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INDEPENDENT SYNTHESIS OF THE GCF'S ACCREDITATION FUNCTION

Approach Paper

February 2020

GREEN CLIMATE FUND
INDEPENDENT EVALUATION UNIT

Independent synthesis of the GCF's accreditation function

APPROACH PAPER

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ABBREVIATIONS

AE	accredited entity
AMA	accreditation master agreement
AP	accreditation panel
COA	country ownership approach
CIF	Climate Investment Fund
COP	Conference of Parties
CP	Country Programme
CSO	civil society organization
DCP	Division of Country Programming
DMA	Division of Mitigation and Adaptation
DAE	direct access entity
DG DEVCO	Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development
EE	executing entity
ESS	environmental and social safeguards
EWP	entity work programme
FAA	funded activity agreement
FP	funding proposal
FPR	Forward-looking Performance Review
GCF	Green Climate Fund
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GI	Governing Instrument
IAE	international accredited entity
IFC	International Finance Corporation
IEU	Independent Evaluation Unit
IU	Independent Integrity Unit
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
IRM	Independent Redress Mechanism
ISP	initial strategic plan
LDC	least developed country
MLF	multilateral fund
NAP	national adaptation plan
NDA	national designated authority
NDC	nationally determined contributions
PMF	performance measurement framework
OPM	Office of Portfolio Management
PSAA	project-specific assessment approach

PSAG	Private Sector Advisory Group
PPF	Project Preparation Facility
PSF	Private Sector Facility
RFP	request for proposal
RMF	results management framework
RPSP	Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme
SAP	Simplified Access Process
SIDS	small island development states
ToC	theory of change
ToR	terms of reference
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

A. INTRODUCTION

1. BACKGROUND TO THE INDEPENDENT EVALUATION UNIT

The Independent Evaluation Unit (IEU) of the Green Climate Fund (GCF), is mandated by the GCF Board under paragraph 60 of its Governing Instrument to inform its decision-making. Specifically, the Governing Instrument states “... the Board will establish an operationally independent evaluation unit as part of the core structure of the Fund. The head of the Unit will be selected by, and will report to, the Board. The frequency and types of evaluation to be conducted will be specified by the unit in agreement with the Board.” The IEU has a mandate for both discharging an accountability function and supporting a learning function. These are central to the GCF being a learning organization as laid out in its Governing Instrument. The IEU has several objectives:

- Informing decision-making by the Board and identifying and disseminating lessons learned, contributing to guiding the GCF and stakeholders as a learning institution, providing strategic guidance.
- Conducting periodic independent evaluations of GCF performance to objectively assess the results of the GCF and the effectiveness and efficiency of its activities.
- Providing evaluation reports to the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Paris Agreement for purposes of periodic reviews of the Financial Mechanism.¹

2. BACKGROUND TO THE SYNTHESIS STUDY

Through Decision B.24/06, the GCF Board-approved five evaluations to be undertaken by the IEU in 2020, which include an independent synthesis of the GCF’s accreditation function.² The current paper describes the approach suggested for the preparation of the Synthesis study. The Synthesis study will be a **desk study** and will examine existing evidence on accreditation. It will systematically and objectively synthesize key findings and make recommendations for the GCF’s accreditation strategy. The aims of this study will be therefore to a) collect all relevant documents produced by the GCF Secretariat, IEU, and external stakeholders; b) review documents using a lens for critical appraisal that will consider gaps in evidence, potential for bias, coverage and sufficiency, relevance and the use of evidence to inform decision-making³ c) produce a synthesis of the evidence; d) synthesize these into knowledge and lessons learned, and e) produce a report and communication products and submit the report to the Board at B.26.

¹ The Conference of Parties to the UNFCCC provides the following guidance on the function of the IEU: “The reports of the GCF should include any reports of the independent evaluation unit, including for the purposes of the periodic reviews of the financial mechanism of the Convention” (UNFCCC decision 5/CP19, annex, paragraph 20).

² GCF/B.24/12/Rev.01

³ These are standard procedures in any ‘synthesis’ study which is a precise term that indicates that the following questions and steps are used: 1. A question is clearly defined; 2. The scope of the question is defined in terms of inclusion and exclusion criteria that can include geographic scope, thematic scope etc.; 3. An ex ante protocol is defined for how the key questions will be answered, what variables will be used and what criteria will be used as well as how qualitative and quantitative information will be aggregated or synthesized/combined (which is not simply ‘vote counting’); 4. An exhaustive literature review is undertaken using search methods; 5. Literature is segregated into relevant and non-relevant/repeated; 5. Assessment is done using the protocol defined in step 3; 6. Assessment evidence is aggregated using rules of synthesis. Many times, these result in meta-synthesis of qualitative/quantitative literature.

B. CONTEXT FOR ACCREDITATION

1. ACCREDITATION IN THE GOVERNING INSTRUMENT AND THE NEW STRATEGIC PLAN

Accreditation is central to the mandate of the GCF. Paragraph 45 in the GCF's Governing Instrument (GI) provides that access to GCF's resources will be through national, regional, and international implementing entities accredited by the Board. It also states that recipient countries will determine the mode of access, and both public and private sector modalities may be used simultaneously.

