



**Verified Carbon
Standard**

A VERRA STANDARD

VCS Program Guide

Version 5.0

16 December 2025

All intellectual property rights in this document and any related materials for its interpretation and application constitute “Website Materials” as defined in the [Verra Website Terms and Conditions of Use](#). All applicable terms and conditions set out therein apply to this document.

Website Materials are owned by Verra or by third parties who have licensed their materials to Verra and are protected by applicable intellectual property laws.

Use of this Website Material in the establishment or operation of a project or development of a methodology under a Verra certification program is permitted (“Authorized Use”). Any other use, including copying, modifying, distributing, or creating derivative works, whether in whole or in part, is prohibited unless expressly authorized by Verra or the relevant rights holder.

All proprietary notices must be retained in any copies made under the Authorized Use. Verra trademarks, logos, and brand names may not be used without Verra’s prior written consent.

All rights not expressly granted herein are reserved.

CONTENTS

1	INTRODUCTION	1
1.1	VCS Program Versions and Effective Dates.....	1
1.2	Language.....	5
1.3	Definitions.....	5
2	OVERVIEW OF THE VCS PROGRAM	6
2.1	Program Objectives	6
2.2	Program History.....	6
2.3	VCS Program Scope.....	7
2.4	VCS Sectoral Scopes.....	7
2.5	Program Documents.....	8
2.6	Roles and Responsibilities	11
3	VCU ATTRIBUTES	14
4	VERRA REGISTRY	15
4.1	VCS Program Fees.....	17
4.2	VCU Liability and Statute of Limitations.....	17
5	VCS PROGRAM APPROVAL	18
6	VALIDATION/VERIFICATION BODY SANCTIONS	19
7	GRIEVANCE REDRESS POLICY	21
	DOCUMENT HISTORY.....	22

1 INTRODUCTION

The Verified Carbon Standard (VCS) Program provides a global program and standard for GHG emission reduction and carbon dioxide removal projects and programs. It uses as its core the requirements set out in *ISO 14064-2*, *ISO 14064-3*, and *ISO 14065*. The *VCS Program Guide* (this document) is the overarching program document and provides the rules and requirements governing the VCS Program and describes the constituent parts of the program such as the project and program registration process, the Verra Registry system, and the accreditation requirements for validation/verification bodies (VVBs).

1.1 VCS Program Versions and Effective Dates

VCS Program Editions

VCS Program editions are labeled with a version number and program documents are correspondingly version controlled.

VCS Version 5 was released in December 2025 and replaces VCS Version 4 as the applicable version of the VCS Program. Effective dates are set out for all VCS Version 5 requirements.

New editions of the VCS Program are issued periodically when major program changes are required. Development of new editions of the program involves engagement with stakeholders through public consultation, and with Verra's expert advisory groups.

Document Versions

VCS Program documents are labeled with a version number. VCS Version 5 is comprised of all the program documents labeled v5.x, where x is a running number starting at zero. Individual program documents may be updated periodically between program editions. The VCS Program edition is referred to as VCS Version 5 regardless of the version numbers of individual program documents.

Projects and Verified Carbon Units (VCUs) are not labeled in the Verra Registry with a specific version of the VCS Program. Instead, project documentation indicates the version number of the *VCS Standard* under which the project was validated (e.g., "validated to *VCS Standard, v4.7*") and the version under which the project was most recently verified (e.g., "verified to *VCS Standard, v5.0*"). This indicates that a project has maintained its conformance to the prevailing versions of the *VCS Standard* throughout its lifetime.

The VCS Program documents for previous editions of the VCS Program are available on the Verra website and should be referred to for the VCS Program rules under such previous editions.

Corrections and Clarifications

Correction documents are issued periodically to correct errors in text, equations, or figures in VCS Program documents and methodologies. Clarification documents are issued to provide additional

guidance or clarity on VCS Program rules, or to issue minor, urgent updates to requirements ahead of a new version of a VCS Program document being issued.

Correction and clarification (C&C) documents are posted on the Verra website alongside the relevant program document or methodology. Project proponents and VVBs must apply and interpret the VCS Program rules and methodological requirements consistent with any corrections and clarifications. Corrections and clarifications are incorporated into the next issued version of the relevant program document or methodology.

Effective Dates of Program Updates

New or revised program requirements are referred to as program updates. An effective date for each update gives project proponents and VVBs time to adjust any project planning, implementation, and reporting to conform to the program update. Effective dates are established on a requirement-by-requirement basis, because some requirements only apply to new projects, while others apply to all projects.

Where a program document is updated, the “Document History” section of the document describes the updates made and their effective dates. Major updates are also accompanied by an *Overview of Program Updates and Effective Dates* document. Project proponents and VVBs must review the [VCS Program Rules and Requirements](#) page on the Verra website to ensure that they are using the applicable version of all program documents.

For program updates that are not effective immediately, project proponents may choose to conform to updated requirements before their effective date. Where a project proponent chooses to do this, the VVB validates or verifies the project in accordance with the updated requirements.

