



WWF-Guianas Grievance Resolution Process Version 1.0

DATE OR RELEASE: September 8, 2020

WWF-Guianas has established a process to receive, respond and resolve grievances raised by stakeholders who may be negatively affected by our work, or by the work that we support through our partners and consultants. A grievance is a formal complaint and will be treated in the manner that is outlined below. This process contributes to WWF's Social Policies and Safeguards (defined below).

Addressing concerns or complaints in a timely and effective way helps resolve issues, improves mutual understanding, strengthens accountability, ensures protection of Human Rights and provides a foundation for increased collaboration. This mechanism conforms with WWF's Social Safeguards and Policies listed in the textbox.

While this Process establishes a formal mechanism to resolve conflicts or concerns, we encourage open relations in which people and hope that we can address issues directly with each other including resolving conflicts and concerns as they occur. This document refers to a formal process for lodging and resolving issues.

WWF Network's Social Safeguards and Policies

- 1) WWF Statement of Principles on Indigenous Peoples and Conservation**
- 2) WWF Policy on Poverty and Conservation**
- 3) Conservation and Human Rights Framework**
- 4) WWF Gender Policy**
- 5) WWF Guidelines: Prevention of Restriction of Rights and Relocation & Resettlement of Indigenous Peoples, Tribal and Local Communities (pending approval)**

Other relevant WWF policies and safeguards developed and communicated to WWF Network WWF Social Policies and Safeguards can be found at the website below or can be made available .to you on request at either our Country Offices in Suriname or Guyana:

WWF Social Policies and Safeguards website:

(http://wwf.panda.org/what_we_do/how_we_work/people_and_conservation/wwf_social_policies/).

Please refer to the Appendix for an explanation of each of these items.

Eligibility: Who can report or file a grievance?

Any community member(s) who believes they are or may be negatively affected by WWF-Guianas failure to follow its Social Policies and Safeguards in the design or implementation of a WWF-Guianas project activity or initiative is considered an “Affected Party”. An Affected Party may identify someone to act on their behalf, and such a person is called a Representative. Any Affected Party or their Representative may file a grievance to the individual listed below either by email, letter, or in person. Representatives filing a grievance on behalf of an Affected Party must provide proof of authority to represent the Affected Party.

Given that this project grievance resolution process is oriented towards direct dialogue and engagement between all parties, an Affected Party can request confidentiality. Please note that there is a risk that confidentiality may limit efforts to resolve a grievance, and the Affected Party will be informed if confidentiality is affecting the process of resolution.

Grievance Filing Process

The WWF-Guianas Grievance Resolution Process is overseen by a Grievance Committee. The WWF-Guianas Human Resource Manager is the designated Grievance Officer.

The Grievance Committee of WWF-Guianas comprises,

- 1) the Human Resource Manager in her capacity as Grievance Officer.
- 2) the Director
- 3) the Country Manager for Suriname or Guyana (whichever is relevant)
- 4) the Communications Manager

Grievances should be directed to WWF-Guianas Grievance Committee by any of the following means:

- **Post:** letters send to WWF Guianas Office directed to the WWF-Guianas Grievance Committee.
- **Email** to any WWF staff or to the Grievance Committee at projectgrievance@wwf.sr
- **Face to face or phone contact** with any WWF-Guianas technical officer or the Grievance Officer.
**Note: All grievances received by technical officers will be directed to the Grievance Officer upon receipt.*
- **Visit** to the Suriname or Guyana Offices [addresses], requesting to see the Grievance Officer.

All correspondence will be received by the Human Resource Manager in her capacity as Grievance Officer. The Grievance Officer will acknowledge receipt of all grievances using the format by which it is communicated within TWO working days of its receipt.

If the grievance is over an action taken by any member of the Grievance Committee, the Human Resource Manager will discuss the report with the Human Resource Director for WWF-LAC for further guidance.

The grievance report should include the following information:

Name and contact information of the Affected Party. If not filed directly by the Affected Party, proof or authority to represent the Affected Party.

- 1) The specific project, initiative or activity of concern including location.
- 2) The harm that is or may be resulting from the project, initiative or activity.
- 3) The relevant WWF Social Safeguard or Policy being violated (if known).
- 4) Any other relevant information or documents (e.g. date of event)
- 5) Any actions taken so far (if any) to resolve the grievance, including contact with WWF
- 6) Proposed solution (if possible)
- 7) Whether confidentiality is requested (stating reason)

The grievance can be filed either in English, Dutch, Sranan Tonga or any of the local languages.

WWF-Guianas will maintain a Register of all grievances filed.

Complaint review process

Step 1 - The Grievance officer will determine whether the grievance is over an action taken by any member of the Grievance Committee, after which the process will move to Step 2. If the grievance is over an action taken by a member of the Grievance Committee the Human Resource Manager will discuss the matter with the Human Resource Director for WWF-US and receive advice on how to proceed.

