



United Nations
Climate Change

Explanatory Note: Appeal and Grievance Processes under the Article 6.4 Mechanism

TABLE OF CONTENTS	Page
PART 1. QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE – WHICH PROCESS IS RIGHT FOR YOU?	3
PART 2. THE APPEAL PROCESS – DETAILED GUIDE.....	3
2.1. Can you file an appeal?	3
2.2. What decisions can you appeal?	4
2.3. What are valid grounds for an appeal?	4
2.4. Step-by-step: How to file an appeal	4
2.5. 2.5 Important protections during the appeal	6
PART 3. THE GRIEVANCE PROCESS – DETAILED GUIDE.....	6
3.1. Can you submit a grievance?.....	6
3.2. What issues can you raise as a grievance?	7
3.3. Step-by-step: How to submit a grievance	7
3.4. Important protections during the grievance process.....	9
PART 4. KEY PROCEDURAL FEATURES IN BOTH PROCESSES.....	9
4.1. Expert panels	9
4.2. Process suspension (Appeals only).....	9
4.3. Language accommodations	10
PART 5. PRACTICAL EXAMPLES	10
PART 6. FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS	11
PART 7. SUMMARY TABLE – APPEAL VS. GRIEVANCE AT A GLANCE	12

Introduction

The Article 6.4 mechanism under the Paris Agreement permits stakeholders, activity participants, and participating Parties to challenge unfavourable decisions of the Supervisory Body or raise concerns about Article 6.4 activities. Two complementary processes exist:

- **Appeal process:** Allows designated parties to formally challenge Supervisory Body decisions on registration, issuance, renewal, and post-registration changes.
- **Grievance process:** Enables local communities and affected individuals to report adverse effects from Article 6.4 activity implementation and request remedies.

Both processes operate independently, with transparent expert panel reviews and appeal fees for vulnerable groups (including local communities and indigenous peoples) waivable upon request, subject to Supervisory Body approval.

Part 1. Quick reference guide – Which process is right for you?

Table 1: Comparison of Appeal and Grievance Processes

Criteria	Use APPEAL	Use GRIEVANCE
Who can file?	Stakeholders, activity participants, Designated National Authorities (DNAs)	Individuals, communities, organizations living/working in the Article 6.4 activity area
What can they challenge?	Supervisory Body decisions (registration, issuance, renewal, post-registration changes)	Adverse social, economic, or environmental effects from Article 6.4 activity implementation
Time limit	28 days from publication (14 days for issuance decisions)	Any time during activity's crediting period
Appeal fee	USD 30,000 (waivable for vulnerable groups upon request, subject to Supervisory Body approval)	No fee
Outcome	Panel affirms or remands decision to the Supervisory Body for reconsideration	Panel issues recommendations or rejects grievance
Financial compensation	No	No
Final?	Yes – no further appeal	Yes – no further grievance

Part 2. The Appeal process – Detailed guide

2.1. Can you file an appeal?

1. To file an appeal, you must have standing, meaning you fall within one of the eligible categories of appellants defined in paragraph 7 of the Appeal and Grievance Procedure:
 - (a) **Stakeholders:** Those who were eligible to participate in the activity's local stakeholder consultation conducted in accordance with the activity standard.
 - (b) **Activity participants:** Public or private entities directly involved in the project or programme
 - (c) **Designated national authorities (DNAs):**

- (i) DNAs of the host Party or participating Parties, for appeals relating to specific activities; and
- (ii) DNAs of the host Party, for appeals concerning the application of Party-specific elements of methodological products that are applicable to that host Party.

Multiple appellants may file joint appeals on the same decision, provided no single appellant appears in more than one appeal.”

