



**Verified Carbon  
Standard**

A VERRA STANDARD

# Registration and Issuance Process

This is not the current version of this VCS Program document. The current version is at:  
<https://verra.org/programs/verified-carbon-standard/vcs-program-details/>.

# 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, to improving agricultural practices, to addressing plastic waste, and to achieving gender equality. We manage programs to certify that these activities achieve measurable high-integrity outcomes. And 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 VISta) Program, and the Plastic Waste Reduction Program.

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# CONTENTS

<b>1</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>OPENING A VERRA REGISTRY ACCOUNT</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>PIPELINE LISTING PROCESS</b>	<b>4</b>
3.1	Process	6
<b>4</b>	<b>PROJECT REGISTRATION PROCESS</b>	<b>10</b>
4.1	Step 1: Project Validation and Verification	10
4.2	Step 2: Registration and Verification Approval	12
4.3	Step 3: Project Review	19
4.4	Step 4: Project Registration and Initial VCU Issuance	24
4.5	Step 5: Periodic VCU Issuance	26
4.6	Step 6: VCU Retirements and Cancellations	28
4.7	Step 7: Project Maintenance	29
<b>5</b>	<b>AFOLU POOLED BUFFER ACCOUNT</b>	<b>32</b>
5.1	Assignment of Buffer Credits at First Request for Issuance	32
5.2	Assignment and Release of Buffer Credits at Subsequent Approved Verification Requests	32
5.3	Cancellation and Holding of Buffer Credits	33
<b>6</b>	<b>QUALITY CONTROL OF REGISTERED PROJECTS</b>	<b>37</b>
6.1	Process	37
<b>7</b>	<b>FURTHER INFORMATION</b>	<b>41</b>
7.1	Communications Agreement	41
7.2	Release and Accession of Project Proponents	41
7.3	Comments Received Outside of a Public Comment Period	42
<b>APPENDIX 1 ELIGIBILITY CONDITIONS FOR CONVERSION OF GHG CREDITS INTO VCUS</b>		<b>43</b>
GHG Credits issued to standalone projects, seeking conversion into VCUs		43
GHG Credits issued to CDM CPAs, seeking conversion into VCUs		44
<b>APPENDIX 2 DOCUMENT HISTORY</b>		<b>46</b>

# 1 INTRODUCTION

This document outlines the procedures for listing pipeline projects, registering projects, and issuing verified carbon units (VCUs) under the VCS Program. This document is intended for use by project proponents, validation/verification bodies, VCU buyers, VCU sellers and any other entities participating in the VCU market. Note that the VCS Standard and its related documents provide the rules and requirements for developing projects, and this document (the Registration and Issuance Process) should not be used for such purpose.

Projects may have one or many project proponents, though to aid readability, this document uses project proponent in the singular. For projects with multiple project proponents, project proponents should be substituted in place of project proponent, as appropriate.

Project proponents interact with the Verra Registry to list pipeline projects, register projects, and issue VCUs (i.e., project pipeline listing, project registration and VCU issuance are handled by the Verra Registry). Verra staff are responsible for undertaking a completeness check on documentation and for ensuring adherence to the VCS Program rules with respect to the pipeline listing process and the project registration process. Verra staff also upload information to the Verra Registry.

The Verra Registry provides the central repository for all information and documentation relating to pipeline and registered projects. The registry is also responsible for ensuring uniqueness of projects, issuing VCU serial numbers, and tracking VCU retirement. The registry makes project and VCU information and documentation publicly available and can be accessed via the Verra website. As set out in the *VCS Program Guide*, Verra is responsible for reviewing project documentation and overseeing validation/verification bodies to ensure the integrity of projects and VCUs in the Verra Registry.

Project documents must be submitted in electronic format.

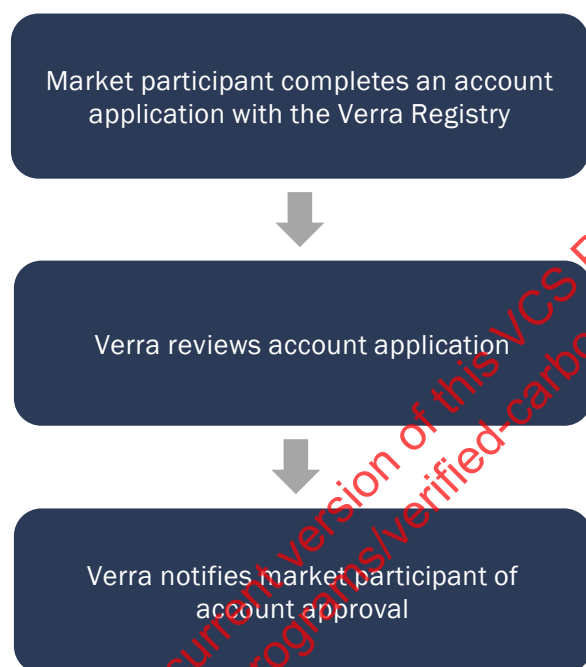
The operating language of the VCS Program is English. The project and program description, validation report, monitoring report, verification report and all other documentation (including all and any appendices) required under the VCS Program must be in English.

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 OPENING A VERRA REGISTRY ACCOUNT

A Verra Registry account shall be opened by any market participant who wants to list a pipeline project, register a project and/or issue, trade or retire VCUs as set out in Diagram 1.

**Diagram 1: Opening a Verra Registry Account**



2.1.1 The Verra Registry is managed and operated by Verra staff. Further details about the Verra Registry are available in the *VCS Program Guide*.

2.1.2 A market participant can apply to open a Verra Registry account at any time. For example, a would-be project proponent does not need to have a validated or verified project and a would-be VCU buyer does not need to have entered into a legal agreement to purchase VCUs in order to open a Verra Registry account.

2.1.3 Market participants can apply to open a Verra Registry account through the Verra website. Market participants are also encouraged to contact the Verra Registry at any time at [registry@verra.org](mailto:registry@verra.org).

### 3 PIPELINE LISTING PROCESS

The Verra Registry includes a project pipeline which lists projects before they are registered. Projects may list on the pipeline in the early stages of development as under development or as under validation when they are ready to begin the public consultation and validation process.

Note that where a methodology element is put on hold or withdrawn, only projects that have been listed on the project pipeline as either under development or under validation by the date on which the methodology element is put on hold or withdrawn shall be granted the grace period for using the methodology element (i.e., any projects not listed on the project pipeline by such date shall not be granted the grace period). Project proponents may therefore wish to list their projects at the early stages of project development to ensure that they can take advantage of any grace periods. See the VCS Standard for more information on grace periods.

Diagram 2 below sets out the process for listing and the public comment period where a project initially requests to list on the pipeline as under development. Diagram 3 below, sets out the process for listing on the pipeline and the public comment period where a project initially requests to list on the pipeline as under validation. Notes that follow the diagrams provide further details.

Diagram 2: Pipeline Listing Process – *Under Development*

**Projects listing as *under development*:**

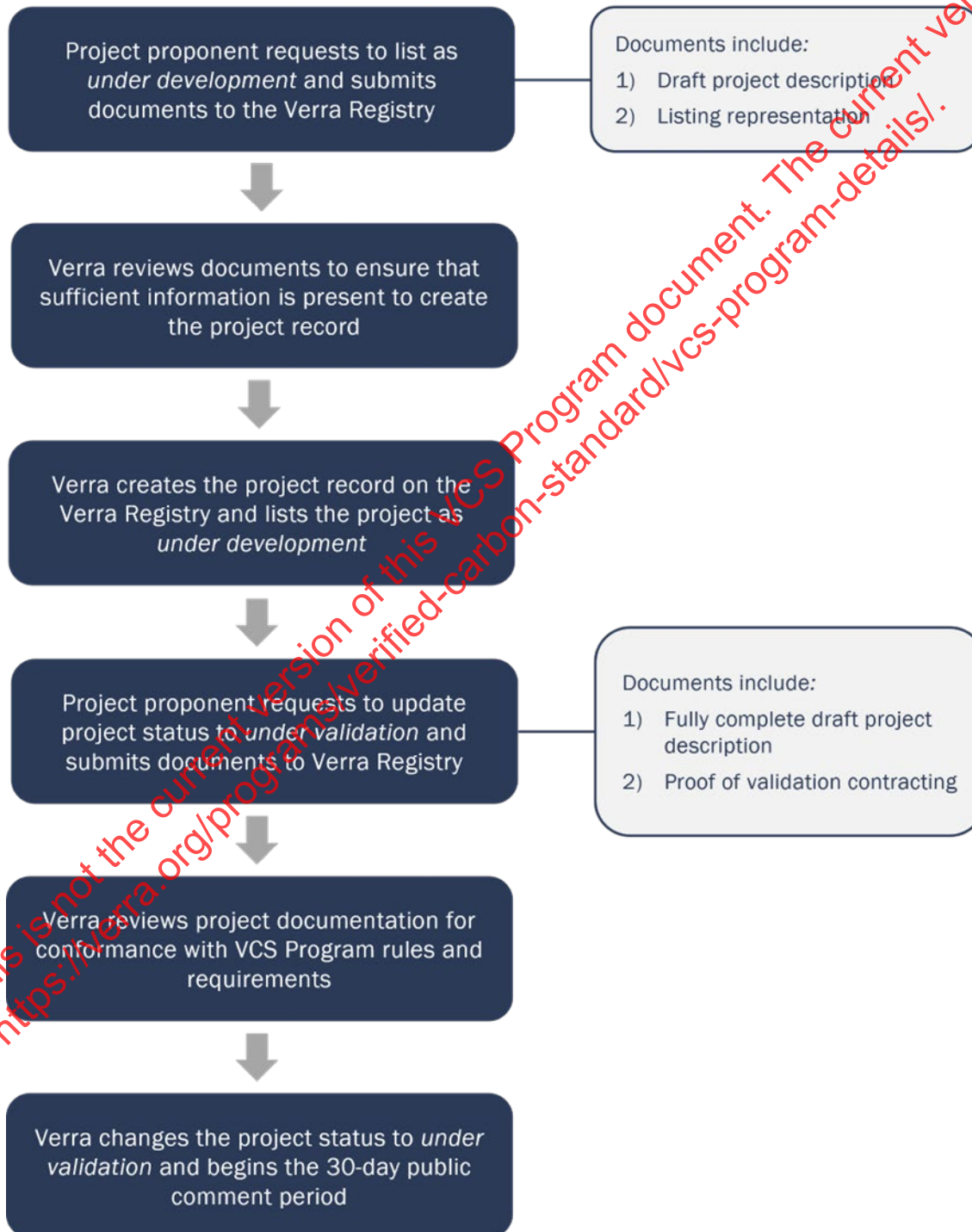
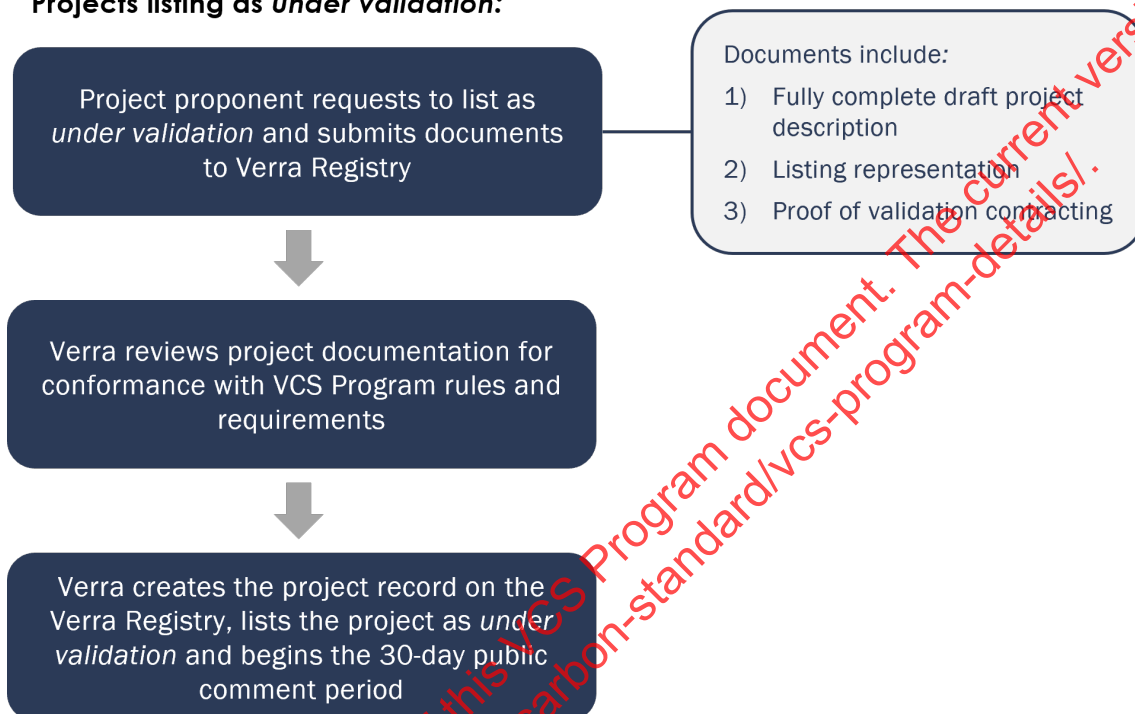


