

THE GREEN CLIMATE FUND

Liane Schalatek, hbs

CLIMATE FINANCE **11** FUNDAMENTALS

MARCH 2026

The Green Climate Fund (GCF) became fully operational in 2015 as a dedicated fund to help developing countries shift to low-emission and climate-resilient development pathways. While the GCF is an operating entity of the Financial Mechanism of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and serves the Paris Agreement (UNFCCC, 2015), it remains a legally independent institution hosted by South Korea. The GCF has its own Secretariat with the World Bank as its Trustee. The 24 GCF Board members, with equal representation of developed and developing countries and support from the Secretariat, have been working to operationalise the Fund and implement its vision since their first meeting in August 2012.

In 2025, the second full year under its executive director Mafalda Duarte, the GCF saw a number of drastic reforms following a comprehensive Secretariat-led review period and rationalisation effort aimed at updating and scrutinising some existing policies and frameworks, with the stated purpose of improving access to the Fund and its network of partners with a renewed focus on country investment platforms and a 'fit-for-purpose' network of implementing entities. These included, most prominently, a radical revamping of its accreditation framework and strategy and advancing efforts for the Fund to better serve recipient country partners, supported by setting in motion the establishment of a regional presence, as well as efforts for speeding up the implementation of a new readiness strategy already approved in 2023. Intended to make the GCF the 'partner of choice', it remains to be seen if these changes and adjustments can drive up the number of funding proposals submitted by direct access entities as well as the overall quality and impacts of GCF projects and programmes, both approved and in the pipeline. 2025 saw further progress in speeding up and reducing the legal backlog for disbursement of approved funding. This was accompanied by a fundamental reorganisation of the Secretariat under an almost completely new management leadership team and the adoption of new comprehensive staff regulations with a revised job architecture and salary structure.

As of October 2025, the GCF had accredited 158 implementing entities as partners to deliver projects (with 19 added in 2025), and had approved USD 19.3 billion for 336 active projects and programmes in 134 countries with an overall worth of USD 78.7 billion. Marking the ten-year anniversary since project funding began at the GCF just weeks before COP20 in Paris, throughout 2025, the GCF Board in three Board meetings approved 50 funding proposals worth USD 3.25 billion in GCF resources, a new high surpassing the previous record of USD 2.9 billion in 2021. The scaling up of project finance was higher than in 2024 and significantly more than in 2023 and 2022, when the GCF faced some financial constraints to its commitment authority during its first replenishment period (GCF-1, 2020–2023), which saw confirmed pledges of USD 9.9 billion by 34 contributors.

As of January 2026, and thus after the second year of the GCF's second replenishment period (GCF-2, 2024–2027), USD 9.64 billion or over 90% of the total pledges of USD 10.64 billion by 34 countries and one region for GCF-2 has been confirmed. This leaves USD 869 million in GCF-2 pledges still to be confirmed, after the second Trump administration, with its announcement that it will quit the Paris Agreement again, also rescinded all outstanding American pledges to the GCF. Nevertheless, the Fund starts 2026 with a solid commitment authority of over USD 4.1 billion for expected programming this year. By mid-2026, the GCF will kick off its third replenishment process (GCF-3, 2028–2031) in a worsening landscape for international public climate finance provision. This means that the GCF under its current executive director, who joined at the tail end of the replenishment effort in August 2023, will have to look for new and additional contributions and financial inputs to come close to realising her ambitious '50 by 30' capitalisation vision for the GCF. Instead, the focus in ongoing reforms will likely centre on doing more with less,

and the GCF highlighting its role in providing technical expertise, building attractive country pipelines and acting as ‘match-maker’ for investors through its support of country platforms.

These efforts come as the Fund seeks to confirm and maintain its role in the climate regime as the major finance channel under the UNFCCC and as the largest multilateral climate fund within a dynamically changing global climate finance landscape, including as part of the commitment under the new collective quantified goal on climate finance (NCQG) post-2025 adopted at COP29 in Baku, Azerbaijan in November 2024, to triple annual outflows of multilateral climate funds serving the Convention and Paris Agreement from 2022 levels by 2030 (UNFCCC, 2024). The GCF in 2022 only approved 19 funding proposals worth USD 1.42 billion as it faced challenges to its commitment authority.

This Climate Finance Fundamental (CFF) provides a snapshot of the operations, programming and functions of the GCF at this crucial phase for its future. Past editions of this CFF further detail the design and initial operationalisation phases of the Fund.

CONTENTS

Introduction / 3

GCF implementation issues / 3

The GCF strategic vision and plan for GCF-2 / 3

Multi-year Secretariat work programme under new leadership / 4

Resource mobilisation, commitment authority and formal replenishments (GCF-1 and GCF-2) / 5

Structure, organisation, staffing and administrative budget of the Fund’s Independent Secretariat / 9

Results management frameworks and performance indicators / 10

Investment framework / 11

Allocation / 12

Project pipeline and approval process / 12

Financial instruments, concessionality and co-financing / 16

Risk management / 16

Country ownership / 17

Access modalities / 17

Accreditation framework with fiduciary standards and environmental and social safeguards / 18

Accredited implementing entities of the Fund / 20

Monitoring and accountability / 21

Readiness and preparatory support / 22

Private sector operations / 23

Independent accountability mechanisms / 24

Gender / 25

Indigenous Peoples / 26

GCF relationship to the UNFCCC and the Conference of the Parties (COP) / 26

Stakeholder and observer input and participation / 27

Information disclosure and communication strategy / 27

Outlook for 2026 / 28

Introduction

As an operating entity of the financial mechanism of the UNFCCC under Article 11 (UN, 1992), a role confirmed in the Paris Agreement, the GCF is “accountable to and function[s] under the guidance of the COP” (UNFCCC, 2011: 17). It is mandated to take a country-driven approach, a principle that is supposed to guide all GCF investment decisions. It is also intended to channel “a significant share of new multilateral funding for adaptation” (ibid.), with the aim to balance funding for mitigation and adaptation measures. The GCF further ring fences support for the urgent needs of Least Developed Countries (LDCs), Small Island Developing States (SIDS), African countries and for local private sector actors.

A total of USD 10.64 billion has been pledged so far to the Fund by 35 contributors for the second replenishment period (GCF-2, 2024-2027) with just over 90% of the pledges formalised through contribution agreements by January 2026. After the annulment by the Trump administration in early 2025 of the United States’ original USD 3 billion in pledges for GCF-2, as well as an unpaid USD 1 billion for the initial resource mobilisation (IRM), this amount is essentially stagnant when compared with pledges over its GCF-1 period (2020-2023) with USD 10 billion and only slightly higher than its IRM process in 2014 with USD 9.3 billion. This cancellation of all outstanding American pledges made by previous administrations was part of the Trump administration’s formal notification to leave the Paris Agreement, followed by the United States’ January 2026 decision to withdraw from the UNFCCC and vacate its GCF Board seat effective immediately (United States, 2025 and 2026). This leaves some USD 860 million in pledges under GCF-2 by Canada, France and Italy still to be confirmed as of January 2026 (GCF, 2025a). To cement its status as the largest multilateral climate fund with the potential to channel even larger sums over time, the urgent conversion of all other outstanding pledged amounts into contribution agreements is required to ensure that this money is made available as quickly as possible for programming in this critical phase, as access to highly concessional funding support becomes even more important in a time of severe cuts to developed country bilateral assistance for developing countries, many of which, especially the most climate vulnerable, are already facing unsustainable debt levels.

Contributions to the Fund, which are allowed and encouraged throughout GCF-2, are only accepted as grants, concessional loans and paid-in capital in the GCF Trust Fund managed by the World Bank as Trustee, whose tenure, after a review the Board extended for another four years until end of April 2027. With the exception of France and Canada, all pledged contributions for GCF-2 are grants received in a multitude of currencies. The GCF then offers grants, concessional loans, equity investments and guarantees to developing countries using the executing and financial management capacities of partner organisations that work as implementing entities or intermediaries.

GCF implementation issues

The governing instrument of the GCF presents a broad framework and general direction that has given the Board substantial flexibility on how to operationalise the Fund. In exercising this discretion, however, the GCF Board members

bear responsibility for decisions that secure the ambition of the Fund, and allow it to achieve its overriding objective of: “[i]n the context of sustainable development ... promot[ing] the paradigm shift towards low-emission and climate-resilient development pathways” (GCF, 2011: 2).

In 2025 the GCF’s thirteenth Co-chairs, Seyni Nafo (Mali) and Leif Holmberg (Sweden), made progress with efforts to strengthen the Fund’s implementation of its Updated Strategic Plan for 2024-2027 (USP-2), a revised strategy for readiness and preparatory support during the same timeframe, and in shepherding through a large policy reform package revamping the Fund’s accreditation and monitoring and accountability frameworks and by doing so working to redefine its partnership with a steadily growing number of implementation partners. The Board also continued its work to review the effectiveness and the ability of Board committees to deliberate on policy reforms, including by working on updating the structure of its standing Board committees to deal with capacity constraints or lack of quorum. A significant restructuring of the Secretariat’s departments and divisions began in 2024, the first full year under the leadership of the new executive director Mafalda Duarte (who took the helm in August 2023 after the previous executive director Yannick Glemarec left after a single four-year term in April 2023), and continued in 2025 with regionalisation efforts taking shape. Despite the significant restructuring effort and staff turnover, the Secretariat was largely able to stay on track with programming targets set for 2025 and thus for the second year of the GCF-2 programming period. This was a testament to efforts to rationalise and shorten processing times through revamping operational procedures of the GCF under a still expanding Secretariat, and of the improved management of a growing portfolio of projects and programmes, although disbursement kept not pace with programming growth. While some important revisions to existing operational policies and guidelines were advanced or completed in 2025, such as a new accreditation and risk management approach, others were further delayed, such as the longstanding attempt to update the GCF’s interim environmental and social safeguards, or a still missing operational policy on programmatic approaches, which are now on the Board and Secretariat work plans for 2026 (see earlier CFF 11 up to 2026 for a more detailed elaboration of the GCF’s operational development).

The GCF strategic vision and plan for GCF-2

Going into a new multi-year programming period, the GCF routinely embarks on strategic planning on priorities, as well as the necessary policy shifts and adjustments in the Secretariat structure and staffing needed to implement this vision. This will also be the case as the GCF in mid-2026 kicks off the process for the third replenishment (GCF-3, 2028-2031) and the related programming period.

Over the years, the GCF has improved its procedures on strategic planning. For the GCF’s first replenishment period (GCF-1, 2020-2023), the strategic goals and the programming directions were detailed in an updated strategic plan (USP-1), which was approved after repeated attempts throughout 2020 only at the 27th Board meeting (GCF, 2020), and thus only after the new programming period had started. The update to the GCF’s original strategic plan from 2016 as part

of the Fund's first replenishment process was guided by an in-depth forward- and backward-looking performance review of the GCF released by the Independent Evaluation Unit (IEU) in mid-2019 (IEU, 2019). This laid out in detail the policy revisions, operational adjustments and priority investment areas that could support the Fund to deliver on its mission and support developing countries' climate actions by becoming "faster, better and smarter" (ibid.: xvii). Whether and to what extent to integrate the IEU and contributor-country recommendations from their summary report (GCF, 2019a) into the new GCF-1 vision document proved highly disputed and revealed substantial differences between the visions of developed- and developing-country Board members for the Fund. For example, contentious issues included if a finance leverage target should be set for the GCF, if a similar target should be set for GCF financing to be programmed through direct access entities, how much to scale up adaptation funding during GCF-1 versus the IRM, the ability of the GCF to act as equity investor, and how to increase the role of the private sector in GCF programming. These issues still remain contentious years later. Ambitious goals and priorities set under USP-1 included doubling annual programming from the initial resource mobilisation period (IRM) to an average of USD 2.2 billion per year and tripling the GCF's portfolio size with better results management of outcomes and impacts; improving the GCF's programming focus on direct access, the private sector and adaptation (although failing to set new targets for each) with an expanding network of implementing partners; and enhancing support for country-driven pipeline development through greater Secretariat engagement in country programming, strategic readiness programming and building direct access entity (DAE) capacity for both programming and implementation.

In reviewing the Secretariat's capacity to deliver against the strategic plan during GCF-1, the Board at its 30th meeting in October 2021 approved a significant build-up of Secretariat staff of up to the full-time equivalent of 350 positions by the end of 2023. The Board in mid-2021 also set in motion the second performance review (SPR) of the Fund's performance for the GCF-1 programming period by mandating the IEU to assess the progress made by the GCF in delivering on its mandate as well as on the goals and priorities of the USP-1. A rapid assessment and emerging findings by the IEU were presented to the Board in March and October 2022 respectively (IEU, 2022a and 2022b), with the final report delivered at the 35th Board meeting in March 2023 (IEU, 2023). The findings from the SPR were meant to inform the Board's consideration for the further update of the GCF's strategic plan (USP-2) in 2023 with objectives and priorities for the second replenishment period (GCF-2) from 2024-2027.

In response to the dissatisfaction especially of contributing developed countries with the process for linking programming goals and the vision for the GCF with its first replenishment period, in which the strategic plan was only set after replenishment consultations were completed, for the second replenishment process the timeline required the completion of the update to the strategic vision and programming goals for GCF-2 prior to pledging. At its 32nd meeting in May 2022, the Board requested the Secretariat to present a review of the GCF policy frameworks for Board

discussion and stressed its intention for an open, inclusive and transparent consultation process to inform the review and update to the existing strategic plan to be completed no later than mid-2023 and thus before the October pledging conference. A zero-draft of the USP-2 was presented to the Board for informal non-public consultation at its October 2022 meeting, with a revised version considered at the Board's 35th meeting in March before the plan's finalisation and approval at its 36th meeting in July 2023.

As the largest multilateral climate fund and one of the major actors in the wider climate finance landscape, the USP-2 sees the GCF's comparative advantages in being "a dedicated, country-driven, and partnership-based climate fund working at a unique nexus of risk, scale and flexible financial instruments that equip it to support the entire value chain of project conception, development and implementation, including acting as an accelerator and amplifier for climate action" (GCF, 2023a). The USP-2 targets the GCF's programming over four years to play to its unique added value in the global and still evolving climate finance landscape with a set of target results focused on: improved country programming through readiness support and increased direct access, with the goal of doubling the number of DAEs with programming (29 at the end of GCF-1) over four years; on increasing its adaptation funding toward locally-led adaptation; on supporting low-emission climate resilient infrastructure in up to 60 countries; on protecting up to 190 million hectares of ecosystems; on targeting support for low-emission transport systems, building and industry; and on providing seed and early-stage risk capital for local private sector ventures and MSMEs, including through building up green finance institutions in recipient countries through access to GCF resources.

The Board at its 40th meeting in October 2025 instructed the GCF's Independent Evaluation Unit (IEU) to launch its third performance review (TPR) to independently assess the GCF's performance in delivering its mandate during the ongoing GCF-2 programming period (2024-2027) as a way to inform the strategy process for GCF-3, including the preparation for further revision and update to the Fund's four-year strategic plan (USP-3). Development of and consultation on the new strategic planning vision will be on the Secretariat's and Board's agenda throughout 2026, with USP-3 adoption expected by mid-2027 and drawing on the final report of the TPR to be presented at the Board's first meeting in 2027.

Multi-year Secretariat work programme under new leadership

With the announcement by Yannick Glemarec at the 31st GCF Board meeting in March 2022 that he would not seek a second term at the helm of the GCF Secretariat when his four-year mandate ended in April 2023, the GCF found itself initiating the fourth search process for an executive director in ten years¹. This came at a critical time for the Fund's future in the midst of its second replenishment process, in which the Secretariat and the executive director play a key organisational and communication and outreach role.

Largely following the selection procedure used in the previous instances, the process for the search and selection of a new executive director was kickstarted with

a Board decision at its 33rd meeting in July 2022 with the designation of an eight-Board member Ad hoc Executive Director Selection Committee (EDSC), which, with the support of an executive search firm, provided oversight, selected and interviewed a set of six candidates, with three considered for the final ranked short-list presented by the EDSC to the Board. The full Board then voted in closed session at its 35th Board meeting in March 2023 to appoint Mafalda Duarte as the new head of the independent Secretariat. She brings more than 20 years of relevant experience, having served prior for nine years as chief executive officer for the World Bank's Climate Investment Funds (CIFs) and following terms as climate finance manager and senior economist at the African Development Bank and the World Bank. The new executive director, who started her position in August 2023, had to hit the ground running, taking on the leadership of the institution just in time for the Climate Ambition Summit in New York, where she outlined her '50 by 30' ambition for the GCF to reach a USD 50 billion aggregate capitalisation by 2030, and in time for the GCF-2 pledging conference in October 2023. While not involved in the process to develop the USP-2 with priorities and goals for the GCF-2 programming period until the end of 2027, she is tasked in implementing its ambition, as well as setting the vision for the third GCF programming period (GCF-3, 2028-2031) and guiding a successful third replenishment process to start in mid-2026.

The Board at its 40th meeting in October 2024, approved the Secretariat work programme (2025-2027), which detailed a three-year trajectory and milestones for the Secretariat's top priorities with a focus on enhancing country ownership and access, delivering impacts and results and on people and institutional strengthening with a results framework that outlines goals to be achieved under each priority area per year. With many, although not all of the firm deliverables for 2025 achieved – most notably the completion of accreditation policy reforms and an update to the monitoring and accountability framework as well as finalising a proposal for regional presence – an updated three-year Secretariat work programme (2026-2028) was approved at the Board's 43rd meeting. It sets an annual programming target of USD 2.7 to 3 billion in funding proposals approved by the Board as well as an annual disbursement target of USD 1,073 to 1,193 million (GCF, 2025b, Annex II).

For 2026, mainstreaming the implementation of the reformed accreditation and monitoring and accountability frameworks, support for countries to establish up to ten new country investment platforms, updates to the information disclosure policy and observer guidelines, consultation and development of a new 2028-2031 Strategic Plan (USP-3) as well as a GCF-3 replenishment plan and an approach to optimise the balance sheet to enhance commitment authority are outlined as firm deliverables, as are submitting up to 51 funding proposals (including a third from the private sector) for technical review and Board consideration and presenting a policy on a programmatic approach and a new gender action plan. With progressive increases in ambition described for 2027 and 2028, by the end of 2028 the work programme foresees up to 70 funding proposals to be

processed per year. Over the three-year period, up to 25 funding proposals approved are to reach underserved recipients, such as fragile and conflict-afflicted countries (FCAS), with at least 15 to focus on locally-led climate action and the implementation of a direct access framework for Indigenous Peoples. 2028 cumulative deliverables for the three years include 25% of the total volume of committed funding allocated to DAEs, including the 29 new DAEs with approved funding proposals targeted by the end of the current USP-2 end of 2027 (GCF, 2025b, Annex II). The updated work programme does not repeat last year's ambitious goal for 2027 to mobilise USD 17 billion in pledges for GCF-3 replenishment to enable the '50 by 30' vision and the implementation of the Fund's strategic vision under an updated strategic plan for 2028-2031 (GCF, 2024a, Annex V), mindful of the fact that the funding landscape has changed significantly (GCF, 2025b, Annex II).

Resource mobilisation, commitment authority and formal replenishments (GCF-1 and GCF-2)

The GCF's IRM, which began in mid-2014, resulted in pledges by 45 contributing countries as well as several regions and cities and initially totalled USD 10.3 billion (for a detailed discussion see the 2014 CFF 11). The GCF achieved 'effectiveness', or the authority to make funding decisions, in May 2015 when 50% of the financing promises received during the November 2014 Pledging Conference in Berlin were fully paid in. During the IRM period (2014-2019), 44 countries, three regions and the city of Paris had confirmed part or all of their pledges amounting to about USD 8.3 billion. While Peru never confirmed its IRM pledge, Colombia and the US only partially honoured theirs – after its formal withdrawal from the Paris Agreement under the first Trump administration, the US failed to confirm USD 2 billion of USD 3 billion initially pledged in 2014. Since then, under the Biden administration, which rejoined the Paris Agreement, the US contributed a further USD 1 billion in April 2023, thus bringing the total of confirmed IRM contributions to about USD 9.3 billion (GCF, 2024b). In January 2025 with the formal announcement by a second Trump administration that it will leave the Paris Agreement, the United States rescinded all outstanding American pledges to the GCF, including the remaining USD 1 billion under the IRM (Mathiesen, 2025).

