

Plastic Waste Reduction Standard

Second Draft

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V0.2

CONTENTS

1	INTRODUCTION	3
1.1	Version and Update Schedule	3
1.2	Language	4
2	PLASTIC PROGRAM SPECIFIC ISSUES	4
2.1	Scope of Plastic Program	4
2.2	Principles	8
2.3	Timing of Crediting	8
3	PROJECT REQUIREMENTS	9
3.1	General Requirements.....	9
3.2	Project Documentation	10
3.3	Project Configuration	10
3.4	Ownership	16
3.5	Project Start Date	17
3.6	Project Crediting Period	17
3.7	Project Location	19
3.8	Project Boundary	20
3.9	Baseline Scenario	20
3.10	Additionality.....	21
3.11	Quantification of Recovered and Recycled Plastic Waste	21
3.12	Monitoring	21
3.13	Stakeholder Engagement	22
3.14	Safeguards.....	26

3.15	Methodology Deviations	29
3.16	Project Description Deviations	30
3.17	Records and Information.....	31
4	VALIDATION AND VERIFICATION REQUIREMENTS.....	32
4.1	Introduction and General Requirements.....	32

1 INTRODUCTION

2 The *Plastic Waste Reduction Standard (Plastic Standard)* provides a global standard for plastic
3 waste (including packaging) recovery and recycling projects. The *Plastic Standard* is
4 operationalized by the Plastic Waste Reduction Program (Plastic Program) to enable the validation
5 of plastic recovery and recycling projects, and the verification of recovered and/or recycled plastic
6 waste. The three principal documents of the program are the *Plastic Waste Reduction Program
7 Guide (Plastic Program Guide)*, the *Plastic Standard* and the *Plastic Waste Reduction
8 Methodology Requirements (Plastic Methodology Requirements) (to be developed)*. The *Plastic
9 Program Guide* describes the rules and requirements governing the Plastic Program and further
10 describes the constituent parts of the program, such as the project registration process, the Verra
11 registry system, the methodology approval process and the accreditation requirements for
12 validation/verification bodies. The *Plastic Standard* provides the requirements for developing
13 projects, as well as the requirements for the validation, monitoring and verification of projects that
14 recover and/or recycle plastic waste. The *Plastic Methodology Requirements* document provides
15 the rules and requirements for developing new plastic recovery and recycling methodologies.

16 The *Plastic Standard* can also be used by plastic waste recovery and/or recycling projects that
17 intend only to account for the results of their recovery and/or recycling activities and are not
18 interested in issuing Waste Recovery Credits or Recycling Credits (Plastic Credits). Requirements
19 pertaining to the issuance of Plastic Credits and eligibility requirements for crediting are not
20 applicable to such projects and are noted as such.¹ Consequently, projects using the *Plastic
21 Standard* solely for accounting purposes are not eligible to issue Plastic Credits.

22 The *Plastic Standard* was developed with the support and leadership of the [3R Initiative](#) and the
23 technical and strategic input of the [Plastic Standard Development Committee](#) (PSDC).

Note to readers – All documents cited as “to be developed” are subsequently referred to throughout this draft as documents that are already developed to avoid edits to language in future drafts. The documents are currently under development and will be part of the Plastic Program launch in 2021.

24 1.1 Version and Update Schedule

25 All information about version control under the Plastic Program is contained in the *Plastic Program
26 Guide*.

27 This document will be updated from time to time and readers shall ensure that they are using the
28 most current version of the document. The next review and potential update of this document is

¹ In this *Plastic Standard* v1, those requirements are Sections 3.5, 3.6 and 3.10.

1 scheduled for 2022. Where external documents are referenced and such documents are updated,
2 the most recent version of the document shall be used.

3 1.2 Language

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

8 The project description, validation report, monitoring report, verification report and all other
9 documentation (including any and all appendices) required under the Plastic Program shall be
10 written in English. For projects located in countries for which English is not a widely used language
11 among project stakeholders, the project proponent shall develop at least a summary of the project
12 description and/or monitoring report in a relevant local or regional language.

13 2 PLASTIC PROGRAM SPECIFIC ISSUES

14 2.1 Scope of Plastic Program

15 2.1.1 The materials included in the scope of the Plastic Program are:

16 1) All materials made of the seven types of plastic²: Polyethylene Terephthalate (PETE or
17 PET), High-Density Polyethylene (HDPE), Polyvinyl Chloride (PVC), Low-Density
18 Polyethylene (LDPE), Polypropylene (PP), Polystyrene or Expanded Polystyrene (PS
19 or EPS) and Other Plastics (O).