Diagram 3: Pipeline Listing Process – *Under Validation*

**Projects listing as *under validation*:**



### 3.1 Process

3.1.1 The only entities that may initiate the pipeline listing process are the project proponent, an entity to which the project proponent has assigned sole right to the GHG emission reductions (reductions) and carbon dioxide removals (removals) for the entire project crediting period, an entity who has been authorized by the project proponent(s) to list the project on the project pipeline or the authorized representative of any of these entities.

3.1.2 To initiate the pipeline listing process, such entities shall submit the required documents for listing to the Verra Registry and change the status of the project to *pipeline listing requested*. Pipeline projects shall be listed as either *under development* or *under validation*. Projects *under development* are those which have not yet contracted a validation/verification body to perform validation. Projects *under validation* are those that have contracted a validation/verification body to perform validation and are ready to begin the validation process.

3.1.3 To list a project as *under development*, such entities shall submit the following to the Verra Registry:

- 1) A draft project description which shall include (at a minimum) the cover page and drafts of Sections 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6, 1.8, 1.9, 1.10, 1.11, 1.12, 1.14, 1.15, 1.16, 1.17,



1.18, 3.1 and 3.2, of the VCS Project Description Template<sup>1</sup>, or the equivalent Sections in the VCS Joint Project Description & Monitoring Report Template.

*Note - Indicative information is sufficient (e.g., the proposed approach for establishing project ownership, rather than the full rationale and evidence that will be submitted for validation).*

2) A listing representation.

3.1.4 To list a project as *under validation*, the following shall be submitted to Verra:

- 1) A project description with all sections of the VCS Project Description Template or the VCS Joint Project Description & Monitoring Report Template completed.
- 2) Proof of contracting of the validation, provided in accordance with Section 4.2.11.
- 3) A listing representation.

3.1.5 The project proponent shall pay the pipeline listing fee before Verra will process the listing request submission. Where the project listed as *under development* first, the fee will not be required when the project subsequently requests to list the project as *under validation*.

*Note – Pipeline projects may either apply an approved methodology or a methodology that is under development. Where a methodology under development is applied, the project description shall provide a reference for the draft version of the methodology.*

3.1.6 Projects participating in multiple Verra programs (e.g. the VCS Program and the CCB Program) may submit joint templates only if the project proponent is making concurrent requests under the VCS Program and the other program(s).

3.1.7 The following applies with respect to the listing representation:

- 1) The Verra website provides the template for the listing representation. The template shall not be altered other than to fill in the project-specific details.
- 2) The listing representation shall be properly executed as a deed in accordance with applicable local laws and the organization's own constitutional documents (e.g., signature by directors and requirement of company seals).
- 3) Where more than one individual or organization can claim rights in respect of the execution of the listing representation, and there exists no other (single) entity which may execute the listing representation, all such individuals and organizations shall execute the listing representation, using the appropriate template available on the Verra website for pipeline projects with multiple project proponents, as applicable. Note that such representations may be executed in any necessary number of counterparts.

3.1.8 All project documents shall be submitted to the Verra Registry in electronic format.

<sup>1</sup> Section numbers are based on the VCS Project Description Template, v4.3

3.1.9 Where a project proponent requests to list a project as *under development*, Verra conducts a completeness review of the submitted project documents to ensure that:

- 1) The relevant sections of the *VCS Project Description Template* have been completed in accordance with Sections 3.1.1.
- 2) The listing representation has been signed by the relevant responsible parties.

Any issues raised as a result of the Verra completeness review shall be addressed before the project listing request can proceed.

3.1.10 Where a project is requesting to list as, or update its status to *under validation*, Verra reviews the submitted project documents to ensure that sufficient information is present for the project to undergo public comment. Any issues raised as a result of the Verra review shall be addressed before the project can proceed to public comment.

3.1.11 The project proponent uploads all relevant documents to the Verra Registry. The project proponent shall use all the information from the project documents to create the project record in the Verra Registry. The status of the project is set to *under development* or *under validation*, as appropriate. All documents submitted are posted publicly, except for commercially sensitive information and proof of contracting.

3.1.12 For projects listed initially as *under development*, the project status shall be updated to *under validation* by submitting the required documentation set out in Section 3.1.4 (noting that a second listing representation is not required) in order to undergo public comment, as set out in Sections 3.1.13 – 3.1.14, below. Verra undertakes the relevant checks set out in Section 3.1.9.

3.1.13 Projects shall undergo a 30-day public comment period. The public comment period starts on the date on which the project status is updated to *under validation* or the date on which the project is listed on the pipeline as *under validation*.

3.1.14 Any comments shall be submitted through the project's page on the Verra Registry. Respondents shall provide their name, organization, country, and email address. At the end of the public comment period, Verra provides all comments received to the project proponent. Verra posts a public summary of all comments received during the period during the public comment period. The project proponent shall address such comments as set out in the *VCS Standard*.

3.1.15 Verra stores the electronic and signed original project documents in its record-keeping system for a minimum period of 12 years from the date the project is listed on the project pipeline.

3.1.16 Where a pipeline project successfully completes validation, it may progress to project registration on the Verra Registry, following the procedures set out in Section 4.

3.1.17 Where a pipeline project does not successfully complete validation within the timeframes specified in the *VCS Standard*, Verra changes the project status to inactive. Inactive projects that were most recently listed as *under development* shall request listing as *under validation* to

be reactivated. Inactive projects that were most recently listed as *under validation* shall request registration in order to reactivate. Inactive projects shall apply the latest version of the applicable methodology and VCS Program rules when reactivating.

- 3.1.18 Where Verra has reason to believe that false or misleading project information has been submitted, Verra seeks clarification from the project proponent. Where the project proponent cannot satisfactorily justify the information provided for the pipeline project, Verra reserves the right to delist the project.
- 3.1.19 Where Verra deems the pipeline listing request is vexatious, frivolous, or an abuse of process, Verra may reject the project without providing findings to the project.
- 3.1.20 Where Verra deems, at any point during the pipeline listing request process, that the project does not clearly demonstrate conformance with the VCS Program rules, Verra communicates the issue(s) to the project proponent and stops the review process. The project proponent may submit updated documentation addressing the issue(s) and request that Verra resumes the review. Where the project proponent fails to address the issue(s) within 12 months of such communication the project status is changed to inactive (see 3.1.17).
- 3.1.21 Where Verra determines, at any point during the pipeline listing request process, that the project does not conform with the VCS Program rules, Verra will:
- 1) Reject the project.
  - 2) Change the status of the project to *rejected by administrator*.
  - 3) Make the project page public and include information on the reason for rejection.

## 4 PROJECT REGISTRATION PROCESS

The following steps are required under the VCS Program to register a project and issue VCUs, and these are presented in detail in this Section 4:

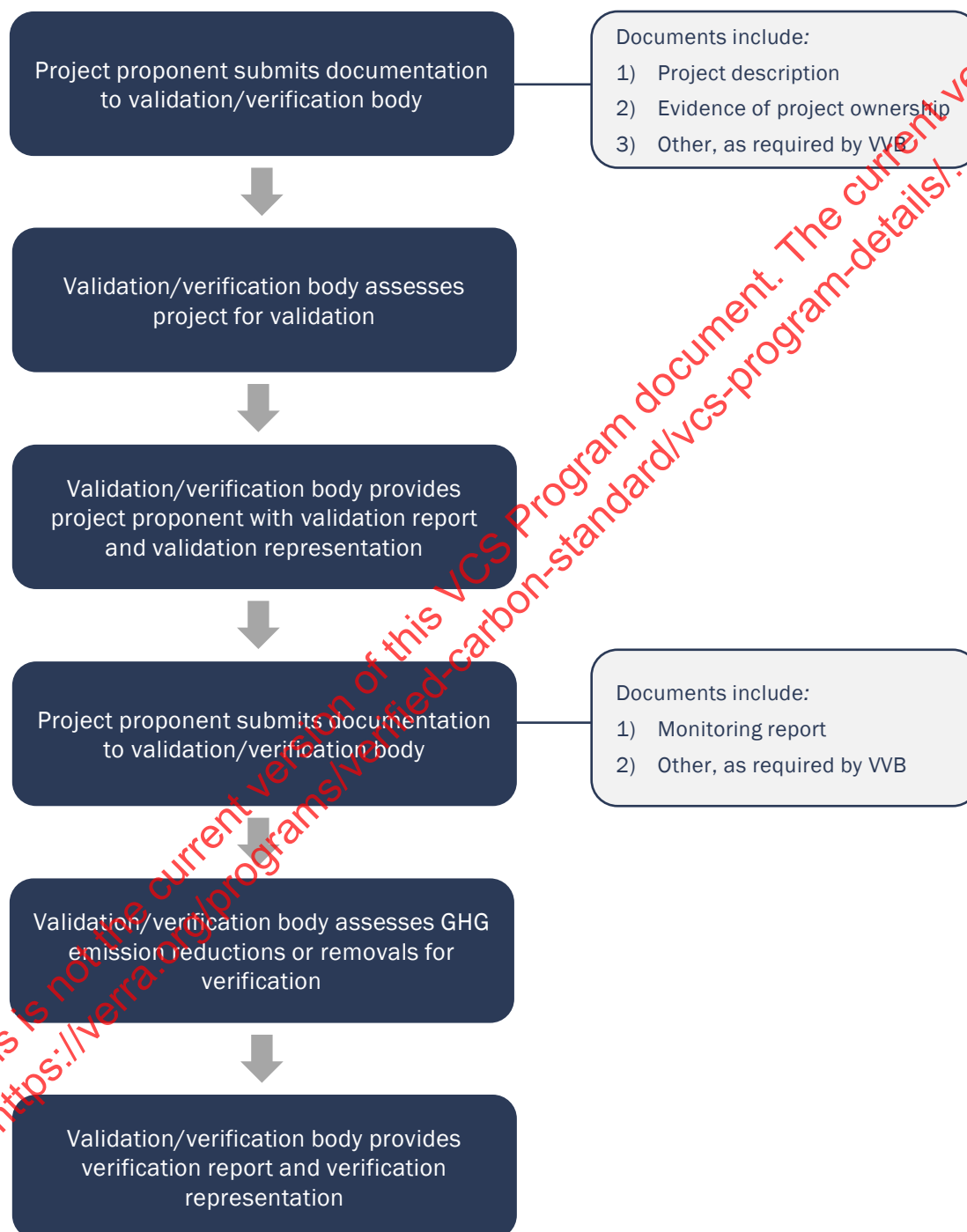
- 1) Project validation and verification
- 2) Registration and verification approval request
- 3) Project review
- 4) Project registration and initial VCU issuance
- 5) Periodic VCU issuance
- 6) VCU retirements and cancellations
- 7) Project maintenance

For the purposes of this document, the project registration process refers to all or any of these six steps, as the case may be. The entity that initiates the project registration process may terminate the process at any one of these steps if it decides it does not want to register the project or have VCUs issued.

### 4.1 Step 1: Project Validation and Verification

The project shall be validated, and the GHG emission reductions or carbon dioxide removals verified as set out in Diagram 4 below.

**Diagram 4: Validation of Project and Verification of Reductions or Removals**



4.1.1 The requirements for validation and verification, including the requirements for validation/verification bodies, are set out in the *VCS Standard* and the *VCS Program Guide*. Projects shall complete validation prior to requesting registration and complete verification prior to requesting verification approval. The process for requesting registration and verification

approval, including the documents required to be submitted for each type of request, are set out in Section 4.2 below.

- 4.1.2 Where a verification period includes more than one calendar year, the Verra Registry will display separate vintages for each calendar year within one verification period.

*Note – For AFOLU ARR and IFM projects with harvesting, if any year within the verification period has a negative number of reductions or removals, zero VCUs will be issued for that year and a net total amount of VCUs will be issued in the next year that sufficient reductions and removals are achieved to compensate for the negative year(s).*

#### Box 1. Example of VCU issuance in separate vintages

For example, where the verification period is 1 January 2020 to 30 June 2021, the project proponent would have one VCU issuance record for the 2020 VCUs and a separate VCU issuance record for the 2021 VCUs. The VCUs assigned each vintage would be based on the breakdown of reductions and removals in the monitoring report. The two vintages would be 1 January 2020 – 31 December 2020 and 1 January 2021 – 30 June 2021.

## 4.2 Step 2: Registration and Verification Approval

The project is presented to the Verra Registry for registration and verification approval as set out in Diagram 5 below.

**Diagram 5: Project Registration Request**



- 4.2.1 The only entities that may initiate the project registration process are the project proponent, an entity to which the project proponent has assigned sole right to the reductions or removals for

the entire project crediting period, or the authorized representative of either of these entities. No other entity can initiate the project registration process.

4.2.2 Registration of a project may be requested when the project has completed project validation but before the first verification of reductions or removals.

4.2.3 Where the project is presented for registration without verification approval, the relevant documents that shall be provided to the Verra Registry are:

- 1) The project description and registration representation.
- 2) The validation report and the validation representation.
- 3) The non permanence risk report, if applicable
- 4) Emission reduction and removal calculation spreadsheets.
- 5) Proof of right or proof of contracting, where relevant.
- 6) Any annexes or supporting documents referenced in the project description.

4.2.4 Where the project is presented for verification approval, the relevant documents that should be provided to the Verra Registry are:

- 1) The monitoring report and the issuance representation.
- 2) The verification report and the verification representation.
- 3) The non permanence risk report, if applicable
- 4) The emission reduction and removal calculation spreadsheets.
- 5) Any annexes or supporting documents referenced in project documentation.
- 6) Proof of right or proof of contracting, where relevant.
- 7) Evidence and representation with respect to the cancelation of GHG credits under another GHG program.

4.2.5 Where the project proponent requests registration and verification approval together, the relevant documents that shall be provided to the Verra Registry are:

- 1) The project description and registration representation.
- 2) The validation report and the validation representation.
- 3) The non permanence risk report, if applicable
- 4) The monitoring report and the issuance representation.
- 5) The verification report and the verification representation.
- 6) The emission reduction and removal calculation spreadsheets.
- 7) Any annexes or supporting documents referenced in project documentation.

- 8) Proof of right or proof of contracting, where relevant.
  - 9) Evidence and representation with respect to the cancelation of GHG credits under another GHG program.
- 4.2.6 Where the project proponent reassesses the project baseline as part of a verification approval request, in addition to the documents listed in Section 4.2.4, the relevant documents that shall be provided to the Verra Registry are:
- 1) An updated project description that includes updated Sections 1.14, 1.15, 1.16, 3.1, 3.2, 3.4, 4.1 – 4.4, 5.1<sup>2</sup> to reflect any changes as required in accordance with baseline reassessment requirements set out in the *VCS Standard*, and any updates to the baseline emissions quantifications.
  - 2) A verification report that includes an assessment of the baseline reassessment in Section 3.4.
- 4.2.7 All documents submitted to Verra as part of the request, comments received, and documents Verra issues as part of project request will be public, except for commercially sensitive information and proof of contracting. Where a project document contains commercially sensitive information, the project proponent may submit a public and a private version of the document. The information in the private document shall meet the definition of “Commercially Sensitive Information” in the VCS Program Definitions.
- 4.2.8 Projects participating in multiple Verra programs (e.g., the VCS Program and the CCB Program) may submit joint templates only if the project proponent is making concurrent requests under the VCS Program and the other program(s).
- 4.2.9 Where a project description deviation has been applied, and a revised project description is issued, such project description shall be provided to the Verra Registry. Likewise, where a project crediting period has been renewed, the revised project description and new validation report and validation representation shall be provided to the Verra Registry.
- 4.2.10 The following shall apply with respect to the project proponent representations:
- 1) The Verra website provides the templates for the registration representation, issuance representation and all other project proponent representations. The templates shall not be altered other than to fill in the project specific details.
  - 2) The project proponent representations shall be properly executed as deeds in accordance with applicable local laws and the organization’s own constitutional documents (e.g., signature by directors, requirement of company seals).
  - 3) Where more than one individual or organization can claim rights in respect of the execution of the project proponent representations, all such individuals and organizations shall

<sup>2</sup> Section numbers are based on the VCS Project Description Template, v4.3.



execute the project proponent representations, using the appropriate templates available on the Verra website for projects with multiple project proponents, as applicable. Note that such representations may be executed in any necessary number of counterparts.

- 4.2.11 Proof of contracting shall be provided to the Verra Registry where required, as set out in Section 3.1.4. The project proponent or its authorized representative shall provide evidence of the legal agreement between the project proponent (or other entity that has contracted the validation/verification body to undertake validation) and the validation/verification body, in relation to validation of the project. A final legal agreement, letter of intent, memorandum of understanding or term sheet shall serve as proof of contracting. Such evidence of proof of contracting shall be uploaded to the Verra Registry as a private document (for Verra internal auditing purposes) and therefore will not be publicly available.
- 4.2.12 There is no need to submit proof of right to the Verra Registry where the project proponent or its authorized representative is initiating the project registration process. Proof of right shall be submitted to the Verra Registry where an entity other than the project proponent or its authorized representative is initiating the project registration process. Evidencing proof of right is as set out below.
- 4.2.13 The entity initiating the project registration process or its authorized representative shall submit to the Verra Registry the legal agreement(s) transferring the right to the reductions or removals for the entire project crediting period to it from the project proponent. Where there are one or more intermediaries standing between the entity initiating the project registration process and the project proponent, Verra checks all the legal agreements documenting the complete chain of transfer of right to the reductions or removals to the entity from the project proponent. Legal agreement(s) shall be in English or shall be an official translation of the legal agreement(s).
- 4.2.14 In consideration of confidentiality, the entirety of the aforementioned legal agreement(s) need not be shown, but Verra undertakes the checks set out in Table 1 (if submitting an official translation of the legal agreement(s), only such information needs to be translated and shown to Verra).

**Table 1: Evidence for Proof of Right**

Information required	Verra Registry check
Names of the parties to the agreement	The parties are the entity initiating the project registration process (buyer or transferee) and the project proponent (seller or transferor), or where there is one or more intermediaries, the parties shall be the relevant parties in the chain of ownership between project proponent and the entity initiating the project registration process
Date of the agreement	Appropriate to the project and transaction subject of the legal agreement
Project name	Same as the project that the entity is presenting for registration
Project crediting period	The project crediting period is defined, with a start date and duration (or end date) specified
Clause that transfers the right to the GHG emission reductions or carbon dioxide removals between the parties to the agreement	The clause transfers the right to the GHG emission reductions or carbon dioxide removals generated by the project for the project crediting period
Signatures of parties to the legal agreement	The legal agreement is signed by both parties to the agreement

4.2.15 The VCS Program allows projects registered under an approved GHG program (e.g., CDM) to also register with the VCS Program. In such cases, the documentation required for the project registration process is the same as required for projects registering under the VCS Program only, but noting the following:

- 1) The project description from the approved GHG program and a project description using the *VCS Project Description Template* with the relevant sections complete, as set out in the *VCS Standard*, shall be submitted.
- 2) Where project proponents have received or are seeking credit for reductions and removals from a project activity under the VCS Program, evidence requirements of no double issuance as outlined in the *VCS Standard* shall apply. If the credits have been cancelled, the project proponent or its authorized representative shall also sign and submit to the Verra Registry a VCU conversion representation.