Guidance: How to prepare for effective dates of program updates

Project proponents and VVBs should:

- review the Verra website to confirm that they are using the most recent effective versions of all templates, representations, and forms to facilitate reporting against current program requirements.
- ensure that projects can demonstrate conformance to a program update in project documentation by the effective date.
- be aware of all forthcoming and recently released program updates. All public consultations and program updates are listed on the [VCS Governance and Development](#) page of the Verra website.

Effective date timelines generally fit into one of three categories:

- **Effective immediately:** where project proponents and VVBs must conform to an update immediately to maintain program integrity and project quality, or where Verra’s internal procedures change
- **Effective in 3–6 months:** where a short period of time is needed for project proponents and VVBs to become aware of and conform to an update by making appropriate changes to project design, implementation, and reporting, and for Verra to provide training to project proponents and VVBs
- **Effective in 12 months:** where a longer period of time is needed for project proponents and VVBs to become aware of and conform to an update by making appropriate changes to project design, implementation, and reporting, and for Verra to provide training to project proponents and VVBs

An overview of guiding criteria that Verra uses to set effective dates is provided in Table 1. Verra may set other effective dates where program or project integrity or other concerns warrant doing so.

Table 1. Setting effective dates for VCS Program updates

Effective date type	Description	Examples
Effective immediately for all project requests ¹	All project requests submitted on or after the update release date must conform to the program update.	<p>New or revised requirements to ensure program integrity and project quality, to comply with external initiatives (e.g., Carbon Offsetting and Reduction Scheme for International Aviation (CORSIA), the Integrity Council for the Voluntary Carbon Market (ICVCM)), or to prevent errors in interpreting VCS Program rules</p> <p>Updated template instructions and clarifications to a requirement where the original intent of the requirement is maintained</p> <p>Clarifications or changes to Verra’s review processes or other internal procedures</p>
Effective for all project requests submitted on or after X date	All project requests submitted on or after the effective date must conform to the program update.	New or revised requirements where it is reasonable to allow time for the project proponent or VVB to conform to the requirements (e.g., affecting program implementation, monitoring, quantification, safeguards, stakeholder communication)

¹ Project request refers to a project proponent submitting a new project request (i.e., changing a project status) in the Verra Registry or Verra Project Hub. For more information about submitting project requests, see the *Registration and Issuance Process*.

Effective date type	Description	Examples
Effective from the next crediting period renewal requests or verification approval requests that includes a baseline reassessment submitted on or after X date	All crediting period renewal requests or verification approval requests that include a baseline reassessment submitted on or after the effective date must conform to the program update.	New or revised requirements that apply to already registered projects and these projects need more time to conform to the program update
Effective for all registration requests (including joint validation and verification requests) submitted on or after X date	All project registration requests submitted on or after the effective date must conform to the program update.	New or revised requirements related to project design or validation-specific requirements (e.g., project start date, project eligibility)
Effective for all verification approval requests submitted on or after X date	All verification approval requests submitted on or after the effective date (including joint validation and verification approval requests) must conform to the program update.	New or revised requirements that project proponents must conform to during project implementation (e.g., ongoing monitoring, ex-post quantification of reductions and removals, ongoing free, prior, and informed consent (FPIC), demonstrating identification and mitigation of safeguard risks)
Effective for projects with a project start date after X date	Projects with a project start date after the effective date must conform to the program update.	New or revised requirements that relate to actions that occur prior to the project start date (e.g., pre-start date stakeholder engagement,)
Effective for projects which initiate validation or verification on or after X date	Projects which initiate validation or verification on or after the effective date must conform to the program update.	New or revised requirements where only projects that have begun a validation or verification process after the specified date must conform to the program update
Effective for all new methodologies under development and revisions to existing methodologies that are approved on or after X date	Applies to the VCS <i>Methodology Requirements</i> . New approved methodologies and methodology revisions must conform to these requirements.	Updates to the VCS <i>Methodology Requirements</i> that must be included in methodologies moving forward (e.g., provisions for baseline setting, quantifying reductions and removals, new sections)

1.2 Language

The operating language of the VCS Program is English. The VCS Program documents may be translated into other languages to facilitate local use. However, the English versions of VCS Program documents, and the interpretation of same, shall take precedence over any other language translations.

1.3 Definitions

Definitions as set out in the *VCS Program Definitions, ISO 14064-2, ISO 14064-3, and ISO 14065* shall apply to all VCS Program documentation. Note that defined terms in the VCS Program documents, in common with ISO convention, are used without capital first letters.