20 a) Other Plastics include, among others, acrylic or poly methyl methacrylate,
21 acrylonitrile butadiene styrene (ABS), polyamide (nylon), polycarbonate and
22 polylactic acid.

23 2) Composite materials containing the plastic types listed above. Such packaging items
24 can be blends of different plastics or products combining layers of different materials.
25 The materials may include different plastic types, thin metal foils or coatings and/or
26 layers of paper or cardboard.³

27 Table 1 provides examples of commonly found items made of each material type
28 included in the scope of the Plastic Program. The examples can be used to identify the

² American Chemistry Council (n.d.). *Plastic Packaging Resins*. Available at:
<https://plastics.americanchemistry.com/Plastic-Resin-Codes-PDF/>.

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

1 material composition of recovered and/or recycled plastic waste and are not
 2 exhaustive. The table also contains material sub-categories for further identification
 3 and categorization of materials.

4 **Table 1: Material types included in the scope of the Plastic Program**

Material Category ⁴	Material Sub-Category ⁵	Examples
(1) PET	PET bottle	Water, soft drink and juice bottles, salad dressing bottles, cleaning product bottles
	PET thermoforms	Salad domes, trays, cups, clamshells, berry boxes
	PET durables ⁶	Carpet, clothing textiles, automotive and furniture fabrics, and non-woven goods
	Other PET rigid	Jars (e.g., peanut butter containers)
(2) HDPE	HDPE bottle	Milk bottles, shampoo bottles, cleaning product and detergent bottles
	HDPE injection	Reusable shipping containers, jars, pots, trays, cups, buckets, boats, folding chairs
	HDPE other rigid	Wire and cable sheathing, piping for water, construction sack, (e.g., dip, ice cream, butter) tubs
	HDPE films	Freezer bags, crinkly shopping bags
(3) PVC	PVC bottles	Bottles (e.g., cosmetic containers)
	PVC extrusion	Piping, framing, fencing materials, windows, doors, siding
	PVC other rigid	Heavy duty non-food packaging, blisters, trays, films
	PVC construction - flexible (softer and more flexible with	Plumbing products, electrical cable insulation

⁴ World Economic Forum, Ellen MacArthur Foundation and McKinsey & Company (2016). *The New Plastics Economy — Rethinking the future of plastics*. Available at: <http://www.ellenmacarthurfoundation.org/publications>.

⁵ The majority of these categories come from Ellen MacArthur Foundation & UN Environment Program (2020). *Plastic recycling data survey 2020 - guidelines for respondents*. Available at: <https://www.newplasticseconomy.org/assets/doc/Plastic-recycling-data-survey-2020-guidelines-for-respondents.pdf>.

⁶ 'Durables' refers to a category of consumer goods that do not wear out quickly.

	plasticizers)	
	PVC medical	Medical tubing
(4) LDPE	LDPE bottles	Squeeze bottles
	Films and flexibles, LDPE	Cling wrap, shrink wrap, rubbish bags, sachets, wrappers, small bags, films (e.g., bottle labels), shopping bags, e-commerce pillows and bubble wrap, bread bags, newspaper bags, dry-cleaner bags, six pack rings
(5) PP	PP bottle	Ketchup bottles, medicine bottles, syrup bottles
	PP other rigid	Tubs (e.g., yogurt, ice cream, dip), microwave dishes, lightweight cups, containers for medicines, caps, laboratory equipment, medical devices
	PP bulky rigids	Automotive parts, buckets, pails, drums, totes, storage containers
	Films and flexibles, PP	Pouches, small bags, straws, sachets, wrappers, potato chip bags
(6) PS	PS injection	Pots, trays, CD cases, plastic cutlery, coat hangers
(6) EPS	EPS foam	Foamed polystyrene hot drink cups, clamshells, foamed trays (e.g., egg cartons, meat and produce trays), foamed PS plates, protective packaging for fragile items, insulation for buildings
(7) Other Plastics	Acrylic or polymethyl methacrylate	Mirrors, plexiglass, lenses, screens, roof windows, signs
	Acrylonitrile butadiene styrene (ABS)	Children's toys (e.g., Lego bricks), keyboard components, wall sockets, plastic alloys and decorative interior car parts, tubing, power-tool housings
	Polyamide (nylon)	Textiles, fishing line, carpets, food packaging, power-tool housings, insulators
	Polycarbonate	Bottles, shatterproof windows, lightweight eyeglass lenses, water jugs

	Polylactic acid	Food packaging (e.g., cups, containers, overwrap, blister packages), biodegradable medical devices
Composite materials	Multi-material packaging	Liquid board packaging/used beverage cartons, toothpaste tubes, stand-up pouches
	Non-packaging composite materials (with visible plastic)	Building and construction materials (including among others, window frames, pipes, facade panels, exterior and interior covering, insulation), storage tanks, circuit boards, protective headgear (e.g., helmets), slides, non-hazardous electronic materials containing plastic
	Flexibles, multi-material packaging	Chips and candy wrappers, sachets, pouches, snack bags

1

Question: Are there material categories, material sub-categories and/or examples that should be explicitly included in the scope or excluded from it?