- 3) AFOLU projects are subject to the rules and requirements for non-permanence risk analysis and buffer withholding set out in Section 4.7.1. The buffer withholding percentage determined by the *AFOLU Non-Permanence Risk Tool* shall be applied to the proportion of GHG credits to be issued under the VCS Program (only).
  - 4) Where a loss event or a reversal occurs, the project shall conform with the VCS Program rules for reporting a loss event and holding and canceling credits set out in Section 5.3. Such reporting, holding, and canceling shall apply to the proportion of credits (GHG credits and buffer credits) granted to date under the VCS Program. For example, if 50 percent of the total credits (GHG credits and, where applicable, buffer credits) granted to the project to date have been granted under the VCS Program and a loss event results in a reversal of reductions or removals achieved to date (in relation to which credits have been issued and buffered), buffer credits would be canceled to cover 50 percent of the reversal.
- 4.2.16 Where the project is registered with both the VCS Program and the CDM, and where temporary GHG credits have been issued to the project (i.e., temporary certified emission reductions (tCERs) and long-term certified emission reductions (lCERs)) which have expired without having been sold or retired, such credits may be issued under the VCS Program in accordance with the requirements in Section 4.2.18. Where temporary credits have expired, evidence of their expiration shall be provided.
- 4.2.17 The VCS Program also allows projects registered under a non-approved GHG program to also register with the VCS Program. In such cases, the documentation required for the project registration process is the same as required for projects registering under the VCS Program only. Where project proponents have received or are seeking credit for reductions and removals from a project activity under the VCS Program and another GHG program, evidence requirements of no double issuance as outlined in the *VCS Standard* shall apply.
- 4.2.18 The VCS Program allows projects registered under an approved GHG program (e.g. CDM) to cancel GHG credits issued under the approved GHG program and have them issued as VCUs in the Verra Registry. Project activities shall be eligible under the VCS Program (i.e., included within the scope of the VCS Program, as set out in the *VCS Standard*) and meet the conditions set out in Appendix 1 in order to be eligible for such conversion. In such cases, the following applies:
- 1) An official notification or other evidence of cancellation of the GHG credits under the approved GHG program and a signed VCU conversion representation shall be provided to the Verra Registry.
  - 2) Where the project is registered under the CDM, those documents required for project registration and Certified Emission Reduction (CER) issuance under the CDM shall be provided to the Verra Registry. Verra creates a project record on the Verra Registry, noting that such record shall have the status *credits transferred from other GHG program*. Such projects are not considered to be registered under the VCS Program and are not eligible for

- verification under the VCS Program without first conforming with the procedures for registration with the VCS Program and an approved GHG program set out in Section 4.2.15
- 3) Where the project is registered under the Joint Implementation (JI) program, the project shall also be registered with the VCS Program before Emission Reduction Units (ERUs) may be converted into VCU<sup>3</sup>. Following registration with the VCS Program, such projects shall provide those documents required for ERU issuance under the JI program to the Verra Registry.
  - 4) Where the project is registered under the Climate Action Reserve (CAR), those documents required for registration and Climate Reserve Tonne (CRT) issuance shall be provided to the Verra Registry. Verra creates a project record on the Verra Registry, noting that such record shall have the status *credits transferred from other GHG program*. Such projects are not considered to be registered under the VCS Program and are not eligible for verification under the VCS Program without first conforming with the procedures for registration with the VCS Program and an approved GHG program set out in Section 4.2.15
  - 5) Where the project is an AFOLU project, the project shall also be registered with the VCS Program before GHG credits issued under an approved GHG program may be converted into VCUs. The buffer withholding percentage for such projects shall be applied to the number of GHG credits being converted.
- 4.2.19 Where a project or project activity is seeking or planning to receive other forms of GHG credit and/or GHG-related environmental credit, evidence requirements of no double claiming as outlined in the VCS Standard shall apply.
- 4.2.20 For grouped projects and AFOLU projects with geographic areas characterized by one or more geodetic polygons, the project proponent shall provide the geodetic information to the Verra Registry in the format specified in the VCS Standard.
- 4.2.21 For grouped projects, AFOLU projects, and other projects with risk of reversal or loss, the project proponent shall submit monitoring and verification reports in chronological order.
- 4.2.22 The Verra website maintains information on validation/verification bodies, and Verra checks the following:
- 1) The validation/verification body that conducted validation of the project was accredited for the relevant sectoral scope for validation at the date(s) on which the validation report and validation representation were issued.

<sup>3</sup> The flexibility inherent within the JI program (e.g., use of an approved methodology not required) means it is necessary for JI projects to register with the VCS Program in order to determine whether ERUs issued to such projects are eligible for conversion into VCUs.

- 2) The validation/verification body that conducted verification of the project was accredited for the relevant sectoral scope for verification at the date(s) on which the verification report and verification representation were issued.

4.2.23 The Project Registration Request Review Fee shall be paid before Verra will process the project registration request.

### 4.3 Step 3: Project Review

Verra reviews all project requests. Verra will not begin the project review until the request is submitted to the Verra Registry and Verra confirms all the relevant documents are complete. If all the relevant documents are not submitted or the documents are not complete, Verra contacts the project proponent (or authorized representative) to identify the outstanding issues.

As part of the review, Verra may identify non-conformances within project documentation, called findings. Verra approves the request when no non-conformances are identified. Where non-conformances have been identified, the validation/verification body and the project proponent must address the findings before the request can be approved, resulting in another round of review.

The project review process does not replace the validation or verification; rather, it checks that the validation/verification body has appropriately assessed and has fully described how it has assessed the project's conformance with VCS Program rules. The project review process is set out in Diagram 6 below.

When submitting a verification approval request, it is not necessary to immediately request issuance of VCUs. VCUs may be issued upon request to the Verra Registry after verification is approved.

Further details on the project review process are provided in this section.

**Diagram 6: Review of Project Registration and Verification Approval Request**



## Project Review Process

**4.3.1** Verra undertakes a review of the project documents to assess conformance with the VCS Program rules and applied methodology. Where no findings are raised during the project review, Verra notifies the project proponent (or its authorized representative) and validation/verification body that the project registration or verification request is approved. Where findings are raised as part of the project review:

- 1) Verra notifies the validation/verification body, copying the project proponent (or its authorized representative) and provides a project review report detailing the findings as part of the first review round.
- 2) The validation/verification body shall address the findings in the project review report.

4.3.2 The validation/verification body shall respond to the findings in the project review report, as follows:

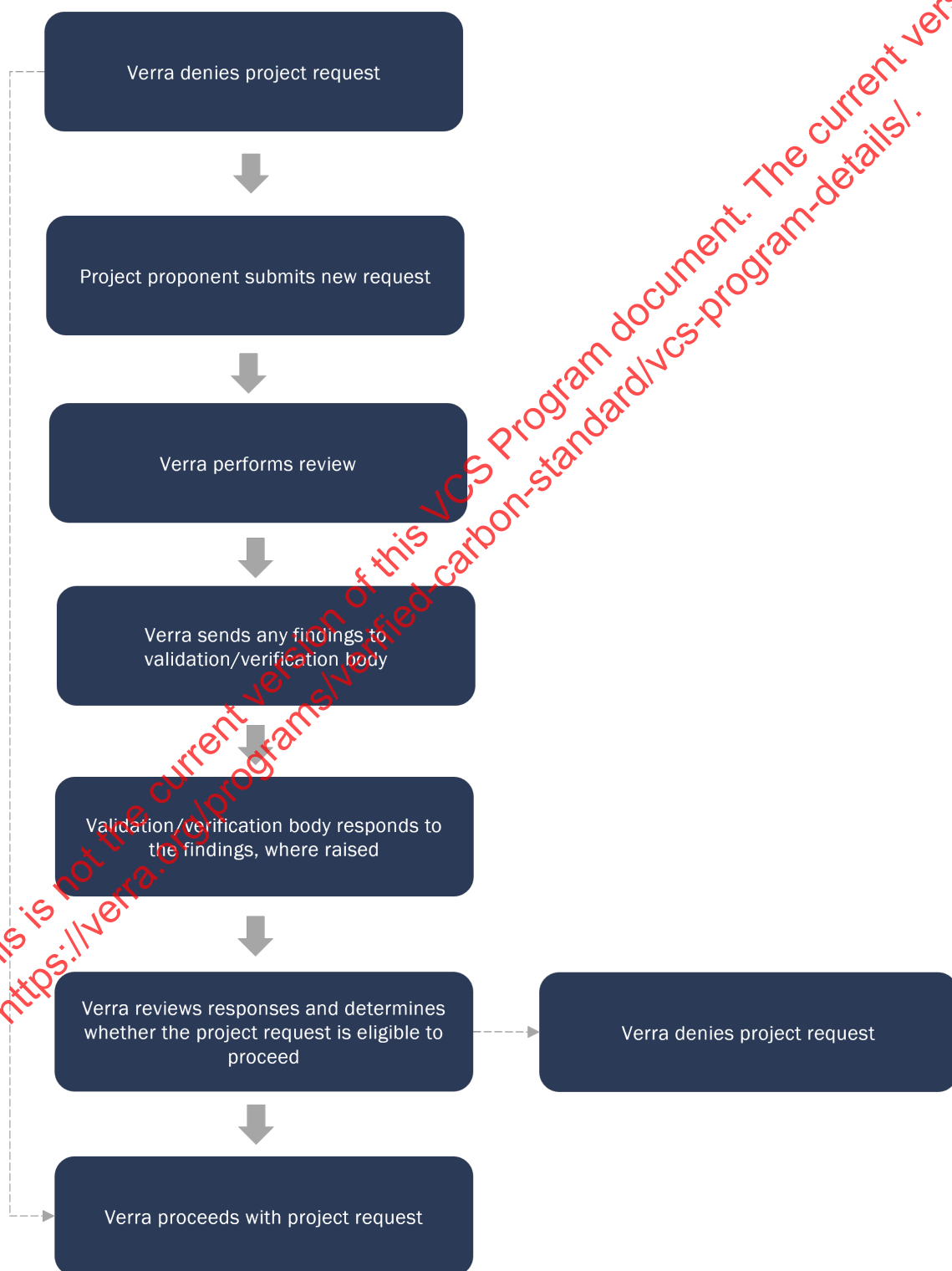
- 1) Undertake, or ensure that the project proponent undertakes, and validate or verify (as appropriate) revisions to the project documents where necessary,
- 2) Provide a written response to each finding, and
- 3) Submit all revised documents to Verra including track change and clean versions.

4.3.3 Where the findings are addressed to the satisfaction of Verra, Verra approves the request and notifies the project proponent (or authorized representative) and validation/verification body.

4.3.4 Where the findings are not addressed to the satisfaction of Verra, Verra may raise another review round to the validation verification body with the unresolved findings, up to three review rounds.