The GI further provides for **direct access** in paragraph 47 and states that recipient countries will nominate competent subnational, national, and regional implementing entities for accreditation. In the GCF Business Model, accredited entities (AEs) are responsible for delivering finance to developing countries, along with the design, delivery, management, implementation, supervision, and evaluation, while also meeting GCF standards and safeguards, as prescribed in paragraph 29. Once accredited, the **GCF relies on the due diligence** and the risk assessment performed by AEs for its investments (see also paper on 'second level due diligence'⁴). The GCF Board only considers funding proposals (FPs) that are submitted by accredited entities (AEs) (apart from RFPs).

As per paragraph 57 of the GI, programmes and projects, as well as other activities funded by the GCF will be regularly monitored for impact, efficiency and effectiveness in line with rules and procedures established by the Board. In this, the GI encourages the use of participatory monitoring involving stakeholders. Paragraph 58 stipulates that a results measurement framework with guidelines and appropriate performance indicators will be approved by the Board and employed by the Secretariat. Performance against these indicators will be reviewed periodically to support the continuous improvement of the Fund's impact, effectiveness, and operational performance.

As of February 2020, GCF allocated finance to Funding Proposals (FPs) ranges from \$2.3 million to 378 million.⁵ In its draft strategic plan (2020-23)⁶, the GCF also commits to 'simplifying access' through the Simplified Approval Process (SAP), meeting NDC and NAP targets, and formulates the following four targets for the next strategic period:

- a) building **capabilities** in developing countries for transformational planning and programming;
- b) catalyzing climate **innovation**;
- c) **scaling up** innovation through mobilizing investments at scale; and
- d) **expanding knowledge** to replicate success and support alignment of financial flows with the Paris Agreement.

This synthesis will examine both: how effective has the accreditation function been in supporting the objectives of the GCF's Initial Strategic Plan (ISP) (and assess the strength of current evidence available to answer this question), and whether the accreditation function is fit-for-purpose for GCF's next strategic period.

⁴ Oliver Wyman (2019) Second Level Due Diligence Framework. Green Climate Fund

⁵ In the GCF, projects can be micro (to USD 10 million), small (between USD 10-50 million), Medium (between 50-250 million USD), Large (above 250 million USD).

⁶ GCF/Informal Draft.V1: The Strategic Plan for the GCF: 2020–2023

2. BUSINESS MODEL OF THE GCF FOR WORKING WITH AEs

The business model of the GCF with its central focus on AEs can be summarized as follows (this is not an official description of the process but comes close to describing a theory of practice i.e. how the process is supposed to work on the ground):⁷

- a) Entities who wish to submit funding proposals and access GCF resources, contact the NDAs in their countries and submit applications to go through an accreditation process.
- b) Once accredited, AEs develop projects with support from countries (including a No-Objection Letter from NDAs), and submit funding proposals to GCF.
- c) AEs implement projects across GCF's eight result areas using six investment criteria⁸, which will deliver mitigation and adaptation benefits.
- d) A paradigm shift takes place towards low-emission and climate-resilient development pathways through the AEs that have adhered to the accreditation criteria.

Several recent reports and reviews have provided data, assessments, and recommendations on the functioning of this model. Systematically synthesizing their findings is the objective of this study, while focusing on relevance, sufficiency, risk of bias as well as whether decision-making has been informed by evidence. During this process, the review will also examine the sufficiency of information on AE results and impact. The synthesis team will be assisted by extensive reviews of accreditation procedures, delays, and pipeline development.⁹ This information will be updated with information from B.25 (cut-off date established for the data is 31 March 2019).

3. BOARD DECISIONS ON ACCREDITATION

In decision B.07/02, paragraph (a), the Board adopted the initial guiding framework for the GCF accreditation process. It decided to establish an **Accreditation Committee** consisting of four Board members or alternates and to create an **Accreditation Panel (AP)** for the review of applications by technical experts. Annex I of decision B.07/02 contains the initial guiding framework for the Fund's accreditation function, including fiduciary criteria, environmental and social safeguards adopting on an interim basis those of the International Finance Corporation (IFC), and the stages of the accreditation function, including the modalities of operation for the AP.

As per Decision B.08/3, the Board-approved the **eligibility of specific entities** to apply under the fast track accreditation function. The entities were those already accredited by other climate funds (the Adaptation Fund and the GEF as well as Directorate-General for International cooperation and Development or DG DEVCO of the EU). Further specific entities were declared eligible for fast track accreditation in several subsequent decisions (Decisions B.10/06, B.12/30, B.14/09, B.15/09, B.17/13 B.18/05 and B.19/14).

Decision B.11/10 established the **Monitoring and Accountability Framework for AEs**. A Strategy on Accreditation was developed by the AP as requested by the Board¹⁰ and presented at B.14 as

⁷ Also see Dalberg Report in: Structure and staffing of the Secretariat, GCF/B.18/10, Annex III, p. 9

⁸ The eight results areas identified in Strategic Plan for the GCF: 2020–2023 (GCF/Informal Draft.V1) include: low-emission energy access and power generation; low-emission transport; efficient buildings, cities, industries and appliance; sustainable land use and forest management; most vulnerable people, communities and regions; health and well-being, and food and water security; resilient infrastructure and the built environment; ecosystems and ecosystem services.