2

3 2.1.2 The activities included in the scope of the Plastic Program are:

- 4 1) Plastic waste recovery and recycling activities, including, among others, informal waste
5 collection activities, community waste collection from the environment (including open
6 ocean cleanup), municipal or private waste collection infrastructure development,
7 mechanical recycling and chemical recycling. Plastic waste sorting can be considered
8 a recovery or a recycling activity depending on whether it is implemented to sort plastic
9 waste from non-plastic waste (i.e., recovery) or to sort recyclable plastic waste from
10 non-recyclable plastic waste (i.e., recycling).
- 11 2) Project activities supported by a methodology approved under the Plastic Program
12 through the methodology approval process.

13 2.1.3 The scope of the Plastic Program excludes:

- 14 1) Project activities that undertake the reduction or reuse of plastic waste. The program
15 may be expanded to include the reduction and/or reuse of plastic waste in the future.
- 16 2) Plastic footprint assessments or plastic waste related claims.
- 17 3) Projects that can reasonably be assumed to have generated plastic waste primarily for
18 the purpose of its subsequent recovery and/or recycling.

1 2.2 Principles

2 2.2.1 The application of principles is fundamental in ensuring that plastic waste-related
3 information is a true and fair account. The principles below shall provide the basis for, and
4 shall guide the application of, the Plastic Program rules and requirements.

5 *Principles based on ISO 14064-2:2019, clause 47 and the ISEAL Credibility Principles.*

6 **Relevance:** Select the plastic waste sources, end-of-life options, data and methodologies
7 appropriate to the needs of the intended user.

8 **Completeness:** Include all relevant plastic types. Include all relevant information to
9 support criteria and procedures.

10 **Consistency:** Enable meaningful comparisons in plastic waste-related information.

11 **Accuracy:** Reduce bias and uncertainties as far as practical.

12 **Transparency:** Disclose sufficient and appropriate plastic waste-related information to
13 allow intended users to make decisions with reasonable confidence.

14 **Conservativeness:** Use conservative assumptions, values and procedures to ensure that
15 net plastic waste recovery and recycling are not overestimated.

16 **Continuous improvement:** Regularly integrate learning and innovation to increase
17 benefits to people and the environment.

18 *Note – Accuracy should be pursued as far as possible, but the hypothetical nature of*
19 *baselines, the high cost of monitoring of some types of plastic waste recovery and*
20 *recycling and other limitations make accuracy difficult to attain in many cases. In these*
21 *cases, conservativeness may serve as a moderator to accuracy in order to maintain the*
22 *credibility of plastic waste recovery and recycling quantification.*

23 2.3 Timing of Crediting

24 2.3.1 Plastic units shall not be issued under the Plastic Program for plastic waste recovery or
25 recycling that has not been verified.

26

27

⁷ Given that there is currently no ISO standard for projects that recover and/or recycle plastic waste, the general intent of ISO 14064-2:2019 informs the principles of the Plastic Program.

3 PROJECT REQUIREMENTS

This section sets out the rules and requirements for projects participating in the Plastic Program.

In order to complete the Plastic Program certification process, projects must demonstrate how they meet the rules and requirements set out below.⁸ Projects must also demonstrate how they have applied an eligible methodology in full. Projects demonstrate their compliance with the Plastic Program rules and the applied methodology through the validation and verification processes, which are defined in Section 4 below. Once projects complete the validation and verification processes, they become eligible to request registration and Plastic Credit issuance, respectively. Note that the full process for requesting project registration and Plastic Credit issuance is set out in the *Plastic Program Guide*.

3.1 General Requirements

Concept

Establishing a consistent and standardized certification process is critical to ensuring the integrity of plastic waste recovery and recycling projects. Accordingly, certain high-level requirements must be met by all projects, as set out below.

Requirements

3.1.1 Projects shall meet all applicable rules and requirements set out under the Plastic Program, including this document. Projects shall be guided by the Principles set out in Section 2.2.1.

3.1.2 Projects shall apply methodologies eligible under the Plastic Program. Methodologies shall be applied in full where the project proponent seeks to issue Plastic Credits, including the full application of any tools or modules referred to by a methodology (e.g., projects that will not generate Plastic Credits do not need to meet a methodology's additionality requirements). The list of methodologies and their validity periods is available on the Verra website.