*Note – For the purpose of determining adherence to deadlines with respect to methodology validity and completion of validation and verification, the dates of the project documents submitted under the initial registration or verification approval request will be used (rather than the dates of the revised documents).*

Diagram 7: Review of Project Registration and Verification Approval Request





## Project Request Denial Process

- 4.3.5 Verra may deny a project request at any point during the review process under the following:
- 1) Where documentation is deemed incomplete, of unsatisfactory quality, or where immediate non-conformances with the VCS Program rules are identified.
  - 2) The project proponent or validation/verification body significantly alters the project documents outside the scope of the findings issued by Verra.
  - 3) Where findings are not satisfactorily closed after three rounds of review.
  - 4) No response is received from the validation/verification body within 60 days from the date the project review report was issued.
- 4.3.6 Where a request is denied:
- 1) Verra notifies the project proponent and uploads the project review report (if applicable) and a letter to the Verra Registry stating the reason that the request was denied.
  - 2) Verra changes the registry status to the relevant denial status (e.g., *registration request denied*).
  - 3) A new request may be submitted after 90 days from the date of denial.
- 4.3.7 To submit a new request the project proponent or its authorized representative must:
- 1) Email [registry@verra.org](mailto:registry@verra.org), stating the project is submitting a new request following a denial.
  - 2) Submit all relevant project documents to the Verra Registry as set out in Sections 4.2.3, 4.2.5, and 4.2.5 and a letter detailing the steps taken to address the reasons for denial.
- 4.3.8 Project proponents submitting a new registration request shall:
- 1) Pay the Project Registration Request Review Fee, which shall be paid before Verra processes the new request.
  - 2) Submit the new request no later than one year from the date the request was denied. Where the new request is not submitted within one year of denial, the project is rejected, and the status is changed to *rejected by administrator*.
- 4.3.9 Where the findings are not addressed to the satisfaction of Verra after two denials at registration request, the project is rejected and the status is changed to *rejected by administrator*.
- 4.3.10 Project proponents shall submit a new crediting period renewal request within one year of denial, or the status is changed to inactive. Where the findings are not addressed to the satisfaction of Verra after two denials of a crediting period renewal request, the project status is changed to *inactive*.

## 4.4 Step 4: Project Registration and Initial VCU Issuance

The project is registered and the VCUs are issued on the Verra Registry as set out in Diagram 8.

**Diagram 8: Project Registration and Initial VCU Issuance**



- 4.4.1 Where the project is presented for registration without verification approval, the project proponent shall upload all documents following the requirements in Sections 4.2.3 and 4.2.7.
- 4.4.2 Where the project is presented for registration and verification approval, the project proponent shall upload all documents following the requirements in Sections 4.2.5 and 4.2.7.
- 4.4.3 The project's geodetic co-ordinates shall be entered onto the project record on the Verra Registry. The Verra Registry checks that there are no other projects within a five-kilometer

radius. Where there are projects within a five-kilometer radius, Verra confirms that the project being presented for registration is unique and not one of the overlapping projects, noting that it is possible to have two projects operated by the same project proponent at the same location (they must be different activities described in separate project descriptions, with separate validation and verification). Verra may do this on its own if sufficient information is available or by contacting the validation/verification body of the project being presented for registration who shall confirm that it is unique and not one of the overlapping projects. Where Verra is unable to confirm uniqueness of the project, the project cannot be registered.

4.4.4 VCUs can be issued incrementally from a verification report (i.e., when the project proponent or its authorized representative requests VCU issuance, it can request issuance of part of the verification report volume and request issuance of the remaining volume at a later date). The following shall apply:

- 1) The entity requesting VCU issuance shall instruct the Verra Registry that it is requesting VCU issuance for only part of the verification report volume and shall specify the volume for which it is requesting VCU issuance.
- 2) The VCU issuance levy and any fees charged by Verra are payable on the volume of VCUs which are issued, not the total verification report volume.
- 3) Verra does not specify thresholds or timeframes on incremental VCU issuance (e.g., the total number of incremental VCU issuances that can be made from a verification report and the elapsed time between first and last VCU issuance from the verification report). Verra is entitled to apply such thresholds and timeframes as it deems necessary.
- 4) The Verra Registry displays the total verification report volume, the volume of VCUs issued to date and the history of VCU issuances with respect to the verification report.
- 5) The entity requesting VCU issuance does not have to request VCU issuance of the total verification report volume (i.e., it can choose to only request VCU issuance for a part of the verification report volume and never request issuance of the remaining verification report volume).
- 6) VCUs are not subject to any discounting with respect to their fungibility. VCU owners, programs or other climate change efforts that accept VCUs may apply a discount at their own discretion.

4.4.5 Where the project has canceled GHG credits issued under an approved GHG program and is having them issued as VCUs (as set out in Section 4.2.18), the project reference number under the approved GHG program shall be noted on the project record on the Verra Registry.

4.4.6 The VCU issuance levy shall be collected by Verra before VCUs are deposited into an account.

4.4.7 The VCS Program allows VCUs to be labeled to designate that the VCS project has met the requirements of another certification standard (certification labels), or that the VCUs are eligible or approved for use in a national, sectoral, or investor-specific market (market labels).

The Verra website provides the list of current VCU labels and the procedure for attaining such VCU labels.

- 4.4.8 To have VCUs labeled, project proponents shall submit documentation to the Verra Registry demonstrating that a project has satisfied the requirements for the label for the entire VCS vintage period for which VCU labels are requested. The covered period may consist of multiple VCS vintage or verification periods. Labels may be applied retroactively, depending on the label type.
- 1) For a certification label, the requirements for the label include the rules and requirements of the other certification standard.
  - 2) For a market label, the requirements for the label include any label-specific guidance and any national, sectoral, or investor-specific requirements.

## 4.5 Step 5: Periodic VCU Issuance

There may be issuance of VCUs subsequent to the initial issuance of VCUs to the project as set out in Diagram 9 below.

**Diagram 9: Periodic VCU Issuance**



4.5.1 All and any periodic VCU issuances shall be initiated by the project proponent stated on the project record in the Verra Registry or its authorized representative. Where another entity wants to become the project proponent (and therefore assume the roles and responsibilities of a project proponent with respect to the Verra Registry), the process set out in Section 7 shall be

followed. The new project proponent on the project record in the Verra Registry or its authorized representative can then initiate VCU issuance.

## 4.6 Step 6: VCU Retirements and Cancellations

The Verra Registry displays the status of every VCU issued under the VCS Program. VCUs may have a status of active, retired or canceled. Note that VCU retirement and cancellation have specific meanings, as set out in the *VCS Program Definitions*.

The process for retiring active VCUs is set out in Sections 4.6.1 - 4.6.4 below. The process for canceling active VCUs is set out in Sections 4.6.5 - 4.6.8 below.

4.6.1 VCUs may be retired as set out in Diagram 10 below.

**Diagram 10: VCU Retirement**



4.6.2 All and any VCU retirements shall be initiated by the registry account holder or its authorized representative.

4.6.3 The registry account holder or its authorized representative may execute a VCU retirement through its Verra Registry account. The Verra Registry records the details of all VCU retirements.

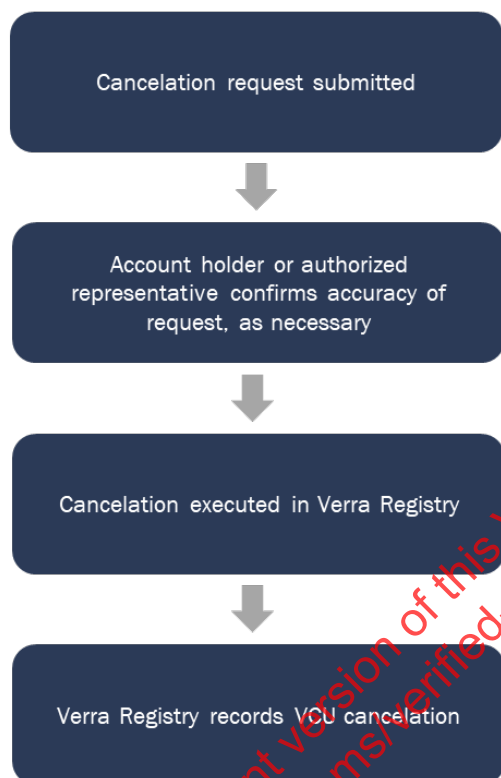
4.6.4 VCUs can be retired incrementally from a registry accountholder's VCU holdings (i.e., when the VCU holder or its authorized representative requests VCU retirement, it can request retirement of part of the VCU holdings and request retirement of any or all of the remaining holdings at a later date). In such cases, the following shall apply:

- 1) The registry account holder or its authorized representative shall designate the specific set of VCUs for retirement through its Verra Registry account.
- 2) Verra does not specify thresholds or timeframes on incremental VCU retirement (e.g., the total number of incremental VCU retirements that can be made from a registry accountholder's VCU holdings and the elapsed time between first and last VCU retirement).

from those holdings). Verra is entitled to apply such thresholds and timeframes as it deems necessary.

4.6.5 VCU may be canceled as set out in Diagram 11 below.

**Diagram 11: VCU Cancellation**



4.6.6 The registry account holder, its authorized representative, the other GHG program in which the registry account holder is participating or Verra may initiate a VCU cancellation. Note that the initiator and recipient of a VCU cancellation request depends on the specific circumstances of the cancellation (e.g., where VCUs are being converted into another form of GHG credit, the cancellation request may be submitted to Verra by the other GHG program in which the registry account holder is participating).

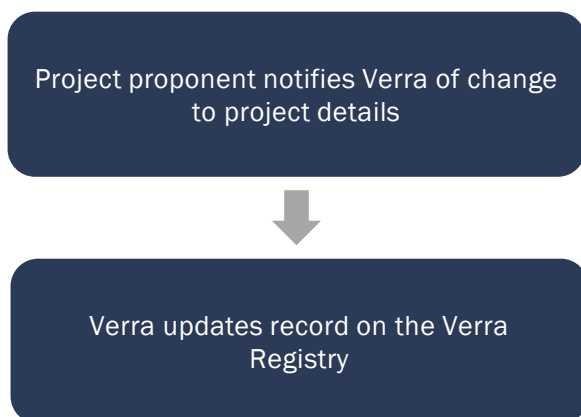
4.6.7 The registry account holder or its authorized representative may be asked to confirm the details of the VCU cancellation request.

4.6.8 VCUs are canceled in the Verra Registry and the Verra Registry records the details of all VCU cancellations.

## 4.7 Step 7: Project Maintenance

Project details may be updated as set out in Diagram 12 below.

Diagram 12: Project Maintenance



4.7.1 Where a project fails to submit a verification report to the Verra Registry within five years of its last verification, the following applies:

- 1) Verra sends written communication to the project proponent to request evidence that the project is still active despite not having verified.
- 2) The project proponent shall submit such evidence within one year of receiving the written communication from Verra.
  - a) Evidence may take the form of a letter submitted by the project proponent to Verra and should explain in detail the status of the project, including an explanation as to why the project has not verified and, where relevant, why it should still be considered active.
  - b) The letter may be accompanied by any relevant documentation of activity implementation (e.g., photographic evidence, monitoring reports, contract for verification in the near future).
- 3) Where a letter is received, it shall be posted publicly to the Verra Registry and the project status in the registry shall be changed to *late to verify*.
- 4) Where no letter is received, the project status shall still be changed to *late to verify*, but will not benefit from an explanation being available to potential buyers and other stakeholders. The project proponent is encouraged to submit an updated letter annually.