As the confirmed IRM contributions were received in a multitude of currencies and over several years and the overall results calculated according to a foreign exchange reference rate adopted for the Pledging Conference in November 2014, the actual overall funding amount available to the GCF during the IRM period was closer to USD 7.2 billion, and with the part of the outstanding US contribution received in 2023 has now been recorded as USD 8.1 billion (GCF, 2024b). At the end of the IRM on 31 December 2019, then about USD 454 million was left. These resources carried over to the first formal replenishment period (GCF-1), which began on 1 January 2020 and ran until the end of 2023.

The GCF's first replenishment was formally launched at the 21st Board meeting in Bahrain in October 2018 with the GCF's cumulative funding commitments having reached

USD 5.5 billion and thus surpassing 60% of total contributions to the GCF Trust Fund received by November 2015. The Bahrain decision focused on the procedural aspects of the replenishment process, not the highly politicised questions regarding the length of the replenishment period, the envisioned scale, or the policies for contributions. These were determined through a series of replenishment consultation meetings with potential contributor countries, in which a delegation of the GCF Board also participated, convened in Bonn (November 2018), Oslo (April 2019) and Ottawa (August 2019), and culminating in a Pledging Conference in Paris in October 2019. The process was aided by the Co-chairs' appointment of a global facilitator.

In the past, the issue of contribution policies has been especially contentious. Developing-country Board members have wanted to avoid the earmarking of resources and the establishment of voting shares for decision-making by contribution. The policy for contributions for GCF-1 approved at the Paris Pledging Conference did not allow for earmarking: instead it set caps for loan and capital contributions at 20% each of overall contributions received, and allowed countries up to nine years to pay in their pledged contributions, with credits received for early fulfilment of contribution agreements.

At the Paris Pledging Conference, 27 countries pledged a combined USD 9.78 billion, of which 94% was committed as grants, with only 6% of the total pledged by France and Canada in the form of loans. Despite being contributors to the IRM, the US and Australia did not participate in Paris. In the absence of the US, and in response to calls for increased contributions to the GCF, a number of developed European countries (such as Germany, France, the United Kingdom, Norway and Sweden) doubled their initial IRM contribution in local currencies, while others increased their contribution less substantially (such as the Netherlands, Italy and Spain) or not at all (most prominently Japan and Canada). South Korea also doubled its pledge and was the only developing country to pledge in Paris. Since then, Indonesia, Russia, Malta, the Belgian region of Wallonia and the Belgian Brussels Capital Region have pledged for GCF-1, with several other countries (such as Austria and Liechtenstein) adding to their initial pledges.

As of December 2025, the GCF reported the equivalent of USD 9.9 billion in pledges for GCF-1 received from 34 contributors, or slightly higher at USD 10 billion with credit earned for early payment (Table 1). Under the GCF-1 policy for contributions, the Fund was to reach its commitment authority once 25% of pledges made in Paris were converted into contribution agreements. This effectiveness threshold was surpassed in mid-December 2019, allowing the GCF to start allocating GCF-1 resources. By November 2022, all 34 contributors confirmed 100% of their pledges and signed contribution agreements, amounting to USD 9.9 billion equivalent in nominal terms. Already in 2021, the GCF Secretariat had warned that given anticipated payment schedules for confirmed pledges until the end of GCF-1, it would lack the commitment authority to maintain around USD 2.5 billion in programming for 2022 unless promissory note encashment schedules were accelerated

or new contributions received. Throughout its operations in 2022, the GCF faced constraints to its commitment authority, and thus the amount of projects it could fund, resulting in only approving between USD 300 and 550 million in new projects per Board meeting, and thus significantly below demand for proposals and the more than USD 1 billion approved at several individual Board meetings in the past years. Going into the 34th Board meeting in October 2022, the GCF had only a commitment authority for USD 579 million for funding decisions, based on cash in the GCF Trust Fund, deposited promissory notes and confirmed pledges. A further USD 921 million was available in projected additional cash for disbursement for the remainder of 2022, with another USD 1.7 billion for 2023, and thus starting the last year under GCF-1 with adequate resources available. While this allowed for more funding approvals in 2023, averaging around USD 700 million per each of the three Board meetings, this also provided important lessons learned for the next four-year programming period under GCF-2 regarding the need to more pro-actively manage the GCF's commitment authority. This includes efforts by the GCF Secretariat to ask contributors for modifications and flexibility to their commitment schedules regarding cash contributions and promissory note encashment where possible and as needed in order to maintain a steady and predictable programming level.

The GCF Board at its 33rd meeting in July 2022 formally kicked off the process for the second replenishment period of the GCF (GCF-2) to run from January 2024 to December 2027, which according to the GCF-1 updated contribution policies was to be initiated 30 months after the commencement of the first replenishment period in order to allow sufficient time for the preparation and consideration of evaluations and performance reports to guide GCF-2 strategic programming and contribution discussions. It conducted a series of three consultation meetings, held virtually (August 2022, December 2022 and April 2023) and concluded with a high-level pledging conference in early October 2023 hosted by Germany. The main focus of these consultation meetings was to discuss and agree on financial matters of GCF-2, including the updated policy for contributions, which the Board approved at its 36th meeting in July 2023, the financial position of the Fund, and the reference exchange rates to account for the different currencies in which pledges are received. The updated contribution policy for GCF-2 continued the GCF-1 practice of setting caps for loan and capital contributions at 20% each of overall contributions received, and allows for up to nine years for the payment of pledged contributions on an indicative payment schedule, with credit received for early fulfilment of contribution agreements (GCF, 2023b).

At the Bonn Pledging Conference, 25 countries pledged a combined USD 9.22 billion, of which 94% was committed as grants, with only 6% of the total pledged by France and Canada in the form of loans. Most countries, most notably Germany, the United Kingdom, Belgium, Canada, Austria and Spain, increased their contribution over GCF-1 in domestic currencies, albeit to varying extent, with Denmark, Liechtenstein and Luxembourg doubling. Others (including Italy and Norway), actually pledged less

Table 1: Status of pledges and contributions for the GCF initial resource mobilisation (IRM), for the GCF first replenishment (GCF-1) and for the GCF second replenishment (GCF-2) (as at 31 December 2025)^a

Contributors	IRM (2014-2019)		GCF-1 (2020-2023)			GCF-2 (2024-2027)			
	Nominal pledge in USD million eq. ^a	Confirmed pledge in USD million eq. ^a	Nominal and confirmed pledge in USD million eq. ^{a,c}	Nominal pledge in USD million eq. ^a with credits ^b	Disbursed cash and deposited promissory notes in USD million eq. ^a	Nominal pledge in USD million eq. ^a	Nominal pledge in USD million eq. ^a with credits ^b	Confirmed pledge in USD million eq. ^a	Disbursed cash and deposited promissory notes in USD million eq. ^a
Australia	187.30	187.30	-	-	-	33.80	34.00	33.80	10.1
Austria	34.80	34.80	146.40	152.50	146.40	172.90	180.10	172.90	108.0
Belgium	66.90	66.90	112.60	116.90	112.60	162.10	167.90	162.10	81.0
Belgium - Brussels	4.80	4.80	1.10	1.20	1.10	-	-	-	-
Belgium - Flanders	19.70	19.70	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Belgium - Wallonia	10.90	10.90	1.80	1.90	1.80	0.40	0.50	0.40	0.40
Bulgaria	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10
Canada	277.00	277.00	225.50	229.10	225.50	333.60	339.70	248.8	248.8
Chile	0.30	0.30	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Colombia	6.00	0.80	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Cyprus	0.50	0.50	-	-	-	0.40	0.40	0.40	0.40
Czech Republic	5.30	5.30	-	-	-	4.00	4.10	4.00	2.00
Denmark	71.80	71.80	120.70	126.00	120.70	232.20	239.20	232.20	87.10
Estonia	1.30	1.30	-	-	-	1.10	1.10	1.10	1.10
Finland	107.00	107.00	112.60	114.90	112.60	64.80	66.20	64.80	6.50
France	1,035.50	1,035.50	1,743.30	1,794.10	1,743.30	1,739.60	1,781.80	1,291.20	757.1
France - City of Paris	1.30	1.30	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Germany	1,003.30	1,003.30	1,689.30	1,689.80	1,689.30	2,160.90	2,160.90	2,160.90	540.20
Hungary	4.30	4.30	0.70	0.70	0.70	0.30	0.30	0.30	0.30
Iceland	1.00	1.00	2.80	2.90	2.80	3.60	3.70	3.60	1.20
Indonesia	0.30	0.30	0.50	0.50	0.50	-	-	-	-
Ireland	10.70	10.70	18.00	18.70	18.00	43.20	44.80	43.20	37.80
Israel	-	-	-	-	-	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10
Italy	334.40	334.40	337.90	337.90	337.90	324.10	324.10	-	-
Japan	1,500.00	1,500.00	1,500.00	1,521.20	1,500.00	1,224.20	1,246.90	1,224.20	612.10
Latvia	0.50	0.50	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Liechtenstein	0.10	0.10	0.30	0.30	0.30	0.40	0.50	0.40	0.20
Lithuania	0.10	0.10	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Luxembourg	46.80	46.80	45.00	46.30	45.00	54.00	56.00	54.00	21.60
Malta	0.60	0.60	0.90	0.90	0.90	0.90	0.90	0.90	0.90
Mexico	10.00	10.00	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Monaco	2.30	2.30	4.20	4.40	4.20	3.90	4.10	3.90	1.80
Mongolia	0.10	0.10	-	-	-	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10
Netherlands	133.80	133.80	135.10	140.10	135.10	151.30	157.20	151.30	118.90
New Zealand	2.60	2.60	10.00	10.60	10.00	15.00	15.90	15.00	15.00
Norway	272.20	272.20	417.50	434.20	417.50	305.60	316.60	305.60	164.50
Panama	1.00	1.00	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Peru	6.00	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Poland	0.10	0.10	3.00	3.20	3.00	-	-	-	-
Portugal	2.70	2.70	1.10	1.20	1.10	4.30	4.50	4.30	2.20
Republic of Korea	100.00	100.00	200.00	200.50	200.00	300.00	301.80	300.00	69.80
Romania	0.10	0.10	0.06	0.06	0.06	-	-	-	-
Russia	3.00	3.00	10.00	10.50	10.00	-	-	-	-
Slovakia	2.00	2.00	2.30	2.30	2.30	2.40	2.50	2.40	1.20
Slovenia	-	-	1.10	1.20	1.10	1.60	1.70	1.60	1.60
Spain	160.50	160.50	168.90	176.50	168.90	243.10	252.80	243.10	210.70
Sweden	581.20	581.20	852.50	852.50	852.50	763.10	773.1	763.10	763.1
Switzerland	100.00	100.00	150.00	155.50	150.00	150.00	155.50	150.00	77.00
United Kingdom	1,211.00	1,211.00	1,851.90	1,851.90	1,851.90	2,000.00	2,000.00	2,000.00	807.30
United States	3,000.00	2,000.00	-	-	-	3,000.00	3,000.00	-	-
Vietnam	1.00	1.00	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	10,322.20	9,310.80	9,867.50	10,002.00	9,867.50	10,497.10	10,639.00	9,639.70	4,750.20

Source: Status of Pledges (IRM, GCF-1 and GCF-2), <https://www.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/2025-status-pledges-website-dec-31.pdf>

- United States dollars equivalent (USD eq.), calculated on the basis of the reference exchange rates established for the High-level Pledging Conference for the IRM in Berlin in 2014, for the High-Level Pledging Conference for GCF-1 in Paris in 2019, and for the High-Level Pledging Conference for GCF-2 in Bonn in 2023.
- As per the Policy for Contributions for GCF-1 and GCF-2 respectively, a notional credit is applied to the pledges made by contributors who have indicated that they would make payments in advance of the standard schedule (which allows for up to nine years for the fulfillment of pledges). A similar nominal credit was not offered for the IRM.
- For GCF-1, as of 31 December 2024, 100% of the pledged amounts of the 34 contributor countries were confirmed; thus, within the table the columns for pledged and confirmed amount are combined since they are identical.

than four years earlier and countries such as Switzerland, France, the Netherlands or Japan stayed mostly flat. South Korea also significantly increased its pledge and was with Mongolia the only developing country to pledge in Bonn. The 37th Board meeting in October 2023 formally endorsed the results of the second replenishment process, including the results of the pledging conference. Since then, six more countries, most prominently the United States with a commitment of USD 3 billion, have pledged their support for GCF-2, resulting in a total pledged amount of USD 12.83 billion, with credit for early payment or encashment included by 31 contributor countries as of early 2025 (see Table 1). However, the Trump administration's announced intention to again leave the Paris Agreement, to freeze all international climate finance contributions as of January 2025 and to rescind all previous outstanding pledges to the GCF, followed by the United States' withdrawal from the UNFCCC and with it the GCF Board, means that no contribution from the United States under GCF-2 – and forecasting to the third replenishment period (GCF-3, 2028-2031) with a likely pledge conference in late 2027 – will materialise (United States, 2025 and 2026). While further new and top-up contributions are encouraged and accepted on a rolling basis, including from countries such as Australia, which returned to GCF-2 after sitting out GCF-1 only with a very modest commitment, and Sweden, which came back as a major contributor for GCF-2 in 2024, this cannot make up for the US shortfall. At the end of 2025, the

confirmed pledges for GCF-2 now stand at USD 9.6 billion, with several countries (Canada, France, and Italy) not having confirmed part or the entirety of their initial pledges for an outstanding USD 860 million (GCF, 2025a).

The GCF reached effectiveness of its commitment authority for GCF-2 already during the Bonn Pledging Conference, as more than 25% of the total amount pledged then were confirmed in fully executed contribution arrangements. This allowed for a seamless programming transition between GCF-1 and GCF-2 in 2024. At the end of 2025, the GCF had USD 1.61 billion in available commitment authority, with forecasted commitment authority available for decisions at three scheduled Board meetings in 2026 of USD 4.1 billion, of which the Fund hopes to programme up to USD 3 billion. The 2026 figures include USD 743.2 million in cash and USD 2.09 billion in promissory notes expected to become available in the course of the year. For 2027, and thus the last year of the GCF-2 period, a further USD 2.27 billion resources (USD 637.8 million in cash and USD 1.64 billion in promissory notes) are projected to become available (GCF, 2026a).

Table 2 provides an overview over cumulative resources and funding decisions from the GCF's inception through end of 2025. It includes investment income for money held in the GCF Trust Fund of around USD 2 billion cumulatively, as well as reflows of USD 362 million from funded project loans and repayable grants (World Bank, 2025).

Table 2: Cumulative resources and funding decisions from GCF's inception through December 31, 2025
(in USD millions eq.^a)

	TOTAL
Cumulative Resources Received^b	24,876.24
Grant contributions	19,633.35
<i>Cash</i>	15,341.69
<i>Unencashed promissory notes</i>	4,291.66
Loan contributions	1,000.31
<i>Cash</i>	1,000.31
<i>Unencashed promissory notes</i>	-
Investment income earned	1,903.51
Investment income from accredited entities	112.43
Reflows	361.85
Cumulative Funding Decisions^c	22,684.45
<i>Approved amounts pending cash transfers</i>	14,627.94
Projects, programmes and accredited entity fees	20,018.08
<i>Disbursed to the project portfolio</i>	6,226.21
<i>Accredited entity fees</i>	314,367.66
Readiness programme	1,155.73
Project preparation facility	149.80
Approved administrative budgets (Secretariat, Board, Independent Units and Trustee)	1,360.84
Foreign exchange risk buffer	320.00
Cost of contribution loan repayments (principal and interest)	68.19

Source: World Bank (2025). Green Climate Fund Trust Fund Financial Report. Prepared by the Trustee (the World Bank). As of December 31, 2025.

Washington, DC: World Bank. <https://fiftrustee.worldbank.org/content/dam/fif/funds/gcftf/TrusteeReports/GCFTF%20Financial%20Report%20as%20of%20Dec%2031%202025.pdf>

- a. USD equivalent (eq.) is based on the foreign exchange rate as of 31 December 2025 for non-USD balances. The USD equivalent amount will fluctuate according to the rate at the time of conversion.
- b. Includes contributions received for IRM, GCF-1 and GCF-2 replenishments.
- c. Total funding decisions are net of cancellations.

Structure, organisation, staffing and administrative budget of the Fund's Independent Secretariat

In December 2013, an Independent Secretariat for the GCF, located in Songdo, South Korea, began its work with around 40 people. The number of staff has increased significantly since, reaching 100 positions at the end of 2016 and 140 by the end of 2017. Secretariat staff levels were approved by the Board at up to 250 positions by 2020, but levels stagnated below 220 for most of 2020 and 2021, which reflected increased staff turnover and attrition as well as efficiency gains in streamlining operational procedures. This recognised the growing workload of the Secretariat given an expanding portfolio under implementation, its complexity and the ambition of GCF-1 programming goals under the GCF's updated strategic plan (GCF, 2021). Accordingly, the Board at its 30th meeting agreed to build-up the Secretariat's staff to the equivalent of 300 full-time positions (in staff and consultants) in 2022 and up to 350 positions in 2023. However, the Secretariat's effort to accelerate its recruitment process proved difficult in 2022, with housing challenges and staff compensation levels deemed not competitive enough a core reason for the slower than hoped for staff growth (it had 223 staff in October 2022). Further aggressive recruiting was pursued with the goal to reach the planned 315 staff at the end of 2023 (with 301 staff count achieved) and to stabilise the Secretariat's headcount in line with requirements to implement GCF-2 programming goals at 325 in 2024 (with 315 count achieved). This staff build-up is to be accomplished while maintaining the operating expenses of the Secretariat at 0.7% of assets under management. The decision by the Board in October 2022 to review and update the GCF's salary structure, followed by the Board's decision at its 37th meeting to increase compensation levels by 4.5% for 2024 to be more competitive with organisational counterparts, such as the Asian Development Bank, is in support of such efforts.

At its 38th meeting, the Board adopted a new compensation philosophy that is supposed to serve as the foundation of the updated GCF salary structure and compensation framework to accompany the planned further increase of full-time staff (GCF, 2024d, Annex II). A three year work programme and administrative budget for the Secretariat approved at its 40th meeting foresees a further staffing increase to 340 full-time staff by the end of 2025 (with 365 by end of 2026 and 385 staff by the end of 2027) commensurate with the goal to reach USD 25 billion in programming by 2027 (GCF, 2024a, Annex V). Recruitment in 2025 focused on shoring up staff capacity in critically needed functions such as monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL), safeguards, risk management, finance, treasury functions and policy development, reaching 331 staff by the year's end.

After an external evaluation of the Secretariat's structure and staffing needs in 2017, the Board approved a major reorganisation of the Secretariat into five major divisions. These were: country programming, mitigation and adaptation, Private Sector Facility (PSF), support services, and external affairs, plus five offices for the general counsel, governance affairs, internal audits, portfolio management, and risk management and compliance. It further expanded the office of the executive director to include a deputy executive director and a focus on knowledge management and strategic outlook. From 2019 onward, the Secretariat

structure has had more clearly separated functions and related reporting lines throughout the project cycle, with programming divisions reporting to the deputy executive director and second-level due diligence and compliance overseen by the executive director. Further efforts from 2020-21 focused on strengthening workplace culture and staff development and wellbeing given the continued work challenges brought on by the Covid-19 pandemic as well as internal grievance and dispute resolution measures. In 2022, the structure was further adjusted, adding new offices for human resources, sustainability and inclusion, financial analysis and innovation and institutional finance (for now ten offices in total). A new Division of Portfolio Management established in 2022 in recognition of the growing implementation scale and responsibilities of the GCF reached 43 staff in 2023. This compared with 36 staff for country programming, 40 for mitigation and adaptation and 22 for the Private Sector Facility.

With the start of programming under the GCF's second replenishment period (GCF-2) and an updated strategic direction in 2024, the new executive director Mafalda Duarte pushed for a comprehensive restructuring of the Secretariat, major management team adjustments and a new job architecture to ensure the Secretariat organisation and staff are fit-for-purpose for new programming requirements under the USP-2 and supportive of the implementation of her '50 by 30' vision. This included significant staff reassignments and turn-over and brought in a new leadership team. The new organisational structure with a decidedly corporate framing has four large divisions on 1) strategy and impact (overseeing departments on communications; partnership and resource mobilisation; strategy, policy and innovation; and MEL); 2) investments (with four regional departments, the Private Sector Facility, investment services, and strategic investment partnerships and co-investments); 3) operations (with departments on people and culture, information technology and corporate services), and 4) on finance and risk management, as well as four offices of governance affairs, internal audit, general counsel and the ED office (GCF, 2024e, Annex III). Given the substantial restructuring of the Secretariat in 2024 and 2025, which included a new job architecture, the Board at the request of the Secretariat in 2025 adopted a new salary structure as well as updated staff regulations at its 42nd meeting in July 2025 (GCF, 2025d, Annex IX). Those are meant to ensure the competitiveness and attractiveness of the GCF as first-rate employer to draw international staff with the expertise and capacity to manage a portfolio of USD 30 billion by 2028.

