



**Gold Standard**<sup>®</sup>

*Climate Security & Sustainable Development*

**TERMS OF REFERENCE**

**EXPERT WORKING GROUP ON ALIGNMENT WITH THE  
PARIS AGREEMENT**

*Date* 31<sup>st</sup> August – 1<sup>st</sup> October 2021

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*Position Title* Expert on Alignment with the Paris Agreement

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## 1| INTRODUCTION + PURPOSE

The implementation of the Paris Agreement, and the expected adoption of new international rules under Article 6 at COP26 this November, has implications and creates opportunities for independent standards like Gold Standard.

Gold Standard is committed to aligning with the Paris Agreement, and in February 2021 consulted on a set of areas where we consider or expect alignment to be necessary, including the avoidance of double counting, baseline-setting and additionality.

Gold Standard considers this alignment necessary to ensure the continued quality of credits issued by Gold Standard, and to maintain integrity when they are used for different purposes. It is also necessary to support new uses of our standard, such as use by aeroplane operators to comply with ICAO's Carbon Offsetting and Reduction Scheme for International Aviation (CORSA), and use by or on behalf of governments seeking to use Article 6 as part of a strategy to meet their Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC).

Over the next year and, as required, beyond, Gold Standard intends to update certain parts of the rules and requirements within its standard, Gold Standard for the Global Goals (GS4GG), as well as its infrastructure, in order to align with the Paris Agreement and in particular with Article 6 guidance.

To support this work, we are looking to convene an Expert Working Group on Alignment with the Paris Agreement to provide technical inputs and expert advice on the design and development of revised rules. This document outlines the specific Terms of Reference for the Working Group, developed in line with the Gold Standard [Technical Governance: Guiding Principles](#) and [Standards 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 Expert Working Group on Alignment with the Paris Agreement is expected to provide:

- Guidance and advice on the scope of Gold Standard’s revisions to existing rules and requirements for the purpose of aligning with the Paris Agreement.
- Independent expert scrutiny of specific proposed revisions to existing GS4GG rules and requirements to ensure comprehensive, robust, efficient and high-integrity alignment with requirements under the Paris Agreement, in particular Article 6.
  
- Guidance and advice on Gold Standard’s broader work to align with the Paris Agreement beyond updates to GS4GG rules and requirements, such as:
  - The promotion of sustainable development and environmental integrity in line with Article 6
  - Registry modifications
  - External communication
  - How Gold Standard can maximise climate and development impact in the context of new market mechanisms and opportunities under the Paris Agreement
  - Horizon-scanning of future UNFCCC rules or other developments relevant to Gold Standard’s work to align with the Paris Agreement

## **2.2 | Composition of Working Group**

The Working Group shall comprise up to five members, including one member from each of Gold Standard’s existing technical advisory committees – Energy and Land Use & Forestry – to ensure consistency with Gold Standard principles and history, plus three independent external experts.

In consultation with the Technical Advisory Committee, the Gold Standard Secretariat shall invite subject matter experts to join the working group, considering each candidate’s alignment with the Competence Requirements outlined in Section 2.6 below. Gold Standard will also consider and seek to ensure gender and geographical balance in the composition of the working group.

The Chair of the Working Group will be selected through a nomination process in the Working Group’s first meeting, under which members can nominate themselves or 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.

Individuals may also participate in the Working Group’s operation as observers, attending working group meetings and receiving supporting material. Observers may

participate in discussion but will not have the right to vote on decisions. The maximum number of participants, including Working Group members and observers but excluding the Gold Standard Secretariat, should be limited to twelve.

Existing members of Gold Standard's existing technical advisory committees, as well as interested stakeholders/subject matter experts not represented on Gold Standard's technical advisory committees, may submit a request to the Gold Standard Secretariat for observer status. The final decision on observers will be subject to Gold Standard's approval, in consultation with appointed Working Group members<sup>1</sup>. As for Working Group members, Gold Standard will consider qualifications and experience in the selection of observers and will seek to ensure gender and geographic balance.

### **2.3 | Membership Tenure**

The Working Group will be convened on a short-term basis, expected to be six months to deliver on the objectives outlined in Section 2.1 | Scope of Work.

