

# REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

## Independent Expert Review of VCS Methodology VM0044 *Biochar Use in Soil and Non-Soil Applications*, v2.0 Draft (M0226)

August 4, 2026

### 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 reducing greenhouse gas emissions, improving livelihoods, and protecting natural resources by working with 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 and enable funding for sustaining and scaling up projects that verifiably deliver these benefits.

The [Verified Carbon Standard \(VCS\) Program](#) is our 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).

An integral component of the VCS Program is the [VCS Methodology Development and Review Process, v5.1 \(MDRP\)](#), which outlines procedures and rules for the development of new or revised VCS methodologies, modules, and tools. A key element of the rigorous process includes review by a group of independent experts to ensure the methodology or revision aligns with current scientific knowledge, research, and best practices. Independent experts review the technical rigor, accuracy, and consistency of the draft methodology as per Section 3.5 of the *MDRP, v5.1*.

### 2 SCOPE OF WORK

Verra is accepting proposals for an independent expert review of the next revision (version 2.0) to VCS methodology [VM0044 Biochar Utilization in Soil and Non-Soil Applications, v1.2](#) (methodology development ID #M0226). The following updates are part of the proposed methodology revision:

- Expansion of eligibility to existing biochar production facilities
- Inclusion of detailed criteria for high-technology biochar production facilities
- Replacement of standardized approach (positive list) with the project method approach for demonstration of additionality

- Expansion of eligibility of feedstocks, including invasive species and other new (not purpose-grown) feedstocks
- Introduction of monitoring approaches for measuring key parameters, including hydrogen to organic carbon ratio of biochar and moisture content
- Inclusion of procedures for calculating feedstock transport emissions
- Consideration of safe storage and transport of biochar
- Inclusion of requirements for uncertainty analysis and assessment
- General editorial improvements and corrections (including alignment with the latest methodology template and the VCS Program rules/requirements)

Verra is therefore requesting proposals for independent expert reviews (including academic experts, consultants, and validation/verification bodies [VVBs]) of the above-listed documents.

The requirements for the independent expert review are set out in Sections 3.3.2 and 3.5.1–3.5.4 of the *MDRP, v5.1*.

The following aspects of the revision must be assessed:

- Scientific rigor: Assessment of whether the proposed major revision reflects the most recent scientific knowledge of GHG emission reductions from the production and use of biochar in soil and non-soil applications.
- Technical robustness and consistency to ensure accurate/conservative outcomes:
  - Suitability of all the proposed feedstock types and related safeguards
  - Relevance and completeness of GHG sources included in the project boundary
  - Appropriateness of equations for quantifying baseline emissions, project emissions, leakage emissions, and GHG emission reductions, including the procedure for the determination of uncertainty
  - Validity of all assumptions and data sources, including the determination of permanence
  - Appropriateness and technical soundness of the monitoring approach, including the hydrogen to organic carbon ratio of biochar, the moisture content, etc.
- Any stakeholder comment that requires input from the expert, as identified by Verra

Minor improvements introduced in this revision, such as editorial changes, general clarifications, and additional guidance, are excluded from the scope of the expert review.

Principal tasks and responsibilities will include at least the following:

- 1) **Review documents and issue draft Independent Expert Report.** Independent experts review the draft revision documents and submit a draft Independent Expert Report issuing findings to

Verra, using the *VCS Independent Expert Report Template*, as per Section 3.5.1 in the *MDRP*, v5.1.

- 2) **Iterate with Verra to resolve independent expert findings** as per Section 3.5.3 in the *MDRP*, v5.1. Verra may arrange a meeting or series of meetings to discuss findings and how they may be clarified or resolved within the draft revision documents. Where findings identify major risks that cannot be addressed within a reasonable timeframe, the methodology is put on hold or rejected by Verra (see Section 3.5.4 in the *MDRP*, v5.1).
- 3) **Issue Independent Expert Report.** Independent experts issue to Verra a final, signed version of the Independent Expert Report, using the *VCS Independent Expert Report Template*, as per Section 3.5.3 in the *MDRP*, v5.1.

The expected time commitment in number of working days:

| Draft revision document                     | Review document and issue draft of Independent Expert Report | Iterate with Verra to resolve findings | Issue Independent Expert Report | Total |
|---------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------|
| Red-lined version of the draft VM0044, v2.0 | 4                                                            | 2                                      | 1.5                             | 7.5   |

### 3 CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION

Verra will use the following criteria for evaluating proposals:

- 1) Relevant expertise in the subject matter, including the following:
  - Depth of knowledge in production and use of biochar in soil and non-soil applications, including in areas such as biomass feedstocks and sustainability assessment, biochar production technologies and process engineering, biochar storage, transport, and end-use applications and related MRV techniques/systems
  - Strong understanding of biochar systems and carbon dioxide removal science, including biochar production pathways, biochar characterization and stability, carbon permanence, H:C<sub>org</sub> assessment, carbon sequestration mechanisms, and biochar utilization in both soil and non-soil applications
  - Experience with GHG accounting and carbon market frameworks, including additionality assessment, baseline setting, leakage, monitoring, uncertainty assessment, and application of Verra/VCS requirements (and requirements from competing standards) for biochar-based carbon removal/reduction projects
  - Record of scientific publications, reports, and project experience
- 2) Experience with VCS project development, GHG accounting, or VCS methodology development, demonstrated by relevant experience
- 3) Cost, including making sure that the proposed level of effort is consistent with the outcomes

