

GLOBAL GRIEVANCE MECHANISM

**FZS CONSERVATION & HUMAN RIGHTS
FRAMEWORK**

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**FRANKFURT
ZOOLOGICAL
SOCIETY**

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INTRODUCTION

FZS's conservation interventions in landscapes are intended to yield positive environmental and social outcomes. However, we recognise that the implementation of conservation activities has the potential to result in negative impacts. When this occurs, affected individuals or communities need a trusted way to voice and resolve their concerns. FZS is committed to transparency and accountability when designing and implementing its conservation programmes, projects and interventions. Thus, FZS is committed to establishing trustworthy mechanisms at the different relevant levels to enable any affected stakeholders and Indigenous Peoples and local communities (IPLCs) to raise their complaints and get them addressed promptly and fairly.

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The Global Grievance Mechanism (GGM) applies to conservation programmes, projects or activities undertaken, sponsored or co-managed by FZS that can potentially contribute to or cause violation of collective or individual human rights or to safeguard such violations.
- 1.2 The GGM provides a mechanism for affected individuals or communities, or others with knowledge of the circumstances, to bring a complaint against the impacts of programmes, projects or activities undertaken or sponsored by FZS. The GGM ensures that human rights grievances are handled, responded to, and documented fairly and promptly.
- 1.3 FZS country offices are responsible for developing and maintaining procedures to enable individuals and communities impacted by FZS programmes, projects and activities to raise and seek resolution to concerns and grievances about negative human rights impacts. Until the landscape-level grievance mechanisms are implemented, the GGM will serve as the main FZS complaint mechanism.
- 1.4 This GGM does not replace the existing processes for FZS personnel to report improper conduct as described in the FZS Code of Conduct and relevant project-specific reporting mechanisms if existent. A whistleblower policy and mechanism are designed for that specific purpose.

2 REQUIREMENTS

- 2.1 **Complainants** – The GGM is available to any stakeholder, such as donors and partner organisations, individual members or representatives of IPLCs and third parties with knowledge of the circumstances.
- 2.2 **Types of Complaints** – Complaints presented in good faith can address any human rights abuses or the safeguarding of violations that are reasonably believed to result from a programme, project or activity undertaken, sponsored or co-managed by FZS.
- 2.3 **Complaint Information** – The complaint should contain sufficient detail about the alleged human rights abuse to permit an investigation and appropriate response. They should include, at a minimum, the following information:
 - a. Name(s), affiliation(s), address(es) and other contact information of the complainant(s) and/or their representative(s). Representatives must identify the person(s) on whose behalf the complaint is made and provide evidence of their authority to represent such person(s). Complainants may remain anonymous. Note, however, that anonymous grievances may limit FZS's ability to properly investigate and respond to it.
 - b. A description of the specific facts, circumstances and events giving rise to the grievance, such as location, date, time, names and descriptions of individuals involved, actions observed, and names or descriptions of any witnesses.
 - c. An explanation of the harm suffered and how the rights of an individual or community were violated and, where applicable, describe any efforts to resolve the complaint through other mechanisms.

- d. A description of the solution or relief requested, where relevant or appropriate.
- 2.4 **Submission** – Grievances and complaints may be submitted in writing, in any language of the countries where FZS works, by email to compliance@fzs.org or sent in writing by mail or courier to the following address:
Social Safeguards Coordinator
Frankfurt Zoological Society
Bernhard-Grzimek-Allee 1
60316 Frankfurt am Main, Germany
- 2.5 In cases where the complainant does not have access to email, mail or courier services or is illiterate, the complaint can be submitted verbally directly to an FZS local officer, who will transmit the complaint to the GGM via email to compliance@fzs.org.
- 2.6 **Landscape-Level GMs** – These procedures should be customised to respect the local and cultural contexts and, where possible, support or supplement existing community complaints mechanisms. They will be established during the design phase of programmes, projects and activities to address the risks identified and the particular social context. For high-risk landscapes, the implementation of GMs is a priority.
- 2.7 Grievances and complaints that cannot be fully addressed or resolved at the landscape or country levels shall be escalated to the GGM, along with all relevant information including the proposed management actions. The Social Safeguards Coordinator is responsible for dealing with the complaints and will report out routinely to the Executive Director.
- 2.8 **Case Management** – All cases received will be logged transparently in a case management system. A case file will be opened, and complainants will be informed about the progress of their case. The Social Safeguards Coordinator will review the complaint and assess whether it is eligible for consideration and if so, suggest to the Assessment Panel the most appropriate method to deal with it. If the grievance falls outside FZS's competence to address it, the complainant will be notified and the complaint forwarded to the competent authority, if known by FZS. An Assessment Panel comprised of FZS leadership will review and respond to the complaint, by adopting the following steps:
 - a. Interviewing FZS personnel, witnesses and affected individuals or communities (to a feasible and appropriate extent), reviewing relevant documentation and other relevant material to ascertain its factual basis. Claims determined to be false, frivolous or submitted with malicious intent will be dismissed and excluded from further consideration.
 - b. The results of the investigation and any recommendations for resolution or corrective action will be documented in writing.
 - c. If recommended in the investigation report, FZS will monitor the implementation of any solution and remedial actions and document the progress of implementation.
 - d. Complainants will be notified that the grievance has been received, and a point of contact will be identified. At the conclusion of the investigation, its results and responsive actions will be communicated to the complainant.
 - e. Non-public, sensitive, and/or personally identifiable information disclosed in a complaint will be treated as confidential to the extent possible under the circumstances. In cases when reporting a grievance entails risks to the complainant, FZS will make every effort to respond in a way that protects the complainant's privacy and ensures the confidentiality of the information provided. In certain circumstances, FZS may be legally compelled to disclose information provided under the GGM.
- 2.9 FZS Country Directors and Programme Managers are encouraged to share and discuss this GGM with partners and stakeholders and to use locally appropriate methods to ensure dissemination to the wider community, considering physical, technical and language capabilities.
- 2.10 Questions concerning the grievance mechanism can be directed to the FZS Social Safeguards Coordinator at compliance@fzs.org.