After the Board considered initial feasibility assessments in 2023, efforts continued throughout 2024 and in 2025 to establish a regional presence in order to overcome language and time-zone barriers that complicate engagement with NDAs and AEs in partner countries. With several options for feasibility presented in early 2024 at the 38th meeting, the Board decided that further work and consultations were needed before the Board's hard-fought decision at its 41st Board meeting in February 2025 to establish regional presence through an open, inclusive, consultative and transparent process with a view to seek an equitable and geographically balanced representation in developing countries, while taking cost-effectiveness and feasibility

into account (GCF, 2025c). At its 42nd meeting, the Board adopted the terms of reference to select the host countries “of regional offices and an outpost” for the GCF regional presence based on a detailed set of eligibility criteria, but without specifying how many offices and in what configuration were planned (GCF, 2025d, Annex VIII). A call for proposals launched in mid-2025 received 43 expressions of interests meeting all eligibility requirements (such as having a number of organisations present working on climate finance and providing a suitable living environment for international staff) by the September 2025 deadline. The Board is expected to make a decision for three regional offices and an outpost to cover Pacific SIDS at its March 2026 meeting based on the Secretariat’s comprehensive analysis of different configurations, including costing efforts that promise budget neutrality over time (GCF, 2026c). Given the completed Secretariat restructuring in regional departments, regional offices are expected to be capable of providing integrated services throughout the programming cycle, including readiness, with a majority of regional staff members likely to be relocated to regional offices, while the headquarters in Songdo will maintain core policy-setting and oversight functions.

At its 43rd meeting, the Board also approved the three-year administrative budget 2026–2028. The GCF’s overall administrative budget for 2026 (which includes expenditures for the Secretariat, the Board, and the Trustee), approved in October 2025, shows an increase of 12% with USD 118.3 million in 2025 to now projected USD 132.4 million. This includes portions for 2026 of previous GCF Board decisions from 2024 with some additional funding for significant growth to the GCF full-time staff capacity for an average staff headcount of 340 targeted in 2025; this also reflects the implementation of the updated staffing plan and salary structure for Secretariat staff approved in 2025. The budget for the Secretariat for 2026 is therefore quite a bit higher at USD 120.8 million in comparison to USD 109.1 million in 2025, a 10% increase. With its decision at its 43rd meeting, the Board also approved the provisional administrative budget for the Secretariat for 2027 at USD 128.7 million, as well as for 2028 at USD 140.5 million, to be updated and adjusted. The budget for 2028 assumes continued GCF-2 programming levels, but will need to be revisited in line with the update to the strategic plan for the GCF 2028–2031 period (USP-3) and GCF-3 resource mobilisation progress. The administrative budget for the Board is USD 4 million for 2026, with USD 6.5 million budgeted for the World Bank’s trustee services. This does not include USD 2.7 million for the Secretariat approved additionally as a contingency budget to deal with unexpected costs due to risks associated with a growing portfolio to deal with disruptions to operations and staffing, such as for continued alternative and remote working arrangements and adaptive management needs (GCF, 2025b, Annex II).

Results management frameworks and performance indicators

Since 2014, the GCF Board and Secretariat have worked to update and refine an initial results management framework with performance measurement matrices against which the impact, effectiveness and efficiency of its funding will be assessed. The initial results framework defined the elements of a paradigm shift towards low-emission and climate-

resilient country-driven development pathways within individual countries and aggregated across Fund activities. It defined four focus areas for mitigation, namely low-emission transport; low-emission energy access and power generation at all scales; reduced emissions from buildings, cities, industries and appliances; and sustainable land and forest management (including REDD+ implementation)² for mitigation. The core metric is that of greenhouse gas (GHG) emission reductions in tons of carbon dioxide equivalents. For adaptation, the four focus areas target the increased resilience of health, food and water systems; infrastructure; ecosystems; and enhanced livelihoods of vulnerable people, communities and regions, with the core metrics being the number of beneficiaries. In this context, the indicators also committed to assess the resulting developmental, social, economic and environmental co-benefits and gender-sensitivity of GCF investments at the Fund level, thereby including both quantitative and qualitative measures. The Board approved a separate performance measurement framework for REDD+ activities, for results-based payments.

Work on further refining the initial performance indicators for adaptation and to better capture both the outcomes of projects and programmes funded, as well as the transformative impact of the Fund’s aggregate activities and efforts to advance accounting methodologies, stalled for several years. The significant shortcomings of the GCF’s initial results and performance frameworks were noted in an independent evaluation prepared by the IEU in 2018 (IEU, 2018a) and considered by the Board at its 22nd meeting in February 2019, which mandated a thorough revision. For two years (2019–2021), the Secretariat worked through a consultancy to address some of the recognised short-comings, particularly in its results measurement of adaptation, as well as in developing methodologies to measure the paradigm shift potential of the Fund’s approved portfolio. The goal of an improved results management framework was to align better with the Fund’s investment framework and integrate a resource management approach in ensuring that Fund resources can achieve maximum outcomes and impacts in contributing to the GCF’s overall strategic objectives and the goals of the Paris Agreement.

The GCF’s new integrated results management framework (IRMF) was approved at the Board’s 29th meeting in June 2021. This followed several rounds of Board discussions and revisions after the presentation of a draft IRMF and proposed results tracking tool (RTT) to the Board at its 27th meeting in November 2020. The new IRMF replaces the initial adaptation and mitigation performance measurement frameworks set in 2014 and is applied for projects and programmes submitted starting from the 32nd Board meeting in mid-2022. The IRMF maintains the eight results areas for results measurement at the GCF impact, outcome and project/programme levels. It now tracks and measures the paradigm shift potential of GCF funded activities with a focus on assessing their scale, replicability and sustainability. GCF outcomes for mitigation and adaptation are now assessed against four core indicators (instead of the previous two) each with several sub-indicators. In addition to the core metrics of GHG emissions reduced, avoided or removed for mitigation and direct and indirect beneficiaries reached for adaptation, two new core indicators now also look at the value of physical assets and

hectares of natural resource areas brought under improved management through adaptation and mitigation efforts. Four additional core indicators (on enabling environment, technology transfer and innovation, market development/transformation, and knowledge generation/learning and standard-setting) focus on how those impacts are achieved. These core indicators are to be combined with qualitative assessments in a three-point scorecard with low, medium and high ratings to be used by evaluators during mandatory interim and final project/programme evaluations.

To address concerns by developing country Board members regarding the impact of the IRMF on project/programme eligibility and direct access, the Board in 2021 requested the development of a results handbook requiring Board approval as well as approved an additional USD 12.4 million in capacity building support for a new dedicated funding window under the Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme (RPSP) to support direct access entities to apply the IRMF in their projects/programme results frameworks. A draft of the results handbook was published by the Secretariat in May 2022 (GCF, 2022).

Outcomes and impacts of the GCF's funding under readiness and preparatory support, reaching a total of USD 749.1 million in approved funding by the end of 2025, are also assessed against a Readiness Results Management Framework (RRMF), which was initially established for the 2019-2023 readiness programme. It was revised in 2025 to better align with the new readiness strategy (2024-2027) and its efforts to support programming in line with the targeted results of the USP-2 and the core indicators of the IRMF, while taking into account recommendations of the IEU's 2023 readiness evaluation (GCF, 2025e).

On the fund level, the Secretariat tracked results as part of its annual reporting under the strategic plan for GCF-1 through the RTT, publishing Annual Results Reports (ARRs) for 2020 and 2021, but not for 2022. The GCF Annual Report for 2023 listed for its portfolio of then 243 projects and programmes approved at the end of GCF-1 a total of 2.9 billion tCO₂e in mitigation benefits and more than 1.1 billion beneficiaries (direct and indirect) of its adaptation efforts, but without indicating gender-differentiated beneficiaries (GCF, 2024f). As of January 2025, and after the first year of programming under GCF-2, the GCF's Data Library indicated for its portfolio of 286 projects and programmes a total of 3.06 billion tCO₂e in mitigation benefits and more than 1.27 billion beneficiaries (direct and indirect) of its adaptation efforts, with 49% of beneficiaries listed as female. For its portfolio of 336 projects and programmes as of early 2026, and thus ten years into its programming, 1.6 billion direct and indirect beneficiaries (but without provided details on gender-disaggregation) and a total of 3.3 billion tCO₂e in mitigation benefits are anticipated (GCF Portfolio Dashboard, n.d.³).

Investment framework

At its 11th Board meeting in Zambia in November 2015, the Board decided project proposals would be evaluated against a set of six agreed investment criteria focusing on: 1) impact (contribution to the GCF results areas); 2) paradigm shift potential; 3) sustainable development potential; 4) needs of recipient countries and populations; 5) coherence with a country's existing policies or climate strategies; and 6) the

effectiveness and efficiency of the proposed intervention, including its ability to leverage additional funding (in the case of mitigation) as well as a list of activity-specific sub-criteria and indicators agreed in 2015. Evaluation of medium- and large-size funding proposals is aided by a scoring approach, ranking proposals as low, medium or high against the investment criteria.

During 2018, work by the Board's Investment Committee and the Secretariat further progressed on the identification of quantitative and qualitative benchmarks. These inform the investment framework of the Fund and support the review and assessment of project proposals alongside efforts to monitor implementation. Based on this work, the Board at its 22nd meeting in February 2019 approved a set of investment criteria indicators for a one-year pilot, although it was unable to review the pilot in 2020. The Board in 2019 also considered, but was not able to approve, a set of separate policies aimed at requiring Accredited Entities (AEs) to more clearly elaborate the climate rationale of funding proposals as well as to justify the level of concessionality requested and apply incremental cost calculation methodologies. With policy work largely stalled in 2020 and 2021 due to the Board's reduced work programme during the pandemic, 2022 saw the adoption of the policy on climate rationale at the Board's 33rd meeting in July after concerns by developing countries were addressed that such a policy should not be used to reject adaptation proposals on technical grounds in the absence or unavailability of long-term data sets. The policy clarifies that best available information and data, including from the IPCC as well as traditional, local and indigenous knowledge and practices, are sufficient as the basis for demonstrating the climate impact of GCF-supported activities. A new guidance approved by the Board at the same meeting on the approach and scope of GCF funding for adaptation measures, which takes into account the findings and recommendations of an in-depth 2021 IEU evaluation on adaptation (IEU, 2021a), complements the new policy.

The Board has yet to consider and approve guidelines for programmatic approaches; this has to be taken up with some urgency as the GCF-2 programming period is well underway, given that the Board since 2020 went ahead with the approval of several large-scale funding programmes in the absence of a joint understanding of rules and regulations needed to guide their implementation and accountability, and that programmatic approaches are also central to the vision of the GCF's Updated Strategic Plan for 2024-2027. At its 37th meeting in October 2023, the Board approved an update to the investment framework by adjusting overall investment allocation parameters and portfolio targets for GCF-2, such as the expectation that the share of funding for private sector activities in nominal terms would grow further. The investment framework's six core indicators and 24 coverage indicators continue to apply.

The Board's investment decision-making is also informed by recommendations on individual funding proposals provided by an Independent Technical Advisory Panel (ITAP). ITAP was formed in 2015 with six members and its effectiveness and capacity were reviewed in 2017. The Board finally reconsidered the mandate, structure, review procedures and expert composition of the ITAP in March 2021 (as part of an ongoing comprehensive review of the work of committees,

expert groups and panels). In approving the updated ITAP review procedures at its 28th meeting, the Board followed the changes recommended in 2020 by its Investment Committee, but also clarified timelines and issues resulting from the ITAP's non-endorsement of funding proposals, especially in cases where the assessment of proposals and their recommendation for Board approval differs between the ITAP and the Secretariat. The latter caused irritation in the case of several adaptation proposals not forwarded for Board consideration by the ITAP in 2021. The updated ITAP review schedule and procedure supports better alignment of proposal review schedules between the Secretariat and the ITAP by conducting the ITAP reviews on a rolling basis and within specified time frames, establishes smaller peer review teams within ITAP instead of requiring consensus among all ITAP members for clearing proposals for Board consideration, as well as mandates deepened engagement with the AEs on project/programme proposals under review for proposed Board consideration. In recognition of the increase in the ITAP's workload with the number of funding proposals – including under the Simplified Approval Process (SAP) – steadily growing, the Board already in 2020 confirmed the nomination of four additional ITAP members to start their work in 2021, selected with a view to further broaden the range of expertise represented on the now 10-member panel. A performance review of individual ITAP members in early 2022 led to some personnel changes on the panel.

Some criticism by developing country Board members about some proposals that were rejected by the ITAP repeatedly and thus needing multiple attempts to clear the technical review for consideration by the full Board, and ongoing discussions in 2023 in the Investment Committee led to the recommendation for a broader review of the function, governance and role of the ITAP. The Board at its 40th meeting in October 2024 adopted the terms of reference for such work under the guidance of the Investment Committee, with a report back to the full Board with recommendations that could decide the future role, if not the continued existence of the ITAP, expected to be presented at the March 2026 Board meeting (GCF, 2024a, Annex III). Options regarding the future of the ITAP are likely to include maintaining the current ITAP role as an independent advisory body with only minor changes to its core mandate, involving the ITAP much earlier in the review process and reserving their engagement for higher-risk funding proposals or even phasing out the ITAP's external technical review role and instead integrating additional outside expertise into the Secretariat's review process (GCF, 2026d).

Allocation

The GCF is committed to 'balance' spending between mitigation and adaptation. In 2014, the Board approved an allocation framework which clarified that the GCF is to spend 50% of its funding on adaptation, of which 50% is to be spent in LDCs, SIDS and African states. Allocations are to be tracked in grant equivalents. While there is no maximum allocation cap for individual countries, the Board has stressed the need for geographic balance (see the 2014 CFF 11 for further details on the GCF allocation approach).

After the 43rd GCF Board meeting, the portfolio of 336 approved and active projects and programmes reflected

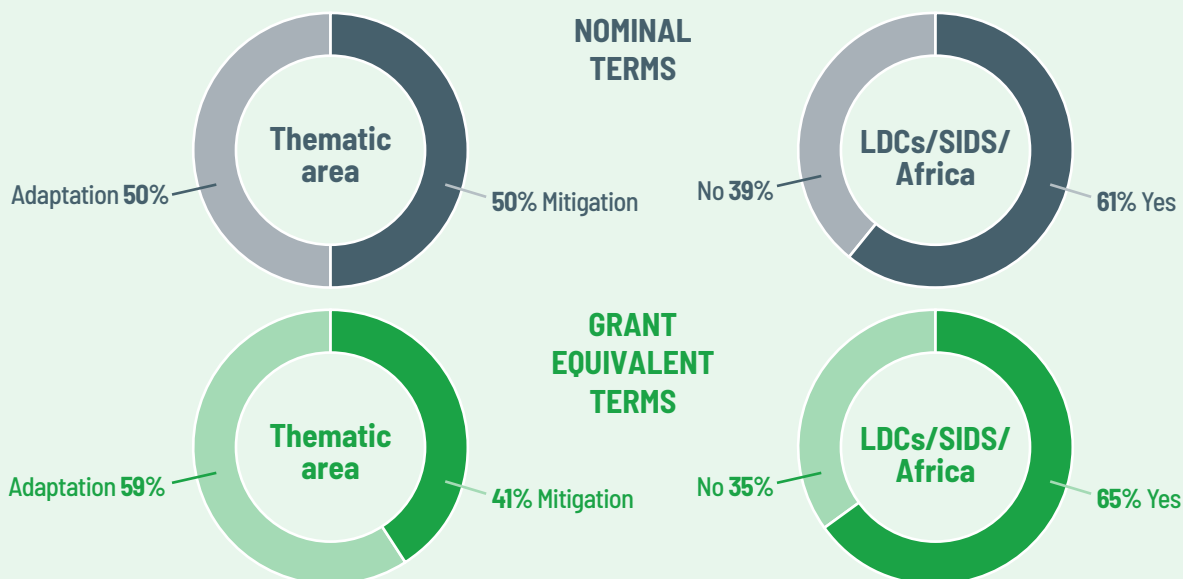
an allocation in grant equivalent terms of 41% (USD 5.01 billion) dedicated to mitigation projects and 59% (USD 7.34 billion) dedicated to adaptation projects and programmes. In nominal terms, the picture for the portfolio of 336 active projects and programmes (with 153 devoted to adaptation, 75 focused on mitigation and 108 classified as cross-cutting by combining elements of both) looks somewhat different. Of the USD 19.37 billion in funding approved, 50% (USD 9.76 billion) is for mitigation and 50% is for adaptation (USD 9.57 billion). Integrated in these amounts is the funding approved for the growing number of cross-cutting proposals (although the detailed criteria the Secretariat uses for allocating funding under cross-cutting proposals to either adaptation or mitigation and for calculation of the overall balance remain unclear). This is the first year the GCF achieved balance in the portfolio in nominal terms after years of a persistent nominal imbalance, but with twice the number of adaptation projects than mitigation projects, reflecting the fact that many of the adaptation measures approved by the GCF Board are still relatively small, single-country projects (GCF, 2026a). Years ago, the IEU in its forward-looking performance review had called to increase the share of adaptation by striving towards a balanced allocation in nominal terms for GCF-1, although contributors and the Secretariat then committed only to maintain the efforts towards balance in grant equivalent terms, which was also confirmed by the Board at its 27th meeting as a goal under the updated strategic plan for GCF-1. Without further adjustments, the same goal for a 50:50 balance over time between adaptation and mitigation funding in grant equivalent terms was also integrated in the update to its strategic plan for GCF-2, which the Board approved in mid-2023 (GCF, 2023a).

The regional distribution in nominal terms shows 37% (USD 7.2 billion) for Africa, 29% (USD 5.7 billion) for Asia-Pacific, 23% (USD 4.5 billion) for Latin America and the Caribbean, and 11% (USD 2.1 billion) for Eastern Europe, Central Asia and Middle East. In grant equivalent terms, the geographical balance of GCF funding shows USD 4.88 billion (or 39%) for Africa, USD 3.5 billion (or 29%) for Asia-Pacific, USD 2.9 billion (or 23%) for Latin America and the Caribbean, and USD 1.2 billion (or 10%) for Eastern Europe, Central Asia and the Middle East (GCF, 2026a). Some 187 projects and programmes target SIDS, LDCs and African states either wholly or partly (GCF, 2025f). Vulnerable countries received 61% (USD 5.9 billion) of the GCF's approved adaptation funding in nominal terms and 65% (USD 4.8 billion) in grant equivalent terms and thus significantly above the targeted floor of 50% of the allocated adaptation funding (see Figure 1).

Project pipeline and approval process

Efforts increased in 2025 to update the project pipeline, including by urging accredited entities to retire or refresh a substantial portion of the legacy pipeline. This goes hand in hand with the Secretariat's commitment to speed up reviews of new projects from receipts of funding proposals to getting them ready for Board consideration in nine months or less of Secretariat review and engagement time. By the end of 2025, the GCF project pipeline comprised 46 funding proposals (36 public sector and ten private sector), requesting USD 3.1 billion in GCF support and worth USD 9.9 billion in total with expected co-financing. Of the requested GCF funding amount, 26% or USD 0.8 billion is for adaptation, only 10.4% or USD

Figure 1: GCF funding by thematic area and adaptation allocation for LDCs/SIDS/African states in nominal and grant equivalent terms (%)



Source: Document GCF/B.43/Inf.10, Figures 16 and 17; https://www.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/09-status-gcf-resources-portfolio-and-pipeline-gcf-b43-inf10_1.pdf

0.32 billion is for mitigation, while 63.5% or USD 1.96 billion is for cross-cutting approaches; this continues a trend of earlier years with the number and value of mitigation funding proposals in the pipeline reduced, while funding requests for cross-cutting activities soar. Of the USD 1.89 billion in requested adaptation funding (when including the adaptation share of cross-cutting funding requests), over three quarters or USD 1.45 billion is requested for projects and programmes in LDCs, SIDS and African states. Among regions, most pipeline proposals target Africa (43.6%), followed by Asia-Pacific (33.4%), and Latin America and the Caribbean (19.6%). Just 3.3% of pipeline funding has been requested for projects and programmes in Eastern Europe, Central Asia and Middle East, reducing an already small share even further. Of all pipeline proposals, ten (22%) are from direct access entities, accounting for 24.9% of requested funding, with the 36 proposals from international access entities adding up to three quarters of the requested funding (GCF, 2026a).