2.2. What decisions can you appeal?

- 2. You can appeal Supervisory Body decisions on:
 - (a) Registration of proposed activities or inclusion of component projects in programmes of activities
 - (b) Post-registration changes (approval or rejection)
 - (c) Issuance of Article 6.4 emission reductions (A6.4ERs)
 - (d) Renewal of crediting or programme activity periods
 - (e) Application of Party-specific elements in methodologies (DNAs only)

2.3. What are valid grounds for an appeal?

- 3. Your appeal must be based on at least one of the following:
 - (a) **Exceeded authority:** The Supervisory Body acted outside its mandate as defined in the rules
 - (b) **Incorrect application:** The Supervisory Body incorrectly or unreasonably applied rules, decisions, standards, or procedures in a way that materially changed the outcome
 - (c) **Material factual error:** The Supervisory Body made an error about a material fact (whether or not available at decision time), which materially affected the decision
 - (d) **Provider error:** Information provided by the designated operational entity (DOE) or activity participants contained errors or misstatements that materially affected the decision

2.4. Step-by-step: How to file an appeal

Step 1: Prepare your appeal (Before filing)

- 4. Gather all evidence supporting your grounds. You will need to submit a sworn statement.

Step 2: File online within the time limit

- 5. Respect the following time limits:
 - (a) **Standard deadline:** 28 days from publication of Supervisory Body decision
 - (b) **Expedited deadline:** 14 days for issuance (A6.4ERs) decisions
- 6. Submit through the dedicated UNFCCC website interface

Step 3: Complete the appeal form (Your filing)

7. Include:
 - (a) Your name, category (stakeholder/participant/DNA), and contact information
 - (b) Your relationship to the activity to demonstrate standing
 - (c) The decision you are appealing (with category)
 - (d) The grounds for appeal (one or more of four types listed above)
 - (e) Sworn statement on grounds and facts
 - (f) Detailed facts and arguments
 - (g) Supporting documents and references

Step 4: Pay the appeal fee (At the filing of the appeal or within 30 days, depending on decision type)

8. The appeal fees are as follows:
 - (a) **Standard fee:** USD 30,000 for issuance decisions (paid upfront at the filing)
 - (b) **Other appeals:** USD 30,000 (due within 30 days of fee statement)
9. **Exemptions:**
 - (a) DNAs appealing Party-specific methodology elements (no fee)
 - (b) Vulnerable groups: including Indigenous peoples, local communities (fee waivable upon request, subject to Supervisory Body approval)
10. **Consequence of non-payment:** Your appeal is automatically withdrawn

Step 5: Completeness check (Secretariat within 7 days)

11. The secretariat reviews your form for all required information, within 7 days from the receipt of the appeal fee or appeal, as applicable. If incomplete:
 - (a) You have 21 days to revise (with one-time 14-day extension available)
 - (b) If still incomplete: Appeal withdrawn, fee returned if paid (minus USD 500)

Step 6: Eligibility check (Appeal panel: within 7 days of receiving the appeal from the secretariat)

12. A three-expert panel confirms:
 - (a) You have legal standing
 - (b) You appealed an appealable decision
 - (c) Your grounds are valid
13. If it does not satisfy any of the eligibility requirements: Appeal rejected, fee returned if paid (minus USD 1,000). You can be asked for additional information.

Step 7: Public notification (After eligibility confirmed)

14. If the appeal panel has confirmed eligibility: Appeal is published on the UNFCCC website (with your personal details kept confidential if you requested).

Step 8: Supervisory Body response (Within 14 days of the publication of the appeal)

15. The Supervisory Body chair may provide background/reasoning for the original decision (optional).

Step 9: Panel review and ruling (Within 14 days after the publication of the appeal or an extended deadline after request for clarification)

16. The appeal panel reviews your case and issues a ruling:
 - (a) **Affirm:** Original decision of the Supervisory Body stands
 - (b) **Remand:** Send case back to Supervisory Body for reconsideration
17. The secretariat notifies the Supervisory Body and the appellant of the ruling and publishes it on the UNFCCC website.

Step 10: Supervisory Body reconsideration (if remanded) (Within 30 days of the notification of the remand ruling)

18. The Supervisory Body reconsiders within 30 days and issues a new decision with full reasoning explaining how it addressed the panel's concerns.
19. The secretariat publishes the reconsideration decision together with the provided rationale on the UNFCCC website and notifies the appellant (and if applicable, the activity participants, the DOE and the participating Parties, through their DNAs) of such publication.

