

REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

Independent Modeling Experts for Digital Soil Mapping

October 29, 2025

1 INTRODUCTION

Verra is a global leader helping to tackle the world's most intractable environmental and social challenges. As a mission-driven nonprofit organization, Verra is committed to helping reduce greenhouse gas emissions, improve livelihoods, and protect natural resources across the private and public sectors. We support climate action and sustainable development with standards programs and tools that credibly, transparently, and robustly assess environmental and social impacts. We also enable funding for sustaining and scaling projects that verifiably deliver these benefits. We work in any arena where we see a need for clear standards, a role for market-based mechanisms, and an opportunity to generate significant environmental and social value.

The Verified Carbon Standard (VCS) Program is Verra's flagship program. It allows vetted projects to turn their greenhouse gas (GHG) emission reductions and carbon dioxide removals into tradable carbon credits called Verified Carbon Units (VCUs). Since its launch in 2006, the VCS Program has grown into the world's largest voluntary GHG program with over 2,400 registered projects in 126 countries that have cumulatively generated more than 1.3 billion VCUs.

An integral component of the VCS Program is independent auditing by qualified third parties. This rigorous process includes independent experts reviewing the technical rigor, accuracy, and consistency of the use of methodologies, modules, and tools.

The tool is intended to be used along with VM0032 Methodology for Adoption of Sustainable Grassland through Adjustment of Fire and Grazing, VM0042 Methodology for Improved Agricultural Land Management, and potentially other methodologies that quantify soil organic carbon (SOC) stocks in agricultural lands.

2 SCOPE OF WORK

Verra has opened a request for applications (RFA) from qualified experts experienced in digital soil mapping (DSM) models or hybrid approaches such as DSM models and biogeochemical models (BGCMs) to serve as independent modeling experts (IMEs) to review DSM Model Validation Reports (DSM-MVRs) from projects using VCS tool VT0014 Estimating Organic Carbon Stocks Using Digital Soil Mapping. Approved DSM-IMEs will be added to a publicly available roster on the Verra website and may

be contracted by validation/verification bodies (VVBs) to support assessments of VT0014 use. Verra does not contract DSM-IMEs.

The roles and responsibilities of an approved DSM-IME are as follows:

- Review, assess, and write up findings on DSM-MVR documents in accordance with VT0014 and with a focus on confirming the following:
 - The quality of calibration data
 - That calibration procedures meet the requirements stated in Section 5.1 of VT0014, v1.0
 - That samples used for model validation follow the guidelines in Sections 5.1 and 5.2 of VT0014, v1.0. The DSM-IME's assessment report must explicitly confirm that validation samples were acquired exclusively within the project area, that the depth or depth range of validation samples matches the depth or depth range of the applied methodology, and that any unsampled locations can be treated as missing at random as defined in Section 3 of VT0014, v1.0.
 - That the sample size is sufficient, with justification, and that the model passes the three validation tests: coverage, goodness of fit, and bias, as described in Section 5.1(10) of VT0014, v1.0. Where DSM has been used to initialize and/or true-up a BGCM, the DSM-IME must confirm that the uncertainty propagation procedures in Section 5.1.2 of VT0014, v1.0 have been correctly implemented.
 - That the variogram has been properly estimated using the procedures outlined in Appendix 4 of VT0014, v1.0
- Ensure compliance with requirements in relevant VCS methodologies and modules and guidance on quantification approaches for soil organic carbon using models and measurements. Methodologies and modules that may be used in conjunction with VT0014 include:
 - VM0032 Methodology for the Adoption of Sustainable Grasslands through Adjustment of Fire and Grazing
 - VM0042 Improved Agricultural Land Management
 - VMD0053 Model Calibration, Validation, and Uncertainty Guidance for Biogeochemical Modeling for Agricultural Land Management Projects for Use Case 1 in VT0014
- Iterate with VVBs to resolve the DSM-IME's findings
- Issue DSM-IME evaluation reports

3 EXPERIENCE AND CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION

Interested applicants (individuals or organizations) must demonstrate their expertise in DSM or DSM-BGCM modeling and must meet Verra’s minimum qualifications for DSM-IMEs (refer to Appendix 1 of VT0014, v1.0).

