



Plastic Waste Reduction Standard

A VERRA STANDARD

Plastic Program Definitions

ABOUT VERRA



Verra supports climate action and sustainable development through the development and management of standards, tools and programs that credibly, transparently and robustly assess environmental and social impacts, and drive funding for sustaining and scaling up these benefits. As a mission-driven, non-profit (NGO) organization, Verra works in any arena where we see a need for clear standards, a role for market-driven mechanisms and an opportunity to achieve environmental and social good.

Verra manages a number of global standards frameworks designed to drive finance towards activities that mitigate climate change and promote sustainable development, including the [Verified Carbon Standard \(VCS\) Program](#) and its [Jurisdictional and Nested REDD+ framework \(JNR\)](#), the [Verra California Offset Project Registry \(OPR\)](#), the [Climate, Community & Biodiversity \(CCB\) Standards](#), the [Sustainable Development Verified Impact Standard \(SD VISta\)](#) and the [Plastic Waste Reduction Program \(Plastic Program\)](#). Verra is also developing new standards frameworks, including [LandScale](#), which will promote and measure sustainability outcomes across landscapes. Finally, Verra was a founding member of the [Initiative for Climate Action Transparency \(ICAT\)](#), which helps countries assess the impacts of their climate actions and supports greater transparency, effectiveness, trust and ambition in climate policies worldwide. Today Verra remains engaged with the ICAT in an advisory role.

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1 INTRODUCTION

This document provides the definitions of terms used in Plastic Waste Reduction Program (Plastic Program) documents. Note that defined terms in Plastic Program documents are used without capitalized first letters. Section 3 lists acronyms used in Plastic Program documents.

This document will be updated from time to time and readers shall ensure that they are using the most current version of the document.

2 DEFINITIONS

Accession representation

The deed issued by a project proponent and an acceding entity made with respect to an acceding entity joining a project as project proponent; prepared using the *Plastic Program Deed of Accession Template*

Authorized representative

An entity authorized by the project to communicate with and provide instructions to the Verra Registry on the project's behalf, with such an authorization granted through a communications agreement signed by both/all parties and submitted to the Verra Registry

Cancellation

The permanent removal of a Plastic Credit from circulation in the Verra Registry for purposes other than retirement (e.g., compensating for excess Plastic Credit issuance). The permanent removal of a Plastic Credit precludes any further transaction of the credit.

Chemical recycling

The conversion to monomer or production of new raw materials ~~(including specialty polymers, feedstocks for new plastics, fuels and waxes)~~¹ by changing the chemical structure of plastic waste through cracking, gasification or depolymerization, excluding energy recovery and incineration ~~(modified from “feedstock recycling” in ISO 15270:2008 Plastics – Guidelines for the recovery and recycling of plastics waste by addition of “including specialty polymers, feedstocks for new plastics, fuels and waxes”)~~

¹American Chemistry Council (n.d.). *What is Advanced Recycling?* Available at: <https://plastics.americanchemistry.com/what-is-advanced-recycling/#:~:text=Advanced%20plastics%20recycling%2C%20also%20called,Virgin%20Like%20Plastics->

Circular economy

An economy that is restorative and regenerative by design, where economic activity builds and rebuilds overall system health. A circular economy relies on three principles: designing out waste and pollution; keeping products and materials in use; and regenerating natural systems.²

Collected plastic

Plastic waste that has been moved from its source to a Plastic Program methodology-defined appropriate destination (based on the definition of “collection” in *ISO 472:2013 Plastics – Vocabulary* with the substitution of “a Plastic Program methodology-defined appropriate destination” for “a place where it can be recovered”)

Collection

The logistical process of moving plastic waste from its source to a Plastic Program methodology-defined appropriate destination (modified from *ISO 472:2013 Plastics – Vocabulary* with the substitution of “a Plastic Program methodology-defined appropriate destination” for “a place where it can be recovered”)

Commercially sensitive information

Trade secrets, financial, commercial, scientific, technical or other information whose disclosure could reasonably be expected to result in a material financial loss or gain, prejudice the outcome of contractual or other negotiations or otherwise damage or enrich the person or entity to which the information relates

