives or “delegates” change, the Governors are expected to formalize those changes through a letter to the GCF Task Force Secretariat. They are also expected to provide high-level input to the GCF Task Force process, ensure the GCF Task Force delegates have the time and resources they need to participate in the GCF Task Force process, and facilitate a smooth transition to new leadership when relevant.

2 - GCF Task Force Governance Policy



2. GCF Task Force Assembly

The “GCF Task Force Assembly” refers to the body of GCF Task Force state, province, department, and region³ delegates, which makes executive decisions on key matters for the GCF Task Force (JAP at 9). It is composed of two delegates selected by the Governor of each member state and province (JAP at 8).⁴ Delegates should be political appointees and/or civil servants of the state/province, and only in limited circumstances can be individuals from NGOs and other entities chosen to act as representatives for the state/province (JAP at 8). Each GCF Task Force state/province can designate additional observer, non-voting governmental participants in GCF Task Force activities from their state/province (JAP at 8). In the event an officially appointed delegate is unable to participate in a meeting(s), the respective Governor may appoint an alternate or replacement delegate(s) to represent the state/province for that meeting. The appointment of an alternate or replacement delegate will be communicated in writing to the Secretariat in advance of the meeting, with appropriate Governor authorization.

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

The GCF Task Force 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 Task Force meetings and offer input to the GCF Task Force and Technical Advisory Bodies, with the exception of closed sessions limited to GCF Task Force members (see Observers below).

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

The GCF Task Force 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 Task Force member and approved for formal membership by consensus (see Decision-making below) by the GCF Task Force Assembly (JAP at 8-9). Members are expected to:

³ Collectively referred to herein as state/province, or state and province.

⁴ The founding states and provinces are Acre, Amapá, Amazonas, Mato Grosso, Pará, Aceh, Papua, California, Illinois, and Wisconsin (which withdrew in 2011).



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 Task Force activities with members from the same country with their respective national governments (JAP at 10).
3. Respond to GCF Task Force communications and deliverables.
4. Attend and actively participate in GCF Task Force meetings and Technical Advisory Bodies.
5. Engage with stakeholders in their state/province to provide feedback and other input to GCF Task Force deliverables and participate in GCF Task Force meetings and other events.
6. Create and dissolve Technical/Advisory bodies and approve Secretariat proposals for the hiring of coordinators and technical consultants to the Technical/Advisory bodies to assist with deliverables.
7. Nominate technical representatives to participate on Technical/Advisory bodies.
8. Assist the Secretariat in identifying needed consultant and expert support.
9. Ensure smooth transitions between administrations or during other time of staff turnover.
10. Disseminate information about GCF Task Force activities.
11. Identify institutional and funding support for their GCF Task Force activities.
12. Regularly update the GCF Task Force members, Coordinators and Secretariat about REDD+ and low emissions development advances in their state/province, including through annual updates of the GCF Task Force Knowledge Database.

4. Executive Committee(s)

The GCF Task Force 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 Task Force Assembly is led by a Chair. The chairmanship of the GCF Task Force 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 Task Force Annual Meeting, which may or may not be held in the Chair's state or province.
2. Lead the GCF Task Force 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 Task Force activities.
5. Coordinate with GCF Task Force 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 Task Force Annual Meeting.

6. Secretariat

The GCF Task Force Secretariat is comprised of a small team of paid professional staff and faculty based at the University of California Los Angeles and the University of Colorado Boulder. The Secretariat of the GCF Task Force has the authority to coordinate the work of the GCF Task Force, keep the efforts of the GCF Task Force running smoothly, and ensure the continuity of the GCF Task Force's efforts. The Secretariat is responsible for:

1. Communicating with the GCF Task Force 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, including by facilitating the development of technical/advisory bodies and preparing guidance and policy papers relevant to advancing jurisdictional programs for REDD+/low emissions development.
3. Ensuring that work product is completed and deadlines are met by any GCF Task Force Technical Advisory Bodies, consultants, and cooperating partners as well as by the GCF Task Force as a whole (pursuant to Grant Agreements/Contracts).
4. Working with members to produce and review background documents for the GCF Task Force meetings, GCF Task Force reports, and other GCF Task Force materials.
5. Interfacing with GCF Task Force members, donors, NGOs, indigenous peoples and traditional community leaders, and other stakeholders and partners on behalf of the GCF Task Force.
6. Assisting in outreach, coordination, and linkage with the global REDD+ and low emissions development policy community, including through the formation of partnerships to strengthen the impact of the GCF Task Force's efforts.
7. Keeping the GCF Task Force informed of relevant issues in the broader REDD+ and low emissions development debates that could impact the GCF Task Force process.
8. Overseeing the GCF Task Force process, grant administration, and project management, coordinating all technical and financial reports to the donors, coordinating and helping facilitate meetings and activities amongst the members, cooperating partners, and stakeholders, and retaining and managing coordinators and Technical/Advisory Body consultants.
9. Fundraising to support the continuity and growth of the GCF Task Force network (including for strategic partnerships, policy innovation, communications, global meetings, and regional processes).



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

GCF Task Force 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 Task Force has had multiple Technical/Advisory Bodies: three Working Groups formed in 2009; four Task Groups formed in May 2010 specifically to guide activities from the 2010 Annual Meeting in Aceh into 2011 (Jurisdictional Frameworks, Financing/Fund, Database, and Communications & Stakeholder Outreach); and the Global Committee on Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities. The GCF Task Force 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 Task Force Assembly. Individuals or organizations may be retained by the GCF Task Force Secretariat as Consultants in response to a GCF Task Force Assembly or Technical Advisory Body need to prepare specific deliverables for the GCF Task Force's consideration.⁵

8. GCF Task Force Coordinators

In 2010, the GCF Task Force created the positions of GCF Task Force Coordinators for the GCF Task Force states in Brazil and GCF Task Force provinces in Indonesia. The GCF Task Force added a Coordinator for Mexico in 2013, a Coordinator in Peru in 2014, and a Coordinator in Ecuador in 2023. The states/provinces are involved in the selection and renewal processes for the Coordinators, which are typically non-profit organizations that operate in the countries where the GCF Task Force has its broadest presence.

The Secretariat develops an annual Scope of Work for each Coordinator, which received a sub-contract from the University of Colorado through June 2022 and then from the University of California Los Angeles. In general, GCF Task Force Coordinators are expected to:

1. Communicate regularly with the GCF Task Force member states to provide input on GCF Task Force activities and deliverables to the Chair, Secretariat, and other Coordinators.
2. Facilitate information-sharing opportunities and technical support for the GCF Task Force states/provinces.

⁵ To date, in addition to Coordinators, translators, graphic design, printers, and vendors associated with the Annual Meeting and other events, the GCF Task Force 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, 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.



3. Act as the hub for the states/provinces to collaborate among themselves and coordinate with national processes 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 as well as current and potential partners.
5. Provide technical expertise and guidance to the members on REDD+ and low emissions development.
6. Assist in the organization of regional meetings and facilitate state/province participation in GCF Task Force Annual and other international meetings.
7. Participate on any GCF Task Force Technical/Advisory Bodies and provide input and feedback on GCF Task Force deliverables pursuant to Grant Agreements/Contracts.
8. Assist with the development of GCF Task Force communications materials.
9. Prepare and share meeting notes and other relevant documents that have been approved by the states and provinces with the Secretariat.
10. Lead fundraising efforts to support regional GCF Task Force activities and priorities

The GCF Task Force Secretariat serves in this role informally for California, Illinois, Caquetá, Cross River State, Belier, Cavally, Catalonia, Pando, Santa Cruz, and Tarija.

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

Observers are states and provinces interested in learning more about the GCF Task Force by participating in GCF Task Force 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 Task Force members. While there are no formal rules governing participation, it is expected that observers will participate in all sessions of the GCF Task Force Assembly Meeting except for closed GCF Task Force 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 Task Force does not fund observers to attend the GCF Task Force Annual Meeting.

