



**Jurisdictional  
& Nested REDD+**

# JNR Program Guide

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

REDD+ (reducing emissions from deforestation, forest degradation, carbon stock enhancements, sustainable management of forests, and conservation) can be implemented and accounted for at multiple scales. Jurisdictional REDD+ programs can create enabling conditions and provide the right incentives for on-the-ground forest protection by establishing appropriate policies and regulations. REDD+ projects can reduce deforestation and forest degradation while delivering direct benefits to communities and other local actors through site-specific activities that help address local drivers of deforestation and forest degradation. There is a growing consensus about the need for and value of coordinated multi-level REDD+ interventions, as integrated REDD+ systems can leverage the strengths of both jurisdictional and project-based approaches to address multi-layered and complex forest dynamics.

Verra's Jurisdictional and Nested REDD+ (JNR) Program provides a framework for developing jurisdictional REDD+ programs that integrate (or “nest”) projects within a workable, practical, flexible, and robust carbon accounting and crediting platform that incorporates current best practices. The *JNR Requirements* are aligned, where relevant, with the UNFCCC decisions on REDD+ while supporting national REDD+ programs.

The *JNR Requirements* were initially developed by the Jurisdictional and Nested REDD+ Initiative (JNRI), overseen by an advisory committee and technical expert groups, comprising national and subnational government representatives, leading experts in REDD+, and representatives from NGOs and the private sector. These requirements were revised in 2021, after considerable public input and with oversight from the JNR Advisory Group and JNR Stakeholder Group.<sup>1</sup> The *JNR Program Guide* and *JNR Requirements* documents were updated in 2024 to align with the Core Carbon Principles Assessment Framework and Procedure published by the *Integrity Council for the Voluntary Carbon Market*.

## 2 OVERVIEW OF SCENARIOS

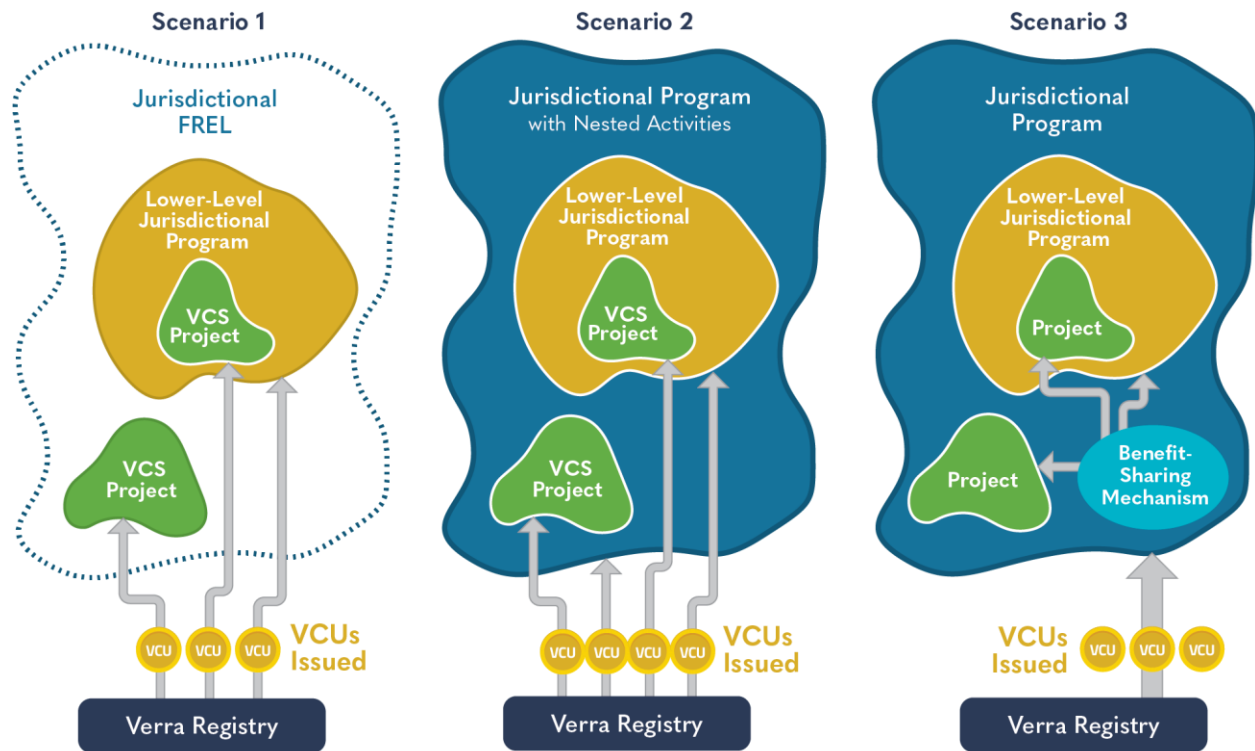
The *JNR Requirements* support the evolution of jurisdictional frameworks over time as governments build the capacity to put in place and implement all components of a jurisdictional REDD+ program. For example, a jurisdictional proponent could first develop and register a jurisdictional forest reference emission level (FREL) for projects and lower-level jurisdictional programs to nest into, which will promote consistent carbon accounting among nested activities, help reduce transaction costs, and promote environmental integrity across the jurisdiction. Subsequently, the jurisdictional proponent could establish a full-fledged jurisdictional program that encompasses crediting across levels, including projects, subnational jurisdictions, and/or national programs.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://verra.org/about-verra/advisory-groups-committees/>