Communications agreement

The agreement by which the project authorizes a third party to communicate with and provide instructions to the Verra Registry on its behalf, the form and scope of which shall be determined solely by the Verra Registry and signatories to the agreement

Composite material

A solid product consisting of two or more layers of, for instance, plastic film or sheet, normal or syntactic cellular plastic, metal or layers of paper or cardboard, with or without adhesive interlayers (modified from *ISO 472:2013 Plastics – Vocabulary* by the addition of “material” and substitution of relevant examples) (includes multi-material packaging, i.e., that which consists of multiple material types that have varying degrees of difficulty of mechanical separation based on availability and accessibility of relevant technology and infrastructure)³

² Ellen MacArthur Foundation (2017). *Learning Path: The Circular Economy in Detail*. Available at: <https://www.ellenmacarthurfoundation.org/explore/the-circular-economy-in-detail>.

³ World Economic Forum, Ellen MacArthur Foundation and McKinsey & Company (2016). *The New Plastics Economy – Rethinking the Future of Plastics*. Available at: <http://www.ellenmacarthurfoundation.org/publications>.

Controlled incineration (Incineration)

The controlled combustion of organic compounds of both biogenic and fossil origin with or without heat capture and utilization, where the process meets applicable and proposed emission limits and other environmental regulatory constraints. Ideally, all the organic content is converted into CO₂ and H₂O. Practically, as combustion is incomplete and inert matter is also in the combusted waste, ashes are an important by-product.⁴

Crediting period

The time period for which plastic waste collected and/or recycled by the project is eligible for issuance as Plastic Credits. The *Plastic Waste Reduction Standard (Plastic Standard)* sets out rules for the length of the crediting period and its renewal.

Crediting period start date

The date on which the first monitoring period commences

Effective consultation

A process by which the project proponent uses socially and culturally appropriate methods to enable transparent sharing of information with stakeholders and their meaningful participation in decision-making, dispute resolution and/or other subjects of consultation

End-of-life

Life cycle stage of a product (including packaging) that follows the use phase⁵

Energy recovery

The production of useful energy through direct and controlled combustion (*ISO 15270:2008 Plastics – Guidelines for the recovery and recycling of plastics waste*)

Flexible material

Material whose shape is likely to change after the contents are added or removed (modified from *ISO 21067-1:2016 Packaging – Vocabulary – Part 1: General terms* by replacing “packaging” with “material”)

Grouped project

A project to which additional instances of the project activity, which meet pre-established eligibility criteria, may be added subsequent to project validation

⁴ Definition adopted from Clean Development Mechanism (2014). *Large-scale Consolidated Methodology*. ACM0022, *Alternative Waste Treatment Processes Version 02.0*. Available at: <https://cdm.unfccc.int/methodologies/DB/YINQ0W7SUY002S6GU8E5DYVP2ZC2N3>, including an addition from National Research Council (US) Committee on Health Effects of Waste Incineration (2000). *Waste Incineration & Public Health*. Available at: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK233627/>.

⁵ The PEW Charitable Trusts and SYSTEMIQ (2020). *Breaking the Plastic Wave: A Comprehensive Assessment of Pathways Towards Stopping Ocean Plastic Pollution*. Available at: https://www.pewtrusts.org/-/media/assets/2020/07/breakingtheplasticwave_report.pdf.

Implementing partner

An individual or organization operating the project in partnership with the project proponent

Informal waste sector activities⁶

Waste management activities carried out by individuals or a group of individuals who are not formally registered or regulated by local authorities or formally responsible for providing waste management services.