2 OVERVIEW OF THE VCS PROGRAM

2.1 Program Objectives

The VCS Program establishes the rules and requirements that operationalize the *VCS Standard* to enable the validation of GHG projects and programs and the verification of GHG emission reductions (reductions) and carbon dioxide removals (removals) that can be used both in voluntary and compliance markets. The VCS Program aims to:

- 1) establish clear rules and procedures to enable the successful development of GHG projects and programs and the creation of high-quality GHG credits;
- 2) create a trusted and fungible GHG credit, the VCU;
- 3) stimulate innovation in GHG mitigation technologies and measures as well as procedures for validation, verification, and registration, all within a context of quality, credibility, and transparency;
- 4) provide a secure registry system for all VCUs that offers assurance against double counting and provides transparency to the public;
- 5) demonstrate workable frameworks and offer lessons that can be incorporated into other GHG programs and climate change regulation;
- 6) provide oversight to ensure that investors, buyers and the market recognize VCUs as being real, additional, and permanent; and
- 7) link carbon markets worldwide through a coherent and robust framework.

2.2 Program History

The Climate Group, the International Emissions Trading Association, and the World Business Council for Sustainable Development are the partner organizations that founded the VCS Program. The World Economic Forum also partnered in the development of the VCS Program for part of the process. The following editions of the VCS Program documents have been released:

- *VCS Version 1* was released on 28 March 2006 as both a consultation document and a standard for use by the market.
- *VCS Version 2* was released in October 2006 as a consultation document and did not replace *VCS Version 1* as the applicable version. After two years of work, two rounds of public consultation, and the work of the 19-member steering committee² and seven technical working

² The members of the steering committee were Jan-Willem Bode, Derik Broekhoff, Mike Burnett, Robert Dornau, Steve Drummond, Mitchell Feierstein, Yoshito Izumi, Mark Kenber, Adam Kirkman, Andrei Marcu, Erin Meezan,

groups, VCS 2007 was released on 19 November 2007. VCS 2007.1, which incorporated requirements for agriculture, forestry, and other land use projects, was released on 18 November 2008.

- VCS Version 3 was issued on 8 March 2011
- VCS Version 4 was released on 19 September 2019
- VCS Version 5 was released on 16 December 2025

2.3 VCS Program Scope

The VCS Program provides principles and requirements for designing projects that reduce GHG emissions or remove carbon dioxide. It forms the basis of their independent validation and verification.

The scope of the VCS Program covers all activities related to reductions in the seven Kyoto Protocol greenhouse gases and ozone-depleting substances (ODS) and removals of carbon dioxide which are established in conformance to:

- eligible methodologies approved for use in the VCS Program, and
- the VCS Program rules, including the *Jurisdictional and Nested REDD+ (JNR) Requirements* for jurisdictional REDD+ programs and nested REDD+ projects.

The scope of the VCS Program does not include carbon footprint assessments or corporate emissions claims.

2.4 VCS Sectoral Scopes

The VCS sectoral scopes provide a way to group methodologies together based on their underlying industrial sectors or greenhouse gas (GHG) emission sources. All VCS methodologies specify the applicable sectoral scope or scopes.³ New methodologies can be developed under any of the sectoral scopes. The VCS sectoral scopes are primarily aligned with the Article 6.4 Paris Agreement Crediting Mechanism (PACM) sectoral scopes.

VVBs are approved to audit projects under specific sectoral scopes based on their technical expertise, qualifications, and other competencies. The Verra website provides a list of VVBs and their respective sectoral scope approvals.

VCS Sectoral Scopes

1. Energy supply
2. Energy distribution
3. Energy demand

Ken Newcombe, Mark Proegler, Robert Routliffe, Richard Samans, Marc Stuart, Einar Telnes, Bill Townsend and Diane Wittenberg.

³ CDM and PACM also specify the sectoral scopes that apply to their methodologies. Verra provides a list of which VCS sectoral scopes are equivalent to the defined CDM and PACM sectoral scopes.

4. Manufacturing industries
5. Chemical industries
6. Construction
7. Transport
8. Mining and mineral production
9. Metal production
10. Fugitive emissions from fuels (solid, liquid, and gas)
11. Fugitive emissions from industrial gases (halocarbons and sulfur hexafluoride)
12. Solvents use
13. Waste handling and disposal
14. Forestry and other land use (forests, wetlands, and grasslands)
15. Agriculture
16. Geological carbon storage
17. Other engineered removals
18. Oceans and marine resources

Where the VCS Program documents and templates refer to requirements that only apply to certain sectors, the terms used align with the sectoral scopes as described in Table 2.