⁹ See in particular the Accreditation Review (GCF/B.21/08) with recommendations by the Secretariat in Annex II and the extensive report on the review of the accreditation framework by Moore Stephens in Annex IV; Forward-looking Performance Review of the GCF (GCF/B.23/20); Independent Assessment of the GCF's Country Ownership (GCF/B.24/13)

¹⁰ DECISION B.10/06: Board decision accreditation proposals; accreditation modalities, paragraph (r):

document GCF/B.14/09 after being deferred at B.11-13; the Board noted it with Decision B.14/08 to which the Strategy on Accreditation was attached as Annex II. It was not approved at this meeting or later; discussions including at B.23 and B.24 focused on the updated accreditation framework.

Decision B.14/08 also established the following **prioritization of entities** applying for accreditation:

1. *National direct access entities;*
2. *Entities in the Asia-Pacific and eastern European regions;*
3. *Private sector entities, in particular those in developing countries, seeking a balance of diversity of entities in line with decisions B.09/07, para. (g) and decision B.10/06, para. (h);*
4. *Entities responding to requests for proposals issued by the GCF, for example including a pilot phase for enhancing direct access; a pilot programme to support micro-, small-, and medium-sized enterprises; and a pilot programme to mobilize resources at scale to address adaptation and mitigation;*
5. *Entities seeking fulfillment of conditions for accreditation; and*
6. *Entities requesting upgrades.”*

This prioritization was extended with Decision B.19/13 until the end of B.20 and with Decision B.23/11 to the end of B.24. Moreover, in Decision B.19/13, the Board noted a project-specific assessment approach (PSAA) and requested the Secretariat to further work on its modalities, in light of comments received and in the context of the review of the accreditation framework. The PSAA was agreed in principle with Decision B.23/11¹¹ and, after further discussion at B.24 (Decision B.24/23), deferred the detailed discussion of implementation modalities to B.25.

The extension of fast-tracking to more entities, the prioritization of AE candidates, and the Board’s agreement to a PSAA reflect the efforts of the Board and the Secretariat to shorten the pipelines for accreditation and to promote the acceleration of project proposals, approvals, disbursements and implementation.

Requests for review: In decision B.18/04, paragraph (a), the Board decided to commence the review of the accreditation framework. In paragraph (b) of the same decision, the Board requested the Secretariat to present a proposal for the revision of the accreditation framework that includes other modalities for institutions to work with GCF, as early as the nineteenth meeting of the Board (B.19). At B.21, the Secretariat submitted an extensive analysis and recommendations in document GCF/B.21/08. The discussions continued at B.22, B.23, and B.24 without resulting in a decision on a revised accreditation framework or the PSAA.¹² In its Forward-looking Performance Review, the IEU devoted a full chapter to the topic of accreditation. Among its many recommendations, it urged the GCF to consider developing a ‘strategy’ for accreditation that lays out: the key objectives of the accreditation process; how accreditation supports the GCF’s overall aims and theory of change and what are the intended pathways through which it does this; and, the (quantitative and qualitative) targets of the accreditation function.

“Requests the Accreditation Committee with the support of the Secretariat to work on a strategy on accreditation for consideration by the Board at its eleventh meeting. The report should examine issues including efficiency, fairness and transparency of the accreditation process, as well as the extent to which current and future accredited entities enable the Fund to fulfil its mandate.”

¹¹ DECISION B.23/11

¹² Refer to documents GCF/B.22/Inf.15, GCF/B.23/05 and GCF/B.24/06

C. METHODOLOGY

This study is not an evaluation, but a synthesis review of existing reviews, evaluations, and analysis prepared by the IEU and other GCF Secretariat divisions or by consultants on their behalf. Therefore, this study will not use traditional evaluation methods and will not collect primary data. Instead, it will use a combination of critical review and qualitative meta-analyses methods.¹³ This approach is pragmatic and flexible, but also inductive and asks questions about what we know and what we don't. It involves rigour and is also accommodative of the sensitive nature of the issues under discussion and the needs of an IEU synthesis on accreditation.

Critical review: A critical review aims to demonstrate that the writer has extensively researched the literature and critically evaluated its quality. It goes beyond the description of identified articles and includes a degree of analysis and the development of innovative narratives. It is based on an ex-ante protocol that indicates criteria and also on inclusion and exclusion criteria that indicate what literature or sources of information are included and which not. A critical review provides an opportunity to 'take stock' and evaluate what is of value from the previous body of work based on a pre-developed (and piloted) protocol.¹⁴

Qualitative systematic review: A qualitative systematic review is a method for integrating or comparing the findings from qualitative studies. The accumulated knowledge resulting from this process may lead to the development of a new theory, an overarching narrative, a broader generalization, or an interpretative translation. It 'looks for themes or constructs in or across individual qualitative studies.'¹⁵

Critical appraisal criteria: Informed by such a systematic review, a critical appraisal will be used to assess the information provided in the various reviews and documents. The information found will be screened using four criteria:

- a) **Relevance:** Is the current form of the accreditation framework and function relevant to the objectives laid out for accreditation? Is it relevant to GCF's overall objectives and its theory of change? How relevant is the evidence that exists so far to answer these questions and to inform actions/decision-making? And what else is required?
- b) **Sufficiency/completeness:** Is the available information and evidence sufficient to show whether the objectives of the accreditation framework and strategy are being reached? Have decision-makers used the right kind of information to inform their actions and strategies for accreditation? Is the information contained in reviews and documents sufficient to inform these actions?
- c) **Reliability/risk of bias:** are the data collected in the documents produced and interpreted objectively? Is there any risk of bias in the way data was produced, analyzed and used? Was there any conflict of interest?
- d) **Complementarity/coherence:** is the GCF accreditation process aligned with good practices in other multilateral climate finance organizations? Is there other management literature that can inform this, for example, from operational research and management practice?