*Note – Where a project has not verified because it has transitioned to another GHG program (e.g., integrated into a government program), its project status shall be changed to project transferred to other GHG program instead of late to verify.*

*Note – Where an AFOLU project fails to submit a verification report to the Verra Registry within five, ten and fifteen years of its last verification, buffer credits are put on hold or canceled (and the project status changed to inactive), as appropriate, per the requirements set out in Section 5.3.6, below.*

4.7.2 Where the project proponent wishes to withdraw the project from the VCS Program (e.g., in



order to transfer the project to another GHG program), the following applies:

- 1) The project proponent shall submit a letter (in English) on its organization letterhead to the Verra Registry, requesting that the project be withdrawn. Such letter shall include the project name, project ID, the reason for the withdrawal request and the signatures and contact information of all project proponents.
- 2) Verra reviews the withdrawal request and may request additional information prior to approving the request.
- 3) Upon approval, Verra updates the status of the project to *withdrawn*. The project information shall remain publicly available on the Verra Registry, but the project will not be able to issue VCUs.
- 4) In the case of an AFOLU project where VCUs have been previously issued, the following applies:
  - a) The project shall not be eligible for any release of buffer credits.
  - b) Where Verra confirms that the project has registered with another GHG program, all buffer credits associated with the project shall be canceled.
  - c) Where Verra is unable to confirm that the project has registered with another GHG program, buffer credits shall be canceled over time in accordance with the rules set out in Section 5.3.6 below.
- 5) Withdrawn projects may rejoin the VCS Program where the project proponent submits a letter to the Verra Registry requesting same. Such letter shall include the information specified in Section 4.7.1(1) above. Verra reviews the project to determine whether it is eligible to rejoin the VCS Program and notifies the project proponent of the outcome of the review. Where the project is eligible to rejoin the VCS Program, Verra updates the status of the project accordingly. Where the project is not eligible to rejoin the VCS Program, the project shall remain withdrawn.

## 5 AFOLU POOLED BUFFER ACCOUNT

The VCS Program addresses the non-permanence risk associated with AFOLU project activities by requiring projects to set aside non-tradable buffer credits to cover unforeseen losses in carbon stocks. The buffer credits from all projects are held in a single AFOLU pooled buffer account, which can be drawn upon in the event of a reversal in carbon stocks in any individual project.

### 5.1 Assignment of Buffer Credits at First Request for Issuance

At first VCU issuance, buffer credits shall be deposited into the AFOLU pooled buffer account, in accordance with the procedures below.

- 5.1.1 The number of credits to be deposited in the AFOLU pooled buffer account is determined by the non-permanence risk report assessed by the validation/verification body(s), in accordance with the requirements set out in the *VCS Standard*. The report establishes the non-permanence risk rating, and this percentage is applied to the net change in the project's carbon stocks (stated in the verification report) to determine the number of credits to be deposited in the AFOLU pooled buffer account.
- 5.1.2 Buffer credits are not issued a VCU serial number, nor are they considered to be VCUs. They are not subject to the VCU issuance levy.

### 5.2 Assignment and Release of Buffer Credits at Subsequent Approved Verification Requests

A portion of a project's buffer credits may be released to incentivize continued verification, risk mitigation, and recognize that certain project risks decrease over time.

- 5.2.1 Projects are eligible for buffer credit releases when the non-permanence risk rating in the latest approved verification report remains the same or decreases from the previous verification report. Buffer credit releases occur after the subsequent verification request is approved by Verra. Project proponents may request a buffer release within 3 months after Verra approves a verification request. The request must be sent via an email to [registry@verra.org](mailto:registry@verra.org). Buffer credits released from the AFOLU pooled buffer account will be issued as VCUs into the designated Verra Registry account upon payment of the VCU issuance levy.
- 5.2.2 The first buffer credit release shall be no sooner than five years after the first verification report was issued and approved by the registry for VCU issuance. Subsequent buffer credit releases shall not occur more than once every five years, even if verification reports are issued more frequently.
- 5.2.3 Where the five year interval set out in Section 5.2.2 has passed, and where the project's non-permanence risk rating of the latest approved verification period remains the same as the risk

rating of the previous approved verification report, a 15 percent “time release” of buffer credits is applied. This 15 percent time release shall be applied to the total number of buffer credits associated with the project to-date (i.e., the number of buffer credits previously held in the AFOLU pooled buffer account plus the number of buffer credits newly deposited).

- 5.2.4 Where the project’s non-permanence risk rating of the latest approved verification report is lower than the non-permanence risk rating at the previous verification report, the new risk rating retroactively applies to all reductions and removals formerly verified.

Previously deposited buffer credits that exceed the updated withholding percentage will be released and issued as VCU’s where the five-year interval set out in Section 5.2.2 has passed.

A 15 percent “time release” shall also be applied to the total number of buffer credits associated with the project to-date (i.e., the number of buffer credits previously held in the AFOLU pooled buffer account plus the number of buffer credits newly deposited).

- 5.2.5 Projects are not eligible for buffer credit releases when the non-permanence risk rating of the latest approved verification report is higher than the non-permanence risk rating of the previous approved verification report.

### 5.3 Cancellation and Holding of Buffer Credits

Buffer credits are canceled from the AFOLU pooled buffer account where there are negative reductions or removals associated with the project (as compared to the baseline), and are put on hold in certain situations, as outlined in this section.

- 5.3.1 Where a loss event occurs (see the *VCS Program Definitions* for the definition of a loss event), the project proponent shall:

- 1) Notify Verra via email within 30 days of discovering the loss event, and
- 2) Where VCUs have been previously issued, prepare and submit to [registry@verra.org](mailto:registry@verra.org) a loss event report within two years of discovering the loss event. Projects that do not submit a loss event report within two years of the loss event’s discovery date are not eligible to issue further VCUs until the report is submitted. Verra puts AFOLU pooled buffer account credits on hold, equivalent to the estimated loss in the loss event report.

- 5.3.2 When a loss event is detected during verification, the project proponent shall submit a loss event report before verification approval is requested.

- 5.3.3 The loss event report shall:

- 1) Be prepared using the *VCS Loss Event Report Template*.
- 2) Include a conservative estimate of the loss of previously verified reductions and removals due to losses in carbon stocks from the project. The estimate shall be based on monitoring of the full area affected by the loss event.

- 3) Be accompanied by a complete loss event representation signed by the project proponent. The template for the loss event representation is available on the Verra website.
- 4) Be verified by a validation/verification body. The verification may be completed as part of the subsequent verification.

5.3.4 The following applies with respect to the verification report submitted after a loss event:

- 1) Where the net GHG benefit of the project for the verification period is negative, a reversal has occurred (see the *VCS Program Definitions* for definition of reversal) and the following applies:
  - a) Where the total reversal is less than the number of credits put on hold after the submission of the loss event report, Verra cancels buffer credits equivalent to the reversal. Any remaining buffer credits shall be released from their on-hold status (though remain in the AFOLU pooled buffer account).
  - b) Where the reversal is greater than the number of credits put on hold after the submission of the loss event report, the full amount of buffer credits put on hold with respect to the submission of the loss event report shall be canceled, and additional buffer credits from the AFOLU pooled buffer account shall be canceled to fully account for the reversal.
- 2) Where the net GHG benefit for the verification period is positive (i.e., all losses have been made up over the verification period taking into account project GHG emissions, removals and leakage), a reversal has not occurred and buffer credits put on hold after the submission of the loss event report shall be released from their on-hold status (but shall remain in the AFOLU pooled buffer account).

5.3.5 The following applies with respect to the VCU issuance after a reversal:

- 1) Where the reversal is an unavoidable reversal (see the *VCS Program Definitions* for the definition of unavoidable reversal) the following applies:
  - a) GHG credits shall be deposited in the AFOLU pooled buffer account in an amount equivalent to the additional number of buffer credits canceled after the reversal, above what has been previously contributed by the project. For example, if the project previously contributed 100 buffer credits and 150 credits were canceled from the AFOLU pooled buffer account after a reversal, the project would deposit 50 buffer credits (to replenish the pool at large). Buffer credits deposited to replenish the pool after a reversal (50 in the example above) shall never be eligible for release back to the project.
  - b) Where further GHG credits are available for VCU issuance after replenishing the AFOLU pooled buffer account, additional buffer credits shall be deposited in the AFOLU pooled buffer account in accordance with Section 5.2 (applying the non-permanence risk rating only to those remaining GHG credits eligible for VCU issuance).

- 2) Where the reversal is an avoidable reversal (see the *VCS Program Definitions* for the definition of avoidable reversal), the following applies:
  - a) GHG credits shall be deposited in the AFOLU pooled buffer account in an amount equivalent to the full reversal. No further VCUs will be issued to the project or any other VCS project solely with the same project proponent, or combination of project proponents, until the deficit is remedied.
  - b) Where further GHG credits are available for VCU issuance after replenishing the AFOLU pooled buffer account, additional buffer credits shall be deposited in the AFOLU pooled buffer account in accordance with Section 5.2 (applying the non-permanence risk rating only to those remaining GHG credits available for VCU issuance).
- 5.3.6 Where a project fails to submit a verification report to the Verra Registry within five years of its last verification 50 percent of the buffer credits associated with the project shall be put on hold.
- 5.3.7 Where a project fails to submit a verification report within ten years, all its remaining buffer credits shall be put on hold.
- 5.3.8 Where no subsequent verification report has been submitted within a period of 15 years, and the project crediting period has not yet expired, buffer credits are canceled from the AFOLU pooled buffer account in an amount equivalent to the total number of VCUs issued to the project (including buffer credits put on hold) and the project's status will be changed to *inactive*.
- 5.3.9 Inactive projects shall apply the latest version of the applicable methodology and VCS Program rules and reassess the baseline when reactivating.
- 5.3.10 Where a project has not verified because it has transitioned to another GHG program (e.g., integrated into a government program), its status will be changed to project transferred to other GHG program instead of inactive, and the remaining balance of buffer credits is canceled.
- 5.3.11 Where buffer credits are put on hold because a project does not submit a verification report within five years of the previous verification, the project may re-claim buffer credits. A new verification report shall be submitted prior to the expiration of the project crediting period. Verra reassigns buffer credits that have been put on hold in accordance with the procedure set out in Section 5.1.1 above. The remaining balance of buffer credits associated with a project will be canceled at the end of the project crediting period.
- 5.3.12 Where a project has a crediting period of less than 40 years, and an avoidable reversal (see the *VCS Program Definitions* for the definition of avoidable reversal) occurs within 40 years of the project's start date, the following applies:
  - 1) The project proponent shall submit a loss event report to the Verra Registry within two years of reversal detection. The loss event report shall meet the requirements of Section 5.3.3.