10. Stakeholders

GCF Task Force 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 Task Force activities. This may be in one of several ways, including (1) a GCF Task Force member invited them to participate on a GCF Task Force 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 Task Force workshop or meeting (to date GCF Task Force 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 Task Force Guidance Document on Stakeholder Involvement.⁶

11. Partners/Donors

GCF Task Force Partners/Donors include entities that provide support to the GCF Task Force, most notably the funders of the project to date: the David and Lucile Packard Foundation (2009), the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation (2009-2013, 2017-18), the ClimateWorks Foundation/CLUA (2010-2013, 2018), the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (2013-2015, 2016-2020, 2020-2024), and the Rockefeller Brothers Fund (2017-2019).

In 2015, the Government of Norway made a pledge of NOK 200 million (approx. USD 24 million) to the GCF Task Force, and in 2017 the United Nations Development Programme's (UNDP) REDD+ Team was selected to administer the funds. In 2018 the GCF Task Force Secretariat entered into a formal Framework for Collaboration with the UNDP'S REDD+ Team, which describes each institution's roles and responsibilities across three primary areas of cooperation:

- i. Window A funding for jurisdictional strategies and investment plans
- ii. Window B funding for innovative approaches to reducing deforestation at the jurisdictional level
- iii. Regional coordination in Brazil, Mexico, Indonesia, Peru, Colombia and Ecuador, and Africa (Côte d'Ivoire and Nigeria).

II. Decision making procedures

1. Each member state and province has one (1) voting member within the GCF Task Force Assembly.
2. Decisions are made by the GCF Task Force Assembly by consensus whenever possible (JAP at 8). Decisions are made at the GCF Task Force Annual Meeting. In unique circumstances, the GCF Task Force Assembly may agree to make decisions by virtually (e.g., by email).⁷
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 Task Force Chair, establishment of GCF Task Force priorities, establishment and

⁶ [available to members upon request]

⁷ For example, a final vote on modifications to the GCF Task Force Governance Policy that have been discussed at an Annual Meeting may be held, upon approval by the GCF Task Force Assembly, through electronic means such as email.



updates to GCF Task Force Governance Policies and procedures, and establishment of new technical/advisory bodies.

III. Observer & new member procedures

A. OBSERVERS

1. Observers are states and provinces interested in learning more about the GCF Task Force by participating in GCF Task Force activities (see above). Becoming an observer is the first step to full GCF Task Force membership. Jurisdictions must be an observer for one year prior to seeking full membership. The Procedures for becoming an Observer are contained in Appendix A.

B. New Members

1. 2019 Decision: At the GCF Task Force Annual Meeting in Florencia, Caquetá, the GCF Task Force Members decided to put a hold on accepting new Members for six months until the membership criteria could be revised by the Executive Committee and approved at the 2020 Annual Meeting to be held in Manaus, Amazonas.⁸
2. The Executive Committee met in 2020 and 2021 to discuss the membership criteria, and based on these discussions recommended the following:
 - a. Jurisdictions that had met the existing new membership criteria (see paragraph 4 below) before the March 2022 Annual Meeting in Manaus, Amazonas, should receive a vote of the GCF Task Force Assembly; and
 - b. The New membership criteria contained in Appendix A (GCF Task Force Membership Procedures) to this GCF Task Force Governance Policy should be considered and adopted by the GCF Task Force Assembly and applied to any jurisdictions who had not met the previous membership criteria by March 2022.
3. 2016 Decision: At the GCF Task Force Annual Meeting in Guadalajara, Jalisco, the GCF Task Force Members decided to put a hold on accepting new Members until the membership criteria could be revised and approved at the 2017 Annual Meeting to be held in Balikpapan, East Kalimantan. New member criteria were not adopted at the 2017 Annual Meeting in East Kalimantan.
4. Prior to September 2016, the New Member criteria were as follows:

⁸ Due to the global COVID-19 pandemic, the 2020 Annual Meeting was postponed until March 2022.