- 4) Availability to comply with the proposed timeline
- 5) Ability to perform an independent review, without risk of bias that could impact the integrity of the methodology
- 6) Prior experience as an independent reviewer, validator/verifier, or methodology expert is preferable but not mandatory
- 7) Knowledge of the ICVCM's core principles, assessment requirements, and procedures is preferable but not mandatory

## 4 MILESTONES, DELIVERABLES, AND TIMELINE

The independent expert review is expected to start in parallel with the public consultation.

The main deliverables and expected timeline resulting from this assignment are as follows:

| Deliverable                                                   | Timeline                                             |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|
| 1) Review documents and issue draft Independent Expert Report | Three weeks from the date of signing of the contract |
| 2) Iterate with Verra to resolve findings                     | Eight weeks from the date of signing of the contract |
| 3) Issue Independent Expert Report                            | Ten weeks from the date of signing of the contract   |

## 5 RESPONSES TO THE RFP

Respondents are requested to submit their proposals as follows:

- Completed Proposal Response Template, provided in Annex 1 and also available as a Word document, that indicates the respondent's qualifications, experience, rate, and ability to conduct the review
- Completed Conflict of Interest Disclosure Form, provided in Annex 2 and also available as a Word document, that indicates the respondent's ability to perform an independent review without risk of bias
- Separately appended resumes/CVs (not to exceed two pages each)

All application materials submitted to Verra will be kept confidential.

Proposals must be submitted by email to [methodologies@verra.org](mailto:methodologies@verra.org), with the methodology development ID #M0226 in the subject line, by close of business on August 25, 2026. Verra will likely ask the top candidates clarifying questions about their proposal. Verra plans to finalize selection of the consultant by September 4, 2026 with the work to begin as soon as possible after then.

### **Legal Nature of RFP**

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

## Annex 1 – Proposal Response Template

| Evaluation Criteria                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Response |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| <p>#1: Relevant expertise in the subject matter, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Depth of knowledge in production and use of biochar in soil and non-soil applications, including in areas such as biomass feedstocks and sustainability assessment, biochar production technologies and process engineering, biochar storage, transport, and end-use applications and related MRV techniques/systems</li> <li>• Strong knowledge of biochar systems and carbon dioxide removal science, including biochar production pathways, biochar characterization and stability, carbon permanence, H:C<sub>org</sub> assessment, carbon sequestration mechanisms, and biochar utilization in both soil and non-soil applications</li> <li>• Experience with GHG accounting and carbon market frameworks, including additionality assessment, baseline setting, leakage, monitoring, uncertainty assessment, and application of Verra/VCS requirements (and requirements from competing standards) for biochar-based carbon removal/reduction projects</li> <li>• Record of scientific publications, reports, and project experience</li> </ul> <p>Please list relevant scientific publications, reports, and project experience.</p> |          |

|                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                     |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| #2: Experience with VCS project development, GHG accounting, or VCS methodology development, demonstrated by relevant experience |                                                                                     |
| #3: Cost proposal. Provide both daily rate and total cost in USD.                                                                |                                                                                     |
| #4: Availability to comply with the proposed timeline.                                                                           |                                                                                     |
| #5: Ability to perform an independent review, without risk of bias that could impact the integrity of the methodology.           | Please complete (sign and PDF) the Conflict of Disclosure Form provided in Annex 2. |
| #6: Prior experience as an independent reviewer, validator/verifier, or methodology expert.                                      |                                                                                     |
| #7: Knowledge of the ICVCM's core principles, assessment requirements, and procedures.                                           |                                                                                     |

## Annex 2 – Conflict of Interest Disclosure Form

### Conflict of Interest Disclosure

#### *Methodology Reviewers*

|                                        |                                                                                                                                              |
|----------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Name:</b> (of collaborator)         | <b>Position/Role:</b> (of collaborator)                                                                                                      |
| <b>Organization:</b> (of collaborator) | <b>Methodology / Tool / Module:</b> <a href="#">M0226 - Revision to VM0044 Methodology for Biochar Use in Soil and Non-Soil Applications</a> |

### 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, or actual. Each category could potentially pose risks for Verra, your relationship with our organization, the integrity of the consultancy and the resulting methodology, 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 (5) business days of being aware of the situation. When in doubt, please make a disclosure.

### Disclosure

- Do you have any affiliations with or involvement in any organization or entity that develops projects under the proposed methodology?  
☐ Yes (Verra will contact you regarding next steps) ☐ No
- Do you have interests, financial,\* personal,<sup>†</sup> 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 the project development.

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

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Signature

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Date