

15 September 2017

Dear Members and Alternate Members of the Board of the Green Climate Fund:

We are writing to express our dismay with the conduct of the July 2017 Board meeting, both in terms of process and treatment of civil society. We would like to ensure that the upcoming Board meeting in Egypt does not see a repeat of July's fiasco, which posed a significant reputational risk to the Fund.

The treatment of civil society was unprofessional and contrary to the spirit of the GCF's Governing Instrument, which mandates the Board "to allow for effective participation by accredited observers in its meetings" (para. 16). While this is not the first time these issues have arisen, we felt warranted to raise them now so that this is the last time.

Following an extremely abbreviated Board discussion, the active civil society observer was not allowed to speak before a decision was taken on accreditation, which is unacceptable. In addition to being contrary to the GCF's Governing Instrument, it is contrary to international law and the right to public participation in environmental decision-making. Once allowed to speak, the CSO active observer was told explicitly not to identify the applicants under consideration for accreditation, even though the names are made publicly available by the GCF. This is equally unacceptable. CSOs can provide both positive and negative information about entities that Board Members may not otherwise have, but that should be considered prior to taking a decision. Further, we are baffled as to why it was considered unfair to identify the Bank of Tokyo Mitsubishi by name in a public Board meeting, for example, when CSOs are raising legitimate concerns about its continued funding of extreme fossil fuel projects and dubious protection of human rights, or why CSOs would not be allowed to raise concerns about the portfolios of institutions such as JICA, which continues to fund coal-fired power development in developing countries in defiance of the Paris Agreement. This is not the first time that CSOs have had considerable concerns about accreditation. Given that these entities are asking to receive GCF funds, it should be of great concern that they have questionable track records related to environmental protection and human rights.

The meeting itself was among the most un-transparent of all Board and Transitional Committee meetings to date. This heightens our concerns that instead of progressing toward international best practice on transparency, the GCF is going backwards. With the exception of allowing four active observers (who were limited by confidentiality orders and could not share information with their respective constituencies) as representatives of global civil society and the private sector into the room, the Board meeting was closed to the public fifty percent of the time. Further, the public had unduly limited access to drafts of decision texts prior to the Board voting on them, and sometimes none at all. Needless to say, we cannot effectively participate in the process and provide input on documents we have not seen. Given the outcomes realized at this meeting, we seriously doubt that the opaque nature of the Board's deliberations was at all worth the reputational damage inflicted.

We therefore urge the Board to change course at the next meeting. No session should be closed to accredited observers. The right of the active observers to intervene prior to decisions being taken should be respected. Active observers should not be censored; the right of active observers to identify applicants for accreditation and for funding should be respected. Draft decision text should be made available in a timely manner to allow for meaningful civil society feedback; if that cannot be done, then the decision should be delayed.

The procedural failings at the July meeting were aggravated by the Board's delay in considering the long-overdue review and revision of observer participation in Board proceedings, as well as the development of detailed observer participation guidelines. Both should be tackled in Cairo with a view to putting the GCF at the forefront of international best practice in observer participation.

Transparency and meaningful civil society engagement at the board, national, and local levels are not merely decorative. They are serious components fundamental to ensuring the efficacy of the GCF; decades of experience in development finance have borne this out. We expect that the Board will do far better at the 18th Board Meeting.

Thank you for your consideration of these most important matters.

Sincerely,

350.org, Global
Abibiman Foundation, Ghana
ActionAid International
AEER (Aksi Ekologi & Emansipasi Rakyat), Indonesia
Aksi! for gender, social and ecological justice, Indonesia
Alliance Sud - Swiss Coalition of Development Organizations, Switzerland
Arab Youth Climate Movement-Lebanon
Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development, Regional (Asia Pacific)
Asociación Ambiente y Sociedad Colombia
Association Femmes Pour L'égalité et la Démocratie, Morocco
Bahrain Transparency Society, Bahrain
BankTrack, Netherlands
Both ENDS, The Netherlands
Campaign for Climate Justice, Nepal
CARE International
CEE Bankwatch Network, Czech Republic
Center for Biological Diversity, United States
Center for International Environmental Law, United States
Centre for Transport and Energy, Czech Republic
CHANGE, Vietnam
Change Partnership, Belgium
Clean Air Action Group, Hungary
Climate Change Network Nigeria
Coal Action Network, United Kingdom
Corporate Accountability International, United States
EarthLore, South Africa
Environics Trust, India
Equity and Justice Working Group Bangladesh (EquityBD), Bangladesh
Ethiopian Society for Consumer Protection, Ethiopia
Finance & Trade Watch Austria
Forest Peoples Programme, UK
Friends of the Earth Australia
Friends of the Earth Ghana
Friends of the Earth Japan

Friends of the Earth U.S.
Germanwatch, Germany
Global Forest Coalition, Netherlands/Paraguay
Greenpeace International
Heinrich Böll Stiftung North America, United States
Helvetas Swiss Intercooperation, Switzerland
IBON International, Philippines
Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy, United States
Institute for Climate and Sustainable Cities, Philippines
Institute for Policy Studies, United States
Interamerican Association for Environmental Defense (AIDA), Regional
International Rivers, United States
IP Hub Africa, Kenya
Janathakshan GTE, Sri Lanka
Karnali Integrated Rural Development and Research Centre (KIRDARC), Nepal
KRUHA Indonesia, Indonesia
Labour, Health and Human Rights Development Centre, Nigeria
Les Amis de la Terre France
Maasai Community Outdoor Educators, Kenya
M'Biguá Foundantion, Argentina
Mennonite Central Committee U.S. Washington Office, United States
mines,minerals & PEOPLE, India
National Association of Professional Environmentalists, Uganda
NGO Forum on ADB, Regional, Asia
Organic Agriculture Association, Albania
Oxfam, Global
Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum, Pakistan
Pakistan Kissan Rabita Committee, Pakistan
Pan African Climate Justice Alliance, Kenya
Pivot Point, A Nonprofit Corporation, United States
Sahabat Alam Malaysia (FOE-Malaysia)
SILAKA, Cambodia
SNI - Indonesia Fisherfolk Union, Indonesia
Tebtebba Foundation (Indigenous Peoples' International Centre for Policy Research and Education),
Philippines
The Bretton Woods Project, UK
The Development Institute, Ghana
Third World Network Malaysia
Transparency International-Korea, Republic of Korea
Ulu Foundation, United States
Umeedenoo Organization, Pakistan
Unitarian Universalist Service Committee, United States
Zambia Climate Change Network, Zambia