

Evaluation on EDCF Climate Mainstreaming

- Executive Summary -

February 2026

I. Evaluation Overview

1. Background of the Evaluation

- (Rationale)** In line with domestic and international trends linking climate change response with ODA, this thematic evaluation was conducted to comprehensively review the operational status of climate mainstreaming within EDCF, assess its alignment with international practices by comparing it with other institutions, and identify areas for improvement.
- (International Trends)** In response to key global developments—such as the UNFCCC's stipulation of developed countries' obligations to support developing countries, the UN SDGs, and the Paris Agreement—expanding climate finance and mainstreaming climate considerations into ODA have emerged as central global issues.
- (EDCF Trends)** EDCF has pursued climate mainstreaming through the establishment of the Green EDCF Strategy and the introduction of the EDCF Climate Change Impact Response Framework. All projects are subject to Rio Marker assessments and Green Index evaluations.

2. Purpose of the Evaluation

- (Climate Change Impact Response Framework)** Examine and compare the Climate Change Impact Response Framework of EDCF and international institutions to assess the status of climate mainstreaming within EDCF.
- (Rio Marker)** Analyze the Rio Marker assignment criteria of the OECD DAC and EDCF's current practices to determine whether EDCF aligns with the original purpose of the marker. Derive representative performance indicators by sector through comparison with other donor agencies.
- (Green Index)** Review the effectiveness of the Green Index and suggest recommendation measures for improvement.

3. Evaluation Scope and Methodology

- (Scope)** The evaluation covers the operational status of the EDCF Climate Change Impact Response Framework, the Rio Marker, and the Green Index.
- (Type)** This is a thematic evaluation that reviews policies and project implementation related to a specific theme to provide recommendations for future policy and operational directions.
- (Criteria)** Given the nature of a thematic evaluation, this assessment applies selected OECD DAC criteria, focusing on relevance and coherence.
 - Relevance is divided into ‘policy validity,’ which assesses alignment with EDCF internal policies, and ‘methodological relevance,’ which evaluates the international consistency of the methodology.
 - Coherence was focused on external consistency with the Paris Agreement and OECD DAC guidelines.
- (Methodology)** The evaluation was conducted through literature review, field visits, and interviews.
 - (Literature Review) Documents such as EDCF strategies, regulations, and guidelines, appraisal reports for 92 approved projects (2021–2025), and international climate mainstreaming policy materials from donor agencies and the OECD were reviewed.
 - (Field Visits) Site visits were conducted to JICA, ADB, AFD, and OECD DAC to obtain information not available through literature review.
 - (Interviews) In-depth interviews were held with EDCF staff regarding the Climate Change Impact Response Framework and Rio Marker. Written Q&A interviews were also conducted for the Green Index and Green ODA commitment.

II. Evaluation Results

1. Relevance

- (Policy Validity)** EDCF's Climate Change Impact Response Framework is evaluated to have policy validity.
 - The guidelines clearly outline procedures including climate risk pre-assessment, review of partner countries' climate policies, climate risk assessment, risk rating classification, and mitigation planning, etc.
 - In line with the Green EDCF Strategy presented in 2021, EDCF introduced the Climate Change Impact Response Framework in 2021. The framework has been applied to 25% of commissioned feasibility studies (F/S) in 2023, and 50% of commissioned F/S in 2024, and it has been applied to all commissioned F/S from 2025 onward. Currently, climate risk assessments are being conducted for all projects.
 - While the current framework consists of climate risk management and performance management of climate projects, further improvement is needed for performance indicators and monitoring system. Consideration should be given to capacity-building programs for internal staff and consultants (including F/S consultants), as well as programs and training that enhance partner countries' climate response capacity, drawing on practices observed in JICA, AFD, and ADB.
- (Methodological Relevance)** EDCF's Climate Change Impact Response Framework is generally aligned with international methodologies.
 - The framework was developed by benchmarking and adapting international approaches to EDCF's context, based on comparative analysis of the IPCC AR5, JICA's Climate-FIT, and ADB's climate risk analysis framework.
 - However, because the framework focuses primarily on physical risks such as natural hazards, it has limitations in addressing transition risks that may arise from framework-wide changes for climate response, and improvement is needed with respect to alignment with the Paris Agreement.
 - For the Rio Marker, internal meetings are held for scoring the Rio Markers in line with internal guidelines; however, to increase objectivity, further training is needed on applying the OECD DAC Rio Marker Handbook.

- The Green Index reflects efforts to incorporate international standards on climate change mitigation and adaptation while also aligning with Korea's policy priorities, such as social inclusion. However, it has limitations, including structural issues that render a full score unattainable and a scoring system that differs from the Rio Marker.

2. Coherence

- (External Coherence)** EDCF's Climate Change Impact Response Framework demonstrates efforts to maintain alignment with international agreements and recent discussion trends.
- However, further review is needed to address issues such as the lack of explicit linkage between project identification and Nationally Determined Contributions(NDCs) of partner countries. Also, the absence of clearly defined climate-specific performance indicators within the Climate Change Impact Response Framework indicates a need for further review and enhancement to improve and systematize the framework.

III. Lessons and Recommendations

1. Climate Change Impact Response Framework

- (Performance Management)** Enhance the performance management framework and implement systematic monitoring
 - To implement climate mainstreaming within EDCF in a systematic manner, it is recommended to continuously expand project-level examples of climate change mitigation and adaptation activities in the guideline, along with performance indicators that can measure the results of such activities.
 - In addition, to strengthen linkage with the Rio Marker, it is particularly necessary to encourage assigning climate-related output and outcome indicators more actively for “significant objective” projects (Rio Marker 1), which account for the majority of EDCF projects.
 - Through these efforts, stakeholders—including EDCF, partner-country implementing agencies, and F/S consultants—will be able to set more precise performance management frameworks for climate response, and EDCF will be able to manage climate response performance more systematically.

- (Organizational Capacity)** Strengthen internal organizational capacity for climate mainstreaming
 - Currently, a small number of staff members are responsible for climate-related tasks across EDCF’s entire portfolio; their academic and professional specialization in climate change is limited, and they also perform safeguard-related work in parallel.
 - In comparison, ADB and AFD have multiple climate change specialists dedicated to climate-related tasks, while JICA also employs external climate/environment experts as a full-time advisor.
 - To secure the internal capacity needed for comprehensive implementation of climate mainstreaming, it is recommended that EDCF increase staffing in relevant departments with personnel who have specialized expertise in this field and expand the pool of climate specialists (technical posts).

2. Rio Marker

- Strengthen training to enhance objectivity in Rio Marker scoring
 - Considering Rio Marker practices of other donor agencies, EDCF is advised to strengthen efforts to enhance objectivity in Rio Marker scoring, including practical training on applying the Rio Marker Handbook.
 - EDCF is expected to strengthen climate mainstreaming centered on the Rio markers—by linking performance management to the Rio markers and enhancing the objectivity of Rio marker scoring—thereby enabling the development of an internationally consistent and harmonized management system.

3. Green Index

- Strengthen Rio Marker-centered climate mainstreaming management
 - With the initial target of achieving a score of 2.5 by 2025 already met, it is needed to carefully review whether the continued use of the Green Index is still appropriate. The current scoring system of the Green Index has structural limitations, as it does not allow for adjusting weights for different climate change response components depending on project characteristics. In addition, it is limited in that international institutions do not use similar project-level composite index. Therefore, it is recommended that EDCF strengthen climate mainstreaming management centered on the Rio Markers.