Following an effort by the Secretariat in 2025 to optimise the pipeline of early stage proposals in the form of concept notes, resulting in the withdrawal of 187 previously submitted concept notes, many of them inactive for years, there are now 144 concept notes (126 public sector and 18 private sector) in the pipeline that together require USD 8.5 billion in GCF funding support, with another USD 8.4 billion in expected co-financing; 85 of these (57%) are from direct access entities, with 58.9% of the required funding, a significant increase over the previous year, with 55 concept notes from international access entities (38%) and five concept notes (3.5%) submitted by NDAs. With the number of direct access project/programme proposals and concept notes in the pipeline having further grown over the past years, this marks the second year in a row (despite the concept note pipeline consolidation) with more direct access concept notes with a higher volume of requested funding (USD 5.0 billion or 58.9%) than for international access entities (USD 3.0 billion or 35.6%) in the pipeline (GCF, 2026a). It remains to be seen

if these can be developed successfully into full funding proposals, and thus show a shift to more of approved GCF funding flowing through direct access entities.

Since 2016, the Secretariat has issued four targeted requests for proposals (RfPs) under five pilot programmes. Approved by the Board in 2015, specific pilot programmes on Enhanced Direct Access (EDA) and micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) were launched in 2016. In 2017, at its 16th meeting, the Board approved a USD 500 million private sector-focused pilot programme that led to an RfP for mobilising funding at scale (MFS) in the same year. At its 18th meeting in Cairo in 2017, the Board approved an RfP under its USD 500 million REDD+ results-based payments pilot programme. An USD 80 million pilot scheme for a SAP for micro- and small-size low-risk projects gained Board support in 2017 after many delays, accepting proposals on an ongoing basis. The GCF's IEU in June 2021 completed a rapid assessment of the GCF's RfP modality and recommended significant improvements to its use to address the then lackluster utilisation of some of the active RfPs (IEU, 2021b):

- So far seven projects worth USD 119 million have been approved under the EDA pilot, the last a public sector adaptation facility in October 2024. The programme's future looks significantly improved over previous years with five remaining active funding proposals and six EDA concept notes worth USD 336.7 million in GCF funding in the pipeline, almost all of them from LDCs, SIDS and African states. The GCF Secretariat has intensified efforts to support direct access entities in utilising the EDA approach, including by issuing a new guidance document in November 2021.
- For the MSME pilot programme, 30 concept notes were initially received, with seven shortlisted for further development. Of these, four were submitted and approved, but only three MSME projects (worth USD 60 million) are still at an active stage, with one having lapsed.

- The private sector-focused RfP for MFS received 350 concept notes, of which 30 were shortlisted. It currently has four active projects with its first proposal, approved at the 23rd Board meeting in July 2019, now cancelled. The four projects and programmes under implementation were approved two each at the 25th and 27th Board meetings in 2020 for a total worth of USD 203 million.
- Under its USD 500 million REDD+ results-based payments pilot programme, four projects worth USD 228.7 million in Brazil, Ecuador, Paraguay and Chile were approved in 2019. Four more projects in Indonesia, Colombia, Argentina and Costa Rica worth USD 268.2 million were approved in 2020, thus exhausting the funding envelope for the pilot programme. This left four concept notes still in the pipeline, which, if approved, would require more than USD 350 million in results-based payments. A further five countries have become eligible for support under the pilot since funding was exhausted in 2020. Efforts intensified in 2023 to propose the next funding phase, following several technical workshops and consultations. A proposal submitted by the Secretariat for the Board's 37th meeting in October 2023 was considered and in a revised form approved by the Board at its 40th meeting in October 2024.

The new policy for REDD+ results-based payments (RBP) essentially ends the pilot programme and mainstreams the approach into the regular project and programme activity cycle, with the funding allocated to REDD+ RBP to be determined under each programming period of the GCF (and not yet set for GCF-2). The Secretariat is tasked to develop relevant guidance and templates, building on those used during the pilot programme phase, but utilising an approved updated REDD+ RBP scorecard. However, the four countries that had submitted and were deemed eligible under the initial pilot programme, namely Laos, Papua New Guinea, Vietnam and Uganda, were allowed to still submit their funding proposals for REDD+ RBP under the initial pilot framework as an exception (GCF, 2024a, Annex VIII). During 2025, the REDD+ proposals for Papua New Guinea, Laos and Uganda were approved at the 42nd and 43rd Board meetings for a total of USD 155.9 million. The REDD+ RBP proposal for Vietnam will be considered by the Board in early 2026.

- Since its launch in late 2017, the SAP pilot scheme saw the approval of four projects in 2018, added another eight approved projects in 2019, seven more in 2020, four in 2021, two in 2022, eight in 2023 and significantly scaled up in 2024 and 2025 with 14 approved SAP projects in 2024 and 17 new approved SAP projects in 2025 worth USD 331.2 million for a total of USD 937.6 million approved across 64 SAP projects. Of these, 33 are from direct access entities and only eight from the private sector. The demand for SAP seems to have slowed down with only six public sector funding proposals and 37 concept notes (36 from the public sector and one from the private sector) in the overall pipeline worth almost USD 734.6 million in GCF support and USD 1.14 billion when taking co-financing into account (GCF, 2026a).

Throughout 2020 and 2021, the SAP was reviewed by the Secretariat and independently assessed by the IEU (IEU, 2020) with significant updates proposed to its operations,

including increasing the level of GCF funding support from the previous USD 10 million, widening the eligibility to mid-risk categories and the consideration of shifting SAP funding decisions away from in-person Board meetings. The Board considered and discussed those and other options at both its 29th and 30th Board meeting in 2021, but could not make a decision on updating the SAP. At its 32nd meeting in May 2022, the Board confirmed that the focus of SAP projects would remain with low-risk projects, but raised the scale of individual SAP projects to USD 25 million in GCF support and tasked the Secretariat to work with the ITAP to reduce the information required for proposal review, as well as to increase the readiness support for SAP funding proposal preparation.

As part of the 2022 update to the GCF accreditation framework, in April 2023 the three-year pilot phase for the project-specific assessment approach (PSAA) was launched. It allows for a one-off project submission without going through the formal accreditation process and is supposed to prioritise proposals from regional, national and subnational entities in developing countries, particularly those without approved GCF-funding and from entities that have responded to RfPs, such as private sector actors that have submitted concept notes, but are not seeking accreditation. As of December 2025, demand for the PSAA remains high with 121 inquiries received and 31 proposals under review. The first PSAA proposal, as a SAP, was approved by the Board at its 40th meeting in October 2024. In 2025, five PSAA proposals were approved by the Board at the 41st and 43rd meeting for a total of USD 298.1 million, of which USD 152.50 was for three international PSAA entities and USD 145.6 million for two national PSAA, with potentially six additional PSAA proposals expected for Board consideration in March 2026. As this is a pilot phase, a review of the PSAA pilot approach will be carried out, with a report slated to be presented to the Board for B.46 in October 2026 with recommendations on the future of the funding approach (GCF, 2026a).

The Secretariat conducts due diligence on all proposals submitted to ensure compliance with the Fund's interim environmental and social safeguards, its gender policy, its Indigenous Peoples policy and financial and other relevant policies. It also assesses proposals against the GCF investment framework as well as specific additional scorecards in the case of targeted RfPs. Only funding proposals that have received a no-objection clearance by an NDA or a country's focal point can be submitted. Throughout 2025, Board discussions and Secretariat efforts continued to centre on steps to improve the quality of proposals, including by better elaborating their climate rationale, and to increase the number coming from direct access entities. The Board approved at its 22nd meeting in February 2019 a policy outlining requirements for cancellation and restructuring of approved projects and has started consultations in 2025 on updating this policy. This follows a multi-year upward trend for restructuring and change requests from 36 in 2021 to 115 in 2023 for already approved projects due to implementation delays from the pandemic and global inflation causing cost overruns. Around a third of projects and programmes under implementation were affected by change requests, including a growing number of major changes requiring Board approval, several of which were approved in 2024,

and indicating an increased need for adaptive management (GCF, 2024g). In 2025, the Board approved major changes to 12 projects and programmes, with a large number of projects needing some adaptive management action through non-major restructuring by the Secretariat. For 2026, the Secretariat has already issued some red flag warnings for 16 approved projects and programmes with implementation challenges that might require major restructuring if not cancellation (GCF, 2026a).

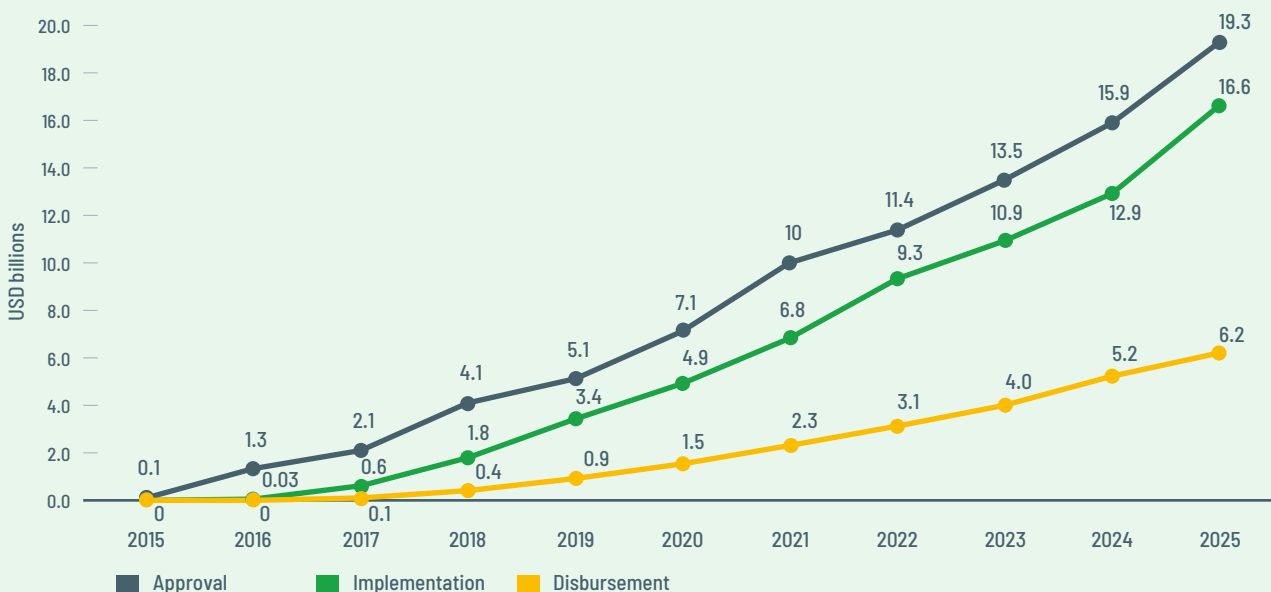
A project preparation facility (PPF) further has ramped up its activities in 2025, including by working through its roster of now 32 consultancy firms that can directly provide project preparation services to direct access entities at their request. Established following a Board decision at its 11th meeting in Zambia in 2015, USD 40 million was approved by the Board at its 13th meeting for the initial phase of the PPF. It is targeted primarily at small-scale activities and for direct access partners (although it is open to request from all accredited entities and now includes PSAA applicants). At its 37th meeting in October 2023, the Board endorsed revised PPF operation modalities and approved USD 90.5 million in additional PPF funding. Project preparation support of USD 1.5 million, and in exceptional circumstances of up to USD 3 million, which is approved by the executive director, can now be used for a wider set of preparatory activities, including assessment of climate impact indicators, gender studies and stakeholder engagement plans. As of end of 2025, 118 PPF applications have been approved for USD 74.6 million supporting some 60 entities, including two under the PSAA. PPF support of USD 30.6 million has led to the approval of 54 funding proposals worth USD 3.2 billion in GCF funding and total climate finance of USD 11.1 billion, including 15 funding proposals in 2025 (eight of them from direct access entities). Demand for the PPF remains strong with 29 PPF requests submitted and under review in the pipeline (GCF, 2026a).

By mid-October 2025, after 30 rounds of project considerations since late 2015, the Board had approved

USD 19.37 billion for 336 active GCF-supported projects and programmes. This includes 79 private sector projects/programmes worth USD 6.9 billion in GCF financing and 87 worth USD 3.8 billion in GCF support to be implemented by direct access entities, as well as six projects under the EDA, three under the MSME, eleven under the REDD+, and five under the MFS pilot programmes. In 2025, 50 project and programme proposals were approved for USD 3.25 billion in GCF funding. Of these, six supported mitigation with USD 632.9 million (19.5%), 28 supported adaptation with USD 1.36 billion (41.75%), while 16 supported cross-cutting projects and programmes with USD 1.26 billion (38.75%) in GCF support, accelerating the massive increase in GCF cross-cutting funding support in absolute and percentage terms. Implementation ramped up further in 2025 despite lingering disruptions caused by the pandemic and inflation. As of December 2025, 295 approved projects and programmes worth USD 16.6 billion (or 88% of approved projects) were under implementation by 65 accredited entities, with USD 6.2 billion or 32.1% disbursed, including full disbursement for approved funding for 53 projects (among them eight REDD+ projects). Of that amount, 37% has been disbursed for private sector projects and 63% for public sector projects. This however means that USD 9 billion of approved GCF funding for activities under implementation remains undisbursed. In 2025, the Secretariat continued to focus on increasing the speed for progressing from the GCF Board approval of projects to first disbursement of funding, including bringing down processing times through digitalisation efforts. In 2025, 70% of the projects and programmes approved in 2025 were able to sign their funded activity agreement (FAA) in less than six months, with some projects being able to sign their FAAs on the margins of the Board meeting at which they were approved (UNFCCC, 2025a; GCF, 2026a).

Figure 2 provides an overview over the development of GCF portfolio implementation and disbursement since 2015.

Figure 2: GCF portfolio implementation and disbursement 2015-2025 (cumulative, in USD billion)



Source: Document GCF/B.44/Inf.08, Figure 6, p. 13, <https://www.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/09-status-gcf-resources-portfolio-and-pipeline-gcf-b44-inf08.pdf>

Financial instruments, concessionality and co-financing

The Fund has used financial instruments beyond grants and concessional loans in support of its 336 approved and active projects and programmes so far, although equity investments and risk guarantees – with 12% (USD 2.26 billion) and 2% (USD 386.7 million) respectively – still make up a minor percentage of overall GCF funding. The largest share with 45% or USD 8.61 billion of approved financing is committed in the form of grants and 38% or USD 7.4 billion in the form of concessional loans. Results-based payments, such as the funding paid for eleven REDD+ projects, now takes up 3% (USD 652.6 million) of approved funding (GCF, 2026a). There are however significant differences in the use of the GCF financial instruments between public sector and private sector funded activities. For public sector projects, with GCF funding of USD 12.4 billion, grants account for the largest portion (63.07%), followed by loans (30.5%), results-based payments (5.25%) and guarantees (1.14%). GCF funding of USD 6.9 billion for private sector projects is accounted for by loans (52.19%), equity (32.56%), grants (11.69%), and guarantees (3.56%) (UNFCCC, 2025a). For the private sector, the reduction of the loan concentration and corresponding increase in equity over the years reflects a shift towards more risk-bearing instruments, such as fund-of-fund structures. Over time, the Fund may also offer an even broader suite of financial instruments. For example, the GCF has increased its involvement as a direct equity investor in some GCF projects and is floating the idea of establishing a co-investment platform; there has also been talk about a possible bond issuance. Some developing country Board members remain concerned that more complex financial instruments would move the Fund even further towards a bank structure, thus undercutting the core mandate of the GCF as an operating entity of the Financial Mechanism of the UNFCCC, which focuses on meeting the additional costs of climate change-related interventions through concessional financing.

At its 13th meeting in 2016, the Board proposed interim risk and investment guidelines for one year. These were differentiated for the public and private sector and based on principles such as maximising leverage and only seeking the minimum required level of concessionality. The guidelines stipulated that while public sector projects could receive 100% GCF grant funding, for private sector investments the grant component would be capped at 5% of total costs. Years later, however, the Fund is still operating on a case-by-case approach, as a standard set of terms for even public sector lending is not yet elaborated. In 2019, a review of the financial terms and conditions recommended a uniform approach to measuring the level of concessionality needed to make GCF funding proposals viable, but the review confirmed the case-by-case approach for private sector proposals.

At its 24th meeting the Board approved a policy on co-financing. While not establishing a co-financing requirement to access GCF funding, the policy nevertheless outlines such an expectation and details AE reporting requirements on co-financing. Board efforts that began in 2019 to consider separate policies on concessionality and incremental cost methodologies have stalled since 2021, but might come up with efforts towards the next strategic phase.

At its 33rd meeting in July 2022, the Board considered findings from its second review of the financial terms and conditions, with a view to expanding the range of financial instruments the GCF could use going forward, the more efficient use of its concessionality, and considering whether and how barriers could be overcome, such as for example the lack of a credit rating for the GCF. The Board tasked the Secretariat and Investment Committee with further work, including developing a local currency financing pilot programme to address current risks associated with currency fluctuations at the project and programme level, with the Board considering some initial options at its 36th meeting in July 2023. The Board at its 39th meeting in July 2024 reviewed progress made in developing a framework for addressing the scope and criteria for local currency financing and tasked the Secretariat to provide the Investment Committee with further analysis on the Fund's existing foreign exchange exposure, as well as to develop a foreign exchange management framework (GCF, 2024h). Going forward, the financial terms and conditions of the GCF's financial instruments are to be reviewed regularly in the year prior to the start of a new replenishment programming period. By the end of 2025, the GCF already recorded some USD 362 million in cumulative reflows of its loan portfolio, which becomes then available for new project funding (World Bank, 2025).

Risk management

To balance inputs into the Fund (currently only in the form of grants from the public and private sector, paid-in public capital contributions and concessional public loans) with the risks and concessionality of finance that the GCF is to offer, the Fund established safeguards such as capital cushions to maintain the ability of the GCF to deliver a significant portion of its funding as grants. The implementation of its initial financial risk management framework (approved by the Board at its 7th meeting in 2014), as well as the implementation of a comprehensive risk management framework (approved by the Board at its 17th meeting and which includes the GCF's risk appetite statement) is overseen by the Board's standing Risk Management Committee working with the Secretariat's Office of Risk Management and Compliance. A detailed risk register – that also addresses non-financial risks such as reputational or compliance risk that the Fund faces as part of this framework – is complemented by a risk dashboard. This was further refined in 2018 and is updated quarterly for every Board meeting and publicly available (GCF, 2025g). The risk dashboard reports on concentration risk (with percentage thresholds set to guard against one accredited entity getting too large a share of approved GCF projects or a too large single funding commitment), lists projects with severe implementation risks, and non-performing loans. Several components of the GCF risk management framework were approved in 2018, specifically an investor risk policy, a non-financial risk policy covering disasters or cyber-attacks, and a funding risk policy dealing with liquidity or foreign exchange risks. At its 23rd meeting in July 2019, the Board approved one of the last missing policy pieces in the risk management framework – a compliance policy. In 2020, the Secretariat and Risk Management Committee jointly reviewed the initial financial risk

management framework, proposing only minor changes. The Secretariat in 2021 continued to work on updates to the legal risk management and risk-rating models, and provided further analysis of the currency risk of non-USD contributions to the GCF, including the risk of currency mismatch as most funding commitments are approved in USD. The Fund initially had set aside USD 170 million to lower the risk caused by the currency mismatch, and during B.33, the Board decided to set aside an additional amount of USD 150 million towards the risk buffer. At its 34th meeting in October 2022, the Board also approved a new policy to minimise the effect of currency fluctuations on the commitment authority of the GCF, which includes the establishment of a collateral reserve and set-aside of USD 50 million.

In 2024, a review of the risk management framework, including the risk register and the risk dashboard template as well as a revision to the GCF's risk appetite statement was started, to better align the risk management framework with the USP-2 for the GCF-2 programming period. The Board adopted a new risk appetite statement at its 40th meeting in October 2024, indicating that the GCF is willing to accept considerable risks in its programmes and projects in return for impact potential evaluated on a case-by-case basis; the new statement introduces three levels of risk tolerance classified as low, moderate and considerable while reducing the scope of policies, behaviours and activities for which a zero tolerance for non-compliance will be applied (GCF, 2024a, Annex IX).