2.5. Important protections during the appeal

20. Key protections include:
 - (a) **Case suspension:** While your appeal is pending, the original case cannot proceed.
 - (b) **Confidentiality:** Your personal details are available only to essential secretariat staff (unless you agree otherwise).
 - (c) **Full reimbursement (if remanded):** If the panel remands the matter to the Supervisory Body for consideration, your appeal fee is fully refunded.
 - (d) **No monetary damages:** The appeal panel cannot award money for harm; only fee reimbursement applies.
 - (e) **Final decision:** The appeal panel's decision is final and not subject to any further internal appeal.

Part 3. The Grievance process – Detailed guide

3.1. Can you submit a grievance?

21. You can submit a grievance if you meet all three of these conditions:
 - (a) **Connection to jurisdiction:** You live or have your main residence in the area where the Article 6.4 activity occurs.
 - (b) **Substantial presence:** Your business, community activity, or livelihood is in the geographic area affected by the Article 6.4 activity.

- (c) **Direct adverse effects:** You suffer or may suffer concrete, tangible harm to your health, property, local environment, or other direct interest from the Article 6.4 activity.
- 22. Documentation of residency is preferred but not required—other means of proving connection are accepted.

3.2. What issues can you raise as a grievance?

- 23. You can submit a grievance about:
 - (a) **Adverse social effects:** Impacts on human communities, livelihoods, labor practices.
 - (b) **Adverse economic effects:** Direct financial harm, lost income, property damage.
 - (c) **Adverse environmental effects:** Impacts on local ecosystems, water, air quality, biodiversity.
- 24. What you cannot raise as a grievance (submit under different procedures instead, e.g. “Procedure: Consideration of unsolicited letters to the Supervisory Body”):
 - (a) Complaints about how the Article 6.4 mechanism is designed.
 - (b) Issues with governance, activity cycle procedures, or accreditation processes.
 - (c) General feedback on methodologies or baseline development.

3.3. Step-by-step: How to submit a grievance

Step 1: Prepare your grievance (Before submitting)

- 25. Document the adverse effects with supporting evidence. You will need to submit a sworn statement.

Step 2: Submit at any time during the activity period (No fixed deadline)

- 26. Submit through the dedicated UNFCCC website interface.
- 27. Can be filed any time the activity's crediting period is valid.

Step 3: Complete the grievance form (Your submission)

- 28. Include:
 - (a) Your name, category (individual/community/organization), and contact information.
 - (b) Your relationship to the Article 6.4 activity in question demonstrating eligibility.
 - (c) The Article 6.4 activity title and UNFCCC reference number.
 - (d) Description of the direct adverse effect and how it connects to the activity.
 - (e) Sworn statement confirming the adverse effect and its connection.
 - (f) Description of your suggested remedy.
 - (g) Supporting documents and references.
 - (h) Evidence of attempts to resolve the issue directly with the activity participants or host government.

Step 4: No Fee (Automatic)

29. Grievances have no filing fee.

Step 5: Completeness check (Secretariat: within 7 days from submission)

30. The secretariat reviews your form for all required information within 7 days from submission of grievance. If incomplete:
- (a) You have 21 days to revise (with one-time 14-day extension available).
 - (b) If still incomplete: Grievance withdrawn, no consequences.

Step 6: Eligibility check (Grievance panel: within 7 days of receipt of the grievance from the secretariat)

31. A three-expert panel confirms:
- (a) You meet all eligibility requirements.
 - (b) Your grievance is within scope.
32. If rejected: You are notified. Panel may request additional information from you or other parties.

Step 7: Public notification (After eligibility confirmed)

33. If the appeal panel has confirmed eligibility: Your grievance is published on the UNFCCC website (with your personal details kept confidential if you requested). If the grievance contains accusations that could trigger legal action, the panel may request the secretariat not to publish the grievance or to publish a redacted version.