3.1.3 Projects and the implementation of project activities shall not lead to the violation of any applicable law, statute or regulation, regardless of whether or not they are enforced.

3.1.4 Where Verra issues new requirements relating to projects, registered projects do not need to adhere to the new requirements for the remainder of their project crediting periods (i.e., such projects remain eligible to issue Plastic Credits through to the end of their project crediting period without revalidation against the new requirements), unless explicitly stated

⁸ Certain sections not applicable to projects using the *Standard* solely for accounting purposes are marked as such.

1 otherwise. The new requirements shall be adhered to at project crediting period renewal,
2 as set out in Section 3.6.4.

3 3.2 Project Documentation

4 *Concept*

5 In order to complete the project validation process, project proponents shall prepare a project
6 description, which describes the project's plastic waste recovery and/or recycling activities. In
7 order to complete the project verification process, project proponents shall prepare a monitoring
8 report, which describes the data and information related to the monitoring of plastic waste
9 recovery and/or recycling.

10 *Requirements*

11 *Project Description*

12 3.2.1 The project proponent shall use the *Plastic Program Project Description Template (to be*
13 *developed)* available on the Verra website. The project proponent shall adhere to all
14 instructional text within the template.

15 3.2.2 All information in the project description shall be presumed to be available for public
16 review, though commercially sensitive information may be protected, as set out in the
17 Plastic Program document *Plastic Program Guide*, where it can be demonstrated that such
18 information is commercially sensitive. The validation/verification body shall check that any
19 information designated by the project proponent as commercially sensitive meets the
20 Plastic Program definition of commercially sensitive information.

21 *Monitoring Report*

22 3.2.3 The project proponent shall use the *Plastic Program Monitoring Report Template (to be*
23 *developed)* available on the Verra website and adhere to all instructional text within the
24 template.

25 3.2.4 The monitoring period of the monitoring report shall be a distinct time period that does not
26 overlap with previous monitoring periods. Projects shall not be eligible for crediting of
27 plastic waste recovered or recycled by the project in previous monitoring periods. In
28 addition, monitoring periods shall be contiguous with no time gaps between monitoring
29 periods.

30 3.3 Project Configuration

31 *Concept*

32 The Plastic Program allows for different approaches to configuring projects. Table 2 describes the
33 configurations that projects may use.

1 **Table 2: Project configurations**

Project Configuration	Description	Example
Single installation of an activity	One project activity at one location	One chemical recycling facility
Multiple project activities	More than one recovery and/or recycling project activity	Recovery of recyclable plastic from one landfill and one mechanical recycling facility
Multiple instances of a project activity	The same project activity at different locations	Waste picker project that distributes new collection equipment to different communities
Multiple instances of multiple project activities	More than one recovery and/or recycling project activity, with instances of some or all activities at different locations	Recovery of recyclable plastic from three landfills and one mechanical recycling facility
Grouped project (with any of the project configurations listed above)	Inclusion of new project activity instances subsequent to project validation	Chemical recycling at one initial facility with new facilities added in different locations after project validation

2 *Note – Project activity and project activity instance have specific meanings that are set out in the*
 3 *Plastic Program document Plastic Program Definitions.*

4 **Requirements**

5 **Multiple Project Activities**

6 3.3.1 Projects may include multiple project activities where the methodology applied to the
 7 project allows more than one project activity and/or where projects apply more than one
 8 methodology.

9 3.3.2 Where more than one methodology has been applied to a project with multiple project
 10 activities, the following applies:

- 11 1) Each project activity shall be specified separately in the project description, referencing
 12 the relevant methodology.
- 13 2) All criteria and procedures set out in the applied methodologies in relation to
 14 applicability conditions, demonstration of additionality, determination of the baseline
 15 scenario and plastic waste recovery and recycling quantification shall be applied
 16 separately to each project activity, noting the following:
 - 17 a) A single set of criteria and procedures for the demonstration of additionality may be
 18 applied where the applied methodologies reference the same additionality

1 procedures, and where separate demonstration of additionality for each project
2 activity is not feasible.

3 For example, separate demonstration of additionality may not be feasible in project
4 activities that are implemented at a single facility and therefore represent a single
5 investment. The onus is upon the project proponent to demonstrate to the
6 validation/verification body that separate demonstration of additionality is not
7 feasible, failing which separate demonstration of additionality shall be provided.
8 Where a methodology specifies requirements for demonstrating additionality in
9 addition to those specified in the referenced additionality procedures, such
10 requirements shall be adhered to.

