

Standard Operating Procedure: Grievance and Appeals Process

eva service gmbh

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Approved by: Nisse Oberwalleney

1. Purpose

This procedure ensures that all grievances submitted to eva service GmbH are handled in a transparent, impartial, and timely manner. It applies to grievances related to eva's services, standards, certification-related activities, or any matter involving eva staff, partners, or certified entities.

2. Scope

Applies to all internal and external stakeholders, including but not limited to:

- Validation/Verification bodies (VVB),
 - Project developers, operators and land owners,
 - NGOs and interest groups,
 - Members of the public,
 - eva staff.
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3. Principles

- **Accessibility:** The process is publicly available and easy to initiate.
- **Impartiality:** Evaluations are conducted without bias.
- **Confidentiality:** Identities and sensitive information are protected.
- **Timeliness:** Grievances are addressed within defined timelines.
- **Transparency:** Outcomes are documented and, where applicable, communicated.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Grievance Officer	Coordinates the grievance process and communication.
Quality Assurance Officer	Ensures procedural compliance and management of records.
Managing Director	Acts as final arbiter, if escalation is required.
External Reviewer (if appointed)	Provides independent advice or resolution support in complex cases.

5. Submission of Grievance

5.1 How to Submit

Grievances may be submitted:

- Via email: **grievance@ecosystemvalue.org**,
- Through the online form on the eva website
- By postal mail: eva service gmbh, Leipziger Str. 70, 06108 Halle
- In person, by appointment.

5.2 What to Include

- Name and contact details of the complainant (anonymous submissions are accepted but may limit response),
 - Description of the issue,
 - Parties involved,
 - Supporting evidence or documentation (if available),
 - Desired outcome or proposed resolution.
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6. Grievance Handling Procedure

Step	Description	Timeline
1	Acknowledgement of Receipt	Within 2 working days after receipt
2	Initial Assessment: Determine admissibility, scope, and urgency.	Within 10 working days after receipt
3	Investigation: Gather facts, consult relevant parties.	Within 30 working days after receipt
4	Resolution Proposal: Issued by the Grievance Officer or escalated, if needed.	Within 10 working days after receipt
5	Feedback to Complainant: Written outcome, including rationale	Within 60 days after receipt

Timelines may be extended with justification and notification to the complainant.

7. Escalation and Appeal

If the Complainant is not satisfied with the outcome, an appeal can be submitted within **15 working days** of the decision. The Managing Director or an independent third party (if appropriate) shall reassess the case.

8. Documentation and Records

All grievances are recorded in the **Grievance Register**, including:

- Date of receipt,
- Summary of issue,
- Investigative steps taken,
- Resolution and closure date.

Records are retained for a minimum of **10 years** and reviewed during internal audits.

9. Protection Against Retaliation

eva service GmbH prohibits retaliation against any individual who submits a grievance in good faith. This includes staff, partners and external stakeholders.

10. Periodic Review

This procedure is reviewed at least every **three years** or after handling of a complex or escalated grievance to ensure continued effectiveness.

11. References

- ISO 9001:2015 – Clause 10.2 (Nonconformity and corrective action)
 - ISEAL Assurance and Standard-Setting Codes (for good governance)
 - eva Document Control Procedure
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12. Revision History

Version	Date	Description	Author
1.0	11.04.2025	Initial Version	Rüdiger Meyer