Country ownership

The Board has repeatedly confirmed country ownership and a country-driven approach as core principles of the Fund. An NDA or a focal point acts as the main point of contact for the Fund, develops and proposes individual country work programmes for GCF consideration, and ensures the consistency of all funding proposals that the Secretariat receives with national climate and development plans and preferences. As of January 2026, 148 of 155 eligible countries have designated an NDA or focal point. Countries' engagement with the GCF is highlighted on individual country pages on the GCF website. Countries have flexibility on the structure, operation and governance of NDAs.

At its 17th meeting the Board approved updated and more detailed country ownership guidelines, including guidance on country coordination functions and stakeholder engagement, which are to be reviewed at minimum every two years. Any proposal needs to be accompanied by a formal no-objection letter (NOL) to the Secretariat from the NDA or focal point in order for it to be considered by the GCF. For regional and multi-country proposals, each country in which the project/programme is to be implemented needs to issue a no-objection letter. This is intended to ensure recipient-country ownership of funding for projects, particularly those that are not implemented by governments (for example through the private sector). In 2024, several Board members from developing countries raised concerns about the current NOL template and its legal status, especially in light of programmatic approaches and multi-country

programmes where sub-projects are not yet known at the time of programme approval and urged a revision of the NOL process to be tackled. The Board at its 41st meeting approved some changes to the language of the NOL template, which clarify that it is the legal responsibility of the implementing entity, not of the NDA, to ensure that projects, programmes, and including sub-projects, are implemented in compliance with the host country's national laws (GCF, 2025c). Further issues are to be considered as part of the review and update of the guidelines for enhanced country ownership and country drivenness expected to be brought to the Board in 2026.

By the end of 2019, and with it the end of the IRM, 24 official country programmes detailing GCF funding priorities had been submitted in final form; a further 33 countries had shared draft versions of their country programmes. Country programmes that are nationally consulted and coordinated with the work programmes of accredited entities were seen as the basis for improved programming during GCF-1. In 2020, only three additional country programmes could be finalised. Four more finalised country programmes endorsed by the Secretariat were added in 2021, with an additional four finalised in 2022. In 2023, a further seven country programmes and in 2024, another five country programmes were endorsed by the Secretariat, which also provided technical assistance and support, including through expert deployment, for 49 countries in investment planning and country programmes. This was the result of strengthened and re-organised country programming support for a second generation of country programmes, including through further scaled-up technical assistance via readiness support, with a focus on embedding GCF financial support stronger than previously into a broader country financial strategy. Work also continued on familiarising AEs with updated country programming guidelines, streamlining AEs' investment priorities in their work programmes and through active match-making by the Secretariat. At the end of GCF-1, the Secretariat reported 111 country programmes in various stages of development, most advanced through increased readiness support (GCF, 2024i). Of those, 51 were finalised, including four in 2025. Countries are also encouraged to use readiness support to develop country and regional platforms to coordinate investment priorities. By the end of 2025, 17 countries and regions had announced their intention to create such platforms, with Brazil as the first country expected to submit a GCF funding proposal developed via its country platform to the Board in 2026 (GCF, 2026a).

Access modalities

The GCF works through a diverse range of partners. Like the Adaptation Fund, the GCF gives recipient countries direct access to funding through accredited national, subnational and regional implementing entities and intermediaries. These may include government ministries, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), national development banks, and other domestic or regional organisations that can meet the standards of the Fund. As previously mentioned, a letter of no objection by the country's NDA or focal point is also necessary under the

country-ownership principle to allow for the accreditation of a direct access entity to proceed. Countries can also access funding through accredited international and regional entities (such as multilateral and regional development banks and UN agencies) under international access, and private sector entities can be accredited as implementing entities or intermediaries too.

Developing countries have also been keen to explore modalities for enhancing direct access (EDA), under which developing country-based accredited institutions make their own decisions about how to programme resources under an allocation of GCF resources. Under a USD 200 million EDA pilot programme, a July 2016 request for EDA proposals netted 12 concept notes, but so far too few have come to fruition. At its 14th meeting, the GCF Board approved its first EDA project for a small grants programme in Namibia. After the Board failed at its 18th meeting in Cairo to approve an EDA proposal from Argentina, in 2018 only one more EDA proposal from Antigua and Barbuda was approved. It took almost three years for a third EDA proposal from Micronesia to be approved at the 30th Board meeting in October 2021, with a fourth for an Amazon eco-business facility in Peru to be added at the Board's 34th meeting in October 2022. 2023 saw two more EDA proposal approvals for two small grant adaptation approaches in Benin and Micronesia, with one West African regional EDA programme approved in 2024 for a total of now seven EDA projects worth USD 119 million. This leaves five remaining active funding proposals and six EDA concept notes worth USD 336.7 million in GCF funding in the pipeline, almost all of them from LDCs, SIDS and African states.

In 2020, the Secretariat established a new EDA team tasked to draft specific guidelines, and increased its outreach to direct access entities on how to develop EDA proposals as an innovative approach to promote more locally led climate actions. These guidelines were published in November 2021, with the Secretariat since then continuing to prioritise additional measures for enhancing direct access, such as targeted on-boarding and training for DAEs. The Secretariat's three-year work programme for 2025-2027, approved at the 40th GCF Board meeting, in its results framework lists doubling the number of new DAEs with approved funding proposals by adding 29 new DAEs by the end of 2027 as one core deliverable, although it does not reference the EDA pilot (GCF, 2024a, Annex V). This is also a core programming target under the USP-2. At the end of 2025, and thus half-way through the USP-2 implementation period, 13 new direct access entities with approved funding proposals had been added, bringing the total number to 42 (GCF, 2026a).

Accreditation framework with fiduciary standards and environmental and social safeguards

In 2014, the Board agreed on a broad accreditation framework with a three-step accreditation process. This accreditation framework remained in place, and thus governed the accreditation of the GCF's 158 accredited entities as of early 2026, until end of October 2025, when a comprehensively revised new GCF accreditation framework became effective.

Implementing entities and intermediaries from both the public and the private sector need to have in place best practice social and environmental safeguards and meet strong fiduciary standards to ensure good financial management. Additional specialised fiduciary standards are required for financial intermediation and programme management. GCF AEs also have to show their ability to comply with the GCF gender policy. In June 2014, the Board adopted the performance standards of the International Finance Corporation (IFC), the private sector arm of the World Bank Group, as the Fund's interim environmental and social safeguards (ESS). While the Fund was supposed to develop its own ESS within three years with inclusive multi-stakeholder participation, this process has been significantly delayed and was only taken up in 2019. This followed the adoption of a forward-looking, human-rights based Environmental and Social Policy (ESP) at the 19th Board meeting in 2018 as a core building block towards completion of the Fund's own Environmental and Social Management System (ESMS). The ESP was updated in 2021 to codify obligations by GCF implementation partners to comply with the Fund's policy on preventing sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment (SEAH). At its 23rd meeting in July 2019, the Board finally approved the process for developing the Fund's own ESS through a comprehensive multi-stakeholder participation process. Progress on this work stalled repeatedly, with several calls for public input on the suggested scope and specificities and on the first draft of the GCF's new proposed ESS advanced during 2021 and 2022, but then not again taken up since then. In the meantime, thinking in the Secretariat has turned to looking at the extent to which the GCF could rely on AEs' own articulated safeguard policies, applying a broader 'functional equivalency' approach. This leaves the future content of the GCF's own ESS articulation unclear, including in the aftermath of the GCF's revamped accreditation approach adopted by the Board at its 42nd Board meeting in July 2025. According to the Secretariat's work plan, an update to the ESS is to be presented for the Board's consideration in 2026 (GCF, 2025b, Annex II).

Under the now revised 'fit-for-purpose' accreditation approach – in which the application of fiduciary standards and ESS were categorised and matched to the risk level, complexity and size of the project or programme to be implemented – applicant entities chose which category of accreditation they sought and whether they wanted to be accredited to provide additional intermediating functions.⁴ A six-member Accreditation Panel, last evaluated and adjusted in expert composition and membership as a result of an in-depth performance evaluation in late 2020 for its 2021-2024 term, reviewed applicants' documentation and recommended to the Board whether an entity was to be granted accreditation, indicating further conditions where applicable. The initial accreditation period was for five years, after which time an entity needed to reapply. An entity was also able to seek an upgrade of its accreditation to a higher risk, size, or complexity level, with nine such upgrades so far approved by the Board. According to a decision taken at the 23rd Board meeting, accreditation is considered effective once an AE has signed its Accreditation Master Agreement (AMA). With

the accreditation of the first GCF implementing entities effective since spring of 2015, the Board at its 24th Board meeting approved a review process for re-accreditation. In 2020, eight AEs were originally scheduled to apply for re-accreditation, although in a decision at its 26th meeting the Board allowed for a one-time request for a six-month extension to the accreditation term due to Covid-19. In 2021, the Board re-accredited five AEs (including three DAEs), but could not agree on the re-accreditation of one DAE. In 2022, it re-accredited 14 AEs (including seven DAEs); in 2023, a further twelve AEs were re-accredited (including six DAEs). This reflected a conscious effort by the GCF Secretariat and Accreditation Panel to prioritise re-accreditations over new accreditations (in 2023, eight new entities were accredited, five of them direct access ones) in order to avoid lapses in the accreditation terms of accredited entities with projects and programmes under implementation. To reduce pressure on the re-accreditation pipeline, the Board at its 37th meeting in October 2023 extended the accreditation term of all AEs by three years from the date their accreditation term lapsed or will lapse, or until the adoption by the Board of a revised accreditation framework, whichever occurs earlier. By the end of 2023, this affected already 17 AEs in various stages of re-accreditation which through the extension of their first accreditation term were allowed to continue to programme with the GCF; in 2024, a further 17 AEs whose five-year accreditation term would have lapsed benefitted from this extension (GCF, 2024j).

The Board, at its 18th meeting, also mandated the Secretariat to consider a revision of the accreditation framework to include other modalities for institutions to work with the GCF, such as a project-specific assessment approach (PSAA). While the Board approved the PSAA in principle at its 23rd meeting in July 2019, an elaboration of its procedure, which stalled in 2020 and 2021, was only adopted as a three-year pilot approach starting in April 2023 at the Board's 31st meeting in March 2022 as part of the broader update to the GCF's accreditation framework also approved. It establishes the PSAA as a second accreditation modality to complement institutional accreditation. The PSAA allows any entity not accredited with the GCF to bring only one proposal up to medium risk and of unlimited scale for Board consideration. The Board approved the GCF's first PSAA proposal at its 40th meeting in October 2024, with five more PSAA proposals, including four from the private sector, approved in 2025 worth USD 335 million in GCF financing. The Secretariat plans to bring six PSAA proposals worth USD 298 million to the Board for its first meeting in 2026, five of them private sector ones. The PSAA is considered a necessity to move forward with concept notes submitted by non-accredited entities from the private sector under its MFS pilot programme; it is also supposed to allow more developing country actors, deterred by the institutional accreditation process, to come forward with project proposals. Entities interested in submitting proposals through the PSAA can receive readiness and project preparation funding support, with two PPF requests approved in 2025. The PSAA pilot approach will be evaluated in 2026 to determine its future.

Lastly, a long-overdue accreditation strategy (first requested by the Board at its 10th meeting in July 2015) was finally approved at the 34th Board meeting in October 2022; it was to be reviewed after five years. It sought to focus on determining and filling gaps (regional, scope, capacities) of the growing existing AE network against both the mandate and the updated strategic plan of the GCF, as well as the programming needs of developing countries. It proposed to explore the potential for the GCF to increase its reliance on AEs' systems and policies, more actively guide applicants to the appropriate accreditation modality (PSAA or institutional accreditation), offer other collaboration options to interested parties and prioritise the accreditation and re-accreditation of certain applicants and AEs, with a particular focus on multi-pronged support pre- and post-engagement with DAEs. The updated accreditation framework, which became effective in April 2023, streamlined and further clarified the processes for accreditation and re-accreditation.

Notwithstanding these previous reform efforts, under the new leadership, the Secretariat in 2024 proposed a further comprehensive revision and a complete restructuring of the accreditation framework and several related policies. A proposed revised framework developed by the Accreditation Committee and the Secretariat was extensively discussed at the Board's 39th and 40th meetings, although not approved. Proponents argued that improvements were necessary and a Fund priority for the GCF-2 programming period in order to improve country ownership, responsiveness and efficiency of the Fund and to support the capacity of DAEs, while some skeptical voices pointed out that the revision of the accreditation framework would do little to improve the capacity of already accredited DAEs to programme more of the GCF's funding. After further quite intensive deliberations, the Board adopted a revised accreditation framework and updates to the fees for accreditation as well as to the monitoring and accountability framework (MAF) at its 42nd meeting in mid-2025. As part of the reform package, the revised accreditation framework includes simplified screening requirements for and legal arrangements with implementation partners (GCF, 2025d, Annexes III-IV).

On October 31, 2025, the revised accreditation framework (RAF), a new policy on fees for accreditation, the updated monitoring and accountability framework (MAF), and the revised approach to legal arrangements with accredited entities became effective. The effective day triggered the one-year transitional period during which the Secretariat will operationalise the RAF and its related policies and components in parallel to the continued implementation of the prior accreditation framework. Under the RAF, the accreditation process is reducing the screening requirements to a sub-set of fiduciary standards and environmental and social safeguards, with other applicable standards and policies now only assessed during the project proposal review stage. An accreditation applicant will also no longer apply for specialised fiduciary standards (such as grant awards or on-lending or blending), with those capabilities instead reviewed at the project proposal stage. Re-accreditation is no longer necessary; this could mean that the number of GCF implementation partners

could eventually number in the hundreds. Compliance is thus exclusively monitored through a likewise updated MAF. This policy change also does away with prior policy mandates under the previous monitoring and accountability framework to evaluate as part of the former re-accreditation process the extent to which an AE had shifted its entire portfolio, not just its small subset of GCF-funded activities, away from fossil fuel funding and towards low-emission efforts. Where under the old accreditation framework accreditation of an AE became effective only through a fully executed Accreditation Master Agreement (AMA), now the accreditation is considered complete after Board approval and with the issuance of a certificate by the Secretariat. Lastly, while accreditation applications were before accepted on a rolling basis, now applications are only accepted during two two-month application windows per year, with the promise that the review by the Secretariat and the Accreditation Panel would be done within nine months. The first application window under the RAF opened in early 2026.

Accredited implementing entities of the Fund

Since the call for accreditation applications was opened in November 2014, the interest in partnering with the GCF has remained high. As of January 2026, there were a total of 193 entities (146 direct access and 47 international access) in the pipeline seeking accreditation, which have been transferred to the RAF, with 109 having previously submitted applications under the old framework. 25 applicants, including 18 direct access applicants, which were already in stage II under the old accreditation process, elected to complete their efforts under the previous regime (GCF, 2026a). The Secretariat expects to process around 40 accreditation applications each year over the 2026–28 timeframe, which could add more than 120 AEs to the existing group of implementing entities for a partner pool of close to 300 (GCF, 2025b, Annex II).

The GCF Board has approved the accreditation of applicant entities since its 9th Board meeting in March 2015 in 26 batches for a total of now 158 AEs⁵ (with 106 or 67% direct access entities from 63 countries and 52 or 33% international access entities), although it did not consider accreditation proposals at its 11th, 16th, 19th, 20th, 28th, 30th, 32nd and 33rd meetings. Of those, 52 are international access entities (including 17 from the private sector) and 106 direct access entities (88 national and 18 regional, including 20 from the private sector). However, less than half of these have so far programmed projects with the GCF. Over the past years, overcoming a worrisome legal backlog, significant strides have been made in having the AMAs of 131 AEs becoming effective as the last legal step in fully operationalising their engagement with the GCF under the old accreditation framework. Under the revised accreditation framework (RAF) legal agreements are simplified, doing away with the AMA requirement. Instead the accreditation will become effective after the Board's decision and with the issuance of a certificate by the Secretariat (GCF, 2026a).

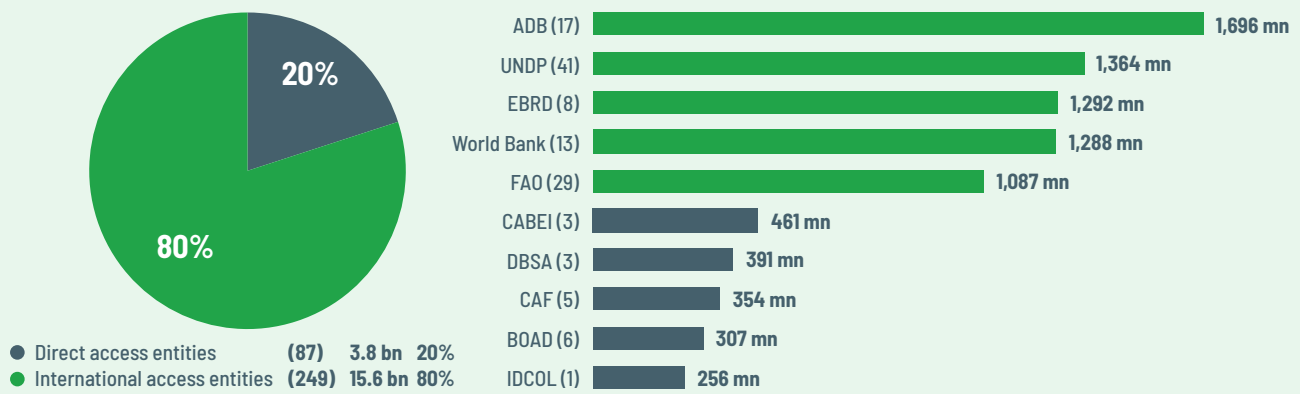
The GCF accreditation process over the years has sparked concerns with some stakeholders, including with respect to the length and complexity of the application process,

its transparency and thoroughness, and the diversity and balance of the GCF's AE network. Independent third-party views on the track record of applicant entities are still not part of the Accreditation Panel review process and there is a lack of transparency of who is in the accreditation pipeline. It is not yet clear if these shortcomings can be effectively addressed though the RAF. While the number of direct access AEs continues to grow faster than international access ones (with an additional 146 DAEs in the accreditation pipeline), this does not (yet) translate into programming. Of the 336 approved projects and programmes at the end of 2025, three times as many (249) came from international access entities than from direct access entities with 87. Without additional efforts to prioritise the accreditation of national and regional institutions for financial intermediation and larger and higher risk project categories and the upgrade of current direct access AEs, the existing imbalance in who accesses GCF funding will continue. The latest round of 22 project and programme proposals approved at the Board's 43rd meeting in October 2025 means that 80% of approved GCF funding in nominal terms (USD 15.6 billion) is channelled through international access entities, and only 20% (USD 3.8 billion) through direct access entities, a share that has not grown over the past years. As just a few international entities capture a disproportionate share of GCF approved funding, this raises the issue of concentration risk.

At the end of 2025, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) is the entity with the largest share of GCF approved funding with a total of USD 1.696 billion or 8.8% of the GCF funding portfolio for 17 large-scale programmes and financing facilities. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) follows second with USD 1.364 billion or 7%. It is also implementing by far the largest number of individual GCF projects and programmes at 41. The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) is next with USD 1.292 billion or 6.7% for eight projects, programmes and financing facilities. The World Bank follows closely with 1.288 billion (6.7%) for 13 projects and programmes, and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) surpasses the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) for fifth place with USD 1,087 million (5.6%) for 29 projects and programmes and rounds up the top five recipients. These five large international entities together received USD 6.7 billion (or 34.7%) and thus more than a third of all approved GCF funding as of January 2026.

A similar concentration among a few recipients – although at decidedly lower levels – is also happening among direct access entities. The top five receive USD 1.769 billion for 18 projects, and thus with 9.1% of the approved GCF funding, the lion's share of 47% of approved funding flowing through direct access entities (Figure 3). The Secretariat, in its 2026–2028 multi-year work programme, laid out a multi-pronged DAE strategy that will span both pre-accreditation and post-accreditation stages in order to bring more DAEs online and enable them to account for a greater share of projects and GCF funding. It foresees a programming goal for 2026 of up to 17 DAE projects and programmes for between USD 621–690 million, as well as a significant share of the expected up to 16 SAP projects for up to USD 310 million (GCF, 2025b, Annex II).

Figure 3: Total GCF funding by access modality of accredited entities, including top five recipients (in USD million), after the 43rd GCF Board meeting



Source: GCF Open Data Library (accessed on 14 February 2026), <https://data.greenclimate.fund/public/data/entities>

Notes: Number of approved projects is given in parentheses against each entity. Abbreviations: ADB = Asian Development Bank; BOAD = Banque Ouest Africaine de Développement (West African Development Bank); CABEI = Central American Bank for Economic Integration; CAF = Corporación Andina de Fomento; DBSA = Development Bank of Southern Africa; EBRD = European Bank for Reconstruction and Development; FAO = Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations; IDCOL = Infrastructure Development Company Limited; UNDP = United Nations Development Programme.

