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REMINDER: Register for our standard updates training

Last week we published our latest set of standard updates that were primarily geared at providing clarification to make the standard and requirements simpler to understand. These updates are summarised below and take into account stakeholder inputs and updates in the sector.

To answer any questions and to provide further guidance we will host two webinars with SustainCERT.

VVB Training Session for Gold Standard for the Global Goals:

31st October 2019, 12:30 PM CET

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Project Developer standard update for Gold Standard for the Global Goals:

01st November 2019, 12:30 PM CET

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Gold Standard
for the Global Goals



SUMMARY OF OUR STANDARD UPDATES

Our standard is updated on a regular basis in compliance with ISEAL's Code of Best Practice for "setting social and environmental standards". The main updates, published last week, are summarised below:

Principles and Requirements:

1. Clarifications on the following:

- Certification outcomes that can be achieved using Gold Standard for the Global Goals
- SDG impact assessment approach
- Project cycle and documentation required for each step
- Preliminary review timings for both the completeness check pathway or the detailed preliminary review pathway (i.e. 4 weeks)
- Projects are eligible for retroactive performance certification for a maximum of two years prior to the date of Project Design Certification, unless otherwise stated in the activity/product requirements
- Reporting any potential or actual non-conformity immediately upon discovery. And in no circumstances later than 30 days after the non-conformity event discovery.
- Design change approval process clarified for permanent design change and temporary deviations
- Conflict and emergency zones validation and verification process

2. **Annual report requirements:** To streamline and simplify the annual report submission process, the following changes have been introduced:

- An annual report shall be submitted for each monitoring year for which verification is not completed
- Annual Report shall be submitted to Gold Standard and will be made publicly available

[**>>Principles and Requirements**](#)

Microscale Project Requirements:

1. Clarification on the **validation and verification steps** and requirements, including the role of Objective Observer.
2. The following clarifications have been made for **simplified methodologies**:
 - Simplified methodology submissions will need to contain certain information, including applicability conditions, description of the baseline, project scenario etc
 - If the submitted simplified methodology requires external review, it will be processed under the fast track process as outlined in the impact quantification methodology approval procedure

>>Microscale Project Requirements

Community Services Activity Requirements:

1. Clarification on the **certification renewal cycle**.
2. Community services activities can now **demonstrate additionality** if they are listed in the CDM tool "Positive list of technologies".

>>Community Services Activity Requirements

GHG Emission Reduction and Sequestration Product Requirements:

1. Clarification on the following:
 - Co-issuance of products e.g. GS-VERs and RECs, ODA declaration
 - Data vintage used for Grid Emission Factors must be the most recent available at the time of submission of the project for validation. The data vintage for other purposes shall be the most recent available at time of first submission of the project to Gold Standard i.e. for preliminary review
 - Aggregation of crediting periods, when the project has been certified under multiple schemes/standards, shall not be greater than the Gold Standard crediting period
 - Process for issuance of PERs under LUF scope: added reference to the Performance Shortfall Guidelines; added clarification on the process of PERs issuance in Annex C
2. Gold Standard has **adopted the CDM definition** on thresholds for Type 1 (Renewable Energy), Type 2 (Energy Efficiency) and Type 3 (Other)

small-scale and micro-scale projects, based on cap at unit/device level.

3. Requirements on **converting CERs** to Gold Standard labelled CERs **or transitioning CDM projects** to Gold Standard for the Global Goals have been simplified for easier adoption.

