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Beach at Duquesne Bay along the North coastline of the island of Grenada. Rising sea-levels threatened beaches and the economies of Small Island Nations (SIDS) that are heavily supported by the tourist industry. | Photo by [PHB.cz](https://www.phb.cz) | Adobe Stock

When the most expensive thing we can do is nothing

Tomesha Campbell

The Green Climate Fund (GCF) was established to help the most vulnerable nations adapt to climate change, but the accreditation process has caused Small Island Developing States (SIDS) to question the Fund's ability to help them achieve climate resilience. Requirements for scientific documentation is causing SIDS to seek assistance from outside sources when government funds should be used to help mitigate climate change. The length of the accreditation process has prevented SIDS from receiving the aid they were promised and is creating a dire situation that is in dire need of rectification.

USD \$100 BILLION –the amount that the [Green Climate Fund](https://www.greenclimatefund.org/) (GCF) is dispersing amongst the developing nations to help those who have contributed the least to Greenhouse Gas emissions, but been impacted the most by climate change take the appropriate actions to minimize the risks. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change in the [Climate Change 2014 Synthesis Report Summary for Policymakers](https://www.ipcc.ch/report/2014-synthesis-report/) has praised the GCF as a long-term mitigation strategy to assist the most vulnerable nations adapt to the adverse effects of climate change. The praise for the GCF is not mutually shared amongst the leaders of the Small Island Developing States (SIDS) who have faced significant challenges in their attempts to receive funding from the GCF.

Facing climate action alone

Some leaders of the SIDS have taken issue with what they see as a complex accreditation process that is preventing them from enhancing their nation's ability to diminish or respond to climate change. The requirement for scientific information has presented challenges for SIDS that lack the resources to provide the evidence and resulted in the hiring of outside experts. This additional expense takes away from the funding that the nations could be utilizing for mitigation efforts and has created concerns about the accreditation process. President Anote Tong of Kiribati shared his concerns about the GCF with *SciDev.Net* stating, "[We are facing the situation where we need the funds more than anybody else, yet we're not getting them.](#)" As many SIDS do not have the capabilities to mitigate climate change on their own the inability to receive funds from the GCF increases the likelihood that climate catastrophes will continue to impact the economic sustainability of island residents.

The costs of coping

Climate change has resulted in excessive rising in the sea-level around SIDS, which can potentially risk the loss of land as the islands slowly vanish into the ocean. The issue is not just geographical, but also economic as the incomes of [a significant portion of SIDS residents are supported by tourism](#). The tourist industry's emphasis on island coastline destinations that are slowly disappearing makes the industry increasingly vulnerable to the economic burdens of climate change. United Nations (UN) Under-Secretary-General and UN Environmental Programme (UNEP) Executive Director [Achim Steiner](#) addressed this point at the World Environment Day in 2014 warning, "[a 50-centimeter rise in sea-level would result in Grenada losing 60 per cent of its beaches; and coral bleaching – a process that has already begun – will further reduce the attraction for tourists.](#)"

In 2013 [20.3% of Grenada's GDP and 18.8% of the nation's total employment](#) was supported by the travel and tourism industry. A reduction in beach area could result in less tourists visiting the island which could greatly impact 8,500 Grenadians, or 14% of the nation's work force, who depend on the tourist industry for their economic stability. More Grenadians could be pushed into poverty without a means to escape their economic situation or the environmental situation that is slowly causing their nation to disappear into the ocean.

From environment to economics

Overcoming these challenges is not impossible, but it will require more than a promise of action from the GCF. The GCF which was created to grant SIDS the opportunity to diminish the impacts of climate change is becoming the factor that is keeping them from doing so. The accreditation process may work for some nations, but those without the resources to provide the required documentation are being left to suffer the consequences of climate actions taken by other states. It is time that the GCF and other world leaders uphold their promise to assist the most vulnerable adapt to climate change to ensure a sustainable future for the generations to come.

Tomesha Campbell is the Mobilization Coordinator for [Our Task's Global 2100 Project](#). The Global 2100 Project empowers youth to become global thinkers by appealing to the older generations to work with them to make needed changes now rather than later. You can learn more about the Global 2100 project [here](#).

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