11 b) The criteria and procedures for identifying the baseline scenario may be combined
12 where the relevant methodologies or the referenced additionality procedures
13 specify criteria and procedures for combining baseline scenarios.

14 3) More than one project activity may be implemented in the same project location as set
15 out in Section 3.7.

16 4) The recovered and recycled plastic waste resulting from each project activity shall be
17 quantified under only one methodology.

18 5) The criteria and procedures relating to all other aspects of the methodologies may be
19 combined.

20 *Note – Where a single methodology is applicable to more than one project activity and*
21 *where the methodology does not provide clear procedures for the application of more than*
22 *one project activity, the above requirements shall be adhered to.*

23 Multiple Instances of Project Activities

24 3.3.3 The baseline determination and additionality demonstration for all project activity instances
25 of the same project activity shall be combined (e.g., the baseline and additionality of
26 multiple mechanical recycling installations shall be determined and demonstrated in
27 combination rather than individually).

28 3.3.4 Each project activity instance shall have the same combined baseline scenario (i.e.,
29 without project scenario) per Section 3.3.3 but may set its own crediting baseline for
30 quantification of net plastic waste recovered or recycled.

31 3.3.5 Where a project includes multiple project activities and one or more of the project activities
32 include multiple project activity instances, the project activity instances from each project
33 activity shall be assessed in accordance with Sections 3.3.1 – 3.3.2 (e.g., the baseline
34 scenario of a project consisting of multiple instances of plastic waste recovery from the
35 environment at different sites and one mechanical recycling facility, shall be determined for
36 each project activity in accordance with Sections 3.3.1 – 3.3.2).

1 Grouped Projects

2 Baseline Scenario and Additionality

3 3.3.6 Requirements in Sections 3.3.7 – 3.3.15 shall supersede requirements in Sections 3.3.1 –
4 3.3.5 for grouped projects with a single project activity, multiple project activities and/or
5 multiple instances of project activities.

6 3.3.7 Grouped projects shall have one or more clearly defined geographic areas within which
7 project activity instances may be developed. Such geographic areas shall be defined using
8 geodetic polygons as set out in Section 3.7 below.

9 3.3.8 Determination of the baseline scenario for and demonstration of additionality of project
10 activity instances added subsequent to validation are based upon the initial project activity
11 instances. The initial project activity instances are those that are included in the project
12 description at validation and shall include all project activity instances currently
13 implemented on the issue date of the project description. The initial project activity
14 instances may also include any planned instances of the project activity that have been
15 planned and developed to a sufficient level of detail to enable their assessment at
16 validation. Geographic areas with no initial project activity instances shall not be included
17 in the project unless it can be demonstrated that such areas are subject to the same (or at
18 least as conservative) baseline scenario and rationale for the demonstration of additionality
19 as a geographic area that does include initial project activity instances.

20 3.3.9 Where a grouped project includes multiple project activities, the project description shall
21 indicate which project activities may occur in each geographic area.

22 3.3.10 The baseline scenario for a project activity shall be determined for each designated
23 geographic area, in accordance with the methodology applied to the project. Where a
24 single baseline scenario cannot be determined for a project activity over the entirety of a
25 geographic area, the geographic area shall be redefined or divided such that a single
26 baseline scenario can be determined for the revised geographic area or areas. Project
27 activity instances in each designated geographic area shall have the same baseline
28 scenario (i.e., the without-project scenario) but may set their own crediting baselines for
29 quantification of net plastic waste recovered or recycled.

30 3.3.11 The additionality of the initial project activity instances shall be demonstrated for each
31 designated geographic area, in accordance with the methodology applied to the project.
32 Where the additionality of the initial project activity instances within a particular geographic
33 area cannot be demonstrated for the entirety of that geographic area, the geographic area
34 shall be redefined or divided such that the additionality of the instances occurring in the
35 revised geographic area or areas can be demonstrated.

36 3.3.12 Where factors relevant to the determination of the baseline scenario or demonstration of
37 additionality require assessment across a given area, the area shall be, at a minimum, the

1 grouped project geographic area. Examples of such factors include common practice;
2 laws, statutes, regulatory frameworks or policies relevant to demonstration of regulatory
3 surplus;⁹ and historical recovery and recycling rates.