Issuance

The instruction by Verra to issue a specified quantity of Plastic Credits for a project activity/activities into the registry account of a user in accordance with Plastic Program rules

Issuance representation

The unilateral representation issued by the project proponent at each Plastic Credit issuance request, made with respect to the plastic waste collected and/or recycled by the project, and which is prepared using the *Plastic Program Issuance Deed of Representation Template*

Landfill

A waste disposal site for the deposit of waste onto or into land under controlled or regulated conditions (*ISO 15270:2008 Plastics – Guidelines for the recovery and recycling of plastics waste*)

Listing

The initial posting of the project and its documentation on the Verra project database

Listing representation

The unilateral representation issued by the project proponent at the time of the project listing request, made with respect to the project, and which is prepared using the *Plastic Program Listing Deed of Representation Template*

Marginalized people or groups

Those people and groups unable to participate fully in economic, social, political and cultural life

Materiality

The concept applied to determine if errors, omissions and misstatements in information could affect the assertion of collected or recycled plastic waste and influence decisions resulting from it

Material recovery facility

A plant that separates and prepares single-stream recycling materials to be sold to end buyers⁷

⁶ Adapted from CDM (2018). AMS-III.AJ. Small-scale methodology: Recovery and recycling of materials from solid wastes, version 07.0. Available at: <https://cdm.unfccc.int/methodologies/DB/R22750M155F84YR0D4YVYOS0CLSCII>.

⁷ Rubicon (2019). *What is a Materials Recovery Facility (MRF)?* Available at: <https://www.rubicon.com/blog/materials-recovery-facility/>.

Material type

A classification applied to plastic or composite packaging or products that describes its polymer or other makeup; can be sub-categorized by packaging or product form

Mechanical recycling

The processing of plastic waste into a recycling material ~~secondary raw material or products~~ via a combination of mechanical processes (e.g., preprocessing,⁸ grinding, washing, separating, drying, re-granulating, compounding)⁹ without significantly changing the chemical structure of the material (modified from *ISO 15270:2008 Plastics – Guidelines for the recovery and recycling of plastics waste* by addition of “via mechanical processes (e.g., preprocessing, grinding, washing, separating, drying, re-granulating, compounding)”))

Methodology

A specific set of criteria and procedures, which apply to specific project activities, for identifying the project boundary, determining the baseline scenario, demonstrating additionality, quantifying net plastic waste collection and/or recycling and specifying the monitoring procedures

Methodology approval process

The process by which new methodology elements are approved under the Plastic Program

Methodology element

A methodology, methodology revision, module or tool (including additionality tools, performance benchmarks and technology benchmarks)

Methodology element developer

An entity that develops a methodology element

Methodology revision

A revision to the criteria and procedures of an existing methodology

Module

A component of a methodology that can be applied to perform a specific methodological task

Monitoring report

The document that records data to allow the assessment of plastic waste collected and/or recycled by a project during a given time period in accordance with the monitoring plan set out in the project description, and which is prepared using the *Plastic Project Monitoring Report Template*

Official translation

⁸ Baling, a process in which plastic waste is compacted and secured as a bundle to facilitate handling, storage and transportation, is an example of a preprocessing activity. Baling in itself is not considered a mechanical recycling activity.

⁹ World Economic Forum, Ellen MacArthur Foundation and McKinsey & Company (2016). *The New Plastics Economy – Rethinking the Future of Plastics*. Available at: <http://www.ellenmacarthurfoundation.org/publications>.

A translation by an individual from a member body of the International Federation of Translators

Open burning

Uncontrolled waste combustion practices, including dump fires, pit burning, fires on bare soil and barrel burning. Open burning is characterized by burning at low temperatures and in oxygen-deprived environments, leading to incomplete combustion where the combustion products are not effectively controlled. Residential open burning, deliberate open burning in landfills and open dumpsites and spontaneous open burning in landfills and open dumpsites are included in this definition.

Packaging

Product to be used for the containment, protection, handling, delivery, storage, transport and presentation of goods, from raw materials to processed goods, from the producer to the user or consumer, including processor, assembler or other intermediary (*ISO 21067-1:2016 Packaging – Vocabulary – Part 1: General terms*)

Partial release representation

The deed issued by the project proponents and the Verra Registry, made with respect to a project proponent leaving a project, and which is prepared using the *Plastic Program Deed of Partial Release Template*

Performance benchmark

A benchmark against which the performance of an individual project is assessed for the purpose of determining additionality and/or the crediting baseline

Plastic

A material that contains as an essential ingredient a high polymer and which, at some stage in its processing into finished products, can be shaped by flow (*ISO 472:2013 Plastics – Vocabulary*). Section 2.1 of the *Plastic Standard* lists the types of plastics and materials containing plastic that are eligible under the Plastic Program.

