

Accountability and Grievance Mechanism

Background:

The Seed Fund is committed to maintaining the integrity of its safeguard processes. The information below provides specific guidance on the collection, recording, processing, and resolving grievances received through The Seed Fund's Accountability and Grievance Mechanism (AGM). It is designed to:

- Address breaches of policy and procedure
- Be independent, transparent, and effective
- Be accessible to project-affected people
- Maintain records on all cases with due regard to confidentiality of grievant identity and information and
- Take appropriate measures to minimize risk of retaliation to grievant.

Submitting a grievance:

Grievances can be sent to The Seed Fund's Accountability and Grievance Mechanism through the following contact channels:

- **Email (preferred):** grievance@seedfundfornature.org (monitored by The Seed Fund Safeguards Manager)
- **Hotline:** [Conservation International's Ethics Hotline](#) (anonymous, offered in multiple languages)

Process for submitting a grievance:

Step 1: Submit a grievance.

The submission of grievances must include the following information:

- Name, designation, address, and contact information.
- If a grievance is made through a representative, the name/s of the person/s on whose behalf the complaint is made.
- Whether the aggrieved party chooses to keep their identity confidential.
- A description of the grievance, including location and date/time of its occurrence.
- A brief description of the impacts of the incident.

Grievances can be submitted by email to grievance@seedfundfornature.org.

Alternatively, a stakeholder may use the [Conservation International Ethics Hotline](#).

Step 2: Eligibility and risk screening.

Grievances will be assessed for eligibility by The Seed Fund Safeguards Manager (and/or The Seed Fund team, if needed). A grievance will be considered eligible if:

- It is made in good faith
- It is directly related to a Seed Fund-supported project
- It is made by, or on behalf of, a person/s affected by a Seed Fund-supported project
- It is made during project implementation or within two years of project close

Grievances that are determined to be outside the scope of the Accountability and Grievance Mechanism (i.e., ineligible) will be communicated to the grievant and closed out of the AGM. This includes grievances with ineligible, insufficient, or incorrect information.

Grievances are reviewed for risk level to determine the most appropriate grievance management approach. In some cases, The Seed Fund team may meet to support grievance resolution and may include select individuals from project partners and/or technical experts.

Risk Level	Description
Low	The complaint is straightforward, the issue is clear, the solution is obvious, and resolutions can be developed and provided immediately. These will usually be handled directly by the Seed Fund Safeguards Manager or referred to an in-country project partner.
Medium	The complaint lacks full necessary information, needs to be investigated, and may involve engagement with multiple stakeholders; or the resolution of the grievance involves action from a particular stakeholder. These will usually involve the Seed Fund team's support to investigate and communicate with the grievant.
High	Grievances with, or the potential to have, a significant adverse impact on, and interaction with, stakeholders. These may include repeated grievances, clear/strong evidence of (threatened) violence, clear/strong evidence of illegal activity, victimization or corruption, and reputational harm to The Seed Fund, partners, or donors. These will usually involve support from CI's Global Grievance Committee.

All grievances received will be managed in a secure online database accessible only through a login system maintained by the Seed Fund Safeguards Manager.

Step 3: Acknowledgement, investigation and response.

The Seed Fund AGM Safeguards Manager will aim to acknowledge the complaint within 10 days and to investigate and respond within 25 days.

Depending on the risk level and context of the grievance, a more complex review or investigation with a longer timeframe, including cases involving third parties, may be needed. The Seed Fund AGM Safeguards Manager will inform the complainant of this, and may engage

in further discussion with the grievant. Once enough information is gathered, a proposed response is shared with the grievant for feedback.

In the case of high-risk grievances, the grievance will be elevated immediately to the Conservation International Global Grievance Committee to help process the complaint.

Step 4: Agreement and implementation.

The Seed Fund AGM Safeguards Manager will aim to communicate the proposed response to the aggrieved party within 25 days of acknowledging the grievance. The aggrieved party can choose to agree or disagree with the proposed response.

If the grievant agrees with the proposed response, it is implemented and monitored. In cases where the grievant is not satisfied with the proposed response, the Seed Fund Safeguards Manager will:

- document the steps taken;
- document communication with the grievant (and other stakeholders if there has been substantial effort to initiate or complete a multi-stakeholder process); and
- document the decisions made by the Seed Fund and the grievant about referral or recourse to other alternatives, including legal alternatives.

The Seed Fund Safeguards Manager will be responsible for monitoring and documenting the implementation of decisions and agreements made with the grievant.

Step 5: Grievance close out.

Once grievance remediation has been completed, The Seed Fund Safeguards Manager will formally close the grievance with the agreement of the grievant.