4 Eligibility Criteria

5 3.3.13 Grouped projects shall include one or more sets of eligibility criteria for the inclusion of new
6 project activity instances. At least one set of eligibility criteria for the inclusion of new
7 project activity instances shall be provided for each combination of project activity and
8 geographic area specified in the project description. A set of eligibility criteria shall ensure
9 that new project activity instances:

- 10 1) Meet the applicability conditions set out in the methodology(ies) applied to the project.
- 11 2) Use the technologies or measures specified in the project description that are relevant
12 to the project activity.
- 13 3) Apply the technologies or measures in the same manner as specified in the project
14 description.
- 15 4) Are subject to the baseline scenario determined in the project description for the
16 specified project activity and geographic area.
- 17 5) Have characteristics with respect to additionality that are consistent with the initial
18 instances for the specified project activity and geographic area. For example, the new
19 project activity instances have financial, technical and/or other parameters (such as the
20 size/scale of the instances) consistent with the initial instances, or face the same
21 investment, technological and/or other barriers as the initial instances.

22 *Note – Where grouped projects include multiple baseline scenarios or demonstrations of*
23 *additionality, such projects will require at least one set of eligibility criteria for each*
24 *combination of baseline scenario and demonstration of additionality specified in the*
25 *project description.*

26 Inclusion of New Project Activity Instances

27 3.3.14 Grouped projects allow for the inclusion of new project activity instances subsequent to the
28 initial validation of the project. New project activity instances shall:

- 29 1) Occur within one of the designated geographic areas specified in the project
30 description.

⁹ Demonstration of regulatory surplus requires demonstration that the project is not mandated by any law, statute or other regulatory framework or that the existing laws, statutes or regulatory frameworks are not enforced.

- 1 2) Comply with at least one complete set of eligibility criteria for the inclusion of new
2 project activity instances. Partial compliance with multiple sets of eligibility criteria is
3 insufficient.
- 4 3) Be included in the monitoring report with sufficient technical, financial, geographic and
5 other relevant information to demonstrate compliance with the applicable set of
6 eligibility criteria and enable sampling by the validation/verification body.
- 7 4) Be validated at the time of verification against the applicable set of eligibility criteria.
- 8 5) Have evidence of project ownership, in respect of each project activity instance, held
9 by the project proponent from the respective start date of each project activity instance
10 (i.e., the date upon which the project activity instance began recovering and/or
11 recycling plastic waste).
- 12 6) Have a start date that is the same as or later than the grouped project start date.
- 13 7) Be eligible for crediting from the start date of the instance through to the end of the
14 project crediting period (only). Note that where a new project activity instance starts in
15 a previous verification period, no credit may be claimed for plastic waste recovered or
16 recycled by the project during a previous verification period (as set out in Section 3.2.4)
17 and new instances are eligible for crediting from the start of the next verification period.

18 Where inclusion of a new project activity instance necessitates the addition of a new
19 project proponent to the project, such instances shall be included in the grouped project
20 within two years of the project activity instance start date. The procedure for adding new
21 project proponents is set out in the Plastic Program document *Plastic Program Guide*.

22 Project Description for Grouped Projects

23 3.3.15 A grouped project shall be described in a single project description, which shall contain the
24 following:

- 25 1) A delineation of the geographic area(s) within which all project activity instances shall
26 occur. Such area(s) shall be defined by geodetic polygons as set out in Section 3.7
27 below.
- 28 2) One or more determinations of the baseline for the project activity in accordance with
29 the requirements of the methodology applied to the project (see Section 3.3.10).
- 30 3) One or more demonstrations of additionality for the project activity in accordance with
31 the requirements of the methodology applied to the project (see Section 3.3.11).
- 32 4) One or more sets of eligibility criteria for the inclusion of new project activity instances
33 at subsequent verification events (see Section 3.3.13).
- 34 5) A description of the central plastic waste information system and controls associated
35 with the project and its monitoring.

1 *Note – Where the project includes more than one project activity (multiple project*
2 *activities), the above requirements shall be addressed separately for each project activity,*
3 *except for the delineation of geographic areas and the description of the central plastic*
4 *waste information system and controls, which shall be addressed for the project as a*
5 *whole.*

6 3.4 Ownership

7 *Concept*

8 Project proponents shall demonstrate that they have the legal right to control and operate the
9 project activities.

10 *Requirements*

11 3.4.1 The project description shall be accompanied by one or more of the following types of
12 evidence establishing project ownership accorded to the project proponent(s):

- 13 1) Project ownership arising or granted under statute, regulation or decree by a
14 competent authority.
- 15 2) Project ownership arising under law.
- 16 3) Project ownership arising by virtue of a statutory, property, direct or indirect contractual
17 right, or service agreement in the plant, equipment, land or management process that
18 facilitates and/or performs plastic waste recovery and/or recycling (where the project
19 proponent has not been divested of such project ownership).
- 20 4) An enforceable and irrevocable agreement with the holder of the statutory, property,
21 direct or indirect contractual right, or service agreement in the plant, equipment, land or
22 management process that facilitates and/or performs plastic waste recovery and/or
23 recycling which grants project ownership to the project proponent.
- 24 5) Project ownership and right to operate arising by virtue of agreement with the relevant
25 government entity to perform the project activity and/or to operate on the land.
- 26 6) Where the types of evidence listed above are not appropriate, project ownership and
27 right to operate arising by virtue of other means of demonstrating proof of ownership
28 and/or right to operate. These include, among others, contractual agreements and
29 alliance of project actors with an organization that can demonstrate proof of ownership
30 (as listed above) on behalf of the project actors. The project proponent shall
31 demonstrate that the nature of the proof of ownership used is commonplace to the
32 location of the project activity or the project activity type.