¹³ For an overview and discussion of 14 different review methods see Maria J. Grant/ Andrew Booth, A typology of reviews: an analysis of 14 review types and associated methodologies, *Health Information and Libraries Journal*, 26, pp.91–108

¹⁴ *ibid.*, p. 93

¹⁵ *ibid.*, p. 99

D. SCOPING THE SYNTHESIS STUDY

The synthesis study will identify and appraise the evidence presented in the documents reviewed using the methods outlined in Section C. In this way, it will be able to point to the parts that are based on sound evidence and parts that are based on less evidence and information.

Among the documents listed in the TOR for this synthesis study, four stand out in terms of analysis and recommendations. The first one is the only review which, at the request of the Board, addresses accreditation exclusively, while the others dedicate chapters to it:

- a) Accreditation Review (GCF/B.21/08) with recommendations by the Secretariat in Annex II and the report on the review of the accreditation framework by Moore Stephens in Annex IV
- b) Forward-looking Performance Review of the GCF (GCF/B.23/20)
- c) Independent Assessment of the GCF's Country Ownership (GCF/B.24/13)
- d) Independent Evaluation of the GCF'S Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme (GCF/B.22/03)

The current review will update these reviews with more current information to the extent that it is available. The Review will also analyze and assess data presented on the efficiency, results, and impact achieved by the AEs, in particular on the quality of the evidence provided and the identification of information gaps and analyze any evidence of the evolution of AE portfolios using non-GCF entity-based data through desk-review methods.

There are several other papers identified for this synthesis:

- e) Draft strategy on accreditation (GCF/B.13/12)
- f) Annual Portfolio Performance Report 2018 (GCF/24/Inf.04)
- g) PSAG recommendations on the development of a private sector outreach plan (GCF/B.19/30/PSAG)
- h) Strategic Plan Report (GCF/B.22/INF.13)
- i) Structure and Staffing of Secretariat (GCF/B.18/10 Annex III: Dalberg Report)
- j) UNFCCC Standing Committee on Finance/ Technical paper on the sixth review of the Financial Mechanism
- k) Work Programme 2019 (GCF/B.21/19)

Operational research and management practice studies as well as studies that may help the IEU to benchmark the GCF's operations and practices.

Also, there are other papers relevant to accreditation. Annex III contains a preliminary list. All general or conceptual or strategic documents and Board decisions concerning accreditation will be analyzed, with the emphasis on those published since B.18 when the discussion about the review of the accreditation framework began. These include one-off documents, like evaluation reports, and the periodical, mostly annual reports like the portfolio report. Any document with substantial information on accreditation will be included as part of the synthesis and appraisal and the development of the conceptual discussion on the accreditation framework and strategy will be traced.

To this will be added the analysis of available internal documents processed by the Secretariat and the AP, in particular those related to risk assessments during the accreditation process, the self-assessment reports of the AEs, and the mid-term reports of the Secretariat. Furthermore, the data collected by the Secretariat concerning approved funding and project results will be provided by the IEU Datalab. This data will be presented through a portfolio approach, using a purposeful sample. A few specific 'mini case studies' may be useful to illustrate the analysis with some specific examples.

The Review will also include interviews with members of the Accreditation Committee, AP, staff of GCF Secretariat, and a sample of other stakeholders. In addition to the synthesis of documents, the study will undertake a desk analysis of 10 agencies to understand/trace their climate portfolio development post-accreditation. This assessment will explore if there is a correlation between GCF accreditation and a change in the incidence of climate change-related projects in the overall portfolios of these agencies. Also, the IEU DataLab will provide data on the portfolio of AEs and other analyses to support the findings of this synthesis.

E. LIMITATIONS

In following this ‘synthesis and meta-analyses’ mode of inquiry, this study is subject to some limitations and challenges. Synthesis studies and meta-analyses pool data; there is unlikely a single representative point.¹⁶ The study will mitigate this constraint by showcasing some emerging conclusions with narratives. The study is unlikely to be replicable. Further, the study is being undertaken through a rapid timeline. The synthesis study will counter some of these challenges through the following measures:

- Data are collected through several steps, with each step informing the results of the other.
- The literature is comprehensive and exhaustive i.e. it covers everything produced within the GCF.
- The study includes consultations with experts and other stakeholders, including to validate the emerging findings and discover unseen data.
- The reviewers are trained in social sciences methods and are familiar with the GCF.
- The IEU is leading the study and is responsible for its content and appearance substantively and for cosmetics.

With these steps, concerns of validity will be satisfactorily addressed to suit the purposes and scope of the study.