- 2) The project proponent shall deposit GHG credits in the AFOLU pooled buffer account in an amount equivalent to the full reversal. No further VCU's will be issued to any other VCS project solely with the same project proponent, or combination of project proponents, until the deficit is remedied.

This is not the current version of this VCS Program document. The current version is at:  
<https://verra.org/programs/verified-carbon-standard/vcs-program-details/>.

## 6 QUALITY CONTROL OF REGISTERED PROJECTS

### 6.1 Process

6.1.1 Verra may, at its discretion, review registered projects and issued VCUs where it has concerns about adherence of the project to the VCS Program rules and the applied methodology. A review may be triggered by any of the following:

- 1) A validation/verification body performing a verification of a registered project identifies an error or quality issue in a previous validation or verification.
- 2) A project proponent identifies an error or quality issue after the registration or issuance of the project.
- 3) A stakeholder has concerns about a registered project<sup>4</sup>.
- 4) Verra itself identifies an error or quality issue, as part of routine operations.

6.1.2 Where a review is triggered, Verra notifies the project proponent (or its authorized representative) and the relevant validation/verification body of the review and may suspend further VCU issuance while the review is performed.

6.1.3 Where non-conformances are identified during the review, the validation/verification body shall provide a written response to findings in a project review report (e.g., corrective action requests or clarification requests) issued by Verra. Verra also suspends further VCU issuance, where it has not already done so.

*Note – Where the relevant validation/verification body is unable to respond due to reasons such as a cease of operations or accreditation, Verra may solicit a response to the findings from alternative entities such as the project proponent or another validation/verification body.*

6.1.4 The follow-up actions of the validation/verification body and/or project proponent shall depend on whether the relevant validation or verification was completed before, on or after 8 April 2014, and shall be as set out in Tables 3 and 4 below. In all cases, the relevant validation/verification body shall undertake a root cause analysis to identify why such quality issues occurred.

<sup>4</sup> Concerns may be raised, in confidence, with Verra at any time.

**Table 3: Actions for Validations and Verifications Completed Before 8 April 2014**

	Issues found, but no excess VCU issuance and no risk of future excess issuance	Issues found, with excess VCU issuance and/or risk of future excess issuance
<b>Project qualifies under program</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Validation/verification body shall conduct a root cause analysis</li> <li>2) Verra lifts suspension on VCU issuance</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Validation/verification body shall conduct a root cause analysis</li> <li>2) Validation/verification body or project proponent, as appropriate, shall revise project documents</li> <li>3) Verra lifts suspension on VCU issuance, upon acceptance of project document revisions</li> <li>4) Verra uploads revised project documents to the Verra Registry</li> </ol>
<b>Project does not qualify under program</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Validation/verification body shall conduct a root cause analysis</li> <li>2) No further VCU issuance is permitted</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Validation/verification body shall conduct a root cause analysis</li> <li>2) No further VCU issuance is permitted</li> </ol>

This is not the current version of this VCS Program document. The current version is at:  
<https://verra.org/programs/verified-carbon-standard/vcs-program-details/>



**Table 4: Actions for Validations and Verifications Completed on or After 8 April 2014**

	Issues found, but no excess VCU issuance and no risk of future excess issuance	Issues found, with excess VCU issuance and/or risk of future excess issuance
<b>Project qualifies under program</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Validation/verification body shall conduct a root cause analysis</li> <li>2) Validation/verification body or project proponent, as appropriate, shall revise project documents</li> <li>3) Verra lifts suspension on VCU issuance, upon acceptance of project document revisions</li> <li>4) Verra uploads revised project documents to the Verra Registry</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Validation/verification body shall conduct a root cause analysis</li> <li>2) Where significant performance issues are found, and as appropriate, disciplinary action shall be taken against the validation/verification body</li> <li>3) Validation/verification body or project proponent, as appropriate, shall revise project documents</li> <li>4) Project proponent may need to compensate for excess issuance (see Section 6.1.5)</li> <li>5) Verra lifts suspension on VCU issuance, upon acceptance of project document revisions by Verra</li> <li>6) Verra uploads revised project documents to the Verra Registry</li> </ol>
<b>Project does not qualify under program</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Validation/verification body shall conduct a root cause analysis</li> <li>2) Where significant performance issues are found, and as appropriate, disciplinary action shall be taken against the validation/verification body</li> <li>3) No further VCU issuance is permitted</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Validation/verification body shall conduct a root cause analysis</li> <li>2) Where significant performance issues are found, and as appropriate, disciplinary action shall be taken against the validation/verification body</li> <li>3) Project proponent may need to compensate for excess issuance (see Section 6.1.5)</li> <li>4) No further VCU issuance is permitted</li> </ol>

6.1.5 Where Verra determines that VCUs have been issued in excess of the correct amount, the following applies:

- 1) The project proponent is 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 the project, as a result of the fraudulent conduct, negligence, intentional

- act, recklessness, misrepresentation or mistake of the project proponent, as set out further in the issuance representation.
- 2) Any compensation for excess VCU issuance shall be through the following, with Verra using reasonable efforts to work with the project proponent to ensure that any adverse impacts on the project proponent are minimized to the extent possible.
    - a) Where the excess VCUs remain in the project proponent's Verra Registry account and it can be demonstrated that they have not been used for offsetting purposes, immediate cancellation of the VCUs.
    - b) Replacement of VCUs through immediate cancellation from subsequent issuances of VCUs to the project.
    - c) Purchase by the project proponent of an equivalent number of replacement VCUs, and cancellation of same, within 60 business days of receiving formal Verra notification of such required action.
  - 3) Where the project proponent fails to compensate for excess VCU issuance, Verra may take action against the project proponent, including applying sanctions with respect to its registry account activities until such time as the excess issuance has been compensated.

## 7 FURTHER INFORMATION

### 7.1 Communications Agreement

- 7.1.1 The purpose of the communications agreement is to designate an authorized representative. An authorized representative is appointed by the project proponent(s) or registry user(s) to act as an agent on their behalf with respect to a project and/or the registry user's account(s). Templates for communications agreements are available on the Verra website.
- 7.1.2 Where there are multiple project proponents, all project proponents shall execute the communications agreement, which shall be provided to the Verra Registry. The authorized representative may be a third party or appointed from among the project proponents.
- 7.1.3 Where there is a single project proponent, a communications agreement may also be provided to designate a third party as an authorized representative.
- 7.1.4 To terminate an authorized representative, the project proponent (where there is one project proponent) or all project proponents (where there are multiple project proponents) shall provide a signed written notification of the termination to Verra. Thereafter, the project proponent(s) shall follow the requirements in Section 7.1.2 and 7.1.3 to sign a new communications agreement, where relevant. Such agreement supersedes any prior (terminated) communications agreement.
- 7.1.5 A project shall only have one authorized representative at any given time, as appointed via the communications agreement.

### 7.2 Release and Accession of Project Proponents

- 7.2.1 Project proponents may join or leave a project subsequent to project listing or registration. Such accession and release is handled via representations made by acceding entities and project proponents as follows:
- 1) Where an entity wants to join a project, it and the existing project proponent(s) shall sign an accession representation, which shall be prepared using the *VCS Deed of Accession Template* and properly executed as a deed in accordance with applicable local laws and the organization's own constitutional documents. Where more than one entity wants to join the project, one accession representation shall be signed for each acceding entity.
  - 2) Where a project proponent wants to leave a project (i.e., give up its rights and obligations in respect of the project), it, the remaining project proponent(s) and Verra shall sign a partial release representation, which shall be prepared using the *VCS Deed of Partial Release Template* and properly executed as a deed in accordance with applicable local laws and the organization's own constitutional documents. Where more than one project proponent

wants to be released from the project, one partial release representation shall be signed for each project proponent that is leaving. Note that a project shall always have at least one project proponent, so there shall always be at least one remaining registration representor (project proponent) that signs the partial release representation.

- 3) The accession and/or partial release representations shall be submitted to the Verra Registry, which uploads the accession and/or partial release representations to the Verra Registry and updates the project record to reflect the change in project proponent.
- 4) Once this process is complete, only the new project proponent or its authorized representative are permitted to initiate subsequent VCU issuance.

*Note – Where a project has one project proponent only and the project proponent wants to leave the project in favor of another entity, this is handled by having the new entity accede to the project via an accession representation and the original project proponent released from the project via a release representation.*

### 7.3 Comments Received Outside of a Public Comment Period

- 7.3.1 Stakeholders may submit comments outside of the 30-day public comment period. Such comments shall be submitted to [secretariat@verra.org](mailto:secretariat@verra.org).
- 7.3.2 Comments received outside of the 30-day public comment period are sent to the project proponent and the validation/verification body performing the next validation or verification, where known. Where the validation/verification body is not known, Verra sends the comments to the project proponent and the project proponent shall provide the comments and any actions taken or comments responses to the validation/verification body.
- 7.3.3 Project proponents shall address any comments received while validation or verification is ongoing (e.g., a comment received outside of the 30-day public comment period but while the validation is ongoing must be addressed as part of validation). Any comments received when a validation or verification is not ongoing shall be addressed at the subsequent validation or verification unless Verra determines a review of project documents is required, as described in Section 6 above.
- 7.3.4 The comments are made public with the rest of the public documents at each request.

# APPENDIX 1 ELIGIBILITY CONDITIONS FOR CONVERSION OF GHG CREDITS INTO VCUS

This appendix provides the eligibility conditions (effective dates) for credit conversions for credits issued to projects and CPAs registered under another GHG program, with activities included within the scope of the VCS Program (see *VCS Standard*, Section 2.1). These conditions remain unchanged from the 5 February 2021 *Errata and Clarifications* (for GHG credits issued to standalone projects) and from the 19 April 2022 update to the VCS Program rules and requirements (for GHG credits issued to CPAs). These conditions are copied to this appendix for greater ease of use.

## GHG Credits issued to standalone projects, seeking conversion into VCUs

GHG credits issued to projects registered under another GHG program, with activities that are included within the scope of the VCS Program are only eligible for conversion into VCUs where one of the following is demonstrated:<sup>5</sup>

- A1.1 For GHG credits issued to a project that does not include afforestation and/or reforestation activities:
- 1) The project shall have an original project crediting period start date on or after 1 January 2016 with another GHG program; or
  - 2) Where the project has an original project crediting period start date from 1 January 2013 to 31 December 2015, the project shall have issued credits during the period 1 January 2016 to 5 March 2021, or shall have a status of “issuance requested” on the relevant GHG program registry by 5 March 2021.
- A1.2 For GHG credits issued to a project with afforestation and/or reforestation activities, the project shall have been registered under another GHG program on or after 1 January 2013.<sup>6</sup> Further,

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<sup>5</sup> GHG credits are deemed to have met these timelines where Verra confirmed (in writing, to the project proponent or an authorized representative) the credits’ eligibility on or before 4 February 2021.