Table 2. Commonly used sectoral groupings

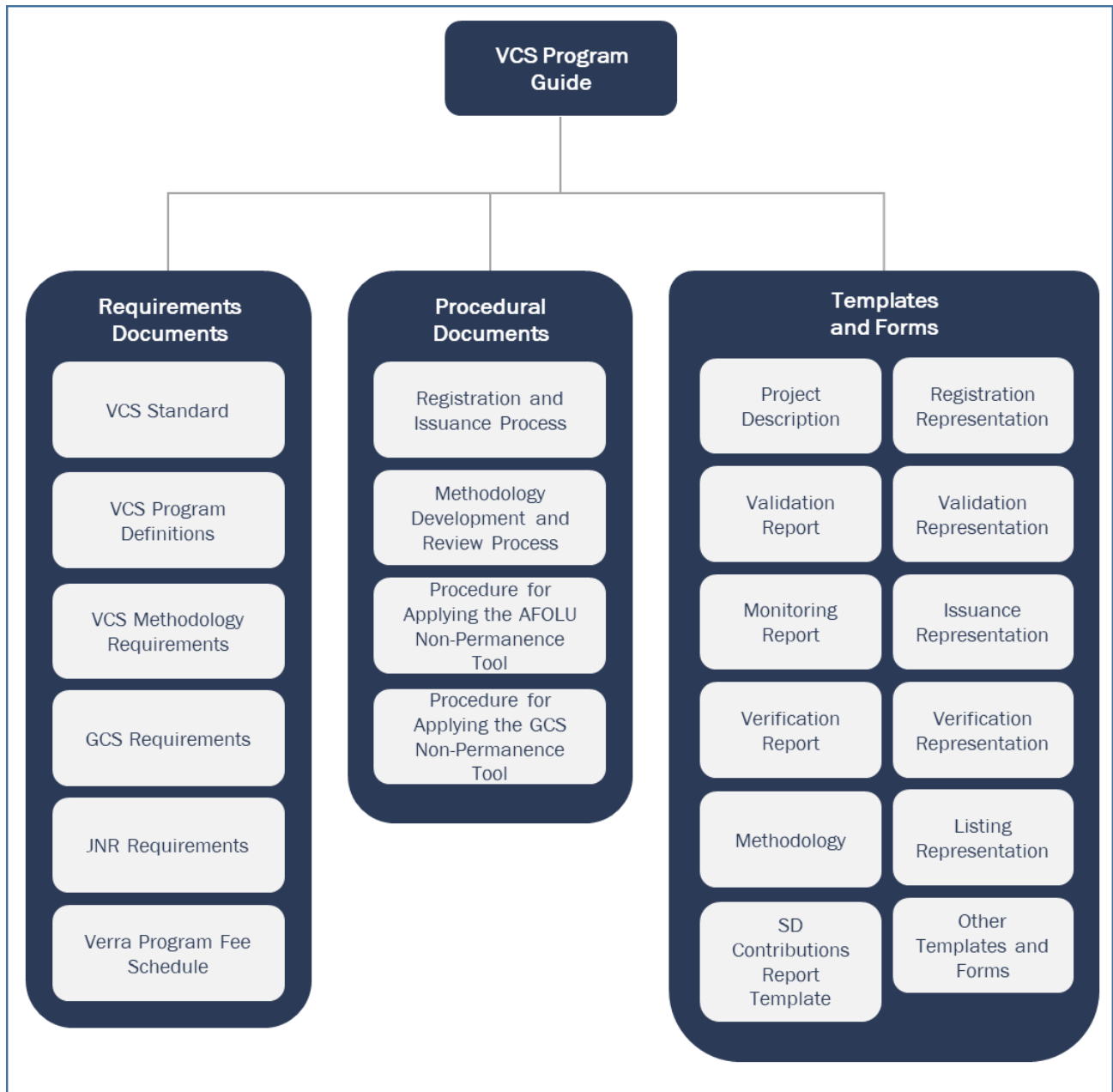
Term	Sectoral scopes included
Energy and industry (E&I) projects	1-13 and 17
Agriculture, forestry, and other land use (AFOLU) projects	14 and 15
Geological carbon storage (GCS) projects	16
Oceans and marine resources (OMR) projects	18

2.5 Program Documents

The rules and requirements for the VCS Program are set out in the program documents. Projects, programs, and methodologies shall meet all the applicable rules and requirements set out in these documents.

The structure of the program documents is summarized in Diagram 1. The *VCS Program Guide* is the overarching program document, providing the rules and requirements governing the VCS Program and further describing the constituent parts of the program such as the project and program registration process, the Verra Registry system, and the accreditation requirements for VVBs. Complementing the *VCS Program Guide* are requirements documents, procedural documents, and templates and forms. Verra may issue new documents, as developments in the VCS Program require, and the complete and current list of the program documents is available on the Verra website.

Diagram 1. Program documents



In addition to the *VCS Program Guide*, the program documents currently include the following:

- 1) Requirements Documents
 - a) *VCS Standard*. Provides the requirements for developing projects and for the validation and verification process.
 - b) *Methodology Requirements*. Provides the requirements for developing new, revised, and consolidated methodologies, tools, and modules.

