

## **Wetlands International Complaints protocol and procedure.**

### **Who can submit a complaint?**

Any external complainant may submit a complaint according to this Complaints Procedure. Note, for Wetlands International Global Office staff the Grievance Procedure is applicable.

### **Article 1 – Definition of terms**

The terms of this procedure are defined as follows:

- A. WIGO: Stichting Wetlands International
- B. CEO: the Chief Executive Officer of WIGO; DoR: Director of Resources of WIGO.
- C. Complaint: in the context of this procedure, a complaint is a written expression of grievance by or on behalf of an external complainant regarding a working method of WIGO in general or regarding the actions or negligence of individual members of staff and/or management of WIGO or the members of WIGO's Supervisory Council, that has not been corrected or resolved after initial steps to raise the complaint have been taken informally
- D. External: not a member of the staff, management or Supervisory Council of WIGO
- E. Complainant: any natural or legal person who files a written complaint
- F. Complaints Coordinator: the DoR is designated to act as Complaints Coordinator

### **Article 2 – Publication of this Procedure**

A notice is placed on the public website of WIGO ([www.wetlands.org](http://www.wetlands.org)) to indicate the possibility of following this Complaints Procedure. This document shall also be integrally available from this website.

### **Article 3 – Letter of Complaint**

1. A complaint is filed by submitting a letter of complaint to the Complaints Coordinator of WIGO at its postal address (currently: P.O. Box 471, 6700 AL Wageningen) in the Netherlands.
2. The letter of complaint must be signed and should include at least:
  - a. name and address of the complainant;
  - b. the date of writing;
  - c. a description of the working method, act or behaviour complained about;
  - d. the reason why the complainant objects to this act/behaviour.

### **Article 4 – Confirmation of receipt**

The Complaints Coordinator shall issue a written confirmation of receipt of the letter of complaint and shall register the receipt of the letter in the complaint register within five working days. This document will be provided with the confirmation of receipt.

### **Article 5 – Period of processing and adjournment**

1. The Complaints Coordinator shall ensure processing the complaint within six weeks from the date of receiving the letter of complaint.
2. The Complaints Coordinator can adjourn the processing of the complaint for a maximum of four weeks. This adjournment will be communicated in writing to both the complainant and the person(s) complained against.

### **Article 6 – Processing of the complaint**

The complaint shall be processed by the Complaints Coordinator. If the complaint concerns the conduct of the Complaints Coordinator, the complaint shall be processed by the CEO.

### **Article 7 – Investigation and hearings**

1. In response to the complaint, the responsible officer according to Article 6 of this procedure shall conduct an investigation into the facts of the act/behaviour that is complained about (the hearing).
2. The complainant and the person(s) complained against are offered the opportunity to put their cases in writing and/or verbally to the Complaints Coordinator. To ensure the impartiality of the reporting, the hearing will be attended/read by one other member of staff of WIGO, not otherwise involved in the complaint.
3. Should the complainant and/or the person complained about decline their right to be heard, the hearing will take place only with person wishing to be heard, if any.
4. To ensure impartiality, a report of the hearing will be drawn up by Complaints Coordinator and the staff member of WIGO involved in the hearing. This report shall be forwarded to the CEO, the complainant, and the person complained about, within four weeks after receiving the complaint. If the complaint concerns the conduct of (a member of) the Management Team or a member of the Supervisory Council, a copy of the report shall be forwarded to the Supervisory Council, for the attention of the Chair.

### **Article 8 – Adjudication**

The Management Team of WIGO shall study the findings of the investigation and the report, within two weeks after receiving it, to make a judgment. If the complaint concerns the conduct of (a member) of the Management Team, the judgment will be made by the Chair together with the Chair of the Finance and Operations Committee or another member of the Supervisory Council of WIGO. If the complaint concerns the conduct of a Supervisory Council member, the judgment will be made by the other members of the Supervisory Council.

### **Article 9 – Announcement of the judgment**

1. The Complaints Coordinator will provide the complainant with a written and explanatory judgment based on the findings of the investigation, including the actions taken in response to the complaint and/or other consequences thereof, if any.
2. The report of the hearings, as described in Article 8, will be attached to the judgment. A copy will be forwarded to the person complained about; copies of the judgment may

also be sent to his/her superior and others involved in the investigation. A copy of the report will be filed in the complaints register.

3. If the complainant is dissatisfied with the settlement of his/her complaint, he/she may turn to WIGO's Supervisory Council, via the Council's Chair. The Supervisory Council will then assess whether the complaints procedure has been conducted in the correct manner.

**Article 10 – Registration of the judgment in the complaints register**

All judgments of processed complaints are recorded in the complaints register. This register is administered by the HR Officer of WIGO, at the office of WIGO in Ede, the Netherlands.

## Colophon

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Email: [post@wetlands.org](mailto:post@wetlands.org)  
Website: [www.wetlands.org](http://www.wetlands.org)  
Document: Wetlands International Complaints Procedure  
Author: Director of Resources  
Modified: June 2024  
Available at: [www.wetlands.org](http://www.wetlands.org)  
Adopted by: Management Board/ Supervisory Council