Step 2 - The Grievance officer will assess the completeness of the grievance report based on the information requested above. If complete, the process will move onto Step 3. If the grievance report is not complete, the Human Resource Manager will inform the Affected Party or Representative that more information is required to proceed with the process within 5 business days after receiving the grievance report.

Step 3 - The complete grievance report will be submitted to the Grievance Committee for review, and the Committee will determine whether the grievance contravenes WWF's Social Policies and Safeguards. The Grievance Committee will communicate its decision within 10 business days of receiving the complete grievance report.

If the grievance is deemed to have contravened WWF's Social Policies and Safeguards, the Grievance Committee will include in its communication, its intention to work with the Affected Party or Representative to prepare a plan to address the grievance. Further, the Grievance Committee will request a meeting with the Affected Party or Representative within five business days from the date when its decision was received by the Affected Party or Representative.

Step 4 – The Grievance Committee, with additional technical support as needed will work with the Affected Party or Representative to develop a plan and timeframe of steps required to resolve any issues identified in the grievance report. The Grievance Committee and Affected Party or Representative will each identify one person to oversee the implementation of the plan.

Step 5 - A summary of the grievance, actions taken, conclusions reached, and further follow up plan will be documented and communicated as agreed between the parties. WWF-Guianas will facilitate support to further clarify, assess, and resolve issues raised as needed, including if appropriate, engaging input from outside experts.

Monitoring

Agreed plans will establish timeframe for regular process monitoring towards resolution of the grievance. The Grievance Committee will coordinate the monitoring by organizing periodic checks – bringing together the concerned parties and relevant technical advisors for meetings or other communication on the status of actions detailed in the plan, until they are completed. WWF-Guianas will assess the effectiveness of this grievance resolution process on an annual basis and identify any needs for improvement.

Non- retaliation

WWF-Guianas strongly disapproves of and will not tolerate any form of retaliation against those who report concerns in good faith. Any WWF-Guianas employee who engages in such retaliation will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

WWF-Guianas will take all feasible actions to protect complainants against retaliation. Anyone who has made a report of suspicious conduct of a WWF-Guianas employee and who subsequently believes he or she has been subjected to retaliation of any kind should immediately report it by the same channels as noted here

Appendix

WWF's social policies guide the integration of social dimensions in our conservation work as well as in the institutional structure of our global network.

WWF Statement of Principles on Indigenous Peoples and Conservation: WWF recognizes that **indigenous peoples are among the Earth's most important stewards of natural resources** and key partners in realizing our mission. WWF's policy reflects our dedication to respecting indigenous and traditional peoples' human and development rights and recognizes the importance of conserving their cultures. We are committed to collaborating with indigenous peoples and organizations to conserve and sustainably use natural resources and to advocate on issues of common concern.

WWF Policy on Poverty and Conservation: WWF defines poverty as encompassing not only physiological deprivation (non-fulfilment of basic needs, lack of income, ill-health, etc.), but also social deprivation and vulnerability (lack of access to natural resources, discrimination, lack of voice and power, gender inequities, etc.). WWF therefore sees its work on poverty as wide-ranging and requiring coordinated action at all levels, from the field to the global policy arena.

This policy reaffirms WWF's **commitment to embrace a pro-poor approach to conservation** to strive to find equitable solutions for people and the environment. It reflects our dedication to making special efforts to enable local people to play a key part in crafting solutions for sustainable development.

Conservation and Human Rights Framework is a consortium of international conservation organizations that seek to improve the practice of conservation by promoting integration of human rights in conservation policy and practice. WWF recognizes human rights as central to achieving effective and equitable conservation and development outcomes. The policy states WWF's **commitment to respect human rights and to promote rights within the scope of conservation initiatives**.

WWF Gender Policy: WWF understands that gender is part of the broader socio-cultural, economic and political context, which also takes into consideration factors such as class, status, ethnicity and age. This policy signifies WWF's **ongoing commitment to equity and integrating a gender perspective** in its policies, programs, and projects, as well as in its own institutional structure

Prevention of Restriction of Rights and Relocation & Resettlement of Indigenous Peoples, Tribal and Local Communities (pending approval): The guidelines aim to ensure that WWF acknowledges and respects the rights of indigenous people and local communities (IPLCs)¹ to land, water and other resources, positively contributes to the exercise of these rights, avoids directly or indirectly undermining and infringing on these rights or causing additional costs to people through our policy and/or fieldwork, projects and activities. The guidelines support the implementation of WWF social policies and policy statements on Indigenous Peoples, Poverty, and Gender, and WWF Principles on Land Use.