F. WORK STEPS REQUIRED

Under the technical guidance of the Head of the IEU, and in close consultation with staff of the IEU who will also manage the study as well as an external consultant (all of whom will be co-authors on the report), the Review will:

- a) Review and critically appraise existing documents and evidence gaps, bias, coverage, knowledge, and lessons learned related to accreditation.
- b) Design the framework to be used to extract the findings and lessons learned from a wide range of GCF and other materials and develop an evidence matrix outlining the inputs (data, sources, reports) needed to properly inform the study and accordingly agree on a final report outline.
- c) Finalize an approach paper for the accreditation synthesis study.
- d) Utilize Board and other GCF and IEU documents involving accreditation and inform the study with data provided by IEU DataLab.
- e) Consider evidence from the literature outside the GCF, including that from other multilateral organizations, think tanks, civil society, academia, and the grey literature.

¹⁶ See for example Kirman, Alan P. "Whom or what does the representative individual represent?." *Journal of economic perspectives* 6.2 (1992): 117-136 and Shiller, R. J. (2019). *Narrative economics: How stories go viral and drive major economic events*. Princeton University Press.

- f) Undertake the core tasks of the study, including review of documents, protocol development, articulating inclusion and exclusion criteria, critical appraisal of evidence, synthesis of findings, among others.
- g) Draft a synthesis study report, to include lessons learned with broader applicability.
- h) Support the development of communication products in the study.
- i) Supplement the information collected with selected interviews in the GCF Secretariat, in particular concerning the implementation of the recommendations of the above-listed reports.
- j) Interview some Board members and their advisers as well as representatives of AEs, focusing on the issues under discussions and chances for implementing the reforms envisaged.

G. TIMELINE

The synthesis study will involve, in part, a desk study, but also need close engagement and communication of the consultant with the IEU, and the GCF Secretariat. The estimated length of the work will extend from December 2019 to June 2020. The work needs to be completed by early May 2020, with follow-up through June 2020.

The timeline for this study, as defined in the TOR, is as follows:

- a) December 20, 2019: Commencement of consultancy assignment and the start of the review and synthesis work.
- b) January 20, 2020: Finalize draft of approach paper and proposed plan for implementation; start of review and consultations.
- c) February 2, 2020: preparation of preliminary reflections to inform Board informal meeting.
- d) March 20, 2020: Presentation of draft results to IEU/GCF and receiving IEU comments.
- e) March 22, 2020: Factual draft paper finalized, sent to IEU/GCF for review and comments.
- f) April 3, 2020: Comments on the factual draft received from the IEU.
- g) April 25, 2020: Accreditation Synthesis study draft report finalized and submitted to the IEU for first use.
- h) May 31, 2020: feedback and comments received, validated, and a final report prepared.
- i) June 2020: synthesis study is expected to be presented at the twenty-sixth meeting of the Board of the GCF.
- j) 2020: communication products from the accreditation synthesis are designed and delivered.

The above timeline is expected and subject to change to accommodate procedural and emerging issues. The confirmed date for the twenty-sixth meeting of the Board of the GCF will be critical to determining the final timeline.

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IEU's evaluation reports

- Independent Assessment of the GCF's Country Ownership, IEU (GCF/B.24/13)
- Forward-looking Performance Review of the GCF, IEU (GCF/B.23/20)
- Independent Evaluation of the GCF'S Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme, IEU (GCF/B.22/03)
- Independent review of the GCF's Results Management Framework, IEU, (GCF/B.21/20)

APPENDIX 2. TENTATIVE OUTLINE OF THE SYNTHESIS STUDY ON ACCREDITATION

Executive summary

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APPENDIX 3. TWO EXAMPLES OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING THE ACHIEVEMENT OF ACCREDITATION OBJECTIVES¹⁷

No	ACCREDITATION OBJECTIVES ¹⁸	MAIN FINDINGS	MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS	SOURCE DOCUMENT	EVIDENCE CITED IN SOURCE DOCUMENT /IEU CRITICAL APPRAISAL OF EVIDENCE
1	AEs become strategic partners of the GCF.	GCF has an opportunity to better frame the role that accredited entities (AEs) play in its business model, either as strategic partners or primarily as funding channels through which projects get implemented. GCF's current practice of doing both with processes that are designed for the strategic engagement of AEs is not sustainable.	Positioning AEs as strategic partners will reduce the focus on the number of AEs but increase the average level of engagement. If AEs are primarily intended as funding channels, GCF may want to accredit as many AEs as possible to increase the likelihood of receiving paradigm-shifting proposals.	Dalberg Report in: Structure and staffing of the Secretariat, GCF/B.18/10, Annex III	Survey data, qualitative and quantitative data/ Relevant, reliable
2	Information on results and impact is regularly provided.	The information provided is of a summative and aggregate nature and does not show results achieved by each AE. A large proportion of GCF projects reviewed have not made sufficient provisions to ensure credible reporting of results with significant implications for GCF's reputation and credibility.	The Secretariat should update the RMF and PMF, address deficiencies, and develop protocols that clarify what, who, when, how indicators can and should be measured and how they should be aggregated. On approval of the GCF Board, the IEU should also carry out an independent review of the accreditation function considering the extensive deficiencies in the evaluability and likelihood of credible reporting.	Annual Portfolio Performance Report 2018, GCF/24/Inf.04 Independent Evaluation of the RMF, GCF/B.21/20, Executive Summary	Relevant, insufficient, reliable

¹⁷ This table is to be considered for illustrative purpose only. Such a table will be further developed and completed during the preparation of the synthesis review

¹⁸ **Further accreditation objectives are:** Country ownership is promoted and supported; the private sector gets increasingly involved in accreditation and project implementation; paradigm shift takes place towards low-emission and climate-resilient development pathway; AEs prepare high- quality proposals and manage for results; risks are systematically assessed during the accreditation process and later by AEs for project proposals; complementarity and coherence across different climate finance delivery channels is achieved.