- c) *JNR Requirements*. Provides further requirements for developing jurisdictional REDD+ programs and nested REDD+ projects.
 - d) *Program Definitions*. Provides the definitions for terms used in the VCS Program documents.
 - e) *Verra Program Fee Schedule*. Provides the fees related to the various parts of the VCS Program and all other Verra programs.
 - f) *Geological Carbon Storage Requirements*. Provides the requirements for developing geological carbon storage projects.
- 2) Procedural Documents
- a) *Registration and Issuance Process*. Provides the procedures and rules for registering projects and issuing VCUs.
 - b) *JNR Registration and Issuance Process*. Provides the procedures and rules for registering jurisdictional baselines and jurisdictional REDD+ programs, as well as projects nested in jurisdictional programs and standalone projects operating under the JNR Scenario 1 Requirements.
 - c) *JNR Validation and Verification Process*. Provides the process and requirements for the validation and verification of jurisdictional baselines and jurisdictional REDD+ programs.
 - d) *Methodology Development and Review Process*. Provides the procedures and rules for the development and review of new or revised VCS methodologies, tools, and modules.
 - e) *Procedure for Applying the AFOLU Non-Permanence Risk Tool*. Provides the procedure for conducting non-permanence risk analysis and buffer determination for AFOLU projects.
 - f) *Procedure for Applying the GCS Non-Permanence Risk Tool*. Provides the procedures for assessing the non-permanence risk and buffer determination required for Geological Carbon Storage (GCS) projects.
- 3) Templates and Forms
- a) *VCS Program Templates*. Templates for project descriptions, validation reports, monitoring reports, verification reports, and methodologies.
 - b) *Representations Templates*. Templates for deeds of representation made by project proponents and VVBs.
 - c) *Forms*. Forms such as for VVBs to notify Verra that they are conducting validation/verification services .

The following are normative (referenced) documents for the VCS Program:

- 1) *ISO 14064-2, Greenhouse gases – Part 2: Specification with guidance at the project level for quantification, monitoring, and reporting of greenhouse gas emission reductions or removal enhancements*.

- 2) *ISO 14064-3*, Greenhouse gases – Part 3: Specification with guidance for the verification and validation of greenhouse gas statements.
- 3) *ISO 14065*, Greenhouse gases – Requirements for greenhouse gas validation and verification bodies for use in accreditation or other forms of recognition.
- 4) *The GHG Protocol for Project Accounting* (Chapter 7, guidance related to additionality and common practice), WRI, 2005.

The four standards above are part of the requirements of the VCS Program, and their requirements shall be met either by the project proponent (*ISO 14064-2*) or the VVB (*ISO 14064-3* and *ISO 14065*). Where there is any conflict between VCS Program documentation and the above normative references, the VCS Program documentation takes precedence.

The program documents are also complemented by guidance documents. These guidance documents do not set out VCS Program rules and requirements, but they provide additional information to assist with the interpretation of the rules and requirements. It is strongly encouraged that such guidance is followed.

2.6 Roles and Responsibilities

2.6.1 Project and Jurisdictional Proponents

Project and jurisdictional proponents are the entities with overall control and responsibility for projects or programs. A project may have one project or jurisdictional proponent, or there may be multiple project or jurisdictional proponents who collectively have overall control and responsibility for a project or program. Project and jurisdictional proponents establish and operate projects and programs in accordance with the VCS Program rules. They are responsible for providing the project or program description, monitoring report, and supporting documentation (including evidence of right to operate) to facilitate validation and verification.

Project and jurisdictional proponents sign unilateral representations with respect to their projects or programs and VCUs, and these are made available on the Verra Registry. Project proponents assume limited liability for the replacement of excess VCUs, as set out in Section 4.2.

Note – To aid the readability of the VCS Program documentation, the documents use project and jurisdictional proponent in the singular. For projects and programs with multiple project or jurisdictional proponents, “project proponents” or “jurisdictional proponents” should be substituted in place of “project proponent” or “jurisdictional proponent”, as appropriate.

2.6.2 Validation/Verification Bodies (VVBs)

VVBs are accredited to validate projects and verify GHG emission reductions and carbon dioxide removals. They are only eligible to carry out work for the sectoral scopes for validation and verification for which they hold accreditation and must sign the required agreement with Verra before they can perform validation or verification in connection with the VCS Program.

The list of VVBs is available on the Verra website.

2.6.3 Verra Registry

The Verra Registry is responsible for ensuring that all required project and program documents have been submitted to Verra; issuing and maintaining accounts of VCUs for accountholders; ensuring the seamless flow of VCUs throughout the entire Verra Registry system; tracking and reporting the deposit/withdrawal of buffer credits to/from the centrally managed AFOLU pooled buffer account and jurisdictional pooled buffer account; and maintaining custody and records of VCU legal ownership.

2.6.4 VCU Buyers, Sellers, and Brokers

Buyers, sellers, and brokers are companies, organizations, or individuals who transact VCUs or facilitate the transaction of VCUs.

2.6.5 Verra

The VCS Program is managed by Verra, which is an independent, non-profit organization incorporated under the laws of the District of Columbia in the United States. Verra is responsible for managing, overseeing, and developing the program. It maintains an impartial position in the market and does not develop projects or JNR REDD+ programs, nor does it provide validation or verification services.

One of Verra's roles is in respect of overseeing and ensuring the integrity of projects, programs, and VCUs in the Verra Registry system. Verra conducts reviews of project and program registration and verification requests. Verra is also responsible for overseeing the VVBs operating under the VCS Program.

Verra's review of projects is conducted in accordance with the *Registration and Issuance Process*. The review ensures that the VVB has appropriately assessed, and fully described how it has assessed, the project's conformance to the VCS Program rules. Reviews do not replace validation or verification.