Plastic Credit

A credit issued by and held in the Verra Registry, representing the right of the account holder in whose account the credit is recorded to claim the achievement of collected or recycled plastic waste of the amount of one (1) tonne that has been verified by a validation/verification body in accordance with Plastic Program rules. There are two types of Plastic Credits: Waste Collection Credits and Waste Recycling Credits. Recordation of a Plastic Credit in the account of the holder at the Verra Registry is prima facie evidence of that holder's entitlement to that Plastic Credit.

Plastic Credit issuance levy

The fee charged by Verra at the time of Plastic Credit issuance to cover the administrative costs of the Plastic Program

Plastic Program rules

The rules and requirements set out in the *Plastic Waste Reduction Program Guide (Plastic Program Guide)*, the *Plastic Standard* and other Plastic Program documents; such rules and requirements may be updated from time to time

Plastic Waste Reduction Program (Plastic Program)

The program operated by Verra, which establishes rules and requirements that operationalize the *Plastic Standard* to enable the validation of plastic waste collection and recycling projects, and the verification of the impacts of those activities

Project activity

The specific set of technologies, measures and/or outcomes, specified in a methodology applied to the project, that alter the conditions identified in the baseline scenario and which result in plastic waste collection and/or recycling

Project activity instance (Instance)

A particular set of implemented technologies and/or measures that constitute the minimum unit of activity necessary to comply with the criteria and procedures applicable to the project activity under the methodology applied to the project

Project description

The document that describes the project's plastic waste collection and/or recycling activities and which is prepared using the *Plastic Project Description Template*

Project documents

The documents required to register the project and/or issue Plastic Credits, as set out in the *Plastic Program Guide*

Project ownership

The legal right to control and operate project activities

Project proponent

The individual or organization that has overall control and responsibility for the project, or an individual or organization that together with others, each of whom is also a project proponent, has overall control or responsibility for the project; the entity/entities that can demonstrate project ownership with respect to the project

Project proponent representation

A unilateral deed of representation issued by the project proponent(s) and/or individuals or organizations accorded certain rights with respect to a project

Project start date

The date on which the project began collecting and/or recycling plastic waste

Proof of right

The document(s) demonstrating an entity's right to any and all plastic waste collected and/or recycled by the project during the crediting period or verification period. Distinct from project ownership.

Recyclable

Characteristic of a product, packaging, or associated component that can be diverted from the waste stream through available processes and programs and can be collected, processed, and returned to use in the form of raw materials or products (*ISO 18604:2013 Packaging and the environment – Material recycling*). An item of packaging or a packaging component is recyclable if its successful post-consumer collection, sorting and recycling is proven to work in practice.¹⁰

Recycled material

Material that has been reprocessed from collected plastic material by means of a manufacturing process and made into a final product or into a component (e.g., flakes, pellets or outputs of depolymerization such as pyrolysis oil, terephthalic acid (TPA) or mono-ethylene glycol (MEG)) for incorporation into a product (~~TE-101-V1.0-2019.10.01~~TE-101-V1.4-2022.07.21 – *Terms and definitions for Textile Exchange standards and related documents*)

Recycling

Reprocessing, by means of a manufacturing process, of a used plastic or packaging material into a product, a component incorporated into a product, or a secondary (recycled) raw material; excluding energy recovery, use of the product as a fuel (from “material recycling” in *ISO 18604:2013 Packaging and the environment – Material recycling*), use of waste plastic for road construction or other applications that have a high risk of leaking into the environment at a future point in time.

Recycling facility

A facility where the recycling process takes place. ~~This can include waste sorting facilities that prepare plastic waste for recycling.~~

Reduction (Plastic waste reduction)

A decrease in the amount of plastic waste generated by an entity, brought about by changing the design, manufacture (including packaging), purchase or use of products containing plastic¹¹

~~Region~~

~~The spatial extent that covers preferably the geographic area containing the source of the plastic waste, the project activity, and the end destination of the plastic waste collected and/or recycled by the project activity; and at most covers the host country or countries in which the project activity and the end destination are located. The applicable geographic area may be an administrative unit (e.g., municipality, district, state or country), based on the availability of data.~~

¹⁰ Adapted from Ellen MacArthur Foundation (2018). *New Plastics Economy Global Commitment*. Available at: <https://www.newplasticseconomy.org/assets/doc/13319-Global-Commitment-Definitions.pdf>.