33

1 **3.5 Project Start Date**

2 *Concept*

3 The project start date is the date on which the project began recovering or recycling plastic waste.
4 Projects shall complete validation within a specific timeframe from the project start date, as set out
5 in Sections 3.5.2 and 3.5.3 below.

6 *Note – The requirements in this section do not apply to projects that intend to use the Standard*
7 *solely for accounting purposes and not to issue Plastic Credits.*

8 *Requirements*

9 3.5.1 The project start date shall be on or after 1 January 2016.

10 3.5.2 Projects with a project start date on or before 31 December 2021 shall complete validation
11 by 31 December 2023.

12 3.5.3 Projects with a project start date on or after 1 January 2022 shall complete validation within
13 two years of the project start date. Additional time is granted for projects to complete
14 validation where they are applying a new plastic waste recovery or recycling methodology.
15 Specifically, projects using a new plastic waste recovery or recycling methodology and
16 completing validation within two years of the approval of the methodology by Verra may
17 complete validation within four years of the project start date.

18 **Figure 1: Start date and validation timeline**



19

20 **3.6 Project Crediting Period**

21 *Concept*

22 The project crediting period is the time period for which plastic waste recovered and/or recycled by
23 the project is eligible for issuance as Plastic Credits. Project crediting periods shall be renewed
24 periodically in order to ensure that changes to a project’s baseline scenario and regulatory surplus
25 are taken into consideration throughout the lifetime of the project.

26 *Note – The requirements in this section do not apply to projects that intend to use the Standard*
27 *solely for accounting purposes and not to issue Plastic Credits.*

1 *Requirements*

2 *Project Crediting Period Length*

3 3.6.1 The project crediting period shall be either seven years, twice renewable for a total of 21
4 years, or ten years fixed.

5 3.6.2 The project crediting period may begin on or after the project start date or registration date.

6 *Renewal of Project Crediting Period*

7 3.6.3 Where projects fail to renew the project crediting period, the project crediting period shall
8 end and the project shall be ineligible for further crediting.

9 3.6.4 The following shall apply with respect to the renewal of the project crediting period under
10 the Plastic Program:

11 1) A full reassessment of additionality is not required when renewing the project crediting
12 period. However, regulatory surplus shall be demonstrated in accordance with the
13 requirements set out in the Plastic Program rules and the project description shall be
14 updated accordingly.

15 2) The validity of the original baseline scenario shall be demonstrated, or where invalid a
16 new baseline scenario shall be determined, when renewing the project crediting period,
17 as follows:

18 a) The validity of the original baseline scenario shall be assessed. Such assessment
19 shall include an evaluation of the impact of any new relevant national and/or
20 sectoral policies and circumstances on the validity of the baseline scenario. This
21 shall also include the market penetration level, financial feasibility and revenue
22 stream of the project activity type in the region.

23 b) Where it is determined that the original baseline scenario is no longer valid, the
24 current baseline scenario shall be established in accordance with the Plastic
25 Program rules.

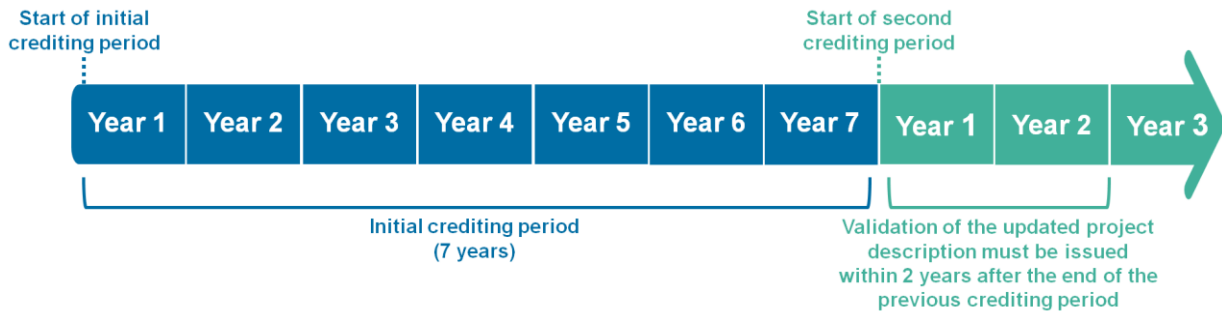
26 c) The project description, containing updated information with respect to the
27 baseline, the estimated volume of recovered and recycled plastic waste and the
28 monitoring plan shall be submitted for validation.