Verra also conducts other types of VVB reviews. These include, but are not limited to, desk reviews of the VVB work, visits to the VVB offices, witnessing the VVB undertaking audits (in person and remotely), and reviewing work products developed by the VVB in performing the audits.

Where Verra identifies shortcomings in a VVB's performance, Verra provides feedback and requires the VVB to address non-conformities. Verra also reports VVB performance to the respective accreditation body.

Verra reserves the right to take action against VVBs and implement sanctions in accordance with the provisions set out in the agreements signed with Verra (see Section 6). The rights and obligations for VVBs are set out in such agreements.

Verra reserves the right not to list projects, register projects and programs, or issue VCUs where it deems that they do not conform to the VCS Program rules or may otherwise impact the integrity of the VCS Program or the functioning of the broader carbon market. Verra reserves the right to cancel VCUs or to reject, put on hold, or inactivate projects where it deems that they have not been registered or

issued in conformance to the VCS Program rules. At listing, Verra may deny the request and/or reject the project where the listing request is frivolous, vexatious, or an abuse of process. Verra makes the reasons for such decisions publicly available on the project page on the registry.

Verra also leads the methodology development and review process. It may choose not to accept methodologies into the process and to put on hold or reject methodologies that are in the process. Verra may review, revise, or set as inactive previously active methodologies where they do not conform to the VCS Program rules, would sanction politically or ethically contentious project activities, or may otherwise impact the integrity of the VCS Program or the functioning of the broader carbon market.

Verra may convene steering committees, advisory committees, or working groups to support its work in specific areas. These groups draw in expertise from outside the organization to develop and support specific elements of the VCS Program. A full list of steering committees and working groups is available on the Verra website.

3 VCU ATTRIBUTES

VCUs issued in the VCS Program embody the attributes set out in Table 3. The VCS Program rules are designed to ensure that all VCUs share these attributes. Project proponents and VVBs ensure the same by developing and auditing projects in conformance to the VCS Program rules.

Table 3. VCU attributes

Attribute	Description
Additional	Reductions and removals exceed what would be achieved under a business-as-usual scenario and would not have occurred in the absence of the incentive provided by carbon markets.
Durable	Where reductions and removals carry a risk of reversal, safeguards are in place to minimize reversal risk and address underlying conditions that may lead to reversals over the longer of the project longevity and project crediting period. Any reversals of reductions or removals that have been credited are accounted, reported, and where possible, replaced.
Independently verified	Reductions and removals are independently verified by an accredited VVB with appropriate expertise for the project location and sector.
Traceable and not double counted	VCUs are transparently recorded and tracked in the Verra Registry to ensure credits are identified securely, uniquely, and unambiguously. Traceability ensures that VCUs are not double issued, double claimed, or double used.
Robustly quantified	Reductions and removals are robustly quantified in conformance to VCS Program rules and methodologies and guided by the VCS Program principles.
Participatory-based	Stakeholders are actively engaged throughout project design and implementation, including through seeking free, prior, and informed consent. Accessible and effective mechanisms allow stakeholders to raise concerns and submit complaints.
Safeguarded from unmitigated harm	Projects are designed and implemented to assess and mitigate risks of negative impacts on people and the environment, uphold human rights and Indigenous Peoples’ rights including to just compensation, and promote equity.
Aligned with sustainable development goals	Project activities are designed to deliver positive sustainable development outcomes.
Aligned with net zero transition	Project activities avoid locking in GHG emissions and activities or technologies that are incompatible with achieving net zero GHG emissions by mid-century.

4 VERRA REGISTRY

The Verra Registry provides the public interface to all project, program, and VCU information. VCU serial numbers are generated by the registry, which ensures the uniqueness of projects, programs, and VCUs. In addition, the Verra Registry provides full transparency on project and program documentation, together with information on the project and jurisdictional proponents, VCU issuance and retirement, the AFOLU and GCS pooled buffer accounts, and the jurisdictional pooled buffer account.