¹¹ United States Environmental Protection Agency (2016). *Waste Prevention*. Available at: <https://archive.epa.gov/epawaste/conserve/smm/wastewise/web/html/prevent.html>.

Registration representation

The unilateral representation issued by the project proponent at the time of the project registration request, made with respect to the project, and that is prepared using the *Plastic Program Registration Deed of Representation Template*

Regulatory surplus

Where actions exceed requirements set forth in any law, statute or other regulatory framework governing implementation or output

Retirement

The permanent removal of a Plastic Credit from circulation in the Verra Registry by a user to preclude any further transaction of the credit

Reuse

Reintroduction of the same product for the same purpose and in its original form, following minimal maintenance and cosmetic cleaning¹²

Rigid material

Material whose shape remains essentially unchanged after the contents are added or removed (modified from *ISO 21067-1:2016 Packaging – Vocabulary – Part 1: General terms* by replacing “packaging” with “material”)

Source

Location from which plastic packaging, composite material containing plastic or raw plastic material may be emitted or released (for the purposes of the Plastic Program, sources include, but are not limited to, the environment, landfills ~~material recovery facilities~~ and households/businesses)

Stakeholder

Any person or entity who can potentially be affected by the project. In identification of stakeholders, it is permitted to consider significance of user populations and how deeply affected they may be by the project, such that distant or intermittent user groups who will be affected in very limited ways by the project need not be defined as stakeholders.

Note – Any reference in Plastic Program documents to project stakeholders is limited to this group of potentially affected stakeholders. Project stakeholders do not include those people or entities that will not be materially affected by the activities of the project (interested stakeholders).

¹² Ellen MacArthur Foundation and ANSYS Granta (2019). *Circularity Indicators: An Approach to Measuring Circularity. Methodology*. Available at: <https://www.ellenmacarthurfoundation.org/assets/downloads/Circularity-Indicators-Methodology.pdf>.

Stakeholder group

Groups whose members derive similar income, livelihood, well-being and/or cultural values from the project and whose values are different from (but not necessarily mutually exclusive of) those of other groups. Stakeholder groups may include Indigenous Peoples, women, youth or other social, cultural and economic groups. Every individual stakeholder must belong to at least one stakeholder group and may belong to more than one.

Validation

Validation is the independent assessment of a project's design by a validation/verification body. The objectives of validation are to evaluate: 1) the conformance of the submitted project description to Plastic Program rules and the applied methodology; 2) project design, planning information and documentation, including the project description, baseline, monitoring and reporting procedures, and quality assurance/quality control (QA/QC) procedures; and 3) reported calculations (e.g., ex-ante estimates and uncertainty estimates).

Validation report

The written report of validation prepared by the validation/verification body in accordance with Plastic Program rules and which is prepared using the *Plastic Program Validation Report Template*

Validation representation

The deed issued by the validation/verification body, referencing the validation report to which it relates, containing a unilateral representation that it has validated the project's compliance with the applicable Plastic Program rules, and which is prepared using the *Plastic Program Validation Deed of Representation Template*

Validation/verification body (VVB)

An organization approved by Verra to act as a validation/verification body with respect to providing validation and/or verification services in accordance with Plastic Program rules

Verification

Verification is the periodic ex-post independent assessment by a validation/verification body, conducted in accordance with Plastic Program rules, of the plastic waste collected and/or recycled by the project during the monitoring period

Verification period

The time period specified in a verification report during which the collected and/or recycled plastic waste has been verified in accordance with Plastic Program rules by a validation/verification body

Verification report

The written report of the verification prepared by the validation/verification body in accordance with Plastic Program rules and which is prepared using the *Plastic Program Verification Report Template*

Verification representation

The deed issued by the validation/verification body, referencing the verification report to which it relates, containing unilateral representation that it has verified the relevant collected and/or recycled plastic waste in accordance with the applicable Plastic Program rules, and which is prepared using the *Plastic Program Verification Deed of Representation Template*

Verra Registry

The platform that records all projects (listed and registered) and Plastic Credits issued under the Plastic Program. Provides public access to all project and Plastic Credit information, and provides project proponents with the ability to list and register projects and issue, hold and retire Plastic Credits.

