

## CORRECTIONS AND CLARIFICATIONS TO VCS PROGRAM RULES AND REQUIREMENTS

Publication date: 25 September 2023

This document provides corrections and clarifications to the program document referenced in the table below. Such corrections and clarifications are effective on the date listed in the table. Project proponents and validation/verification bodies must apply and interpret the Verified Carbon Standard (VCS) Program documents consistent with the corrections and clarifications set out in this document.

The corrections and clarifications will be incorporated into the next issued versions of the affected VCS Program documents.

Correction/ Clarification	Description	Document and Section Reference	Effective Date
Correction 1	Correction to the effective date for the project longevity requirement (Update ID#8)	<i>VCS Standard, v4.5, Appendix 3 Document History and Effective Dates</i>  <i>AFOLU Non-Permanence Risk Tool, v4.1, Appendix 1 Document History</i>	Effective immediately
Correction 2	Correction to the effective date for updated non-permanence monitoring and compensation requirements (Update ID#10)	<i>VCS Standard, v4.5, Appendix 3 Document History and Effective Dates</i>	Effective immediately
Correction 3	Correction to the effective date for updated requirements to account for government policies and legal requirements when establishing the baseline scenario (Update ID#15)	<i>VCS Standard, v4.5, Appendix 3 Document History and Effective Dates</i>	Effective immediately
Correction 4	Correction to the effective date for updated safeguard and stakeholder engagement requirements (Update ID#18)	<i>VCS Standard, v4.5, Appendix 3 Document History and Effective Dates</i>	Effective immediately
Clarification 1	Clarification to double counting evidence requirements for no double issuance to allow evidence beyond signed letters from the GHG Program	<i>VCS Standard v4.5, Section 3.23.2 (4)</i>	Effective immediately

## I. Correction 1: Updated effective date for 40-year project longevity

### Correction: VCS Standard v4.4, Appendix 3 Document History and Effective Dates

ID#	Update Description & Effective Date	Section
8.	Added updates to: i) require the use of the <b>AFOLU Non-Permanence Risk Assessment Calculator</b> to generate the <i>Non-Permanence Risk Report</i> ; and ii) specify how to assess AFOLU non-permanence risk analysis for grouped projects.  Effective for all project requests submitted on or after 1 January 2024	3.2.10, <del>3.2.11</del> , 3.2.14, 3.6.19
8a	Introduced 40-year project longevity requirement in alignment with the <i>AFOLU Non-Permanence Risk Tool</i> .  Effective for all projects that request registration on or after 1 January 2024	3.2.11

### Correction: AFOLU Non-Permanence Risk Tool, Appendix 1 Document History

Version	Date	Comment
v4.1	29 August 2023	<p>Updates effective for all project requests submitted on or after 1 January 2024:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Added a requirement for all projects to use the <i>AFOLU Non-Permanence Risk Assessment Calculation Tool</i> to complete the risk analysis.</li> <li>Updated the natural risk assessment to include an analysis of projected future impacts from climate change and sea level rise.  Note that projects may use version 4.0 of this tool to compare their calculated risk score with a previous risk score for the purposes of determining whether the project is eligible for a time release of buffer credits and, where eligible, to calculate the release volume (see the <i>Registration and Issuance Process</i> for more details on buffer releases). This may <u>only</u> be done for the first eligible time release after 1 January 2024. The most recent version of this tool shall be used to calculate the buffer credits to be deposited. In all other cases, the project must adhere to the process set out in the <i>Registration and Issuance Process</i> to determine whether the project is eligible for a buffer release.</li> <li>Added ALM-specific risk and mitigation options (throughout).</li> <li>Introduced new withholdings for projects that have previously failed to submit a loss event report on time and projects located in countries with a history of intervention in land or resource use.</li> <li>Modified project longevity formulas to ensure projects with longevity of less than 100 years do not receive a zero score <b>and removed the stakeholder engagement mitigation measure (now required in the VCS Standard, v4.5)</b>.</li> </ol>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6) Updated the political risk mitigation discount requirements to reflect current climate change policy.</li> <li>7) Removed the ability for projects to obtain negative scores in any sub-category and eliminated the possibility of obtaining a natural risk score of zero unless natural risks are not applicable.</li> <li>8) Made adaptive management plans a requirement.</li> <li>9) Minor edits to text to aid readability and improve accuracy (throughout).</li> </ul> <p>Updates effective for all <b>projects which request registration on or after 1 January 2024:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Extended project longevity to 40 years <del>and removed the stakeholder engagement mitigation measure (now required in the VCS Standard, v4.5).</del></li> </ul>
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**Background:**