<sup>6</sup> Note that for a project seeking to convert GHG credits to VCUs, a project with activities within the Agriculture, Forestry, and Other Land Use (AFOLU) sector shall register under the VCS Program, and the project shall be required to deposit credits into the AFOLU pooled buffer account in accordance with the AFOLU Non-Permanence Risk Tool. Such a project shall first register under the VCS Program before any GHG credits may be converted into VCUs, given the risk of non-permanence (see VCS Registration and Issuance Process, v4.3 Section 4.2.16(5)).

the following applies with respect to vintages:<sup>7</sup>

- A3.1 For GHG credits issued to a project that does not include afforestation and/or reforestation activities, only GHG credits with vintages beginning on or after 1 January 2016 are eligible for conversion into VCUs.
- A3.1 For GHG credits issued to a project with afforestation and/or reforestation activities, only GHG credits with vintages beginning on or after 1 January 2013 are eligible for conversion into VCUs.

## GHG Credits issued to CDM CPAs, seeking conversion into VCUs

GHG credits issued to CDM CPAs registered under another GHG program, with activities that are included within the scope of the VCS Program are only eligible for conversion into VCUs where one of the following is demonstrated:<sup>8</sup>

- A1.5 For GHG credits issued to a CDM CPA that does not include afforestation and/or reforestation activities:
  - 1) The CPA shall be part of a Program of Activities (PoA) with an original program crediting period start date on or after 1 January 2016; or
  - 2) Where the CPA is part of a Program of Activities (PoA) with an original program crediting period start date from 1 January 2013 to 31 December 2015 and where the CPA has an original crediting period start date from 1 January 2013 to 31 December 2015, the CPA shall have issued credits during the period 1 January 2016 to 5 March 2021, or shall have a status of "issuance requested" by 5 March 2021; or
  - 3) Where the CPA is part of a PoA with an original program crediting period start date from 1 January 2013 to 31 December 2015 and where the CPA has an original crediting period start date on or after 1 January 2016, no prior credit issuance is required.
- A1.6 For GHG credits issued to a CPA with afforestation and/or reforestation activities, the CPA shall be part of a PoA that was registered on or after 1 January 2013.

Further, the following applies with respect to vintages:<sup>9</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Similarly, GHG credits are deemed to have met these timelines where Verra confirmed (in writing, to the project proponent or an authorized representative) the credits' eligibility on or before 4 February 2021.

<sup>8</sup> GHG credits are deemed to have met these timelines where Verra confirmed (in writing, to the project proponent or an authorized representative) the credits' eligibility on or before 4 February 2021.

<sup>9</sup> Similarly, GHG credits are deemed to have met these timelines where Verra confirmed (in writing, to the project proponent or an authorized representative) the credits' eligibility on or before 4 February 2021.

- A1.7 For GHG credits issued to a CPA that does not include afforestation and/or reforestation activities, only GHG credits with vintages beginning on or after 1 January 2016 are eligible for conversion into VCUs.
- A1.8 For GHG credits issued to a CPA with afforestation and/or reforestation activities, only GHG credits with vintages beginning on or after 1 January 2013 are eligible for conversion into VCUs.

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# APPENDIX 2 DOCUMENT HISTORY

Version	Date	Comment
v4.0	19 Sep 2019	Initial version released under VCS Version 4
v4.1	20 Jan 2022	Updated the pipeline listing process and public comment procedures to require all projects to list as <i>under validation</i> or update the project status to <i>under validation</i> before beginning the public comment period (Section 3) (effective from 20 July 2022 for all new pipeline listing requests)
v4.2	22 Jun 2022	<p>Main updates (all effective on issue date, unless otherwise stated):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) New rules set out how proponents may submit requests to have VCU's labeled (Section 4.2.18).</li> <li>2) Incorporated clarification to eligibility conditions for the conversion of GHG credits issued to standalone projects into VCUs from <i>Errata &amp; Clarification to VCS Program Rules and Requirements</i>, v4.0, published on 5 February 2021. See Appendix 4. This clarification is effective from <u>5 February 2021</u>.</li> <li>3) Introduced clarification to eligibility conditions for the conversion of GHG credits issued to CDM CPAs into VCUs into Appendix 1.</li> </ol>
v4.3	21 Dec 2022	<p>Main Updates (all effective on issue date, unless otherwise stated):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Updated language in Sections 3 and 4 to simplify descriptions of <b>Verra review processes</b>.</li> <li>2) Updated language in Sections 3.1.15 and 3.1.18 to provide further information on how projects request <b>reactivation from inactive status</b> on the Verra Registry.</li> <li>3) Language added to Sections 3.1.17 and 3.1.19 to clarify Verra's process to <b>reject project pipeline listings</b>.</li> <li>4) Updated language in Section 4.1.2 to <b>require ERRs in monitoring and verification reports to be broken down by vintages by calendar year</b>, effective 1 April 2023.</li> <li>5) Updated language in Section 4.2.3 to clarify the requirement that project proponents shall submit: any supporting annexes necessary to read the application; any emission reduction and removal calculation spreadsheets; any AFOLU-specific documentation.</li> <li>6) Added language to Section 4.2.18 to clarify the requirement for <b>no gaps in monitoring periods</b> for AFOLU projects, grouped projects, and other projects with risk of reversal or loss. Effective immediately for grouped projects, AFOLU projects, and other projects with a risk of reversal or loss that have gaps in monitoring periods. These projects shall submit monitoring and verification reports for such gaps before requesting verification approval for any subsequent verification period. Projects which have already begun verification activities for a previous gap in monitoring periods may proceed with submitting such monitoring and verification reports, where confirmed</li> </ol>



		<p>by Verra, in writing, to the project proponent or an authorized representative on or before 21 December 2022.</p> <p>7) Updated language in Section 4.2.20 to clarify requirement that <b>VVBs must be accredited for the relevant sectoral scope</b> and provide information on how Verra checks that requirement.</p> <p>8) Added language to Sections 5.3.1. and 5.3.3 to clarify that in the event of a <b>non-catastrophic reversal</b> no further VCUs will be issued to the project or any other project the project proponent has registered on the VCS registry until the buffer is replenished.</p>																											
v4.3	17 Jan 2023	Minor cross-referencing and formatting errors were corrected.																											
v4.4	29 August 2023	<p>Updates are listed with a unique ID# as referenced in the <i>August 2023 Overview of VCS Program Updates and Effective Dates (PDF)</i>, available on the Verra website.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>ID#</th><th>Update Description and Effective Date</th><th>Section</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>40.</td><td>Clarified processes related <b>pipeline listing initiation</b>. Effective immediately</td><td>3.1.1 – 3.1.6</td></tr> <tr> <td>41.</td><td>Updates from the 30 March 2023 Errata &amp; Clarification regarding the <b>VCS Fee Schedule</b> update were incorporated with an effective date of 1 May 2023. Effective immediately</td><td>3.1.3, 3.1.4, 4.2.22, 4.6.4</td></tr> <tr> <td>42.</td><td>Clarified that <b>projects cannot submit a joint program template</b> for any request if the project is only requesting listing, registration, verification approval, or crediting period renewal under one program. Effective immediately</td><td>3.1.6., 4.2.8</td></tr> <tr> <td>43.</td><td>Clarified <b>which project documents are publicly posted</b> for each project request. Effective immediately</td><td>3.1.11, 3.1.14, 4.2.7</td></tr> <tr> <td>44.</td><td>Minor update to clarify <b>validation deadline process</b>. Effective immediately</td><td>3.1.17</td></tr> <tr> <td>5.</td><td>Clarified which documents are required for <b>baseline reassessment</b> and removed unnecessary language. Effective for all project requests submitted on or after 1 March 2024  Clarified that baseline reassessment is required to reactivate an already registered project. Effective immediately.</td><td>4.2.6  5.3.9</td></tr> <tr> <td>21.</td><td>Clarified <b>evidence requirements for no double issuance</b> and no double claiming. Effective for all project requests submitted on or after 1 March 2024</td><td>4.2.15, 4.2.17, 4.2.19</td></tr> <tr> <td>45.</td><td>Updated <b>request denial processes</b>, and restructured the information related to review process.</td><td>4.3</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	ID#	Update Description and Effective Date	Section	40.	Clarified processes related <b>pipeline listing initiation</b> . Effective immediately	3.1.1 – 3.1.6	41.	Updates from the 30 March 2023 Errata & Clarification regarding the <b>VCS Fee Schedule</b> update were incorporated with an effective date of 1 May 2023. Effective immediately	3.1.3, 3.1.4, 4.2.22, 4.6.4	42.	Clarified that <b>projects cannot submit a joint program template</b> for any request if the project is only requesting listing, registration, verification approval, or crediting period renewal under one program. Effective immediately	3.1.6., 4.2.8	43.	Clarified <b>which project documents are publicly posted</b> for each project request. Effective immediately	3.1.11, 3.1.14, 4.2.7	44.	Minor update to clarify <b>validation deadline process</b> . Effective immediately	3.1.17	5.	Clarified which documents are required for <b>baseline reassessment</b> and removed unnecessary language. Effective for all project requests submitted on or after 1 March 2024  Clarified that baseline reassessment is required to reactivate an already registered project. Effective immediately.	4.2.6  5.3.9	21.	Clarified <b>evidence requirements for no double issuance</b> and no double claiming. Effective for all project requests submitted on or after 1 March 2024	4.2.15, 4.2.17, 4.2.19	45.	Updated <b>request denial processes</b> , and restructured the information related to review process.	4.3
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		Verra Registry statuses to reflect these processes will be available soon. Effective immediately	
	35.	Added clarity to processes related to <b>VCU label</b> requirements. Effective immediately	4.4.7 – 4.4.8
	9.	Clarified <b>buffer release requirements</b> , including requirements for when a project can request a buffer release. Effective immediately	5.2.1 – 5.2.5
	37.	Clarified <b>loss event reporting requirements</b> . Effective immediately	5.3.1 -5.3.7
	10.	Updated <b>non-permanence monitoring and compensation requirements</b> to a minimum of 40 years. Effective for all project requests submitted on or after 1 March 2024	5.3.4, 5.3.12
	11.	References across program documents to 'catastrophic' and 'non-catastrophic' reversals have been updated to the new terminology of ' <b>unavoidable</b> ' and ' <b>avoidable</b> ' reversals, respectively. Effective immediately	5.3.5, 5.3.12
	46.	Revised the <b>communication agreement</b> requirements with clearer information about how project proponent(s) submit communication agreements to the Registry to designate one Authorized Representative for the project. Effective immediately	7.1.1 – 7.1.5
	19.	Added requirements for <b>comments received outside of the public comment period</b> for both project proponents and validation/verification bodies. Effective for all project requests submitted on or after 1 March 2024	7.3

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## Standards for a Sustainable Future



**Verified Carbon  
Standard**



**Jurisdictional  
& Nested REDD+**



**Climate, Community  
& Biodiversity Standards**



**Sustainable Development  
Verified Impact Standard**



**Plastic Waste  
Reduction Standard**

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