Verra will use the following criteria to evaluate applications:

- 1) Relevant expertise (demonstrated by record of scientific publications, reports, and project-specific experience) in the subject matter, including:
 - a) Digital soil mapping and models
 - b) Biogeochemical models
 - c) Soil organic carbon dynamics under agricultural land management
 - d) Greenhouse gas emission accounting approaches and protocols
- 2) Experience with VCS project development, GHG accounting, or VCS agricultural land management methodologies, in particular VM0032 and VM0042
- 3) References (see details in Annex 1)
- 4) Ability to perform independent review, without risk of bias that could impact the integrity of DSM-MVRs

4 RESPONSES TO THE RFA

Respondents are requested to submit their applications as follows:

- 1) Qualifications, experience, references, and ability to conduct reviews, using the template provided in Annex 1: Application Response Template
- 2) Completed Conflict of Interest Disclosure Form, provided in Annex 2, that indicates the respondent’s ability to perform an independent review without risk of bias
- 3) Separately appended resume/CV (not to exceed two pages)

All application materials submitted to Verra will be kept confidential.

Applications must be submitted by email to methodologies@verra.org, with “RFA for DSM-IME” in the subject line. Verra may ask candidates clarifying questions about their application. Verra is accepting applications until otherwise noted and will review submissions on a rolling basis.

Upon receipt of a complete application, Verra will review the information provided and contact the references provided. Upon receipt of positive responses from both references, Verra will inform the aspiring DSM-IME if minimum qualifications are met. Verra may reject an application where it



determines that the aspiring DSM-IME may not be able to provide competent evaluation services under the VCS Program.

Approved applicants will be added to a publicly available roster on Verra's website and may be contacted by prospective project proponents and/or third-party VVBs seeking DSM-IME support. If selected, DSM-IMEs may be contracted by VVBs to support assessment of DSM use with the newly released VT0014.

LEGAL NATURE OF RFA

This RFA is an invitation for applications, and Verra is under no legal obligation to accept any application nor proceed with the RFA. Verra reserves the right to amend the requirements at any time.

ANNEX 1: APPLICATION RESPONSE TEMPLATE

1) Relevant expertise in the subject matter, including:

- a) Digital soil mapping and models
- b) Biogeochemical models
- c) Soil organic carbon dynamics under agricultural land management
- d) Greenhouse gas emission accounting approaches and protocols

Years of experience: *Please complete.*

Name and source of the model(s) that the aspiring IME has expertise to evaluate: *Please complete.*

Describe competency in quantifying GHG fluxes, in particular SOC stock changes, associated with agricultural land management through the use of biogeochemical models, specifying specialization in certain practices or land uses and regional/national expertise, where relevant. A DSM-IME must have at least five years of relevant work experience applicable to the model(s) that they evaluate.

Such experience may be demonstrated and supported with direct work experience, peer-reviewed journal articles, publications, publicly available reports, and/or methodologies and standards developed, applied, or assessed. (Max. 1000 words)

2) Experience with VCS project development, GHG accounting, or VCS methodology development, in particular with VM0032 and VM0042

Years of experience: *Please complete.*

Please list relevant scientific publications, reports, and project-specific experience. (Max. 1 page)

3) References

Name and contact information, including email address, for two referees, preferably researchers, academic staff, or former staff

4) Ability to perform independent review, without risk of bias that could impact the integrity of DSM-MVRs

Please complete (sign and pdf) the Conflict of Interest Disclosure Form provided in Annex 2.



ANNEX 2: CONFLICT OF INTEREST DISCLOSURE FORM

Confidential

Conflict of Interest Disclosure

Independent Modeling Experts for VT0014

Name:

Position/Role: (if any)

Organization: (if any)

Methodology: VT0014 Estimating Organic Carbon Stocks Using Digital Soil Mapping

Instructions

Conflict of Interest (“COI”):

A COI is a situation in which a personal interest interferes with or is perceived to interfere with your ability to carry out your responsibilities in an impartial, unbiased, and objective manner. There are three categories of COIs: potential, perceived, and actual. Each category could potentially pose risks for Verra, your relationship with our organization, and your personal and professional reputation.

In undertaking your review responsibilities, you have an ongoing duty to be transparent and are required to disclose any potential, perceived, or actual conflicts of interest within five business days of being aware of the situation. When in doubt, please make a disclosure.

Disclosure

- 1) Do you have any affiliations with or involvement in any organization or entity that develops projects under the proposed methodology listed on the top of this form?
 Yes (Verra will contact you regarding next steps) No
- 2) Do you have interests, financial,* personal,† or otherwise, related to project development (interests that concern the broader support of climate mitigation are not required to be disclosed)?
 Yes (Verra will contact you regarding next steps) No

If you answered “Yes” to #1 or #2, or if you have a situation that is different from them, please provide details in the space below. Please include names of organizations, activities, and relevant relationships.



*Financial interests arise when the reviewer or their immediate relative has been or is currently engaged in discussions to have, directly or indirectly, through business or investment, an ownership or investment interest in any project development.

†Personal interests arise when the reviewer or their immediate relative obtains an advantage, profit, right, or share or may benefit in any manner from project development.

I have declared all relevant interests on this form and will continue to disclose relevant interests as and when they arise.

Signature

Date