APPENDIX 4. PRELIMINARY QUESTIONS MATRIX

The table below is a preliminary questions matrix for the synthesis study on accreditation. The following questions will be explored through the synthesis. Questions and sources marked with an asterisk (*) involve primary data, and will be examined contingent upon the availability of data.

AREA	PRELIMINARY QUESTIONS	SOURCES
The mandate of accreditation	<p>What is the guidance provided by the GI and UNFCCC?</p> <p>How is it implemented in the business model?</p> <p>What are the relevant Board documents and decisions?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of GI, COP guidance • Analysis of the business model • Inherent assumptions in the business model • Analysis of overarching Board documents
Accreditation strategy and framework	<p>What is the trajectory of accreditation over time?</p> <p>How have multiple iterations developed through B.18-B.25?</p> <p>What are the implicit and explicit assumptions in accreditation?</p> <p>What are the various priorities and expected results (whether implied or explicitly stated)?</p> <p>Is this based on sound evidence?</p> <p>Are the AEs partners or merely implementers?</p> <p>Is the target to build institutions, or is it to build a pipeline of GCF projects?</p> <p>Is the target to build AEs for GCF or climate finance more broadly?</p> <p>Why is there no accreditation strategy? Is one needed?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of accreditation-specific Board documents and other reports • Accreditation from the perspective of various actors: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – GCF Secretariat – Board interviews/ discussion reports – Country case studies – PSAG reports – Evidence from FPR
Accreditation as a function	<p>What is the process for GCF accreditation?</p> <p>Are there any gaps and inconsistencies in the GCF policies?</p> <p>How does this compare (complementarity/coherence) with other multilateral organizations?</p> <p>What is the reporting system in place?</p> <p>What is the efficiency in the accreditation function?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of accreditation application • Benchmarking analysis • Analysis of efficiencies • Synthesis of country case studies – entities that were not accredited • Second level due diligence paper* • Effectiveness of AMAs* • Analysis of a sample of entities that did not get accredited*
AE portfolio 2019	<p>Are the AEs accredited so far and the mix of IAEs and DAEs best suited for achieving the objectives of the GCF as a whole and for each country (in particular paradigm change)?*</p> <p>Is the assumption ‘the more DAEs, the better’ correct?</p> <p>Which countries have no DAEs yet and why?*</p> <p>Are DAEs always more suitable than IAEs? Are they more country-owned?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data on the accreditation portfolio (cut-off: 31. December 2019) • Additional data on portfolio collected by IEU • Updating of data in Country Ownership evaluation • Synthesis of country case studies • Status as provided by Datalab • Scenario analysis: assuming current rates of portfolio growth, how long will it take to balance the portfolio

AREA	PRELIMINARY QUESTIONS	SOURCES
	Which applications for accreditation get stuck/are refused and why?*	<p>among IAEs and DAEs. What are the various scenarios?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data on shift in the portfolio of the first ten AEs • NDC matching with AE
Results and impacts of accreditation	<p>The following objectives are identified at the preliminary stage:</p> <p>Are AEs effectively achieving results and impact?</p> <p>Do AEs become strategic partners of the GCF?*</p> <p>Is the information on results and impact regularly provided?</p> <p>Is country ownership promoted and supported?</p> <p>Is the private sector getting increasingly involved in accreditation and project implementation?</p> <p>Is a paradigm shift taking place towards low-emission and climate-resilient development pathway?¹⁹</p> <p>Do AEs prepare high- quality proposals and manage for results?</p> <p>Are risks systematically assessed during the accreditation process and later by AEs for project proposals?*</p> <p>To what extent is complementarity and coherence across different climate finance delivery channels achieved?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data on AEs' capacities* – evaluation offices, risk assessment, ability to manage climate projects, ensure both climate and financial returns (especially for PSF projects) and the importance of having climate built into procurement, budgetary and infrastructural attributes of the organization (at least over time) • Annual Self-Assessments by the AEs* • Midterm Reviews of AEs by the Secretariat* • Analysis of accreditation documents • Synthesis of IEU evaluations • Data from other climate finance agencies

¹⁹ Reference: IEU stoplight study 'Building faster, better, smarter'

APPENDIX 5. PRELIMINARY LIST OF RELEVANT DOCUMENTS AND DECISIONS

Governing Instrument, Strategic Plan and Business Model Framework, along with Board meeting reports