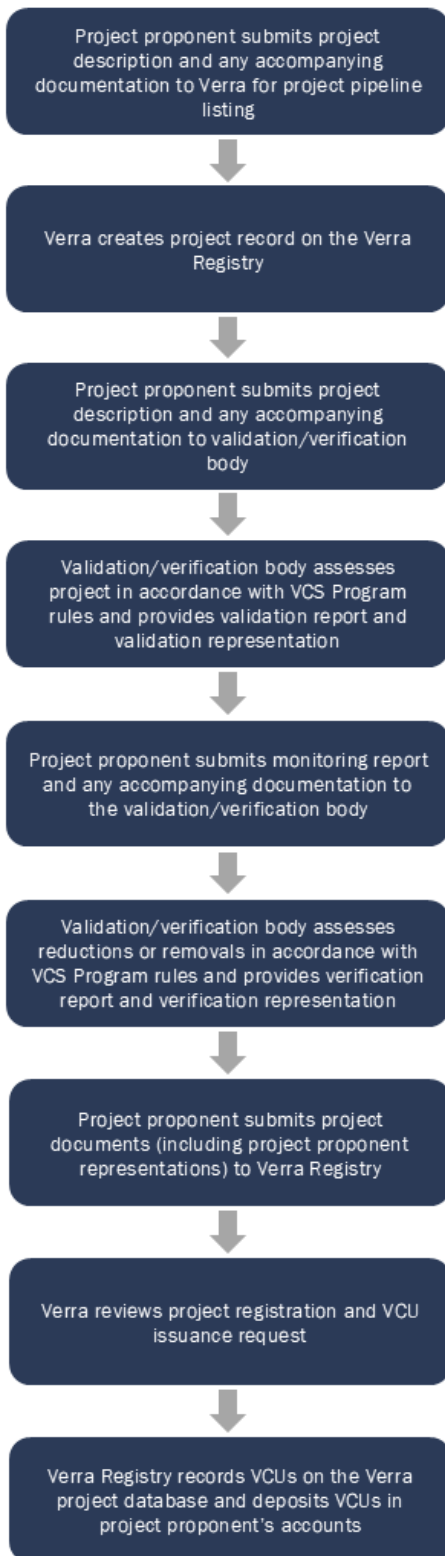
The AFOLU and GCS pooled buffer accounts hold non-tradable buffer credits to cover the non-permanence risk associated with AFOLU and GCS projects, respectively. The accounts are subject to periodic reconciliation, as set out in the *VCS Standard*. Likewise, the jurisdictional pooled buffer account holds the non-tradable buffer credits to cover the non-permanence risk associated with jurisdictional REDD+ programs and nested projects.

The Verra Registry provides accountholder services and is the entry point into the registry system for project and jurisdictional proponents, and VCU buyers and sellers. Such market participants open an account with the Verra Registry and project and program registration and VCU issuance is initiated with the Verra Registry.

The Verra Registry is responsible for: ensuring that projects and programs are registered and VCUs are issued in accordance with the VCS Program rules; providing services for holding, transferring, and retiring VCUs; managing AFOLU and jurisdictional buffer credits; and providing custodial services for VCUs and maintaining records of VCU legal ownership.

Project and jurisdictional proponents (or other eligible entities, as set out in the *Registration and Issuance Process* and *JNR Registration and Issuance Process*) request listing and registration of projects and programs and VCU issuance, with the Verra Registry. Diagram 2 outlines the project life cycle and registration process, which is similar to the program life cycle and registration process. Once the project or program has been validated and the GHG emission reductions or carbon dioxide removals verified, the project or jurisdictional proponent submits the relevant documents to the Verra Registry. Verra conducts a completeness review of the documents and may conduct a further accuracy review to assess conformance to the VCS Program rules. Where it is determined that the project or program conforms to the VCS Program rules, Verra uploads the documents to the public Verra Registry and issues VCUs into the project or jurisdictional proponent's account. Note that validation and verification may be undertaken simultaneously, with registration and issuance of the VCUs occurring at the same time, or validation may occur before verification, with registration occurring before any subsequent issuance of VCUs.

Diagram 2. Project life cycle and registration process



The process and detailed rules and requirements for project pipeline listing, program listing, project, and program registration, and VCU issuance are set out in the *Registration and Issuance Process* and *JNR Registration and Issuance Process*.

4.1 VCS Program Fees

Verra charges fees to cover administration costs, at the rates set out in the *Verra Program Fee Schedule*.

4.2 VCU Liability and Statute of Limitations

Registered projects and issued VCUs are subject to review by Verra, as set out in the *Registration and Issuance Process*. Project proponents are responsible for compensating for excess VCU issuance where Verra deems, acting reasonably, that there has been a material erroneous issuance of VCUs in respect of a project, as a result of the fraudulent conduct, negligence, intentional act, recklessness, misrepresentation, or mistake of the project proponent. A statute of limitations applies, whereby Verra can only require such compensation up to the later of:

- 1) 6 years after the date of issuance of the relevant VCU; or
- 2) 12 months after the date upon which any subsequent verification report with respect to the relevant VCU is accepted on the Verra Registry.⁴

⁴ The relevant VCU will be issued following acceptance of a verification report for a project. For some types of AFOLU projects in particular, verification cycles may be longer than 6 years. In this regard, if the subsequent verification report shows a VCU has been erroneously issued, Verra will have an additional 12 months to deal with that issue. Note also that where a VCU is erroneously issued from the last verification report of a project, Section 4.2(1) applies.

5 VCS PROGRAM APPROVAL

VVBs are eligible to provide validation and verification services under the VCS Program where they:

- 1) are accredited by an accreditation body that is a member of the International Accreditation Forum (IAF) and granted recognition for IAF Multilateral Recognition Arrangement (MLA) under ISO 17029 and/or 14065.
- 2) are approved by Verra and listed as an active VVB on Verra's website.
- 3) have signed the required agreement with Verra.