>>GHG Emission Reduction and Sequestration Product Requirements

Land Use and Forests Activity Requirements:

1. Clarification on the following:
 - Single area project and group project
 - Project start
 - Eligibility criteria
 - FSC dual certification
 - Secured titles
 - New Area Certification
 - Specific Safeguarding Principles and Requirements
 - Crediting period and cycle
 - Financial additionality and ongoing financial need
 - Procedures to address uncertainty of LUF parameters
 - Requirements for smallholder and microscale projects
 - Guidelines to conduct a spatial forest/nonforest assessment
2. **Terminology** on projects boundaries has been updated for LUF projects from "Project area = planting area + non-eligible area" to "**Project area = eligible area + non-eligible area**". Eligible area is now a common term to all LUF projects - and in the case of A/R refers to the planting area.
3. **Requirements of shapefiles** to be submitted by project type have been harmonised for A/R and Agriculture projects. Also, it is now indicated which shapefiles must be submitted at each certification stage.
4. Requirements applicable to **smallholders and microscale projects** have been consolidated into one single section. Also, some requirements have been deleted as they were a duplication of what is already represented in the LUF Activity Requirements.
5. The **Terms and Definitions** section has been updated to include only one section on Project Area, which applies to either A/R or Agriculture projects.
6. All sections regarding the **certification of New Areas** have been compiled into one single section. And additional guidance (on the process) has been provided.

>>Land Use and Forests Activity Requirements

Programme of Activities (PoA) Requirements:

1. Clarification on the following:
 - CDM requirements must be used when specific requirements are not listed in the Gold Standard Programme of Activity Requirements.
 - Time of first submission, duration and crediting period of PoAs
 - Regular and retroactive VPA/CPA certification cycle steps
 - Version of additionality tool and methodology to be applied
 - PoA/VPA/CPA level stakeholder consultation
 - Application of safeguarding principles and requirements
 - Selection of multiple methodologies for application within the same PoA
 - Sample based approach for site visit by VVB at time of inclusion/renewal of PoA/CPA/VPA, including issues to be considered when using this approach
 - Design change rules and fee
2. Clarification on the following aspects of **Gold Standard Micro-PoAs**:
 - Requirements on VPA inclusion and verification
 - Role of Objective Observer

>>Programme of Activities (PoA) Requirements

Renewable Energy Label Product Requirement:

1. Clarification on the following:
 - Process for CDM projects claiming RE labels
 - Conditions for co-issuance of RE label and carbon credits
 - Certification cycle of RE labelled projects
 - Annual reporting requirements
2. Requirements on **eligibility criteria** for projects seeking **retroactive design certification** are formally introduced.

>>Renewable Energy Label Product Requirements

Renewable Energy Activity Requirements:

1. Clarification on **additionality** and **ongoing financial need**; and additional **eligibility criteria** for specific project types.
2. Introduction of **new eligibility requirements for RE projects**. Exceptions to the rule maybe provided under certain circumstances. The list of eligibility criteria is provided in the document.
3. **Waste incineration and gasification** are now allowed if the additional criteria for eligibility (as listed in the document) are met.

>>Renewable Energy Activity Requirements

Safeguarding Principles and Requirements:

1. Text has been re-arranged to make the requirements clearer to Project Developers and VVBs. The assessment questions are provided in the form of a checklist before the main requirements. The assessment questions must be answered as per the requirements in the document.

>>Safeguarding Principles and Requirements

Stakeholder Consultation and Engagement Procedure, Requirements and Guidelines:

For simplicity and ease of use this document has been split into:

- **Requirements:** provide the core rules that must be followed in planning, conducting a stakeholder consultation and following-up after
- **Guidelines:** support the requirements by providing additional guidance on how each requirement of the stakeholder consultation and engagement process can be met

>>Stakeholder Consultation and Engagement Procedure, Requirements

IMPORTANT UPDATES:

Renewable Energy Eligibility Requirements

We have introduced new eligibility requirements for Renewable Energy (RE) projects.



In line with Gold Standard's focus on supporting vulnerable communities, eligibility is restricted to those projects that are based in Least Developing Countries (LDCs), Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs), Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and projects in lower income and lower-middle income countries, where penetration rates of the technology are lower than 5%. This ensures that funding goes to interventions most in need post-2020 when the Paris Agreement comes into force.

Exceptions to this rule maybe provided under certain circumstances. The full list of eligibility criteria is provided in [the document>>](#)

EVENTS

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18-19 November, Philadelphia

[UN Climate Change Summit \(COP25\)](#)

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