Accordingly, the *JNR Requirements* can be applied to the carbon accounting and crediting Scenarios illustrated in Diagram 1 below:

**Diagram 1. Overview of Crediting Scenarios**



### Scenario 1

#### **Jurisdictional Forest Reference Emission Level (FREL) with crediting to nested projects and/or lower-level programs**

Where a higher-level (e.g., national) jurisdictional government decides that it is not ready to register a REDD program with the VCS, or that it prefers not to do so, but wants to allow for projects and lower-level (e.g., state, province, or municipal) programs to register as nested projects or programs, it can develop and register a FREL encompassing its jurisdictional territory. In this case, the jurisdictional FREL is developed following the *Jurisdictional and Nested REDD+ Guide (this document)* and the *JNR Scenario 1 Requirements*. The jurisdictional FREL is allocated to the REDD projects and lower-level programs located within its geographic boundaries to determine their baselines or FRELs, respectively. Projects and lower-level programs in this situation are referred to as “having nested baselines or FRELs”, accordingly.

Carbon accounting and crediting occur only for nested projects and lower-level programs since there is no program registered for the higher-level jurisdiction.

## Scenario 2

### **Jurisdictional program with crediting to the jurisdiction and/or nested projects/lower-level programs**

Where a jurisdictional government has established the key elements<sup>2</sup> for REDD+ implementation under the UNFCCC, and wants to account for the GHG emission reductions achieved by the REDD activities it carries out in its territory while also allowing for direct crediting to projects and lower-level programs, it can register a jurisdictional program with nested activities. The jurisdictional and lower-level programs shall follow the *Jurisdictional and Nested REDD+ Guide (this document) and the JNR Scenario 2 Requirements*. Nested projects shall follow the nesting requirements of the same documents and all the applicable VCS Standard requirements. REDD projects and lower-level programs are considered “nested” only when their GHG accounting system is integrated within the jurisdictional GHG accounting system.

Scenario 2 jurisdictional programs must include all elements needed for jurisdictional accounting; at a minimum, a jurisdictional strategy or plan to develop REDD+ activities, a jurisdictional FREL, a jurisdictional measuring and reporting system, and a safeguards information system. In this case, all levels undertake carbon accounting and may seek issuance of VCUs, i.e., the jurisdictional program, as well as any nested REDD project and/or lower-level program. Alternatively, where the jurisdictional proponent has established the basic elements for REDD+ implementation under the UNFCCC<sup>3</sup>, but the jurisdictional program does not intend to generate or claim carbon credits under JNR, it may decide that only nested projects and/or lower-level programs may be credited (referred to as Scenario 2b).