Monitoring and accountability

At its 11th meeting, the Board approved an initial monitoring and accountability framework (initial MAF) for GCF AEs, which is a key part of the broader monitoring and accountability system of the GCF. It set the incentives and remedial actions to ensure compliance by the AEs with GCF safeguards, standards and its policies on gender and Indigenous Peoples. The framework relied primarily on regular mandatory self-reporting by AEs on both annual project implementation progress through annual performance reports (APRs), most of which are publicly available (although only after considerable delay and for the private sector projects only in redacted form) as well as continued compliance with relevant GCF standards and policies with only spot checks by the Secretariat through annual self assessment reports and mid-term review reports. In 2024, the Secretariat and Accreditation Panel formally reviewed and analysed the required mid-term review reports submitted by 14 AEs that had reached the mid-term of their accreditation period, as well as the annual self-assessments of 48 AEs. However, the M&A framework also highlights an oversight role for NDAs and local stakeholders through participatory monitoring approaches for project implementation.

For the 43rd Board meeting, the Secretariat submitted its eighth annual GCF portfolio performance report (APPR), aggregating the individual APRs submitted by the AEs for the 286 projects and programmes worth USD 16.0 billion in GCF investments, with 244 projects and programmes under implementation with USD 4.7 billion in GCF funding disbursed by the end of 2024 and highlighting tangible results as many more projects and programmes are now advancing in maturity. At the end of 2024, GCF resources were channelled into 35 of the 89 accredited DAEs for the support of 70 approved projects and programmes, compared with 32 of the 50 IAEs which had 216 approved

projects and programmes. The 2024 APPR stressed that project success was supported by rigorous preparation, adaptive planning and management as requirement for resilient delivery, including through contingency funding and inclusive engagement; it also reported continued improvements and best practice compliance efforts with the mandates of GCF policies on gender and Indigenous Peoples, such as moving in project implementation from gender sensitivity to gender responsiveness and project inclusion of Indigenous and traditional knowledge, while also admitting continued challenges in applying in particular free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) of Indigenous Peoples in its programming (GCF, 2025h).

The initial MAF also importantly included a provision to monitor the shift of the entire portfolio of AEs – not just the GCF-funded portion – away from fossil fuels as a condition for re-accreditation after five years. Further work on setting a baseline for the consideration of the AE portfolio had stalled in 2019, after a draft methodology submitted for the 21st Board meeting in October 2018 was not considered. Instead, the Accreditation Panel, together with the Secretariat, developed a light-touch version of a baseline indicator tool for a pilot phase that was implemented with a sample of 15 AEs. This methodology was applied for the first time to several AEs seeking re-accreditation in 2021 showcasing some of the utility, but also challenges in applying the approach. In particular, the re-accreditation of one DAE stalled in 2021 as some developed country Board members felt the entity had insufficiently demonstrated its compliance with this provision of the GCF re-accreditation process. This DAE was re-accredited in 2022 after strengthening its commitments. Throughout re-accreditation of several entities in 2022 and 2023, the Board struggled with the best way to safeguard and document a commitment by re-accredited AEs to the portfolio shift goal, using in several instances the existence of net-zero plans and policies as justification and evidence.

The documentation of AEs' portfolio shift was effectively suspended with the 2023 decision to hold re-accreditation procedures for three-years. The revision of the GCF's accreditation framework approved at the Board's 42nd meeting in July 2025, which included a revision of the initial MAF, obliterated the need for re-accreditation and with it this portfolio shift provision. This means the loss of an important feature for documenting the paradigm shift that the GCF funding is supposed to support. Instead the AE is asked to report every five years after its accreditation date on its contribution towards the mandate of the GCF and its continued intent to do so in the future. The new MAF also 'rationalises' the reporting requirements for AEs. While an annual project-specific performance report is still required, self-assessment reporting of the AE's ability to comply with the GCF's policies, standards and safeguards will become less regular and supplemented through self-certification statements if AE policy or structural changes might affect its compliance. The new MAF retains some encouragement for AEs and NDAs to operationalise participatory monitoring efforts "where applicable" on the project/programme as well as the country-portfolio level (GCF 2025d, Annex V).

Readiness and preparatory support

LDCs, SIDS and some developed countries on the GCF Board made a strong case for early support for 'readiness activities' that would build country capacity to access and programme GCF finance effectively. Germany and South Korea provided early resources for this purpose before the IRM. By September 2017, the Board had approved a total of USD 80 million for readiness activities, of which 50% was slated to support vulnerable countries including SIDS, LDCs and African states. The Board approved an additional USD 50 million at its 18th meeting and a further USD 60 million at its 19th meeting to deal with the growing number of funding requests. In July 2019, at its 22nd meeting, the Board committed another USD 122.5 million for the GCF's Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme (RPSP). This was followed by the Board approving an additional USD 162.4 million at its 26th meeting in August 2020 for the 2020-2021 work programme of the RPSP, as well as an additional USD 166.94 million at its 33rd meeting in July 2022 for the 2022-2023 work programme of the RPSP, thus increasing the overall readiness financing approved by the Board to USD 641.8 million. For the period 2022-2023, the RPSP focussed support on addressing capacity and technical gaps for climate finance coordination, strategic frameworks for low-emission investment, strengthened adaptation planning and pipeline development, as well as continuing to assist developing countries in planning for a post-pandemic climate-resilient recovery.

Supporting national, subnational and regional implementing entities and intermediaries to meet GCF accreditation standards has been identified as a priority of the programme. This is intended to ensure that these standards do not become a barrier to direct access to the GCF. The Fund also provides readiness support to strengthen the institutional capacities in recipient countries for country coordination and multi-stakeholder consultation mechanisms as needed, as well as to prepare country programmes and project pipelines. At its 13th meeting, the Board also revised the list

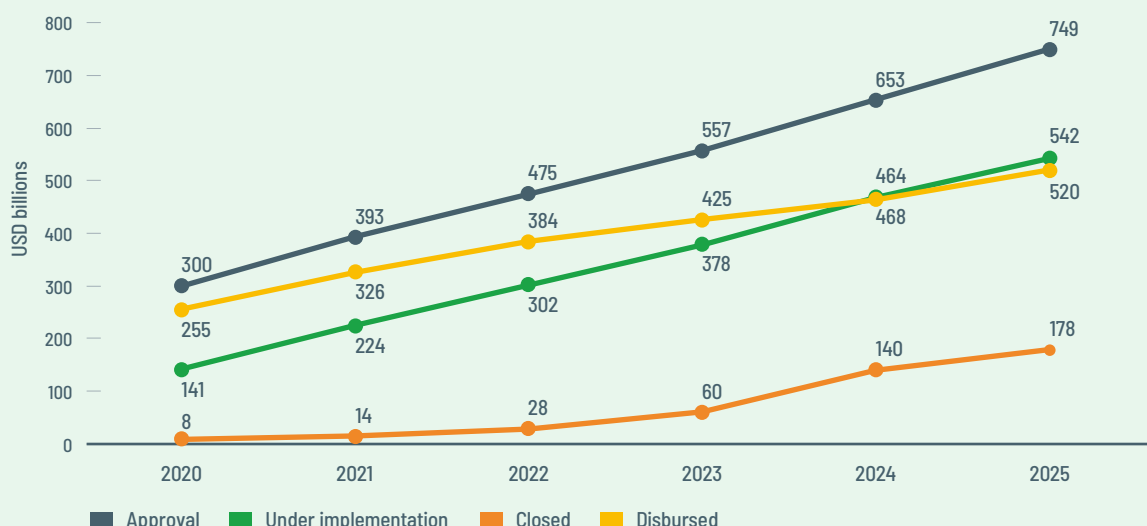
of activities that it can support to include up to USD 3 million per country for the formulation of National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) and other adaptation planning processes. Since then, requests for NAPs support have steadily increased. At the national level, the NDA or focal point plays a lead role in deploying readiness and preparatory support funding, and the GCF is one of the few international funds to give NDAs direct access to funding for institutional activities and the development of country programmes. As part of the new RPSP strategy approved in October 2023 for the GCF-2 programming period, NAP support will not only target plan formulation, but also with an equal amount the transition to NAP implementation (GCF, 2023c).

As of January 2026, the GCF had approved 880 readiness proposals from 142 countries, 93 of these are SIDS, LDCs or African states, with readiness support worth USD 749.1 million, of which 71 new proposals worth USD 96.2 million were approved in 2025. By January 2026, 144 NAP support grants worth USD 314.2 million, which made up 42% of total approved funding, had been approved benefitting 121 countries, among them 38 LDCs, 29 SIDS and 49 African countries. Africa is the region with the highest value of readiness grants approved (USD 250 million), followed by Latin America and the Caribbean (around USD 227 million), Asia-Pacific (around USD 164 million) with readiness support for Eastern Europe, Central Asia and Middle East remaining at just USD 104 million approved. Cumulatively, USD 530.3 million have been disbursed since the start of readiness support, with a total of 380 readiness grants (43.2%) closed as completed by the end of 2025. This leaves 500 readiness grants under implementation for both non-NAP and NAP as of January 2026 (GCF, 2026a). For the development of the GCF's RPSP programme over time, now globally the largest climate action capacity building programme, see Figure 4.

In 2016, the Board took first steps to simplify readiness grant agreements, including through framework agreements with readiness providers such as UNDP or *Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit* (GIZ, German agency for international cooperation) which operate in many countries. In the past, the number of its readiness delivery partners numbered up to 159, including NDAs, the majority from developing countries.

In 2018, the Fund's RPSP was reviewed extensively by the GCF's IEU, its first independent review (IEU, 2018b). The Board discussed the IEU's recommendations and made necessary adjustments in a revised readiness strategy for 2019-2021 that was adopted at its 22nd Board meeting. 'Readiness 2.0' allowed NDAs and focal points to request multi-year grants of up to USD 3 million for three years, replacing the previous one-year grants capped at USD 1 million. To better align the RPSP with the requirements and goals under the Updated Strategic Plan for the GCF-2 programming period (2024-2027), the Board at its 37th Board meeting approved a revised four-year RPSP strategy as well as USD 501.5 million for its execution and requested the Secretariat to develop detailed operational modalities and indicators for the strategy. As approved, the new strategy foresees four-year readiness budgets and support plans on the country level for up to USD 7 million, establishes a dedicated DAE window, shifts a much larger

Figure 4: Development of the Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme 2020-2025 (in USD million)



Source: GCF Board Document GCF/B.44/Inf.08, Figure 2, p.8. <https://www.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/09-status-gcf-resources-portfolio-and-pipeline-gcf-b44-inf08.pdf>

Note: Under implementation = grants which are still legally effective; closed = grants which have completed grant activities and finalised all reporting obligations (including completing reports and final audits); approved = all grants issued a formal approval notification from the GCF Secretariat; disbursed = all grants which has received disbursement, including those closed and/or cancelled.

part of funding support into project and programme pipeline development and ramps up country-level technical support, among other priorities (GCF, 2023c). This is meant to address what many recipient countries viewed as overly restrictive time and spending limits under the old approach.

After a one year transitional phase until May 2025, by the end of 2025 five new grants were approved under the new readiness framework, including four grants for the DAE window (which received a total of 37 requests in 2025) and one for the country window (with 48 requests received). The new strategy also foresees a new application process for readiness service providers to become part of a pre-approved pool of providers with at minimum three year contracts. In mid-2024, the Secretariat introduced a new placement scheme as part of the new readiness strategy to bolster local capacities by embedding GCF experts within host countries. By year's end it received 78 requests for placements (with 51 requests from SIDS and LDCs), and placed 28 liaison officers, 19 of them in SIDS or LDCs (GCF, 2026a). For 2026, the Secretariat expects 100 new readiness proposals worth USD 258 million to be approved, with USD 114 million to be disbursed with then 522 approved readiness grants under implementation (GCF, 2025b, Annex II).

Private sector operations

The GCF's outreach to, and engagement with, the private sector is seen as a key defining element of the Fund. Originally set up as a separate Private Sector Facility (PSF), the Fund has now sought to make private sector operations a cross-cutting aspect of all GCF operations, including in accreditation, portfolio development and management and with a special focus on enabling domestic private investment in low-emission and climate-resilient approaches. With the comprehensive restructuring of the Secretariat throughout 2024 and 2025, as of early 2026 staff

of the formerly separate PSF is now being integrated into four regional departments and a department of strategic investment partnerships and co-investment as a way of strengthening the mobilisation of private sector finance. As a result, as of January 2026, 36% of the portfolio's nominal value (USD 6.9 billion) had been allocated to the private sector for active 77 funded proposals reaching 102 countries, often large-scale multi-country programmes and financing facilities, which are expected to mobilise USD 31.3 billion in co-financing (a ratio of 1:4.5). The Secretariat indicates that slightly more than half (55.3%) of approved private sector finance benefits Africa, SIDS and LDCs (GCF, 2026a). However, with many private sector programmes listing multiple countries as potential but not guaranteed recipients, actual investments made in those priority countries and regions are likely lower.

A 14-member Private Sector Advisory Group (PSAG) – composed of eight private sector representatives (four each from developed and developing countries) in addition to two civil society experts (one from developed and one from developing countries) and four Board members (two each from developed and developing countries) – was set up in 2014 in order to provide strategic guidance on GCF engagement with private sector actors. It operated until 2019, but has been defunct since then with no apparent plan to revive it. Working closely with the Secretariat as well as the Board Investment and Risk Management Committees, the PSAG over a period of five years elaborated broad principles as well as targeted recommendations to the Board for Fund-wide engagement options and opportunities with the private sector. This included, for example, recommendations on mobilising funding at scale or working with local entities, particularly MSMEs.

Following core recommendations by the PSAG, the Board approved a USD 200 million MSME pilot programme and a

USD 500 million pilot programme for MFS at its 10th meeting in July 2015. The RfP for the MSME pilot, which opened in summer 2016, resulted in three approved MSME proposals, the last approved in 2019, and several in the pipeline. The RfP for MFS closed by September 2017 and netted 350 concept notes. Of these, 30 were shortlisted, with one approved by the Board at its 23rd meeting in July 2019, one initially submitted for and then withdrawn at its 24th meeting, and two more approved respectively at the 25th and the 27th Board meetings. In 2021, the IEU reviewed the use of both RfPs as well as the GCF's private sector approach (IEU, 2021c). The three-year PSAA pilot approach (set to be evaluated in 2026), allowing interested entities one-off engagement with the GCF for implementing a project idea, has in fact focused on bringing in more private sector actors as GCF implementing partners, especially from developing countries. As of early January 2026, there are six approved PSAA, four of them from the private sector. And of the six PSAA proposals brought to the Board for consideration at its March 2026 meeting, five are private sector programmes (GCF, 2026b).

Earlier PSAG recommendations on private sector engagement in REDD+, adaptation and in the SIDS were also largely integrated in the update of the GCF's strategic plan for GCF-1 approved in November 2020. This update also incorporated recommendations from a new private sector strategy shared with the Board in 2019, such as a stronger focus on private equity investments and facilitating the partnership of private sector actors with the Fund through the PSAA instead of full-fledged accreditation.

Following an evaluation of the GCF's private sector approach by the IEU in 2021, the Board at its 32nd meeting in Antigua and Barbuda in May 2022 reviewed the PSF modalities and the private sector strategy concerned that private sector programming goals elaborated in its strategic plan on catalysing private sector finance at scale, increasing direct access for private sector entities and focusing private sector funding increasingly on adaptation and in LDCs and SIDS were at risk of not being met. It adopted a new private sector strategy and outreach plan with a focus on supporting climate technology incubators and national and regional banking institutions in developing countries to engage with the domestic private sector, including MSMEs, as well as new modalities to scale up the use of guarantees and equity and explore other finance instruments such as insurance products, and reduce foreign exchange risks for private sector DAEs. This focus is anchored in the USP-2 for the GCF-2 programming period with a commitment to increase the share of funding allocated through the PSF compared to GCF-1, especially by supporting up to 1,500 local private sector early stage ventures and MSMEs with seed capital as well as supporting regional and national financial institutions with support to green finance, particularly for MSMEs (GCF, 2023a). At the mid-point of the USP-2, two years into GCF-2 programming, the Secretariat reports that it has supported 451 of such ventures and MSMEs. At the end of 2025, cumulative GCF funding of USD 6.9 billion for private sector projects is accounted for by loans (52.19%), equity (32.56%), grants (11.69%), and guarantees (3.56%), seeing in particular a shift away from loans and toward equity investments over the

past two years. Half-way through the GCF-2 programming period, already USD 2.3 billion of GCF funding to the private sector was committed as equity versus USD 1.6 billion during all of GCF-1 (GCF, 2026a). In 2025, the Board approved twelve private sector projects and programmes worth USD 899 million or 27.7% of the USD 3.245 billion in funding approved in 2025 for 50 projects and programmes.

Independent accountability mechanisms

The GCF governing instrument foresees three separate accountability mechanisms, namely an IEU reporting to the Board, an Independent Integrity Unit (IIU) and an Independent Redress Mechanism (IRM).⁶ In Songdo in June 2014, the Board decided on the terms of reference for all three mechanisms, specifying, for example, that the IRM will receive complaints by affected people related to Fund operations as well as recipient-country complaints about Board funding decisions. All three units had started their work in 2017, with the IRM gaining approval for a revised term of reference in 2017. In 2022, the terms of the heads of the IRM and the IIU, who had built up the units and their procedures, ended with the Board initiating a search process led by its Ethics and Audit Committee for their successors to be appointed by the Board at its 35th meeting in March 2023. The Board in October 2022 also appointed the new head of the IEU after a prolonged search process. In 2025, both the head of the IEU and the IIU were reappointed for another three years by the Board.

Since 2018, all three units have submitted ambitious yearly work programmes with growing budgets and staff. In 2019, the Board approved standards for the implementation of a policy on anti-money laundering and countering the financing of terrorism (AML/CFT), as well as policies drafted by the IIU on prohibited practices and protection against sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment (SEAH). A new policy on administrative remedies and exclusion for integrity violations committed by GCF partners developed by the IIU was also approved in 2021. While already operational for GCF personnel, some revisions to the SEAH policy's application to GCF implementing partners were only finalised in March 2021 by integrating SEAH policy requirements into a revised Environmental and Social Policy (ESP) approved. The Board also approved at its 22nd meeting guidelines and complaint procedures for the IRM, which in 2021 and 2022 received two new formal project-related complaints each, including one for a project in Nicaragua as the GCF's first formal compliance case. The Board considered the Nicaragua grievance case in March 2023, formally closing the IRM review case, but mandating the Secretariat to address compliance issues with the AE, such as invigorated ESS and stakeholder engagement procedures. In March 2024, the Secretariat terminated the project after concluding that the AE did not address the issues sufficiently.

With the IEU producing on average four full scale evaluations per year, the Board given its reduced virtual engagement in 2021 fell further behind in fully considering several in-depth independent evaluations completed by the IEU in 2020 and 2021. This included those of country ownership, of the GCF's environmental and social safeguards, of the relevance and effectiveness of GCF investments in SIDS, and

the GCF's approach to the private sector and to adaptation. Board reviews of two further IEU assessments on the GCF accreditation function and the rapid assessment of the GCF's request for proposal modality were also outstanding, although the assessment of the SAP was discussed and noted by the Board in October 2021. The IEU produced new evaluations on direct access and the effectiveness of GCF investments in SIDS and African states in 2022. The continued backlog in considering the IEU's output came at the same time as a pushback by some developing country Board members against the IEU's growing mandate, leading to the Board's review and update to the terms of reference for the IEU in 2021. The Board in 2022 addressed some of this backlog by taking note of several evaluation reports as a decision in-between meetings, although this of course limits the engagement and discussion within the Board on the IEU's findings. In 2021, the Board also tasked the IEU in preparation for the start of its replenishment discussions in mid-2022 with the second performance review (SPR) of the GCF's performance for the GCF-1 programming period. As part of this, the IEU released a synthesis report in March 2022, summarising key findings through evaluations and other processes during GCF-1, and a summary report in October 2022, presenting emerging findings and initial recommendations for the SPR, with the final report presented in March 2023 (IEU, 2023). It also shared its evaluation on the effectiveness of the GCF's direct access modality with the Board in March 2023. Further IEU work presented to the Board in 2024 included evaluations of the effectiveness of GCF investments in Latin American and Caribbean States (IEU, 2024a); of the GCF's approach to whistleblower and witness protection (IEU, 2024b); of the GCF approach to the energy sector (IEU, 2024c); and of its investment framework (IEU, 2024d). In 2025, the Board considered the IEU's evaluations on the implementation of the GCF's Indigenous Peoples policy as well as GCF investments in health, well-being, food and water security (IEU, 2025a and 2025b), both left over from its 2024 work programme. Prepared evaluations on country ownership and the SAP were not taken up by the Board (IEU, 2025c and 2025d). The IEU has to submit management action reports on possible follow up within a year.