Verra website

The Verra website: www.terra.org

Vintage

The set of plastic waste collected and/or recycled by a project during a single vintage period

Vintage period

The time period for which a particular set of plastic waste collected and/or recycled by a project is verified, which may be any subset of a verification period

Vulnerable people or groups

Those people and groups who lack the ability to anticipate, cope with, resist and recover from stresses or shocks due to physical, social, economic and environmental factors or processes

Waste

Any discarded, rejected, unwanted, surplus or abandoned post-use or post-industrial material that is not being collected for appropriate end-of-life management

Waste Collection Credit (WCC)

A credit issued by, and held in, the Verra Registry representing the right of the account holder in whose account the credit is recorded to claim the achievement of collected plastic waste of the amount of one (1) tonne of plastic that has been verified by a validation/verification body as collected in accordance with Plastic Program rules. Recordation of a Waste Collection Credit in the account of the holder at the Verra Registry is prima facie evidence of that holder's entitlement to that Waste Collection Credit.

Waste management¹³

The collection, treatment, transportation and/or disposal of waste. Countries have the full right to define their waste management operations.

Waste Recycling Credit (WRC)

A credit issued by, and held in, the Verra Registry representing the right of the account holder in whose account the credit is recorded to claim the achievement of recycled plastic waste of the amount of one (1) tonne of plastic that has been verified by a validation/verification body as recycled in accordance with Plastic Program rules. Recordation of a Waste Recycling Credit in the account of the holder at the Verra Registry is prima facie evidence of that holder's entitlement to that Waste Recycling Credit.

Waste sorting¹⁴

The separation of collected waste material into different categories of recyclable (and non-recyclable) materials to facilitate further processing (or other relevant action as applicable). The sorting process may include manual sorting and segregation and/or further separation through physical, mechanical and electromagnetic processes.

¹³ Adapted from Verified Carbon Standard (2012). *Approved VCS methodology VM0018: Energy efficiency and solid waste diversion activities within a sustainable community, version 1.0*. Available at: <https://verra.org/methodology/vm0018-energy-efficiency-and-solid-waste-diversion-activities-within-a-sustainable-community-v1-0/> and Article 2 of United Nations Environment Programme (2014). *Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal*. Available at: <https://www.basel.int/Portals/4/Basel%20Convention/docs/text/BaselConventionText-e.pdf>.

¹⁴ Adapted from CDM (2018). *AMS-III.BA. Small-scale methodology: Recovery and recycling of materials from e-waste, version 02.0*. Available at: <https://cdm.unfccc.int/methodologies/DB/PVHQ5T7VGCT007EUHFU517J4HNNW21Q>.

3 ACRONYMS

3R	Reduce, Recover, Recycle [Initiative]
ABS	Acrylonitrile butadiene styrene
EPS	Expanded polystyrene
GHG	Greenhouse gas
HDPE	High-density polyethylene
LDPE	Low-density polyethylene
MRF	Material recovery facility
PET	Polyethylene terephthalate
PP	Polypropylene
PS	Polystyrene
PSAWG	Plastic Standard Assessment Working Group
PSDC	Plastic Standard Development Committee
PVC	Polyvinyl chloride
VVB	Validation/verification body
WCC	Waste Collection Credit
WRC	Waste Recycling Credit

APPENDIX 1: DOCUMENT HISTORY

Version	Date	Comment
v1.0	10 Feb 2021	Initial version released under Plastic Program Version 1.
v1.0	12 Aug 2024	Correction and clarification to the <i>Plastic Program Definitions, v1.0</i> , effective immediately: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Correction 1: Removed definition for “region”• Clarification 1: Revised definitions related to recycling processes