



# ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL COMPLAINTS MECHANISM

OF AGENCE FRANÇAISE DE DÉVELOPPEMENT (AFD)

**A** **WHAT**  
is an Environmental and Social Complaints Mechanism?

It is an **out-of-court recourse mechanism** which allows any person or group of persons affected by the environmental or social impacts of an AFD-funded project **to submit a complaint to AFD**.

The complaint may be made when its author **has exhausted all the**

**possibilities for dialogue and has introduced without success out-of-court redress procedures** with the contracting authority.

The Mechanism ensures that environmental and social complaints are handled impartially by **a panel of independent experts**.

**B** **WHY**  
such a Mechanism?

For several years, **AFD Group has been strengthening its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)**, with the aim of enhancing the environmental and social performance of its action. AFD has developed high environmental, social and ethical standards based on respect for human rights, the fight against corruption, transparency, dialogue with its stakeholders, and the reduction of its ecological footprint.

In its CSR strategy, AFD **has thereby pledged to implement** an Environmental and Social Complaints Mechanism.

This Mechanism **enhances AFD's transparency over its activities and forms part of an in-depth dialogue with its partners** from civil society, parliamentarians, non-financial rating agencies, and the National Consultative Commission on Human Rights (CNCDH).

**C** **WHO**  
can submit a complaint?

**One or several natural or legal persons affected by an AFD-funded project** can submit a complaint to the Mechanism Secretariat.

The complaint may either be about the contracting authority which obtained AFD financing, or report AFD's non-

compliance with its environmental and social procedures.

It must exclusively concern the environmental and social aspects of the project and projects conducted in foreign countries.

**D** **WHEN**  
can a complaint be submitted?

A complaint can be made when its author **has exhausted all the possibilities for dialogue and has introduced without success out-of-court redress procedures** with the contracting authority.

It must be received **within two years of the author of the complaint becoming aware of the facts**.

**E** **HOW**  
to submit a complaint?

Complaints may be sent:

- **By e-mail:** [reclamation@afd.fr](mailto:reclamation@afd.fr)
- **By post:** Agence Française de Développement - Secrétariat du Dispositif de gestion des réclamations environnementales et sociales  
5, Rue Roland Barthes - 75598 Paris Cedex 12 - FRANCE
- **Or delivered by hand** at AFD's headquarters or in its network of agencies.

A sample complaints form may be downloaded from the AFD website. By the end of 2017, complaints will also be made using an online form on AFD's website.

## REFERENCE DOCUMENTS:

- [Complaints Form](#)
- [Mechanism Rules of Procedure](#)

## CONTACT THE MECHANISM SECRETARIAT:

[reclamation@afd.fr](mailto:reclamation@afd.fr)

**F** HOW are complaints handled?

The **Mechanism Secretariat**, under the supervision of the **Ethics Advisor**, is the **entry point** for the reception of complaints and their follow-up.

Complaints are handled by a **panel of independent experts**, who firstly assess their eligibility based on criteria defined in the Rules of Procedure for the Mechanism.

If the complaint is **deemed to be eligible**, it is handled using one or both of the following methods:

- **Dispute resolution**, which restores a dialogue between the author of the complaint, or its representative, and the counterparty, in order to resolve the dispute which has led to the complaint. It ends when the parties concerned reach an agreement or when, in the opinion of the experts, no additional progress towards the dispute resolution is possible;
- **A compliance audit**, which determines whether AFD has complied with its environmental and social procedures and, otherwise, recommends remedial measures. An action plan is subsequently proposed and its implementation is monitored by the Secretariat.

In order to handle the complaint, the experts may need prior agreement from the beneficiary of the AFD financing regarding the disclosure of information covered by banking secrecy. Failing that, the Secretariat would close the complaint file.

A report on the Mechanism’s activities is published on the AFD website every year.

THE HANDLING PROCESS