The Board at its 40th Board meeting adopted three-year rolling work programmes and indicative budgets for each of its three accountability units for the 2025-2027 period, requesting the IEU for the first time to seek the endorsement of its planned activities, including intended evaluations, by the Board's Risk Management Committee as well as its Budget Committee. Both the IUU and the IRM also similarly have to seek such an endorsement from the Board's Ethics and Audit Committee. Part of the three-year budget and work plan of the IEU is the time plan and USD 1.2 million budget for the Third Performance Review (TPR) of the GCF ahead of its third replenishment efforts (GCF-3) to be kicked off in mid-2026, with some initial reports to be delivered in 2026 (GCF, 2024a). All three units saw increased budgetary scrutiny also in 2025 in the context of the Board's approval at its 43rd meeting of the three units' respective three-year work programme and indicative budgets for 2026-2028 (GCF, 2025b). The IEU especially was asked to better delineate its role in monitoring, evaluation and learning from that of

the Secretariat in order to avoid duplications of efforts and resources. Some observers are concerned that this could pave the way for weakening the independence and the functions of the three accountability mechanisms.

Gender

All GCF funding needs to take a gender-responsive approach, as elaborated in a gender policy and gender action plan for the Fund, approved at the 9th Board meeting in March 2015 (GCF, 2015). This has been under a mandated review, however, and efforts to significantly strengthen both – including by elaborating responsibilities of all GCF partners, clear priority actions and success indicators, as well as staff and budget requirements – stalled in 2018 and early 2019 due to strong objections from some developing country Board members who felt that the policy added too much burden to recipient countries. The logjam was finally broken with the adoption of an updated gender policy and gender action plan 2020-2023 at the Board's 24th meeting in November 2019, following assurances around strengthened technical assistance and readiness support for the implementation of the gender mandate, as well as weakened provisions (GCF, 2019b). The latter, for example, contextualises the implementation of the GCF gender mandate in national practices and cultural understandings, thus potentially weakening the universal principle of women's rights as unalienable human rights.

In addition to the GCF gender policy update, gender considerations are mainstreamed into key operational policies and guidelines such as results management and investment decisions, as well as in accreditation procedures and stakeholder engagement processes. However, additional improvements are needed. While the GCF was the first dedicated climate fund to have a gender mainstreaming approach in place at the beginning of its funding operations, it did not turn this initial best practice into a sustained gender leadership role among multilateral climate funds with respect to gender integration. This is where an update to the GCF's long since expired gender action plan should help, but only if its new development, slated in the Secretariat's work plan to be finally tackled in 2026, and thus with a three year delay, is actually preceded by a thorough analysis and mapping of how the GCF itself has complied in fulfilling the actions set out in the original gender action plan. For example, there has been no obvious and transparent reporting against the gender action plan's indicators, specifically also on actions to be taken within the Secretariat. This becomes even more important as the Secretariat embarks on instituting a regional presence, where the entire programming cycle would be located, including in ensuring stakeholder outreach and ESS and gender compliance review and assurances. The IEU is also preparing an evaluation of the GCF's gender approach for 2026, with an initial synthesis report, highlighting structural shortcomings, published in September 2025 (IEU, 2025e).

The current gender policy from 2019 applies to all funding areas and funding decisions of the GCF and makes a gender and social assessment accompanied by a project-specific gender action plan mandatory for each funding proposal. The GCF annual portfolio report for 2025 for projects and programmes under implementation notes

that while technical compliance with its updated gender policy is high, and a shift from gender sensitivity to gender responsiveness is noticeable in stronger gender targets and a focus on more concrete activities on the ground, this does not automatically translate into action through implementation. The GCF Secretariat is particularly targeting engaging with implementing partners to improve and revise their submitted gender action plans as 'living documents' as needed by refining targets, activities and indicators and tracking sex-disaggregated data reiteratively (GCF,2025h). Implementation of gender action plans depends also on the pace of implementation of other project activities, which requires dedicated gender expertise by the AEs. Many projects under implementation also still lack a sufficient focus on transformative actions that address gender-biased power relations, equal access to resources, and joint decision-making (see also CFF 10 2025 on gender and climate finance for further details). Secretariat guidance and review, including through AEs' required reporting on gender implementation progress in their annual performance reports (APRs), must ensure that monitoring and reporting focuses on qualitative changes (changes in attitudes, practices), and on enhancing women's skills as leaders and women's contributions to technical fields in various sectors.

Other gender provisions in the governing instrument, particularly the need for gender balance among the Secretariat staff, have seen significant improvement over the years. At the end of 2025, the Secretariat claims a close to 50:50 balance among the 331 GCF staff from 81 countries, with nine out of 22 senior management positions women (with some vacancies). The 24-person GCF Board, which as of March 2025 included ten female Board members and nine female alternate Board members, is after an unfortunate dip in female representation below 30% in 2025, now improved again with 40% female Board members, and thus closer to the hoped for balance.⁷ Gender balance, as well as sufficient gender expertise of its members, is also crucial for the various committees and expert advisory bodies, including for Board Committees, the ITAP and the Accreditation Panel.

Indigenous Peoples

After years of continued engagement and lobbying by Indigenous Peoples' groups, the Board, at its 15th meeting in Samoa in December 2016, requested the Secretariat to prepare a Fund-wide Indigenous Peoples policy for it to consider. Working with Indigenous Peoples' representatives as part of an internal coordination group, the Secretariat managed a public submission process in the summer of 2017, inviting broad stakeholder input into the development of such a policy. The GCF's Indigenous Peoples policy was approved at the 19th Board meeting, taking a strong rights-based approach by focusing on the self-determination of Indigenous Peoples and their right to free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) throughout the GCF project cycle (GCF, 2018). The Fund-wide policy is complemented by implementation guidelines developed by the Secretariat in 2019. A separate Indigenous Peoples Advisory Group (IPAG), originally expected to start its work already in 2020, started its first term from January 2022 to December 2024 with three members and three alternate members self-

selected by Indigenous Peoples groups. At its first meeting in September 2022, the IPAG articulated its multi-year work plan with a focus on defining practical steps in implementing and monitoring the GCF's Indigenous Peoples policy, and preparing to provide any other guidance that the GCF Board may request, although a dedicated budget for IPAG activities, which are logistically supported by the GCF Secretariat through funding under its administrative budget, has yet to be provided for the IPAG's use.

Over the past three years, throughout its two scheduled meetings per year, IPAG meetings focused on engaging the Secretariat with a focus on finding entry points for strengthening support for Indigenous Peoples groups in the USP-2 and through the revised RPSP strategy for the 2024-2027 programming period and its implementation. IPAG reports are provided as information documents to the Board. A particular focus has been on developing a dedicated direct access financing framework for Indigenous Peoples, something that the Secretariat in theory committed to and has also integrated as a priority deliverable in its 2026 work plan (GCF, 2025b, Annex II). This intention also responds to findings and recommendations of the IEU's evaluation of the GCF's approach to Indigenous Peoples considered by the Board at its 41st Board meeting in February 2025 with a follow-up management action plan (IEU, 2025a). April 2026 will also see the GCF's first Global Conference on Indigenous Peoples with a focus on access to finance. The current IPAG membership ends 2026, with discussions around increasing the IPAG by two members in the next term to allow for a more diverse representation.

GCF relationship to the UNFCCC and the Conference of the Parties (COP)

The GCF is an operating entity of the UNFCCC's Financial Mechanism. It is to be "accountable to and function under the guidance of the COP" (UNFCCC, 2011: 17). The GCF Board sought to define the arrangements between the COP and the GCF with a decision in October 2013 that reaffirmed its full responsibility for funding decisions, which the Warsaw COP approved (UNFCCC, 2014). The Standing Committee on Finance (SCF), a complementary UNFCCC body aimed at taking stock and ensuring accountability in the global climate finance architecture, has also developed recommendations to this end. Since 2015, the GCF has also been serving the Paris Agreement. The GCF Board prepares an annual report on its programmes, policies and priorities and status of resources and responds to feedback and guidance received in reaction from the COP, with its 14th report to the COP submitted in October 2025 (UNFCCC, 2025a). In addition, the COP has the authority to commission an independent assessment of the GCF to evaluate overall Fund performance, including that of its Board and the adequacy of its resources, in connection with periodic reviews of the UNFCCC financial mechanism. COP guidance can compel successful Board action. For example, in response to the fallout in the Board in 2021 regarding the application of a climate rationale to adaptation projects, especially the rigor of required data to be submitted to pass the technical evaluation by the ITAP, COP26 requested the Fund to clarify that the use of data and information from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), and

traditional, local and indigenous knowledge and practices in the assessment of concept notes, project preparation funding applications and funding proposals was acceptable. A new policy on climate rationale, adopted by the Board at its 33rd meeting in July 2022 provides that clarification.

At COP29, Parties decided that from 2027 on COP guidance would only be issued biennially. In 2025, following guidance from COP29, the GCF worked on addressing policy and implementation gaps, such as updating its accreditation and monitoring frameworks and strengthening direct access. The Secretariat and Board responded to COP29 guidance on a number of issues, including with a key decision to establish regional presence, as well as with attempts to strengthen monitoring and reporting of disbursements for, and impacts arising from, multi-country funded activities on a per country basis. Several COP29 mandates have yet to be addressed, such as the development of a gender action plan for GCF-2, diversifying GCF financial instruments, including through a local currency financing pilot, or expediting the development of a policy on programmatic approaches (GCF, 2025c, Annex IV).

Stakeholder and observer input and participation

The GCF governing instrument anticipates extensive stakeholder participation in the design, development and implementation of the strategies and activities financed by the GCF. Stakeholders are broadly defined as “private-sector actors, civil society organisations, vulnerable groups, women and indigenous peoples” (GCF, 2019a: 17). These mandates are currently operationalised primarily in the context of arrangements for country ownership and programming for the Fund, and in accreditation criteria for implementing entities and intermediaries. GCF readiness support also facilitates the gender-responsive engagement of national and subnational stakeholders in the GCF programming process, although the IEU review in 2018 highlighted how lacklustre this engagement was (IEU, 2018b). Following the 6th Board meeting in 2014, the Secretariat improved efforts to consult observers intersessionally via carefully managed requests for written input. However, the Secretariat still needs to elaborate stakeholder engagement procedures to improve comprehensive outreach and involvement of stakeholders and observers in the GCF, as many engagements, such as the participation of non-governmental, non-AE stakeholders in for example regional dialogues or exchange with Secretariat staff, is ad hoc and not seen as a priority.

Very rudimentary observer participation guidelines approved at the Board’s first meeting in 2013 as part of its rules of procedure (but not updated since) include also a provision for stakeholders to observe the deliberations of the Fund, and for two active observers each from the private sector and civil society to provide input at Board meetings, although their formal inclusion in processes in-between meetings is insufficient. In 2016 the Board initiated a participatory review of observer participation in Board proceedings with the goal of addressing existing weaknesses, such as the lack of financial support for the participation of observers from developing country civil society organisations (CSOs) or the lack of direct representation for Indigenous Peoples. This review stalled in

2018 but was started up again in 2019 with a new submission process for public inputs. While the review was scheduled to be finally considered in 2021 according to the Board’s four-year work plan approved in 2020, the item was again indefinitely postponed, with no further action throughout the remaining GCF-1 period and for the first two years of programming under GCF-2. This leaves the role of observers, severely affected by reduced engagement options in virtual Board meetings during the Covid-19 pandemic, and faced with severe funding cuts for CSO work on climate change in a precarious situation as the GCF-2 programming period proceeds, as meaningful engagement takes time and financial support that many observers, in particular from developing countries and local communities, lack. Given the GCF’s financial status and maturity, more robust financial support could be provided, also acknowledging that CSO and IP observers and stakeholders played an important role through their advocacy for the GCF’s second replenishment and for monitoring effective GCF portfolio implementation. Observers are also expected to advocate for ambitious GCF-3 replenishment under a worsening financial landscape in 2026 and 2027. The Secretariat has indicated its intention to work on an update of the outdated observer participation guidelines of the GCF in 2026 (GCF, 2025b, Annex II).

Information disclosure and communication strategy

At its 12th meeting, the GCF Board approved a revised comprehensive Information Disclosure Policy (IDP), which operates under a ‘presumption to disclose’ (GCF, 2016). Board meeting documents are posted on the GCF website⁸ at the same time they are sent to Board members, advisors and active observers. Under the disclosure policy, documents are supposed to be kept confidential only on an exceptional basis under special circumstances (a ‘negative list approach’), although information related to any private sector engagement is considered as proprietary. The Fund’s IDP also allowed webcasting of Board meetings on a test basis, enabling stakeholders worldwide since the 13th Board meeting in 2016 to take advantage of this relatively low-cost way of increasing transparency and public awareness of the Fund’s decision-making process. At its 18th meeting, the Board decided to continue webcasting until the end of 2019 and at its 24th meeting in 2019 webcasting was extended indefinitely. This has proved crucial for the deliberations of the Board during the pandemic 2020 to 2021, which have been conducted exclusively in a virtual setting. The review and update of the IDP is one of the outstanding policy issues and now on the Secretariat’s work plan for 2026 (GCF, 2025b, Annex II).

The IDP also sets the time frame for the public disclosure of project-related environmental and social assessments at 120 days for the highest-risk projects (Cat. A) and 30 days prior disclosure for medium-risk projects (Cat. B), following global established practice; increasingly sub-project ESS under approved programmes are now also made available, although not consistently. However, 2018 saw some challenges in the application of these requirements, triggering the first ever complaint filed by civil society under the Information Appeals Panel (IAP) of the GCF. A few further civil society challenges to require earlier and more detailed public information disclosure on proposals in the project

pipelines as well as urging the release of select project compliance and mid-term evaluation reports tested the remit of the IDP. Over the last few years, with the number of information disclosure requests going up, the Secretariat's timely compliance with those requests has worsened, with a significant number either rejected or ignored. Since the 24th Board meeting, all relevant annexes of public funding proposals are made publicly available, although those of private sector proposals are not yet. Additionally, the past few years saw the disclosure of an increasing number of APRs, although some of them only in redacted form and with significant publication delays, for verification of progress in project implementation.

A Board-approved detailed communication strategy for the Fund to set parameters for sharing information with the public is yet to be developed (despite being on the Board's work plan for several years). However, an external relations division in the Secretariat was established in 2018 and dedicated support staff added. External communication efforts are also aided by a continuously updated and expanded website for the Fund, which includes, for example, individual country pages and project implementation pages. Outreach activities intensified in 2019 in connection with the GCF's first replenishment process, but have suffered in 2020 and 2021 in light of the continued Covid-19 pandemic. They were ramped up for the GCF to marshal public support for its second replenishment efforts in 2022 and 2023 with a narrative focused on GCF achievements and climate results and its added value in the global climate finance landscape and in 2024 to tout changes and a new vision for the GCF under new leadership.

In 2025, the Secretariat put a particular focus in its communication outreach on its "GCF.10" campaign, celebrating the accomplishments of the GCF in its 10th year of programming, since the first batch of GCF project was approved at its 11th Board meeting in November 2015 just weeks before the adoption of the Paris Agreement at COP21. The Secretariat's work plan for 2026 foresees the implementation of its own comprehensive communication strategy, including a planned GCF Global Impact Conference no doubt seen as contributing to building the narrative and strengthening the advocacy for the GCF-3 replenishment process to be kicked off in mid-2026 (GCF, 2025b, Annex II).

Outlook for 2026

The AE partner network and portfolio of approved projects and programmes continued to grow in 2025, with a sturdy pipeline of fundable projects and programmes ready for approval and demand exceeding funding availability. With the cancellation of the US pledge of USD 3 billion for the second replenishment (Mathiesen, 2025), the goal for the two remaining years under the GCF-2 programming period will be to at least maintain the around USD 2.5 – 3 billion in approvals for projects and programmes, necessitating for all other outstanding pledges to be quickly confirmed, as well as for some of the contributor schedules to be accelerated or frontloaded. For 2026, with a number of significant policy frameworks recently revised as well as fundamental restructuring within the Secretariat, it will become crucially important for the Fund to facilitate transitions to the new regimes, providing clarity and support

to partners to ensure that the purported purpose of many of these changes – namely improving access and facilitating project development from direct access and non-accredited partners in order to pursue ambitious goals under the USP-2 – will materialise. This will require a strengthened focus on improved monitoring, evaluation and learning of the impacts and concrete outcomes of a maturing portfolio that is dealing with ongoing risks caused by high inflationary pressures and fragility and conflicts affecting many of its implementation partners and recipient countries, especially as the Fund endeavors to expand its engagement with those particularly vulnerable and governance-challenged states. With a core decision on the Fund's regional presence made in 2025, 2026 must drive forward its quick implementation of three regional offices and an outpost to better engage with its partner network and a growing and maturing portfolio still facing significant implementation challenges.

As the GCF at the end of 2026 will look ahead to the next GCF-3 (2028-2031) programming period with hopes for an ambitious and successful third replenishment in 2027, a number of other vital operational functions need to be revised and upgraded without further delays to be able to reach ambitious targets set under the USP-2. This includes in particular long overdue guidelines for a programmatic funding approach, especially when applied to multi-country programming, and the strengthened articulation and accountability for country ownership that this requires; the safeguarding and strengthening of the independence of the Fund's accountability mechanisms and its technical expert bodies; as well as the updating and completion of an ESMS for the Fund through the development of the GCF's own environmental and social safeguards and the upgrade to and implementation of best practice information disclosure practices.

The Fund is continuing to also struggle with important administrative policies, in particular securing the privileges and immunities that allows Fund staff and appointed personnel to operate in countries receiving GCF funding. With only two new agreements in 2025 signed for a total of now 34, these are still missing for more than 90 countries (GCF, 2026e). While the Secretariat has upgraded its job architecture, salary structure and staff guidelines in 2025 to attract and retain staff with first-grade expertise, staff recruitment and retention remain a priority, as the Secretariat has not been able to expand the number of its staff to 340 by the end of 2025 it hoped for. Expanding staff capacity further is needed to deal with the management issues of a growing funding portfolio under implementation and strengthening and expanding its network of implementing partners, especially since a new accreditation framework, approved in 2025, could mean adding up to 120 more accredited entities over the course of the next three years.

At the same time, in order to address many outstanding policy issues, the Board (with a lot of turnover in the current three-year term started in 2025) will have to continue to take on its governance challenges and further improve Board decision-making, including by voting in the absence of consensus (over the past years more routinely applied for project approval, although currently not considered

appropriate for the approval of far-reaching policy updates) and through decision-making between meetings. A Board mandated revision of the terms of reference of the specialised standing Board committees has yet to be fully implemented, and in 2026, the GCF will need to carry through on its intention to improve the functionality, efficiency and effectiveness of these bodies to tackle and move forward many ongoing policy reviews and reforms with the needed competence and capacity before they can be submitted for full Board consideration.

In early 2026, last year's Co-chairs, Seyni Nafo (Mali) and Leif Holmberg (Sweden), were proposed by their respective Board constituencies to continue to serve as their Co-chairs for 2026. They will need to work closely with the executive director of the Fund and a restructured Secretariat as it advances its regional presence in 2026 to come up with a multi-year Board work plan for 2026–2028 that tackles in the remaining two years under GCF-2 programming outstanding priorities under the USP-2 and is synchronised with the Secretariat's approved multi-year work programme and budget for 2026–2028. This is to ensure that the Board can take timely decisions on key outstanding issues and provide clarity and oversight on the successful implementation of multiple policy changes over the past two years to assure GCF stakeholders seeking sustainability and predictability from their engagement with the Fund in these uncertain times of reduced climate finance provision.