Step 8: Panel consideration and outcome (Within 14 days after the publication of the grievance)

34. The grievance panel considers your case and may request additional information from you or other relevant parties (submission deadline: 21 days, with one-time 14-day extension).
35. The panel either:
- (a) **Issues recommendations** to activity participants, the host government (DNA), or the Supervisory Body to take action.
 - (b) **Rejects the grievance** if insufficient information, non-responsiveness, or organizational legitimacy issues exist.
 - (c) **Finds no merit:** Acknowledges the issue but determines it was not substantiated.
36. Types of recommendations may include:
- (a) Corrective actions by activity participants
 - (b) Corrective actions by host government authorities
 - (c) Temporary suspension of activity issuance or renewal pending resolution
 - (d) Improvements to Article 6.4 rules and procedures
37. The secretariat promptly publishes the outcome of the consideration of the grievance panel (to issue recommendations or reject the grievance) – on the UNFCCC website, and communicates the outcome to the grievant, and if there are recommendations, also to the relevant individual(s) and /or organization(s).

Step 9: Request clarification (Optional) (Within 14 days of outcome)

38. You may request a single call with the panel and secretariat to clarify procedural aspects (not the outcome itself). The identity of your representative will be kept confidential if requested. The secretariat shall fix an appointment for the call within three days of the receipt of the request. The secretariat shall record the call and, if needed, classify it as confidential.

Step 10: Monitoring (Three months after the issuance of recommendations and beyond)

39. If recommendations were issued:
- (a) The secretariat monitors whether the host Party implemented recommendations.
 - (b) The Supervisory Body considers whether to take related action on the activity.
 - (c) Results are published on the UNFCCC website.

3.4. Important protections during the grievance process

40. Key protections include:
- (a) **No fee:** Grievances are free to submit
 - (b) **Confidentiality:** Your personal details are available only to essential secretariat staff (unless you agree otherwise).
 - (c) **No monetary damages:** The panel cannot award compensation, only recommend corrective actions.
 - (d) **Final decision:** The grievance panel's outcome is final and cannot be appealed.

Part 4. Key procedural features in both processes

4.1. Expert panels

41. Both appeals and grievances are reviewed by independent three-expert panels, each with one designated chair. Experts must:
- (a) **Have relevant experience:** International law, administrative law, carbon markets, environmental and socioeconomic fields, climate science.
 - (b) **Be independent:** Serve in their personal capacity with full independence.
 - (c) **Avoid conflicts:** Declare and abstain from cases in relation to which they have an actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest; are Supervisory Body members or alternate members or members or employees of its support structure, DOEs or DNAs.
 - (d) **Maintain confidentiality:** Keep internal panel discussions and confidential information private.
 - (e) **Observe ethics:** Follow UN standards and treat all parties with dignity.
42. The secretariat maintains a roster of 30 experts for this purpose.

4.2. Process suspension (Appeals only)

43. When you file an appeal, the original case is **immediately suspended**:
- (a) No further action on the decision pending appeal conclusion.

- (b) The Supervisory Body is notified.
- (c) Resumes automatically when the appeal concludes.

4.3. Language accommodations

- 44. **Working language:** English (the procedure is conducted in English).
- 45. **Your submission:** You may file an appeal or grievance in any of the six UN official languages (Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian, Spanish)

Part 5. Practical examples

Example 1: Appeal by activity participant

Scenario: A company operating a renewable energy project receives a rejection from the Supervisory Body on its request for issuance of A6.4ERs. The company believes the Supervisory Body misapplied the verification standard.

Action:

- 1. Files appeal within 14 days (expedited deadline for issuance decisions).
- 2. Pays USD 30,000 upfront (required for issuance appeals).
- 3. Provides sworn statement and detailed technical arguments.
- 4. Panel is established within 7 days of completeness check.
- 5. Panel issues ruling within 14 days: finds the Supervisory Body's interpretation was unreasonable.
- 6. **Outcome:** Panel remands to Supervisory Body (fee fully reimbursed).
- 7. Supervisory Body reconsiders within 30 days and approves issuance.

