



Q&A: FAO's Green Climate Fund team responds to the COVID-19 pandemic

Q.1: How is the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations' (FAO) Green Climate Fund (GCF) team continuing to provide support to countries during the COVID-19 pandemic?

A.1: FAO activated its business continuity plan to ensure the delivery of services and the smooth functioning of the Organization at an early stage of the COVID-19 pandemic.

By working remotely and using digital communication tools effectively, FAO's GCF team has continued to provide support to its Members, while staying safe. To date, the team has achieved all expected results: responding to GCF Secretariat comments; ensuring the submission of four funding proposals to iTAP for assessment before the next Board meeting (B.26.); submitting three readiness proposals; and supporting the submission of four additional funding proposals for possible consideration at the twenty-seventh meeting of the Board.

The team continues to provide support to all decentralized offices, responding to Governments' requests related to accessing GCF climate finance.

Q.2: Have there been any changes to FAO/GCF project timelines?

A.2: At the moment, FAO's GCF team is working closely with the GCF Secretariat and country offices to assess the impacts of the pandemic on FAO's GCF activities, and to identify potential response measures and new climate investment opportunities with strong social and economic co-benefits that can be presented to the GCF Board.

A phased and risk-based approach will be taken to prioritize measures needed to address project implementation challenges. Country offices are encouraged to identify and implement all possible preparatory activities so that when the situation goes back to normal, activities can resume without further delays.

It should be noted, however, that the GCF formulation cycle is long and normally lasts up to 12 months, so a temporary delay is not expected, for the time being, to have long-term effects on formulation and submission timelines.

Q.3: Have there been any changes to submission dates for readiness proposals?

A.3: No changes have been made to readiness submission deadlines. Three readiness proposals were submitted to GCF as per the March 2020 deadline, along with one National Adaptation Plan (NAP).

Efforts are ongoing to formulate and finalise new readiness grants for the upcoming June and August submission deadlines. The GCF Secretariat is also reviewing 14 readiness grants previously submitted by FAO (2019), and the GCF team will continue liaising with country offices to respond to GCF comments when they reach National Designated Authorities (NDAs) and FAO.

The [Green Climate Fund](#) has recently communicated to its delivery partners, including FAO, that it is offering flexibility by providing a six-month, no cost extension on some Readiness Programme and Project Preparation Facility (PPF) grants. The list of readiness projects for which FAO is seeking such an extension has been submitted to GCF for the Fund's consideration.

Q.4: Will the COVID-19 pandemic affect private sector engagement and investments in GCF projects?

A.4: The global economy has seen a rapid decline, and all forecasts point to a major recession worldwide as countries try to cope with the [COVID-19 pandemic](#). Now is the time to step up our efforts to catalyse green investment to relaunch economies on low-emission, climate-resilient trajectories.

Q.5: Have the dates for GCF Board meetings in 2020 been changed because of the pandemic?

A.5: The [twenty-fifth meeting of the GCF Board](#) was held, as planned, from 10 to 12 March, in Geneva, Switzerland. For the time being (at the time of publication of this Q&A), the next meeting (B.26.) is scheduled to take place from 23 to 25 June 2020.

Q.6: What actions are being taken to mitigate the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on FAO's GCF work?

A.6: FAO is committed to collaborating closely with its partners to identify how COVID-19 is affecting climate action activities and what measures can be taken to address both immediate and longer-term impacts. This will ensure that the right steps are taken, not only to mitigate the pandemic's impacts on FAO's work, but also to bring about the necessary socio-economic and environmental benefits that will support countries as they relaunch their economies on low-emission, climate-resilient development pathways.