The duration of the Working Group's work may be extended, or the Working Group may be temporarily placed on hold then reconvened at a later date (for instance after the adoption of further rules at a future COP). In either scenario, existing Working Group members and observers will be given first right to remain in their roles. If members or observers decline, Gold Standard will seek replacement members or observers in line with the terms outlined in Section 2.2 | Composition of Working Group.

### **2.4 | Working modalities**

Members will aim for effective decision-making and seek to participate in discussions and decision-making in a collegiate, inclusive efficient manner. Members should aim to take all decisions by consensus of the group or at least by majority with a quorum, with major objections from any dissenting members identified and documented. The working language of the Working Group is English for both written and oral communication.

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<sup>1</sup> The Expert Working Group on Aligning with the Paris Agreement is being established with financial support from the Swedish Energy Agency. Gold Standard therefore intends to invite a representative of the Swedish Energy Agency to participate in the Working Group as an observer. Gold Standard shall ensure alignment with its [Technical Governance Guiding Principles](#) which state that "Funders of new developments shall not have undue influence or casting vote over any decision or certification".

Working Group members shall act in personal capacity and shall sign a Confidential information and Conflict of Interest declaration as per Gold Standard’s Service Provider Agreement (SPA).

The Gold Standard Secretariat will facilitate the operation of the Working Group in consultation with Working Group members by:

1. Organising online meetings at a scheduled date and time selected in consultation with Working Group members
2. Setting the agenda of each meeting
3. Sharing the agenda and associated documentation at least 3 and ideally 5 working days in advance of each meeting
4. Recording and taking notes of Working Group discussions and decisions, which will be shared no more than 5 working days after each meeting
5. Distributing relevant background information/documentation

Meetings of the Working Group may be scheduled on an ad hoc rather than regular basis, to ensure optimal use of members’ time by convening meetings at the point that decisions are required. The Working Group should meet no more than one time each month, unless under exceptional circumstances.

Working Group members shall endeavour to attend all meetings. Members who expect to be absent may provide input prior to or following each meeting, including votes on decisions included in the agenda wherever reasonable.

With their appointment, the members agree to accept these terms of reference for the Working Group. All members and, as applicable, all observers, experts and staff shall:

1. Adhere to these terms, notifying Gold Standard Secretariat of any clarification, inconsistency, deviation or change of position
2. Provide advice and input in support of the purpose and goals of Gold Standard including its vision, mission, and Theory of Change
3. Regularly participate in meetings and calls of the Working Group
4. Actively contribute to meetings and promptly undertake any follow-up actions as agreed in each meeting
5. Declare all actual/perceived conflicts of interest at nomination and before taking part in discussions and decision-making processes

## **2.5 | Outputs from Working Group**

The Working Group’s outputs, including minutes of meetings, will represent consolidated advice and key decisions from which Gold Standard will develop revisions to standards documentation and otherwise seek to align with the Paris Agreement.

The Working Group will not be responsible for formal approval of standards documentation, which will remain with Gold Standard’s existing technical advisory committee, but will have the opportunity to provide advice on and scrutinise revisions

and new products related to its Scope of Work. Members will also have the opportunity to comment and raise concerns on how their inputs have been realised.

## 2.6 | Competence requirements

Candidates shall have:

- At least five years overall experience in carbon markets, including demonstrable current or very recent experience related to the negotiation, development, or implementation of Article 6 of the Paris Agreement
- Strong knowledge/understanding of carbon market principles and modalities
- Good understanding of Gold Standard, including Gold Standard’s standards documentation
- Good understanding of the Sustainable Development Goals and their promotion through carbon market activities
- The ability to communicate fluently in English, both in writing and orally

Gold Standard aims to form a Working Group that represents a cross-section of stakeholders and backgrounds, as well as seeking to ensure gender and geographic balance.

## 2.7 | Remuneration

Gold Standard intends to financial remunerate Working Group members, the terms of which will be disclosed in due course.

## 3 | Applications

To register your interest please submit [this form](#), and for any questions, please email [Hugh Salway](#) by 1 October 2021.