Example 2: Grievance by affected community

Scenario: A community living near a renewable energy project reports that the installation has damaged water springs used for irrigation and drinking water. They describe the connection to the project activities.

Action:

- 1. Submits grievance form (no deadline limit, no fee).
- 2. Provides evidence of water damage and connection to project.
- 3. Describes attempts to work with project and DNA.
- 4. Panel is established within 7 days of completeness check.
- 5. Panel issues recommendations to project operator to restore water supply and to DNA to monitor implementation.
- 6. **Outcome:** Project operator implements remedial measures; monitoring occurs at 3-month mark.
- 7. Secretariat reports to Supervisory Body and community.

Example 3: DNA appeal on methodology application

Scenario: A Designated National Authority disagrees with how the Supervisory Body applied Party-specific elements of a methodology to their country's circumstances.

Action:

1. Files appeal within 28 days (no fee for DNAs on this ground).
2. Provides detailed legal and technical arguments on methodology application.
3. Panel is established and reviews interpretation of rules.
4. **Outcome:** Panel affirms Supervisory Body decision or remands for clarification of methodology.

Part 6. Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Can I file both an appeal and a grievance on the same activity?

A: Yes, if you have standing for both. An appeal challenges a Supervisory Body decision; a grievance addresses implementation harm. They operate independently.

Q: What happens if my appeal is rejected at the eligibility stage?

A: You are notified, and if you paid a fee, it is returned minus USD 1,000. You cannot re-file the same appeal, but the Supervisory Body decision stands. You may explore other remedies.

Q: Do I need a lawyer?

A: No, but you may be represented by an authorized representative if you provide evidence of authorization.

Q: How is my personal information protected?

A: Your name and contact details are available only to essential secretariat staff unless you explicitly agree otherwise to broader disclosure. You can request confidentiality when submitting.

Q: Can I request extension of deadlines?

A: Yes, for completion checks: you get one 14-day extension for revising incomplete forms. For grievance considerations, you get one 14-day extension for providing additional information.

Q: What if the activity is very new? Can I still submit a grievance?

A: Grievances can be filed any time during the activity's valid crediting period. There is no minimum duration requirement.

Q: Will my grievance stop the activity?

A: No, not automatically. Your grievance may result in recommendations for temporary suspension of issuance or renewal, which the Supervisory Body may or may not adopt.

Q: What if I disagree with the panel's ruling or recommendations?

A: Neither appeals nor grievances can be appealed further. The panel's conclusion is final.

Q: Can I get money for damages?

A: No. Appeals allow fee reimbursement only if remanded. Grievances do not include monetary damages. Both processes focus on correcting decisions or recommending corrective actions.

Q: What if I am indigenous or part of a vulnerable group?

A: You may request a waiver of the appeal fee (subject to Supervisory Body approval). Grievances have no fee regardless.

Q: How many experts review my case?

A: Three independent experts from the roster review each appeal or grievance. One is designated chair.

Part 7. Summary Table – Appeal vs. Grievance at a glance

Table 2: Appeal and Grievance processes comparison

	Appeal	Grievance
Standing	SB-related category	Residency + presence + harm
Scope	SB decisions	Implementation effects
Fee	USD 30,000 (waivable)	None
Timeline to file	28 days (14 for issuance)	Any time (crediting period)
Process suspension	Yes	No
Outcome type	Affirm or remand	Recommend or reject
Monetary award	Fee reimbursement only	None
Appealable	No	No

Conclusions

Whether you are challenging a Supervisory Body decision (Appeals) or seeking remedy for activity-related harm (Grievances), these processes are designed to:

- (a) Ensure independent review by qualified experts
- (b) Maintain confidentiality and protect personal information
- (c) Provide clear timelines and procedural steps
- (d) Offer protections for vulnerable groups
- (e) Publish decisions transparently for accountability

For further questions, visit the UNFCCC website (Appeals and Grievances | UNFCCC), or contact the Article 6.4 mechanism secretariat through the dedicated interface.

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