Continuing to showcase the value addition of the Fund as the main multilateral financing mechanism under the UNFCCC for the implementation of the Paris Agreement is politically important in the context of the COP29 decision taken on the new collective quantified finance goal (NCQG) to replace the USD 100 billion annual commitment post-2025, which pushed for efforts to triple outflows of the operating entities of the Financial Mechanism latest by 2030 from 2022 levels. This comes in light of the shortfall for GCF-2 from the withdrawal of the US commitment by the Trump Administration and a worsening international climate finance landscape since 2025. And it comes as the GCF kicks off its third replenishment process (GCF-3, 2028–2031) by mid-year 2026, with a pledging conference anticipated in fall 2027. In the wake of the NCQG decision, the role of a well-resourced and governed GCF with growing impact is more important than ever in providing developing countries with the financial assurance and technical assistance to support their low-emission and climate-resilient development ambitions. Only then will they feel encouraged that priority climate actions defined under revised and more ambitious nationally determined contributions (NDCs) that many submitted as required in 2025 under the outcomes of the Paris Agreement's first Global Stocktake and in the NCQG decision (UNFCCC, 2024), can be implemented. This will depend will depend also on the GCF's ability, through a successful GCF-3 replenishment, to continue to provide scaled up highly concessional additional funding support for the foreseeable future.

References and further reading

Both ENDS; Heinrich Böll Stiftung North America; Aksi! for Gender, Social and Ecological Justice; and Prakriti Resources Centre (2018) Local actors ready to act: six proposals to improve their access to the Green Climate Fund. Washington, DC: Heinrich Böll Stiftung North America. <http://us.boell.org/2018/06/13/local-actors-ready-act-six-proposals-improve-their-access-green-climate-fund>

Climate Funds Update: www.climatefundsupdate.org

Green Climate Fund: www.greenclimate.fund

GCF Accredited Entities: <https://www.greenclimate.fund/about/partners/ae>

GCF Open Data Library: <https://data.greenclimate.fund/public>

GCF Portfolio Dashboard: <https://www.greenclimate.fund/projects/dashboard>

GCF Project Portfolio: <https://www.greenclimate.fund/projects>

GCF Readiness: <https://www.greenclimate.fund/readiness>

GCF Resource Mobilisation: <https://www.greenclimate.fund/about/resource-mobilisation>

GCFWatch Civil Society Independent Monitoring Website: <https://www.gcfwatch.org/>

GCF (2011) Governing instrument for the Green Climate Fund. Incheon, South Korea: Green Climate Fund. <https://www.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/governing-instrument.pdf>

GCF (2015) Gender policy and action plan. Annex XIII and Annex XIV of GCF Board Document GCF/B.09/23, Decisions of the Board – Ninth Meeting of the Board, 24-26 March 2015. Incheon, South Korea: GCF. https://www.greenclimate.fund/documents/20182/24949/GCF_B.09_23_-_Decisions_of_the_Board_-_Ninth_Meeting_of_the_Board__24_-_26_March_2015.pdf/2f71ce99-7aef-4b04-8799-15975a1f66ef

GCF (2016) Information disclosure policy of the Green Climate Fund. Incheon, South Korea: GCF. <https://www.greenclimate.fund/document/information-disclosure-policy>

GCF (2018) Indigenous Peoples policy. Incheon, South Korea: GCF. <https://www.greenclimate.fund/document/indigenous-peoples-policy>

GCF (2019a) GCF first replenishment (GCF-1): replenishment summary report. GCF Board Document GCF/B.24/11. Incheon, South Korea: GCF. <https://www.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/gcf-b24-11.pdf>

GCF (2019b) Updated gender policy and gender action plan 2020-2023. GCF Board Document GCF/B.24/15. Incheon, South Korea: GCF. https://www.greenclimate.fund/documents/20182/1908411/GCF_B.24_15_-_Updated_Gender_Policy_and_Gender_Action_Plan_2020_2023.pdf/ee6cc1ca-9576-e2f6-34ca-1e1cb57d9c40

GCF (2020) Updated strategic plan for the Green Climate Fund 2020-23. GCF Board Document GCF/B27/21. Incheon, South Korea: GCF. <https://www.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/gcf-b27-21.pdf>

GCF (2021) Review of Secretariat capabilities to deliver the updated Strategic Plan for 2020 – 2023. GCF Board Document GCF/B.30/08. Incheon, South Korea: GCF. <https://www.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/gcf-b30-08.pdf>

GCF (2022) Integrated Results Management Framework (IRMF): Results Handbook. Incheon, South Korea: GCF Secretariat. <https://www.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/draft-results-handbook.pdf>

GCF (2023a) Green Climate Fund – Strategic Plan 2024-2027. Co-Chairs Proposal. GCF Board Document GCF/B.36/17/Rev.01. Incheon, South Korea: GCF. <https://www.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/gcf-b36-17-rev01.pdf>

GCF (2023b) Updated Policy for the Contributions to the Green Climate Fund. GCF Board Document GCF/B.36/15/Rev.01. Incheon, South Korea: GCF. <https://www.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/gcf-b36-15-rev01.pdf>

GCF (2023c) Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme: revised strategy 2024-2027. GCF Board Document GCF/B/37/17. Incheon, South Korea: GCF. <https://www.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/16-readiness-and-preparatory-support-programme-revised-strategy-2024-2027-gcf-b37-17.pdf>

GCF (2024a) Decisions of the Board – fortieth meeting of the Board, 21 – 24 October 2024. GCF Board Document GCF/B.40/23. Incheon, South Korea: GCF. <https://www.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/decisions-board-fortieth-meeting-board-21-24-october-2024-gcf-b40-23.pdf>

GCF (2024b) Status of Green Climate Fund resources. GCF Board Document GCF/B.38/Inf.07. Incheon, South Korea: GCF. <https://www.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/09-status-gcf-portfolio-approved-projects-and-fulfilment-conditions-gcf-b38-inf08.pdf>

GCF (2024c) Status of pledges and contributions (IRM, GCF-1 and GCF-2). Incheon, South Korea: GCF. <https://www.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/2024-status-pledges-website-december-31-ver2.pdf>

GCF (2024d) Decisions of the Board –thirty-eighth meeting of the Board, 4 – 7 March 2024. GCF Board Document GCF/B.38/15. Incheon, South Korea: GCF. <https://www.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/gcf-b38-15-decisions-board-thirty-eighth-meeting-board-4-7-march-2024.pdf>

GCF (2024e) Report on the activities of the Secretariat. GCF Board Document GCF/B.40/Inf.13. Incheon, South Korea: GCF. <https://www.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/05-report-activities-secretariat-gcf-b40-inf13.pdf>

GCF (2024f) GCF Annual Report 2023. Incheon, South Korea: GCF. <https://www.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/gcf-annual-report-2023-040919.pdf>

GCF (2024g) Annual portfolio performance report (2023). GCF Board Document GCF/B.40/Inf.10/Rev.01. Incheon, South Korea: GCF. <https://www.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/09-annual-portfolio-performance-report-gcf-b40-inf10-rev01.pdf>

GCF (2024h) Decisions of the Board – thirty-ninth meeting of the Board, 15 – 18 July 2024. GCF Board Document GCF/B.39/19. Incheon, South Korea: GCF. <https://www.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/decisions-board-thirty-ninth-meeting-board-15-18-july-2024-gcf-b39-19.pdf>

GCF (2024i) Final report on the implementation of the Updated Strategic Plan 2020-2023. GCF Board Document GCF/B.38/Inf.01/Add.04. Incheon, South Korea: GCF. <https://www.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/05-final-report-implementation-updated-strategic-plan-2020-2023-gcf-b38-inf01-add04.pdf>

GCF (2024j) Consideration of accreditation proposals. GCF Board Document GCF/B.38/03. Incheon, South Korea: GCF. <https://www.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/11-consideration-accreditation-proposals-gcf-b38-03.pdf>

GCF (2025a) Status of Pledges and Contributions. (IRM, GCF-1 and GCF-2). Incheon, South Korea: GCF. <https://www.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/2025-status-pledges-website-dec-31.pdf>

GCF (2025b) Decisions of the Board – forty-third meeting of the Board, 27-30 October 2025. GCF Board Document GCF/B.43/21. Incheon, South Korea: GCF. <https://www.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/decisions-board-forty-third-meeting-board-27-30-october-2025-gcf-b43-21.pdf>

GCF (2025c) Decisions of the Board – forty-first meeting of the Board, 17-20 February 2025. GCF Board Document GCF/B.41/15. Incheon, South Korea: GCF. <https://www.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/decisions-board-forty-first-meeting-board-17-20-february-2025-gcf-b41-15.pdf>

GCF (2025d) Decisions of the Board – forty-second meeting of the Board, 30 June – 3 July 2025. GCF Board Document GCF/B.42/18. Incheon, South Korea: GCF. <https://www.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/gcf-b42-18-decisions-board-forty-second-meeting-board-30-june-3-july-2025.pdf>

GCF (2025e) Revised Readiness Results Management Framework Handbook. Incheon, South Korea: GCF. <https://www.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/6-revised-rrmf-handbook.pdf>

GCF (2025f) Status of the GCF resources, pipeline and portfolio. GCF Board Document GCF/B.43/Inf.10 . Incheon, South Korea: https://www.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/09-status-gcf-resources-portfolio-and-pipeline-gcf-b43-inf10_1.pdf

GCF (2025g) Risk Dashboard. Q3 2025. Incheon, South Korea: GCF. <https://www.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/risk-dashboard-q3-2025-0.pdf>

GCF (2025h). Annual Portfolio Performance Report (2024). GCF Board Document GCF/B.43/Inf.10/Add.01. Incheon, South Korea: GCF. https://www.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/09-annual-portfolio-performance-report-2024-gcf-b43-inf10-add01_1.pdf

GCF (2026a) Status of the GCF resources, portfolio and pipeline. GCF Board Document GCF/B.44/Inf.08. Incheon, South Korea: GCF. <https://www.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/09-status-gcf-resources-portfolio-and-pipeline-gcf-b44-inf08.pdf>

GCF (2026b) Consideration of funding proposals. GCF Board Document GCF/B.44/02. Incheon, South Korea: GCF. <https://www.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/10-consideration-funding-proposals-gcf-b44-02.pdf>

GCF (2026c) Operationalizing GCF regional presence: assessment results, proposed configurations and implementation plan. GCF Board Document GCF/B.44/17. Incheon, South Korea: GCF. <https://www.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/12-operationalizing-regional-presence-gcf-b44-17.pdf>

GCF (2026d) Review of the independent Technical Advisory Panel. GCF Board Document B.44/13. Incheon, South Korea: GCF. https://www.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/07a-review-independent-technical-advisory-panel-gcf-b44-13-final_0.pdf

GCF (2026e) Report on the activities of the Secretariat. GCF Board Document B.44/Inf.07. Incheon, South Korea: GCF. <https://www.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/05-report-activities-secretariat-gcf-b44-inf07.pdf>

HBS (n.d.) GCF dossier. Washington, DC: Heinrich Böll Stiftung Washington, DC. [Archived] <http://us.boell.org/en/green-climate-fund-gcf-dossier>

Independent Evaluation Unit (IEU) Evaluations: <https://ieu.greenclimate.fund/evaluations>

IEU (2018a) Independent Review of the Green Climate Fund's Results Management Framework. Incheon, South Korea: GCF Independent Evaluation Unit. <https://ieu.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/rmf-main-report.pdf>

IEU (2018b) Independent Evaluation of the Green Climate Fund's Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme (PRSP). Incheon, South Korea: GCF Independent Evaluation Unit. <https://ieu.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/rpsp-main-report.pdf>

IEU (2019) Forward-looking performance review of the Green Climate Fund. Final Report. Incheon, South Korea: GCF Independent Evaluation Unit. <https://ieu.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/fpr-final-report.pdf>

IEU (2020) Independent Assessment of the Simplified Approval Process (SAP) Pilot Scheme. Incheon, South Korea: GCF Independent Evaluation Unit. <https://ieu.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/sap-final-report.pdf>

IEU (2021a) Independent Evaluation of the Adaptation Portfolio and Approach of the Green Climate Fund. Incheon, South Korea: GCF Independent Evaluation Unit. <https://ieu.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/210223-adaptation-final-report-top.pdf>

IEU (2021b) Independent Rapid Assessment of the Green Climate Fund's Request for Proposals Modality. Final Report. Incheon, South Korea: GCF Independent Evaluation Unit. https://ieu.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/210726-rfp-final-report-2ed-top_0.pdf

IEU (2021c) Independent Evaluation of the Green Climate Fund's Approach to the Private Sector. Final Report – Volume I. Incheon, South Korea: GCF Independent Evaluation Unit. <https://ieu.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/priv2021-final-report-vol-i.pdf>

IEU (2022a) Report of the Synthesis Study. An IEU Deliverable Contributing to the Second Performance Review of the Green Climate Fund. Incheon, South Korea: GCF Independent Evaluation Unit. <https://ieu.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/220307-spr-synthesis-final-report-top-web.pdf>

IEU (2022b) Summary Report. An IEU Deliverable Contributing to the Second Performance Review of the Green Climate Fund. GCF Board Document B/34/Inf.08. Incheon, South Korea: GCF Independent Evaluation Unit. <https://ieu.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/gcf-b34-inf08.pdf>

IEU (2023) Second Performance Review of the Green Climate Fund. Final Report – Volume I. Incheon, South Korea: GCF Independent Evaluation Unit. <https://ieu.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/230406-spr-final-report-top-web-isbn.pdf>

IEU (2024a) Final Report of the Independent Evaluation of the Relevance and Effectiveness of GCF's Investments in the Latin American and Caribbean (LAC) States. Incheon, South Korea: GCF Independent Evaluation Unit. https://ieu.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/lac2024-final-report_0.pdf

IEU (2024b) Final Report of the Independent Evaluation of the Green Climate Fund's Approach to and Protection of Whistleblowers and Witnesses. Incheon, South Korea: GCF Independent Evaluation Unit. <https://ieu.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/240730-ppww-final-report-top-30-07-24-1635.pdf>

IEU (2024c) Final report of the Independent Evaluation of the Green Climate Fund's Energy Sector Portfolio and Approach. Incheon, South Korea: GCF Independent Evaluation Unit. https://ieu.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/070924-energy-sector-evaluation-final-report_0.pdf

IEU (2024d) Final report of the Independent Evaluation of the Green Climate Fund's Investment Framework. Incheon, South Korea: GCF Independent Evaluation Unit. <https://ieu.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/240208-if-final-report-top-web-2-1.pdf>

IEU (2025a) Independent Evaluation of the GCF's Approach to Indigenous Peoples. Incheon, South Korea: GCF Independent Evaluation Unit. https://ieu.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/250221-ips-final-report-top-web_0.pdf

IEU (2025b) Independent Evaluation of the GCF's Result Area "Health and Wellbeing, and Food and Water Security" (HFWF). Incheon, South Korea: GCF Independent Evaluation Unit. <https://ieu.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/250124-hfwf-final-report-top-web-1.pdf>

IEU (2025c) Independent Evaluation of the GCF's Approach to Country Ownership. Final Report. Incheon, South Korea: GCF Independent Evaluation Unit. https://ieu.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/250915-coa-final-report-top-web_0.pdf

IEU (2025d) Simplified Approval Process. Final Report of the Independent Evaluation of the GCF's Simplified Approval Process. Incheon, South Korea: GCF Independent Evaluation Unit. <https://ieu.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/sap-final-evaluation-report.pdf>

IEU (2025e) Independent Synthesis of the GCF's Gender Approach. Incheon, South Korea: GCF Independent Evaluation Unit. <https://ieu.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/2025-ieu-gender-synthesis-4.pdf>

- Mathiesen, K. (2025) Trump rescinds \$4B in US pledges for UN climate fund. POLITICO, 2 February 2025. <https://www.politico.eu/article/donald-trump-rescind-4-billion-us-pledge-un-climate-fund/>
- Schalatek, L. (2023) GCF replenishment sends some signals – just not the right ones. Washington, DC: Heinrich Böll Stiftung Washington, DC. <https://us.boell.org/en/2023/10/12/gcf-replenishment-sends-some-signals-just-not-right-ones>
- Schalatek, L. (2019a) Green Climate Fund 2.0 – moving to the next phase. Washington, DC: Heinrich Böll Stiftung Washington, DC. <http://us.boell.org/en/climate-policy-finance>
- Schalatek, L. (2019b) Pledges in Paris were a start, but not enough to signal real replenishment ambition. Washington, DC: Heinrich Böll Stiftung Washington, DC. <http://us.boell.org/en/2019/10/29/pledges-paris-were-start-not-yet-enough-signal-real-gcf-replenishment-ambition>
- Schalatek, L.; Zuckerman, E.; McCullough, E. (2021) More than an add-on? Evaluating the integration of gender in Green Climate Fund projects and programs. Washington, DC: Heinrich Böll Stiftung Washington, DC and Gender Action. <https://us.boell.org/en/2021/10/26/more-add-evaluating-integration-gender-green-climate-fund-projects-and-programs>
- UN (1992) United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. FCC/INFORMAL/84 GE.05-62220 (e) 2000705. New York: United Nations. <https://unfccc.int/resource/ccsites/zimbab/conven/text/fulltext.htm>
- UNFCCC (2011) The Cancun Agreements: outcome of the work of the ad-hoc working group on long-term cooperative action under the Convention. FCC/CP/2010/7/Add.1. Bonn: United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. <https://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2010/cop16/eng/07a01.pdf#page=2>
- UNFCCC (2012) Report of the Conference of the Parties on its seventeenth session, held in Durban from 28 November to 11 December 2011. FCC/CP/2011/9/Add.1. Bonn: UNFCCC. <https://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2011/cop17/eng/09a01.pdf>
- UNFCCC (2014) Report of the Conference of the Parties on its nineteenth session, held in Warsaw from 11 to 23 November 2013. FCC/CP/10/Add.1. Bonn: UNFCCC. <https://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2013/cop19/eng/10a01.pdf#page=24>
- UNFCCC (2015) Paris Agreement. FCC/CP/2015/10/Add.1. Bonn: UNFCCC. http://unfccc.int/paris_agreement/items/9485.php
- UNFCCC (2024) New collective quantified goal on climate finance. FCC/PA/CMA/2024/17/Add.1. Bonn, Germany: UNFCCC. Decision 1/CMA.6. https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/cma2024_17a01E.pdf
- UNFCCC (2025) Report of the Green Climate Fund to the Conference of the Parties. Note by the secretariat. Addendum. FCC/CP/2025/7/Add.1. Bonn, Germany: UNFCCC. https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/cp2025_07a01.pdf
- United States (2025) Putting America First in International Environmental Agreements. Executive Order E014162. Washington, DC: White House, 20 January 2025. <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2025-01-30/pdf/2025-02010.pdf>
- United States (2026) Withdrawing the United States from International Organizations, Conventions, and Treaties that Are Contrary to the Interests of the United States. Presidential Memoranda. Washington, DC: White House, 7 January 2026. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2026/01/withdrawing-the-united-states-from-international-organizations-conventions-and-treaties-that-are-contrary-to-the-interests-of-the-united-states/>
- World Bank (2025). Green Climate Fund Trust Fund Financial Report. Prepared by the Trustee (the World Bank). As of December 31, 2025. Washington, DC: World Bank. <https://fiftrustee.worldbank.org/content/dam/fif/funds/gcftf/TrusteeReports/GCFTF%20Financial%20Report%20as%20of%20Dec%2031%202025.pdf>

Endnotes

1. Hela Cheikhrouhou, the first executive director of the Fund, who presided over the establishment of the Independent Secretariat and managed the IRM, stepped down in September 2016 after a three-year term. Howard Bamsey, whom the Board selected at the 15th Board Meeting in December 2016, arrived with considerable experience of the UNFCCC as the former chief climate negotiator for Australia, and briefly led the Global Green Growth Institute (GGGI), but had only a short 18-month tenure. The selection process for a new executive director in 2019 ran concurrent to the start of the first replenishment process and ended with the selection of Yannick Glemarec, who brought more than 30 years of experience in the UN system, having held executive positions as UN Assistant Secretary-General and with UN Women and UNDP, and started his GCF tenure with a successful replenishment.
2. REDD+ is reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, plus the sustainable management of forests and the conservation and enhancement of forest carbon stocks.
3. Numbers reports as reflected on the GCF Portfolio Dashboard, accessed on 15 March 2026.
4. Entities already accredited with the GEF, the Adaptation Fund and the development aid programme of the European Commission (EU DEVCO), as well as institutions with a track record of engaging with the private sector, can apply for fast-track accreditation, provided any identified gaps in adherence with GCF standards and safeguards are addressed.
5. Overall, the Board has approved the accreditation of 161 AEs, but the term of three AEs ended without their seeking reaccreditation (World Meteorological Organization, Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau, and China Clean Development Mechanism Fund Management Center).
6. Not to be confused with IRM, initial resource mobilisation.
7. As of March 2026, the GCF Board listed ten female members and nine female alternates, but with one Board alternate member not yet nominated. When calculated as percentage of only the nominated Board members, the percentage of female GCF Board members stays at 40%.
8. www.greenclimate.fund