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# GCF TASK FORCE GOVERNANCE POLICY

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**2025 UPDATE**

## Background

The Governors' Climate & Forests (GCF) Task Force has adopted this Governance Policy to facilitate the operation of this unique network of states, provinces, regions, and departments. This Governance Policy builds off of a 2009-2010 [Joint Action Plan](#) that established the objectives of the GCF Task Force and included provisions on GCF Task Force Composition, Governance, and Responsibilities. The Governance Policy was initially adopted in 2011 and has been updated over the years into its present form.<sup>1</sup>

Based on those objectives, the Governance Policy is structured as follows:

- I. General Governance
  - A. Current Governance Structure
  - B. Roles & Responsibilities of GCF Task Force Governing Bodies and Delegates
- II. Decision-making Policy
- III. Technical/Advisory Body Procedures
- IV. Meeting Procedures
- V. Fundraising Procedures
- VI. Withdrawal and termination procedures

Appendix A – GCF Task Force Membership Procedures

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<sup>1</sup> The GCF Task Force Governance Policy was developed in 2011 and updated in 2014, 2018, 2022, 2023, and 2025. Additional historical records pertaining to the Governance Policy, Joint Action Plan, and related materials are available at <https://www.gcftf.org/resource-library/>.



## I. General Governance

### A. CURRENT GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE<sup>2</sup>



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

#### 1. Governors

The GCF Task Force Governors are expected to provide high-level direction and input to the GCF Task Force process, ensure 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.

Governors are required to designate two representatives to the GCF Task Force through a letter or email to the GCF Task Force Secretariat. If these designated

<sup>2</sup> The graphic may be modified by the GCF Task Force Secretariat as necessary to reflect changes in members and observers. Such a modification will not require a vote to update the Governance Policy.



representatives or “delegates” change, the Governors are expected to formalize those changes in writing through a letter or email to the GCF Task Force Secretariat.

## **2. GCF Task Force Assembly**

The “GCF Task Force Assembly” refers to the body of GCF Task Force state, province, department, and region<sup>3</sup> delegates, which makes executive decisions on key matters for the GCF Task Force. It is composed of two delegates selected by the Governor of each member state and province.

### Delegates

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. Each GCF Task Force state/province can designate additional observer, non-voting governmental participants in GCF Task Force activities from their state/province. 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.

### GCF Task Force Annual Meeting

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. After 2027, the GCF Task Force Assembly will meet every two years. 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 observers and 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).

### Chair

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

### Stakeholders

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).

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



### **3. GCF Task Force Members & Representatives**

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);<sup>4</sup> or (2) nominated by a founding GCF Task Force member(s) and approved for formal membership by consensus (see Decision-making below) by the GCF Task Force Assembly. Jurisdictions seeking membership must comply with all of the steps outlined in the Observers and New Member Procedures included in Appendix A.

Members are expected to:

- a. Make executive decisions on recommendations to implement the MOU forest sector provisions (for founding members) and GCF Task Force policy documents, including the [Guiding Principles for Collaboration and Partnership between Subnational Governments, Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities](#), the [Rio Branco Declaration](#), the [Manaus Action Plan](#), and the [GCF Task Force Gender Policy: Women for Forests and Climate](#).
- b. 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.
- c. Respond to GCF Task Force communications and deliverables.
- d. Attend and actively participate in GCF Task Force meetings and Technical Advisory Bodies.
- e. 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.
- f. 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.
- g. Nominate technical representatives to participate on Technical/Advisory bodies.
- h. Assist the Secretariat in identifying needed consultant and expert support.
- i. Ensure smooth transitions between administrations or during other time of staff turnover.
- j. Disseminate information about GCF Task Force activities.
- k. Identify institutional and funding support for their GCF Task Force activities.
- l. 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 through Secretariat Surveys and GCF Task Force Databases.

### **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,

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<sup>4</sup> These MOUs are specific to founding member states and provinces, which are Acre, Amapá, Amazonas, Mato Grosso, Pará, Aceh, Papua, California, Illinois, and Wisconsin (which withdrew in 2011).



governance, and other organizational issues. The Chair of the GCF Task Force Assembly shall also serve as the Chair of the Executive Committee, which shall meet at least quarterly.

## **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. The Chair is selected and voted upon by the Assembly and begins duties on the 1<sup>st</sup> of the following year. The Chair is expected to:

- a. 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.
- b. Lead the GCF Task Force Annual Meeting in coordination with the Secretariat.
- c. Develop the annual workplan with the Secretariat and members.
- d. Identify and secure finances to implement GCF Task Force activities.
- e. Coordinate with GCF Task Force states and provinces through regular meetings (telephone, virtual, and otherwise).
- f. Assist with new member issues and recruitment (particularly from demand-side jurisdictions).
- g. Assist with stakeholder/intergovernmental outreach and coordination.
- h. Conduct decision-making processes and consult 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:

- a. 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.
- b. 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.
- c. 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).