## Scenario 3

### **Jurisdictional program crediting only**

Where a government wants (and has the legal right) to be credited for the GHG emission reductions achieved by the REDD activities carried out within the boundaries of its jurisdiction, it may register a jurisdictional program following the *Jurisdictional and Nested REDD+ Guide (this document) and the JNR Scenario 3 Requirements*. In such a case, carbon accounting and crediting occur only to the jurisdictional program, and projects or lower-level programs are not eligible for direct issuance of VCUs. Scenario 3 jurisdictional programs must include, at a minimum, all elements needed for jurisdictional accounting, a jurisdictional strategy or plan to develop REDD+ activities, a jurisdictional FREL, a jurisdictional measuring and reporting system, a safeguards information system, and a benefit-sharing system.

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<sup>2</sup> As described in paragraph 71 of UNFCCC decision 1/CP.16, and in the Warsaw Framework for REDD+.

## 2.1 SCENARIO REQUIREMENTS

The *JNR Requirements* (comprised of this *Jurisdictional and Nested REDD+ Guide* and the three scenario modules outlined below) is the program document that establishes the rules and requirements for all jurisdictional carbon accounting and crediting options. The following scenario modules (see Table 1), set out the specific rules and requirements for the development and implementation of the different jurisdictional carbon accounting and crediting options under the VCS JNR Program:

- 1) **JNR Scenario 1 Requirements:** jurisdictional forest reference emission levels (FRELs) with crediting to nested projects and/or lower-level programs.
- 2) **JNR Scenario 2 Requirements:** jurisdictional programs that include the key elements of the UNFCCC,<sup>3</sup> with or without crediting to the higher-level jurisdictional program and/or nested projects/lower-level programs.
- 3) **JNR Scenario 3 Requirements:** jurisdictional program crediting only (without nested activities) that include the key elements of the UNFCCC.<sup>4</sup>

**Table 1. Overview of JNR Carbon Accounting and Crediting Options**

	Scenario 1	Scenario 2	Scenario 3
	Jurisdictional FREL with project/lower-level program crediting <u>only</u>	Jurisdictional program with jurisdictional and/or project/lower-level program crediting	Jurisdictional program crediting <u>only</u>
Purpose	Jurisdictional proponents develop a jurisdictional FREL for projects and/or lower-level programs to nest into.	Jurisdictional proponents develop a jurisdictional REDD program that includes crediting to nested projects and/or lower-level programs and may include crediting to the jurisdictional program.	Jurisdictional proponents develop a jurisdictional REDD program that does not include projects or lower-level programs .
Crediting	Nested lower-level programs and/or projects <u>only</u> .	Jurisdictional program (optional) and nested lower-level programs and/or projects	Jurisdictional program <u>only</u>
Document	<i>JNR Scenario 1 Requirements and VCS Standard for the projects</i>	<i>JNR Scenario 2 Requirements and VCS Standard for the projects</i>	<i>JNR Scenario 3 Requirements</i>

<sup>3</sup> Ibidem

<sup>4</sup> Ibidem

# APPENDIX I DOCUMENT HISTORY

Version	Date	Comment
v4.0	15 April 2021	Initial version released under VCS Version 4
V4.1	19 August 2024	Minor updates to align with the Core Carbon Principles Assessment Framework and Procedure published by the <i>Integrity Council for the Voluntary Carbon Market</i>  Minor clarifications and editorial corrections





## Standards for a Sustainable Future



**Verified Carbon  
Standard**



**Jurisdictional  
& Nested REDD+**



**Climate, Community  
& Biodiversity Standards**



**Sustainable Development  
Verified Impact Standard**



**Plastic Waste  
Reduction Standard**