The VVB for a project shall hold such accreditation and Verra approval for validation or verification (as applicable) for the sectoral scope applicable to the methodology applied to the project. Where the methodology falls under more than one sectoral scope, the VVB shall hold accreditation or approval for validation or verification (as applicable) for all relevant sectoral scopes.

Where the VVB holds such accreditation and Verra approval for the verification of the relevant sectoral scopes but does not hold accreditation or approval for validation, it may validate project description deviations and inclusion of new project activity instances in grouped projects at the time of verification where all of the following are true:

- 1) The VVB holds accreditation and Verra approval for validation in at least one other sectoral scope.
- 2) The VVB has completed validation of at least five projects under the VCS Program that have been registered with the VCS Program.
- 3) The validation activity does not entail validation of a project description deviation that impacts the applicability of the methodology, additionality, or the appropriateness of the baseline scenario (see the *VCS Standard* for further information on such deviations).

To apply to become an approved VVB with the VCS Program, organizations must complete a *Verra Validation/Verification Body Application Form* and submit the signed application, along with any supporting evidence (as required by the application) to auditing@verra.org.

A list of accredited VVBs that are Verra-approved to undertake validation and verification services under the VCS Program is available on the Verra website.

6 VALIDATION/VERIFICATION BODY SANCTIONS

Based on its oversight activities, Verra has sole discretion to apply sanctions that vary according to the severity of issues and/or non-conformance(s) where VVBs are:

- 1) Found by Verra to be conducting services not in conformance to the governing accreditation body and/or VCS Program rules, or
- 2) Deemed by Verra to be performing poorly.

Warning Issuance

Where Verra deems sanctions are merited, it may issue a warning notice and non-conformity report to the VVB, requiring it to undertake a root cause analysis and identify corrective actions for addressing the identified issues. The root cause analysis and corrective action plan must be submitted to Verra within the time frame identified in the warning and non-conformity report.

Verra reviews and assesses whether the VVB's root cause analysis and corrective action plan are satisfactory or if additional sanctions may be applied.

Accreditation Body Referral

Verra may share the results of its VVB non-conformity reports with relevant accreditation bodies.

Suspension and Reinstatement

Verra may issue a notice of VVB suspension at any time. Where a suspension notice is issued, Verra provides the VVB with a copy or detailed description of the evidence upon which its decision was based. Suspension may be for the entire VCS Program, or the VVB may be suspended for specific VCS sectoral scopes per the provisions set out in the *Verra VVB Agreement*.

The suspension is announced on the VCS website.

- 1) Where the full VCS program scope is suspended, the VVB's approved status is changed to inactive
- 2) Where specific scopes are suspended, the VVB status remains active, but the suspended scope is changed from active to suspended.

A VVB is automatically suspended where it is suspended by the accreditation body under which it holds accreditation.

Inactive VVBs or active VVBs with specific suspended scopes are not permitted to conduct validation or verification audits or issue any documentation (e.g., validation/verification reports) concerning the suspended (inactive) program or specific scope(s) without Verra's prior and explicit approval.

A sectoral scope may be reactivated and/or VCS Program approval status reinstated where:

- 1) the VVB demonstrates to Verra's reasonable satisfaction that:
 - a) the evidence upon which such suspension was based was inaccurate or misleading, or
 - b) the facts or circumstances leading to such suspension are no longer current or likely to affect the VVB's performance, or
 - c) its suspension by the accreditation body under which it holds accreditation is lifted, and
- 2) the VVB has paid all VVB program and reinstatement assessment fees.

7 GRIEVANCE REDRESS POLICY

Project proponents, VVBs, and other stakeholders (including interested stakeholders) may submit inquiries to Verra at any time. In addition, Verra provides a grievance redress policy as set out in the *Verra Grievance Redress Policy* available on the Verra website.

DOCUMENT HISTORY

Version	Date	Comment
v5.0	16 Dec 2025	Updated version released under VCS Version 5



ABOUT VERRA

Verra sets the world's leading standards for climate action and sustainable development. We build standards for activities as diverse as reducing deforestation, improving agricultural practices, addressing plastic waste, and achieving gender equality. We manage programs to certify that these activities achieve measurable high-integrity outcomes. We work with governments, businesses, and civil society to advance the use of these standards, including through the development of markets. Everything we do is in service of increasingly ambitious climate and sustainable development goals, and an accelerated transition to a sustainable future.

Verra's certification programs include the [Verified Carbon Standard \(VCS\) Program](#) and its [Jurisdictional and Nested REDD+ \(JNR\) framework](#), the [Climate, Community & Biodiversity Standards \(CCBS\) Program](#), the [Sustainable Development Verified Impact Standard \(SD VSta\) Program](#), and the [Plastic Waste Reduction Program](#).



Standards for a
Sustainable Future



**Verified Carbon
Standard**



**Jurisdictional and Nested
REDD+ Framework**



**Climate, Community
& Biodiversity Standards**



**Scope 3
Standard**



**Sustainable Development
Verified Impact Standard**



**Plastic Waste
Reduction Standard**