GCF task force

- a. Jurisdictions interested in becoming a member of the GCF Task Force 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 Task Force Secretariat and GCF Task Force 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 Task Force's goals and objectives, and identify who its two designated GCF Task Force 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 Task Force 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 Task Force membership, and their interest in reduced emissions from tropical deforestation and land use.
- b. The letter from the Governor must be accompanied by a letter of support from a founding GCF Task Force 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 Task Force. Jurisdictions seeking membership are encouraged to participate in GCF Task Force activities and interact with GCF Task Force members during their time as an observer to help facilitate this process.
- c. The GCF Task Force Secretariat will present the letters to the GCF Task Force members for their consideration before the vote at the GCF Task Force Annual Meeting. The jurisdiction will continue to be an observer during this time period before the vote (see above for more information on observers).
- d. Votes on new members must take place at the GCF Task Force Annual Meeting, except under special circumstances. A representative from the jurisdiction seeking membership must attend this GCF Task Force Annual Meeting.
- e. New members must be accepted by consensus (JAP at 9).
- f. New members will have the same rights as founding members, with the exception of the ability to nominate a new member. (JAP at 8).

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



- g. New members are required to adopt all key GCF Task Force documents such as the [JAP](#), [Stakeholder Policy](#), the GCF Task Force Strategic Plan, the GCF Task Force Rio Branco Declaration, the [Manaus Action Plan](#), and other GCF Task Force governance documents identified by the Members. (JAP at 9).
- h. New members are expected to engage as outlined in Section I.B.3. (GCF Task Force Members & Representatives) above.

IV. Technical/advisory body procedures

1. The GCF Task Force Assembly may create Technical/Advisory Bodies by consensus.
2. The GCF Task Force 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 Task Force members, stakeholders, and private consultants to participate on and produce the work products of the Technical/Advisory Bodies.
4. The GCF Task Force Technical/Advisory Bodies report to the GCF Task Force Assembly and are supervised by the Leads (designated either by the GCF Task Force 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 Task Force 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 Task Force Assembly.

V. Meeting procedures

1. There is one GCF Task Force Annual Meeting per year.¹¹

¹⁰ Currently, the 4 Technical Advisory Groups are supervised and led by the Secretariat. 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 Task Force Annual Meeting location changes every year, but there are no GCF Task Force 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 Task Force states and provinces for ease of travel or to coincide with another important event or opportunity.



2. The GCF Task Force Annual Meeting may be held in any location chosen by the members, including a GCF Task Force state or province.
3. The agenda for these meetings is developed by the Chair, Secretariat, and Coordinators, with input from the GCF Task Force members and any consultants.
4. The Chair runs the Annual Meeting with assistance from the Secretariat and Coordinators.
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 Task Force matters.
6. The Annual Meeting will include a closed business session for the GCF Task Force members, Coordinators, and Secretariat to discuss GCF Task Force 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. The GCF Task Force Assembly, in whole or in part, may also meet less formally at gatherings such as at the UNFCCC COP (see above). Additional workshops/trainings and meetings occur in the GCF Task Force regions, depending on the priorities and funding available for a given year.

VI. Fundraising procedures

1. The GCF Task Force Secretariat acts as the lead in submitting proposals for general GCF Task Force support to funders.
2. Funding proposals will be aligned with the priorities established by the Members at the GCF Task Force Annual Meeting. In addition, the Secretariat will work with the Coordinators and delegates, to the extent feasible, to ensure funding proposals and activities to be funded through those proposals are aligned with jurisdiction priorities. If a jurisdiction wishes to opt-out of a specific funding proposal, the Secretariat will ensure the proposal is clear on this point.
3. The Secretariat will work with the Coordinators to the extent feasible on funding proposals and provide advance notice to the GCF Task Force Members of any funding proposals it intends to submit.