

Gold Standard

SDG IMPACT TOOLS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME:

Promoting transparent and standardised quantification and reporting on sustainable development impacts in climate interventions



Version 1.2

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The challenge: The Paris Agreement and the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development strongly call for collaborative approaches and strategic partnerships to facilitate enhanced ambition and the delivery of changes needed to achieve climate security and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The SDGs, however, were designed for national governments, hence the targets and indicators are often not applicable at the organisation, project, or programme level.

Our response: Gold Standard and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change Secretariat (UNFCCC) have a collaboration to develop guidance and tools for non-governmental stakeholders to assess and report transparently and independently the impact of their climate initiatives and their contributions towards the SDGs.

This **SDG Impact Tools programme** is aimed at developing impact quantification and reporting tools tailored for different climate actions, with specific indicators linked to the SDGs, relevant and applicable by project type and sector.

Quantifying and reporting SDGs can serve as a lever to catalyze more ambitious climate action, as this allows actors that are funding activities to mitigate climate change to transparently and credibly communicate to stakeholders about the benefits those actions bring to the global community.

As part of this programme, Gold Standard has co-developed guidance documents to inform impact and indicator identification and tool development. This guidance was supported by myclimate, Climate Seed, the Swedish Energy Agency, and in review with UN-SDSN. The guidance documents will be published shortly, before convening working groups for activity-specific SDG Impact Tools.

We are now inviting organisations to join this programme by:

- a) **Becoming an implementation partner** in Phase II of the programme, for testing the SDG Impact tools and co-developing modules of the tool for specific project types.

WHAT SDG IMPACT TOOLS WILL ACHIEVE

The SDG Impact tools developed in this programme will enable non-state actors, including project developers, corporates, investors, and funders to quantify and report transparently and independently the SDG impacts of their climate interventions.

The SDG Impact tools will be publicly available, allowing users to:

- Enhance credibility for SDG impact claims by using an independent, robust and standardized way to quantify and report these impacts

- Simplify the quantification by selecting relevant indicators and targets based on the specific project type or sector
- Enhance the communication of SDG impacts by having a transparent, standard and compelling way to visualise the impacts for each intervention
- Facilitate comparability and aggregation of SDG impacts for reporting at a portfolio level and comparability within sectors and in value chain interventions
- Have a new benchmark for the demonstration of SDG contributions at the intervention level in a credible, compelling way

The SDG Impact tools will be positioned to become the reference tools to quantify and report SDG impact of climate activities and interventions. Alignment is sought with existing SDG tools and frameworks (e.g. UNDP) and key civil society supporters (incl. UN SDSN) will be engaged throughout the process to ensure adequate recognition and/or formal endorsement.

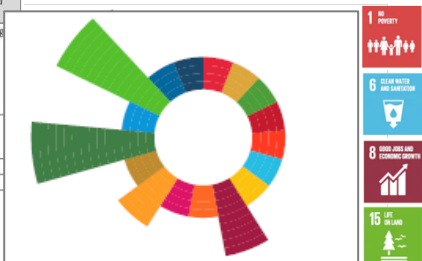
HOW SDG TOOLS WILL WORK

SDG Impact tools will guide users to: 1) identify the potential impacts and contributions to the SDGs based on the sector and activity type; 2) provide options for relevant indicators to the activity; and 3) assess the level of contribution to a specific target or SDG (e.g. significant, positive, minor, neutral, and negative).

The SDG Impact tools and modules developed will initially be Excel based, with a view to digitise them throughout the course of the programme. The Certified SDG Impacts will be presented in a clear, transparent, and standardized way.

Sustainable Development Goals	Activity Type						
	Afforestation / Reforestation		Improved Forest Management			Conservation	
SDG Goal	Timber Harvest	Conservation	Prevent loss of stocks	Increase stocks	Increase HWP	Conservation	Restoration
SDG 1 – No Poverty SDG Contribution Identified: Instigation or increase of smallholder income from forestry and forest products. Related SDG Target: 1.2 By 2030, reduce at least by half the proportion of men, women and children of all ages living in poverty in all its dimensions according to national definitions							
SDG 6 – Water and Sanitation SDG Contribution Identified: Water filtration - improved water quality and quantity outputs from forested areas. Related SDG Target: 6.6 By 2020, protect and restore water-related ecosystems, including mountains, forests, wetlands, rivers, aquifers and lakes							
Contribution to SDG 8: Enhanced quantity and quality of employment in forests and supply chains Monitoring Indicator: Potential methodology: Suggested Monitoring Frequency: Other Notes:							
Related SDG Target: 8.5 By 2030, achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value. SDG Adopted Indicator: 8.5.2 Unemployment rate, by sex, age group and persons with disabilities interpreted as: 1 - Change in Nr or % gain/loss employment in the forestry sector including comparison to national indicators							

1. Intuitively select SDGs and targets relevant by intervention type
2. Guide the selection of indicators to monitor and report impacts
3. Communicate results in a clear and standardized way



HOW TO GET INVOLVED

Phase II: Development of intervention-specific modules and testing

Implementation Partners are invited to join Working Groups to: a) develop intervention-specific modules based on the SDG tool blueprint, defining tailored indicators and parameters for each of these project types; and b) test the SDG tool in specific project contexts.

This phase will also seek to digitize the tools and identify existing (or develop a new) online platforms where the tools will be hosted and made available for wider adoption and for further improvements and updates. The view is also to link the tools with existing databases and host country-specific information to enable reporting towards the country's SDG priorities and targets and for aggregation of impacts.

The development process for each tool will last (indicatively) 3-6 months and will follow a pre-set process for efficiency. The tool development will be staggered over a period of 1 year to 18 months, as necessary.

Table: Tools per Activity Type

Group/Activity Type	Specific project types included	Comments
Community Services	Cookstoves, biogas, safe water supply & sanitation, and lighting	TBC – 1-2 working groups to form
Renewable Energy	Grid connected, off-grid, and others TBC	Likely 1 group for grid connected, 1 for off grid (or 1 combined reviewing 2 tools)
Waste Management	MSW composting, landfill gas captured/utilisation, and wastewater treatment	1 group
Forestry	Afforestation/Reforestation, and others TBC	1 group for A/R
Agriculture	Energy processes (livestock etc.) and soil carbon/cropping process	Likely 2 separate groups TBC

HOW TO SIGN UP

For Phase II, we are looking to form working groups with Implementation Partners for each intervention-specific module of the tool. Participants will be able to contribute to the technical development of the tool and/or testing the modules in project specific contexts.

The participation fee for each working group is €5,000 (Minimum 5 participants per working group). Besides participation, benefits for Implementation Partners will include profiling opportunities, joint communication activities, amongst others.

For more information about joining Phase II of this programme, or the Gold Standard Platform, please contact: platform@goldstandard.org.