- GCF Governing Instrument
- GCF Rules of Procedure

Board Meeting Reports from B.1 to B.24 when relevant to accreditation

Board Decisions and reports produced by the Secretariat on Accreditation

- Accreditation Review (GCF/B.21/08) with recommendations by the Secretariat in Annex II and the extensive report on the review of the accreditation framework by Moore Stephens in Annex IV
- Matters related to the accreditation framework, GCF/B.24/06
- Updated accreditation framework, GCF/B.23/05
- Matters related to accreditation, including the framework review, and matters related to the baseline of AEs, GCF/B.22/Inf. 15
- Accreditation framework review, including the project-specific framework approach, GCF/B.20/17
- DECISION B.BM-2017/03: Performance review of members of the Accreditation Panel
- DECISION GCF/BM-2017/10: The performance review of the Accreditation Panel
- Consideration of accreditation proposals, GCF/B.23/04 as well as on 12, 13, 14, 15, 17, 18, 21, and 22 Meeting
- Accreditation Process, on the GCF website, <file:///Users/ansgareussner/Dropbox/Green%20Climate%20Fund/Accreditation%20study/Accreditation%20Process%20-%20GCF%20101%20%7C%20Green%20Climate%20Fund.html>
- DECISION B.23/11: Accreditation Framework, accreditation application review priorities and start of the accreditation
- DECISION B.21/16 (e): Accreditation priorities to be used through the twenty-third meeting of the Board
- DECISION B.22/16: Review of the Accreditation Framework
- DECISION B.19/13: Extension of accreditation priorities and development of a project-specific assessment approach
- DECISION B.18/04: Review/Revision of the Accreditation Framework and Prioritization of Applications
- DECISION B.14/08: Strategy on Accreditation and Prioritization of Entity Application Review
- DECISION B.11/10, Operationalizing the initial monitoring and accountability framework for accredited entities, adopting the initial policy on fees
- DECISION B.08/02: Approval of the guidelines for the fit-for-purpose accreditation approach
- DECISION B.07/02: Adoption of the initial guiding framework for the Fund's accreditation process, initial fiduciary principles and standards, interim performance standards, and establishment of an Accreditation Committee and an Accreditation Panel DECISION B.05/08: Access modalities - Accreditation

- DECISION B.19/14: Eligibility of specific entities to apply under the fast track accreditation process
- DECISION B.08/03: Fast track Accreditation Programme
- DECISION B.17/15: Status of accreditation master agreements and funded activity agreements
- DECISION B.23/15 (d): Amendment of the accreditation master agreement template

IEU Evaluations and papers

- Independent Assessment of the GCF's Country Ownership, IEU (GCF/B.24/13)
- Forward-looking Performance Review of the GCF, IEU (GCF/B.23/20)
- Independent Evaluation of the GCF'S Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme, IEU (GCF/B.22/03)
- Independent review of the GCF's Results Management Framework, IEU, (GCF/B.21/20)
- Fiala, N., Puri, J, and Mwandri, P. (2018). Becoming bigger, better, smarter: A summary of the evaluability of Green Climate Fund proposals. IEU Working Paper, Green Climate Fund. Songdo, South Korea
- Mwandri, P., and Cha, T. (2018). Complementarity and coherence concept note. Inception Note, Green Climate Fund, Songdo, South Korea

Strategic Planning

- DECISION B.17/05: Implementation of the Initial Strategic Plan of the GCF
- DECISION B.12/20: Endorsement of the Strategic Plan of the GCF
- DECISION B.BM-2015/11: Ad-hoc group for the Strategic Plan for the GCF
- DECISION B.11/03: Development of the Strategic Plan of the GCF
- DECISION B.10/14: Development of Strategic Plan of the GCF

Other reviews and reports produced by the Secretariat

- Annual Portfolio Performance Report 2018, GCF/24/Inf.04
- Annual Portfolio Performance Report 2017, GCF/21/Inf.12
- Report on the Activities of the Secretariat, GCF/22/Inf.01
- GCF/B.18/10: Structure and staffing of the Secretariat

On RPSP

- GCF/B.19/32/Add.01 The Secretariat's initial review of the Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme
- DECISION B.19/15: Revised 2018 Readiness Work Programme and measures for programme improvement

On risk management framework

- Initial risk management framework/risk appetite, Decision GCF/B.09/06
- Adoption of Interim risk and investment guidelines, Decision GCF/B.13/36
- Document GCF/B.17/12, GCF risk management framework: Risk Management Committee proposal
- Adoption of a revised risk register, risk appetite statement, risk dashboard, and Risk guidelines for funding proposals, DECISION B.17/11

- Document GCF/B.19/19 titled “Risk management framework: Proposal by the Risk Management Committee
- Adoption of investment risk policy, non-financial risk policy, and funding risk policy, and updating the risk dashboard, DECISION B.19/04
- Document GCF/B.23/06 titled “Risk management framework: compliance risk policy – a proposal by the Risk Management Committee
- Adoption of the risk management framework component VIII – compliance risk policy, DECISION B.23/14 0

On private sector work

- Private Sector Advisory Group reports
- The forward-looking road map on the Green Climate Fund’s private sector work
- DECISION B.19/17: Recommendations on the development of a private sector outreach plan
- DECISION B.17/06: Analysis of barriers to crowding-in and maximizing the engagement of the private sector
- DECISION B.16/03: Private Sector Facility: Potential approaches to mobilizing funding at scale
- DECISION B.13/05: Co-financing, analysis of barriers to crowding-in and maximizing private sector engagement, and development of a private sector outreach plan

