

## WWF Project Complaints Resolution Process

The World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) has established a mechanism to receive and respond to concerns raised by stakeholders who may be affected by WWF-supported conservation activities as a key means to strengthen implementation of WWF's Social Policies and Safeguards (defined below). Addressing complaints in a timely and effective way helps resolve conflicts, improves mutual understanding, strengthens accountability and provides a foundation for increased collaboration. This process will be available on WWF's public website ([wwf.panda.org](http://wwf.panda.org)) and should be shared with stakeholders during the project design phase or at other appropriate interactions.

### WWF's Network Social Safeguards and Policies

1. WWF Statement of Principles on Indigenous Peoples and Conservation
2. WWF Policy on Poverty and Conservation
3. WWF Gender Policy
4. Conservation and Human Rights Framework
5. WWF Guidelines: Prevention of Restrictions of Rights and Relocation & Resettlement Of Indigenous Peoples, Tribal and Local Communities (pending approval)
6. Other relevant WWF policies and safeguards developed and communicated to the WWF Network

WWF Social policies and safeguards can be found at [WWF social policies](http://wwf.panda.org/what_we_do/how_we_work/people_and_conservation/wwf_social_policies/) :

([http://wwf.panda.org/what\\_we\\_do/how\\_we\\_work/people\\_and\\_conservation/wwf\\_social\\_policies/](http://wwf.panda.org/what_we_do/how_we_work/people_and_conservation/wwf_social_policies/)).

### Eligibility: Who can make a complaint?

Any community or group (at least two or more people) that believes it is or may be negatively affected by a failure on the part of WWF to follow its Network Social Policies and Safeguards in the design or implementation of a WWF project activity is considered an "Affected Party". Any Affected Party may file a complaint. Representatives filing a complaint on behalf of an Affected Party must provide concrete evidence of authority to represent them. Because this project complaints process is oriented towards direct dialogue and engagement among all parties, anonymous complaints will not be considered although complainants can request confidentiality. There is a risk that confidentiality may limit efforts to resolve complaints, and complainants will be informed if confidentiality is impeding the process.

### Complaint Filing Process

The WWF Complaints Resolution Process is overseen by the office of the Director General of WWF International. Complaints should be directed to WWF International's Project Complaints Officer by email to [ProjectComplaint@wwfint.org](mailto:ProjectComplaint@wwfint.org) or delivered by post to Project Complaints, Director General Office, WWF International, Avenue Mont-Blanc 27, 1196 Gland, Switzerland. Complaints may be submitted in the Affected Party's native language.

The complaint should include the following information:

- Complainant's name and contact information
- If not filed directly by the complainant, proof that those representing the affected people have authority to do so

- The specific project or program of concern including region and country
- The harm that is or may be resulting from it
- The relevant Social policy or provision (if known)
- Any other relevant information or documents (e.g. date of event)
- Any actions taken so far to resolve the problem, including contact with WWF
- Proposed solutions
- Whether confidentiality is requested (stating reasons)

### **Complaint Review Process**

The WWF International Project Complaints Officer will acknowledge receipt and – within 10 business days – assess the eligibility of the complaint and provide a response as to whether or not it is eligible, in accordance with the above criteria.

If the complaint is eligible, the Project Complaints Officer will notify the concerned WWF office or program, and request that they provide a response. The concerned office or program will provide a response to the Project Complaints Officer within 10 business days with information on how it plans to look into the complaint and a timeframe for this process. The Project Complaints Officer will communicate this information to the Affected Party. The concerned office or program will then look into the matter, with technical support as needed, for example through investigation of the issues raised and dialogue with the Affected Party and other concerned parties. Based on the results, the WWF office or program will work with concerned parties to develop an action plan and timeframe of steps required to resolve any issues identified. A summary of the concerns raised, actions taken, conclusions reached, follow up plan and timeframe for completion will be documented and communicated as agreed between the parties, and provided to the Project Complaints Officer. (If confidentiality has been requested, the Project Complaints Officer will then communicate the response to the Affected Party.) WWF International will facilitate support to further clarify, assess, and resolve issues raised as needed, including if appropriate engaging input from outside experts.

### **Monitoring**

Agreed action plans should establish timeframes for regular process monitoring towards resolution of the complaint. The Project Complaints Officer will coordinate the monitoring by organizing periodic checks – bringing together the concerned parties and relevant technical advisors for calls, meetings or other communication on the status of action plans, until they are completed. WWF will also assess the effectiveness of this complaints resolution process on an annual basis, and identify any needs for improvement.

### **Ensuring Compliance with this Process**

WWF International, through the Project Complaints Officer, shall ensure offices are aware of and understand this process and their responsibilities to comply with it.

**Non-retaliation.** WWF strongly disapproves of and will not tolerate any form of retaliation against those who report concerns in good faith. Any WWF employee who engages in such retaliation will be subject to discipline up to and including termination. WWF will take all feasible actions to protect reporters against retaliation. Anyone who has made a report of suspicious conduct of a WWF employee and who subsequently believes he or she has been subjected to retaliation of any kind by should immediately report it by the same channels as noted herein.