- d. 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.
- e. 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.
- f. 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.
- g. 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.
- h. 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.
- i. 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**

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. 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. Current Technical/Advisory Bodies include:

- Global Committee on Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities
- Working Group on Gender

## **8. GCF Task Force Coordinators**

GCF Task Force Coordinators support the member states and provinces in the country in which they are located. In addition, Coordinators work directly with the GCF Task Force Secretariat via contract or via more informal partnership vehicles. Coordinators currently operate in Brazil (since 2010), Indonesia (since 2010), Mexico (since 2013), Peru (since 2014), Ecuador (since 2023), and Bolivia (since 2024). 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 with each Coordinator, which may, depending on overall funding, receive a sub-contract from the University of California Los Angeles. In general, GCF Task Force Coordinators are expected to:

- a. 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.
- b. Provide timely communications to the GCF Task Force Secretariat on activities, deliverables, funding opportunities, and other relevant topics.
- c. Facilitate information-sharing opportunities and technical support for the GCF Task Force states/provinces.
- d. 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.
- e. Assist in the effort to develop deeper collaborations with new administrations as well as current and potential partners.
- f. Provide technical expertise and guidance to the members on REDD+ and low emissions development.
- g. Assist in the organization of regional meetings and facilitate state/province participation in GCF Task Force Annual and other international meetings.
- h. Participate on any GCF Task Force Technical/Advisory Bodies and provide input and feedback on GCF Task Force deliverables pursuant to Grant Agreements/Contracts.
- i. Assist with the development of GCF Task Force communications materials.
- j. Prepare and share meeting notes and other relevant documents that have been approved by the states and provinces with the Secretariat.
- k. Lead fundraising efforts to support regional GCF Task Force activities and priorities, and coordinate with the GCF Task Force Secretariat on global fundraising efforts.

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

## **9. Observers**

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 Appendix A and be approved as an observer by a consensus of the current GCF Task Force members during an Annual Meeting. While there are no formal rules governing participation, it is expected that observers will participate in all sessions of the GCF Task Force Annual Meeting except for closed portions of GCF Task Force business sessions. A jurisdiction must be an observer for at least one year, or the time period between Annual Meetings, whichever is shorter, before it can seek membership.





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 Task Force 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.<sup>5</sup>

## **11. Partners/Donors**

GCF Task Force Partners/Donors include entities that provide funding, technical assistance, and other support to the GCF Task Force Secretariat, Coordinators, and/or member states and provinces.

# **II. Decision making procedures**

- A. Each member state and province has one (1) voting member within the GCF Task Force Assembly.
- B. Decisions are made by the GCF Task Force Assembly by consensus whenever possible. Decisions are made at the GCF Task Force Annual Meeting. In unique circumstances, the GCF Task Force Assembly may agree to make decisions virtually (e.g., by email).<sup>6</sup>
- C. 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.
- D. If a 2/3 vote is not achieved, the decision is tabled.
- E. 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 updates to GCF Task Force Governance Policies and procedures, and establishment of new technical/advisory bodies.

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<sup>5</sup> [available to members upon request]

<sup>6</sup> 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.





### III. Technical/advisory body procedures

- A. The GCF Task Force Assembly may create Technical/Advisory Bodies by consensus.
- B. 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.
- C. The Technical/Advisory Bodies in coordination with the Secretariat may recruit GCF Task Force members, stakeholders, and private consultants to participate in and produce the work products of the Technical/Advisory Bodies.
- D. 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.<sup>7</sup>
- E. 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.
- F. 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.

### IV. Meeting procedures

- A. There will be one GCF Task Force Annual Meeting per year through 2027, after which, the GCF Task Force Annual Meeting will be held every two years.
- B. The GCF Task Force Annual Meeting may be held in any location chosen by the members, including a GCF Task Force state or province.<sup>8</sup>
- C. The agenda for these meetings is developed by the Chair, Secretariat, and Coordinators, with input from the GCF Task Force members and any consultants.
- D. The Chair runs the Annual Meeting with assistance from the Secretariat and Coordinators.

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<sup>7</sup> Currently, the 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.

<sup>8</sup> The GCF Task Force Annual Meeting location changes every year, but there are no GCF Task Force rules governing this issue. The GCF Task Force Assembly may even decide 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.



- E. 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.
- F. 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.
- G. 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.

## V. Fundraising procedures

- A. The GCF Task Force Secretariat acts as the lead in submitting proposals for general GCF Task Force support to funders.
- B. 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.
- C. 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.

## VI. Withdrawal and termination procedures

- A. **Withdrawal.** Members may withdraw their membership from the GCF Task Force at any time by providing a Letter of Withdrawal to the GCF Task Force Secretariat and GCF Task Force Chair, signed by the Governor of the member state/province. The letter may specify the reasons for withdrawal.
  - 1. Withdrawal will be effective 30 calendar days from receipt of the Letter of Withdrawal.
  - 2. The GCF Task Force Secretariat will take all measures necessary, and as expeditiously as possible, to reflect the withdrawal on the GCF Task Force webpage.
- B. **Termination.** Termination of a member may only occur through a vote of the GCF Task Force Assembly at an Annual Meeting. Termination



procedures will only apply when a written request from at least three GCF Task Force states and provinces is submitted to the GCF Task Force Secretariat and GCF Task Force Chair. This request must be submitted at least sixty calendar days prior to the closed business session of the GCF Task Force Annual Meeting.

1. A vote on termination may occur for the following reasons:
  - i. A member state/province has not participated in any meeting of the GCF Task Force for the previous four years.
  - ii. A member state/province has not adhered to the commitments contained in the [Guiding Principles for Collaboration and Partnership between Subnational Governments, Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities](#), the [Rio Branco Declaration](#), the [Manaus Action Plan](#), and the [GCF Task Force Gender Policy: Women for Forests and Climate](#). Demonstration of this nonadherence must be presented with the written termination request for consideration by the GCF Task Force Assembly.
  - iii. A member state/province has used its membership in the GCF Task Force for dishonest, illegal, or improper purposes. Demonstration of this action will be presented by the GCF Task Force Secretariat to the GCF Task Force Assembly, together with the written termination request, at least two months prior to the closed business session of the GCF Task Force Annual Meeting.
2. The GCF Task Force Secretariat will work with the member state/province subject to the written termination request to assist them in submitting a written response, which must be submitted at least thirty calendar days prior to the closed business session of the GCF Task Force Annual Meeting.