The effective date for updated 40-year longevity period requirement only applies to newly registered projects. Existing projects may choose to update project longevity periods to align with the Core Carbon Principles published by Integrity Council for Voluntary Carbon Markets.

**II. Correction 2: Updated effective date for non-permanence monitoring and compensation requirements**

**Correction: VCS Standard v4.4, Appendix 3 Document History and Effective Dates**

ID#	Update Description & Effective Date	Section
10.	Updated <b>non-permanence monitoring and compensation requirements</b> to a minimum of 40 years. Effective for all <b>projects which request registration on or after 1 January 2024</b>	3.2.18 – 3.2.19, 3.2.24 -3.2.27

**Background:**

The effective date for updated non-permanence monitoring and compensation requirements now aligns with the effective date for the updated version of the AFOLU Non-Permanence Risk Tool, which includes the updated 40-year longevity period requirement.

### III. Correction 3: Updated effective date for baseline scenario requirements

Correction: VCS Standard v4.4, Appendix 3 Document History and Effective Dates

ID#	Update Description & Effective Date	Section
15.	Added requirement to take account for <b>government policies and legal requirements</b> when establishing the baseline scenario.  Effective for all projects that <b>initiate the validation process</b> <del>request listing as <b>under validation</b></del> on or after 1 March 2024	3.13.4

#### Background:

The effective date for Update ID#15 is now consistent with other effective dates which apply to projects which initiate any validation process, rather than only projects which request listing as *under validation*. See section 4.1.5 of the VCS Standard, v4.5 for the description of when validation is initiated.

### IV. Correction 4: Updated effective date for stakeholder consultation requirements prior to project start date requirements

Correction: VCS Standard v4.4, Appendix 3 Document History and Effective Dates

ID#	Update Description & Effective Date	Section
18.	Clarified <b>safeguard and stakeholder engagement</b> requirements related to ecosystem health, property rights, human rights, and risks to stakeholders and the environment.  Clarified that project proponents reporting on SDGs must also report on contributions to the host country's SDG reporting.  Effective for all project requests submitted on or after 1 March 2024.  Except for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Section 3.19.27(3) which does not apply to projects with a start date prior to 1 March 2024, pending further consultation.</li> <li>• <b>Section 3.18.2 which does not apply to projects with a start date prior to 1 October 2023.</b></li> </ul>	3.18 – 3.19

#### Background:

Section 3.18.2 does not apply to projects with a start date prior to 1 October 2023. Projects with a start date on or after 1 October 2023 must conform with the effective date of 1 March 2024 for Section 3.18.2.

### V. Clarification 1: Update to double counting evidence requirements

Clarification: VCS Standard v4.4,

3.23.2 Where project proponents have received, or are seeking credit for reductions and removals from a project activity under the VCS Program and another GHG program, the following

information about the other GHG program shall be provided to the validation/verification body and Verra:

...

- 4) Evidence that the same reductions and removals seeking credit under the VCS Program have not been and will not be counted, used, or credited under the GHG program, or evidence confirming the cancellation and non-use of credits issued under the other GHG program. Such evidence may include:
  - a) A signed letter from the program administrator stating that the same reductions or removals have not and will not be otherwise counted, used, or credited under the other GHG program;
  - ~~or~~
  - b) A signed letter from the program administrator confirming the cancellation and non-use of GHG program credits for the same reductions or removals seeking credit under the VCS Program; ~~or~~
  - c) **Links to the official public program registry or project page demonstrating non-issuance or cancellation of credits.**

**Background:**

This clarification was added to specify additional types of evidence that may be provided to the validation/verification body and Verra to conform with Section 3.23.2(4).