Other GCF reports and documents

- Green Climate Fund (2018) Impact Casebook. Green Climate Fund, Songdo, South Korea
- Green Climate Fund (2018) Turning Ambition into Action. How the Green Climate Fund is Delivering Results. Green Climate Fund, Songdo, South Korea
- SMT Internal Memorandum (2018) Seeking complementary evaluation criteria for assessing private equity and other funds. Green Climate Fund, Songdo, South Korea

Business Model Framework

- DECISION B.04/04 Business Model Framework – objectives, results and performance indicators
- DECISION B.01-13/06 Development of the Business Model Framework

Simplified Proposal Approval Process

- DECISION B.18/06: Approval of the Simplified Approval Process (Pilot Scheme)
- DECISION B.14/07 (a) to (h): Consideration of funding proposals and approval of the operational guidelines of the simplified proposal approval process
- DECISION B.13/20: Simplified processes for approval of proposals for certain activities, in particular, small-scale activities
- DECISION B.12/10: Consultations on simplified processes for the approval of proposals for certain activities, in particular, small-scale activities

Results Management Framework

- DECISION B.13/34: Deferral of consideration of further development of indicators in the performance measurement frameworks
- DECISION B.12/33: Consultation on indicators in the performance measurement of frameworks
- DECISION B.09/02: GCF investment opportunities and alignment of the portfolio with the results management framework

- DECISION B.07/04: Adoption of the elements of the initial results management framework of the GCF

IPCC and UNFCCC documents

- Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (2018). Summary for Policymakers. In: Global warming of 1.5°C. An IPCC Special Report on the impacts of global warming of 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels and related global greenhouse gas emission pathways, in the context of strengthening the global response to the threat of climate change, sustainable development, and efforts to eradicate poverty. World Meteorological Organization, Geneva, Switzerland
- Guidance provided by the COP
- GCF reports to the UNFCCC
- The technical summary of the fifth (FCCC/CP/2014/10/Add.2) and sixth reviews of the financial mechanism of the UNFCCC (FCCC/CP/2017/9, Annex II) and decisions 9/CP.20 and 11/CP.23, and SCF/TP/2017/1

Scientific and grey literature

- Atkins, S., Lewin, S., Smith, H., Engel, M., Fretheim, A., & Volmink, J. (2008). Conducting a meta-ethnography of qualitative literature: lessons learned. *BMC medical research methodology*, 8(1), 21.
- Echeverri, C.A., Reynolds, C., Davis, S. (2018) Analysis of the Green Climate Fund Framework for Measuring, Reporting and Verification. Center for Clean Air Policy, Washington, D.C.
- Global Environment Facility (GEF), Independent Evaluation Office. (2018). Evaluation of the GEF's System for Transparent Allocation of Resources. Evaluation Report No. 130. Washington, D.C.
- Grant, M. J., & Booth, A. (2009). A typology of reviews: an analysis of 14 review types and associated methodologies. *Health Information & Libraries Journal*, 26(2), 91-108.
- Perrault, A., & Leonard, S. (2017). The Green Climate Fund: Accomplishing a Paradigm Shift?, in Rights and Resources.
- TANGO International. (2018). Overall Evaluation of the Adaptation Fund. July 2017 – June 2018. Final Report.

APPENDIX 6. BOARD DECISIONS ON CORE INDICATORS

As per Decision B.07/04, for mitigation projects and programmes, three Board-approved GCF-level core indicators are:

- Tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (tCO₂eq) reduced as a result of Fund-funded activities.
- Cost per tCO₂eq decreased for all Fund-funded mitigation projects and programmes.
- The volume of finance leveraged by GCF lending, disaggregated by public and private sources.

Adaptation projects and programmes require one Board-approved GCF-level core impact:

- The total number of direct and indirect beneficiaries; and the number of beneficiaries relative to the total population.

Cross-cutting projects are required to inform both the mitigation and adaptation core indicators.

As per decision B.08/07, and relating to the proposed mitigation and adaptation performance measurement frameworks (PMFs), the Board decided on certain indicators and took note of other indicators that require further refinement. Two documents, GCF/B.12/13, and GCF/B.13/26, both titled “Further development of indicators in the performance measurement frameworks”, were then published and presented to the Board at its twelfth and thirteenth meetings; neither of the decisions presented in the documents was adopted. Subsequently, the Board, by decision B.17/01 paragraph (b)(x), decided to defer consideration of the further development of some PMF indicators as noted in GCF/B.13/26.²⁰

The Board considered several adaptation indicators in GCF/B.13/34 and GCF/B.12/13, but this is the only GCF-level indicator on adaptation that was agreed to, demonstrating that measuring adaptation is more difficult than measurement of mitigation.

²⁰ See document GCF/B.20/Inf.01, p. 1

Independent Evaluation Unit
Green Climate Fund
175, Art center-daero, Yeonsu-gu
Incheon 22004, Republic of Korea
Tel. (+82) 032-458-6450
ieu@gcfund.org
<https://ieu.greenclimate.fund>



GREEN
CLIMATE
FUND

Independent
Evaluation
Unit

