

TERMS OF REFERENCE

**CARBON REMOVAL EXPERTS WORKING GROUP
(CR-WG) – TERMS OF REFERENCE**

Date 20 May 2021

Work Group Title Carbon Removal Experts Working Group (CR-WG)

Membership Tenure 6 months to deliver on objectives as per scope of work

1| INTRODUCTION + PURPOSE

In 2020, Gold Standard published its [2020-2025 strategy](#), indicating an intent to significantly expand its carbon removals portfolio. Subsequently, Gold Standard conducted a comprehensive [public consultation](#) on its forward policy for markets and sought feedback on the inclusion of technologies and practices for carbon removals.

The Gold Standard Board, as per its mandate to decide upon eligible scopes for carbon market certification, adopted these policy recommendations, including the principle to expand the Gold Standard for Global Goals (GS4GG) scope to include carbon removals technologies and practices.

To deliver on this principle approval from its Board and to take into account the feedback received during consultation, the Gold Standard Secretariat is creating a new scope development programme to establish:

1. A high level 'vision' and rationale for inclusion of the scope
2. Scope and activity requirements (for example, similar to those [already published](#) for Land Use and Forests), including any core eligibility criteria
3. Any updates to Gold Standard for the Global Goals [Principles & Requirements](#) documents, particularly [Safeguarding Principles](#)
4. An [SDG Impact Reporting Tool](#), similar to those launched for testing in other sectors
5. Gold Standard methodologies and guidance for specific activities, including any digital approaches

To deliver these outputs, Gold Standard is appointing a lead author and convening a Carbon Removal Expert Working Group (CR-WG) to provide technical inputs and expert advice on their design and development. The work will be accompanied by communications and stakeholder consultations and events as well as working with first adopters to generate momentum.

This document outlines the specific Terms of Reference (ToR) for CR-WG developed in line with the Gold Standard [Technical Governance: Guiding Principles](#) & [Standard Setting Procedure](#).

2| Terms of Reference

This document outlines the terms of references, including scope, competence requirements, modalities of the Working Group.

2.1 | Scope of Work

The CR-WG is expected to provide:

- Technical advice, ideas and inputs on criteria for selection of eligible carbon removal technologies & practices and addressing technology level risks to ensure compliance with GS4GG principles and requirements
- Guidance on creating the following aspects of carbon removal technologies & practices:
 - establishing relevant precautionary principles to uphold GS4GG Safeguarding Principles & Requirements
 - approaches to ensure the permanence of carbon removals
 - other relevant aspects to ensure best practice approaches
 - Sustainable Development Goal related provisions and criteria, with a view to creating an SDG Impact Reporting Tool
- Guidance on establishing a rigorous risk assessment process for reviewing methodologies/technologies (in this domain) submitted for approval
- Guidance to avoid perverse incentives for propagation of fossil fuel energy supplies
- ***Note: Nature-based carbon removals are not within scope of the CR-WG's work.***

2.2 | Composition of Working Group

- The CR-WG would comprise up to five members, including one member from each technical advisory committee – Energy and Land Use & Forestry – to ensure consistency with Gold Standard principles and history, plus three independent external experts. The existing TAC members (i.e. from Energy and

Land Use and Forestry) may also join the working group as observers. The working group may also include additional observers at Gold Standard's discretion, but the maximum working group, including observers, shall be limited to 10. The working group members, acting as observers may participate in discussion but will not have the right to vote on decisions.

- In consultation with the Technical Advisory Committee, the Gold Standard Secretariat shall invite subject matter experts taking into account expert's qualification and professional/organisational background to join the Working Group. The Gold Standard will create the Working Group with gender balance in mind. Geographic balance is also a consideration, though the targeted activities/practices are not so influenced by geography as per other Gold Standard scopes.
- The Chair/Moderator of the CR-WG will be selected through a nomination process where the individual can nominate himself/herself or can nominate others. In case of more than one nomination, the Chair will be selected through a majority vote or through consensus in line with Gold Standard's Standard Setting Procedures.
- Gold Standard Secretariat may also invite or select observers to the CR-WG. The interested stakeholders/subject matter experts may submit a request to join the working group to observe the working group's proceedings. The final decision will be subject to Gold Standard's approval in consultation with appointed CR-WG members. The observers will have the opportunity to provide inputs but will not participate in the decision making.

2.3 | Membership Tenure

- The CR-WG will be convened for a short-term basis i.e., 6 months to deliver on objectives as per Scope of Work outlined in paragraph 2.1 |above.

2.4 | Working modalities

Members will aim for effective decision-making following working principles. All decision making shall be taken ideally on consensus of the group or at least by majority with a quorum with major objections identified and documented

- Working language is English both for written and oral communication.
- CR-WG members act in personal capacity and shall sign Confidential information and Conflict of Interest (CoI) as per the Service Provider Agreement (SPA)
- Gold Standard Secretariat will facilitate the operation of CR-WG in consultation with working group members by:
 - a. Organising online meetings as per scheduled date/time
 - b. Setting the agenda of the meeting
 - c. Sharing the agenda of the meeting and associated documentation in advance of the call (at least 5 working days)
 - d. Distributing relevant background information/documentation
- Working Group members shall endeavour to attend all meetings. Members who expect to be absent can provide input prior to the call or meeting, including votes on decisions included in the agenda wherever reasonable.
- With their appointment, the members accept these terms of reference of the WG functions. All members and, as applicable, all observers, experts and staff shall:
 - a. Adhere to these terms, notifying Gold Standard Secretariat of any clarification, inconsistency, deviation or change of position
 - b. Always act in the interest of Gold Standard
 - c. Support the purpose and goals of Gold Standard including its vision, mission and Theory of Change
 - d. Regularly participate and contribute in the WG calls/meetings
 - e. Actively contribute in calls and on follow-up actions as agreed in the meeting,
 - f. Declare all actual/perceived conflicts of interest at nomination and before taking part of decision-making processes

2.5 | Approval of final documentation

The Working Group outputs will represent consolidated advice and key decisions from which Gold Standard will develop standards documentation. The Working Group will not be responsible for approval of standards documentation but will have the opportunity to comment and raise concerns on how their inputs have been realised. This is to ensure consistency with wider Gold Standard documentation and to focus Working Group efforts on key technical issues.

2.6 | Competence requirements

- The candidate shall have at least ten years overall experience in related topics and specifically, including direct and meaningful experience/expertise working on carbon removal technologies and practices.
- An academic/research background is highly desirable.
- Be able to communicate fluently, both in writing and orally, in English
- Have an advance university degree in environmental studies, natural sciences, engineering, development studies, sustainable development, climate change policy or any related discipline.
- General knowledge/understanding of carbon market principles and modalities.

Gold Standard aims to form a Working Group that strikes the balance between academic/theorists, project developers and other relevant stakeholders.

2.7 | Remuneration

There will be some financial remuneration, the terms of this will be disclosed in due course.

To register your interest please submit [this form](#) or to nominate a candidate email [Vikash Talyan](#) by **20 June 2021**.