29 3) The updated project description shall be validated in accordance with the Plastic
30 Program rules. In addition, the project shall be validated against the (current) scope of
31 the *Plastic Standard*. Such a validation report shall be issued within two years after the
32 end of the (previous) project crediting period.

33

34

1 **Figure 2: Validation timeline for crediting period renewal**



2 **3.7 Project Location**

3 *Concept*

4 The project location shall be provided in order to accurately describe project characteristics and to
5 demonstrate a project's conformance with other requirements, such as project ownership and
6 regulatory compliance.

7 *Requirements*

8 3.7.1 Project location shall be specified in the project description as follows:

- 9 1) Project location shall be specified by a single geodetic coordinate.
- 10 2) Where there are multiple project activity instances (see Sections 3.3.3 – 3.3.5 for more
11 information on multiple instances of project activities), project location shall be
12 specified according to the following:
- 13 a) Where it is reasonable to do so, a geodetic coordinate shall be provided for each
14 instance and provided in a KML file; or
 - 15 b) Where there are a large number of project activity instances (e.g., waste collection
16 sites for recovered plastic waste), at least one geodetic coordinate shall be
17 provided, together with sufficient additional geographic information (with respect to
18 the location of the instances) to enable sampling by the validation/verification body.
- 19 3) Project location for grouped projects shall be specified using geodetic polygons to
20 delineate the project's geographic area or areas (see Section 3.3.7 for further
21 information on geographic areas for grouped projects) and provided in a KML file.

22
23
24

1 3.8 Project Boundary

2 *Concept*

3 The project boundary includes the source (e.g., environment, landfill, material recovery facility or
4 household/business) and proximate end-of-life scenario (e.g., landfill, sale of recycled content) of
5 the plastic waste recovered or recycled that are relevant to the project and baseline scenarios.

6 The relevant sources and proximate end-of-life scenarios that shall be included or excluded, or are
7 optional, are set out in the methodology(ies) applied by the project.

8 *Requirements*

9 3.8.1 The project boundary shall be described (using diagrams, as required), and sources and
10 proximate end-of-life scenarios of recovered or recycled plastic waste shall be identified
11 and assessed in accordance with the methodology applied to the project. If applicable, the
12 project shall justify not selecting any relevant source or proximate end-of-life scenario.

13 3.8.2 The project boundary may span multiple countries. The requirements of the *Plastic*
14 *Standard* and all criteria and procedures set out in the applied methodology(ies), in relation
15 to applicability conditions, demonstration of additionality and determination of the baseline
16 scenario, shall be met for each country included in the project boundary. The project
17 location (see Section 3.7) shall include all countries in which the project activity is
18 operating.

19 3.9 Baseline Scenario

20 *Concept*

21 The baseline scenario represents the plastic waste management activities that would most likely
22 occur in the absence of the project activity. The baseline scenario shall be determined so that an
23 accurate comparison can be made between the plastic waste management that would have
24 occurred under the baseline scenario and the plastic waste recovery and/or recycling that was
25 achieved by project activities.

26 *Requirements*

27 3.9.1 The baseline scenario for the project shall be determined in accordance with the
28 requirements set out in the methodology applied to the project, and the choice of baseline
29 scenario shall be justified.

30 3.9.2 Equivalence in type and level of activity of products or services provided by the project and
31 the baseline scenario shall be demonstrated and, where appropriate, any significant
32 differences between the project and the baseline scenario shall be explained.

33 3.9.3 In developing the baseline scenario, assumptions, values and procedures shall be selected
34 that help ensure that net plastic waste recovered and recycled is not overestimated.

1 3.10 Additionality

2 *Concept*

3 A project activity is additional if it can be demonstrated that the activity results in recovered or
4 recycled plastic waste that is in excess of what would most likely have occurred in the absence of
5 the project activity and the activity would not have occurred in the absence of the incentive
6 provided by the plastic crediting mechanism. Additionality is an important characteristic of Plastic
7 Credits because it indicates that they represent a net environmental benefit and a real reduction of
8 plastic waste in the environment.

9 *Note – The requirement in this section does not apply to projects that intend to use the Standard*
10 *solely for accounting purposes and not to issue Plastic Credits.*

11 *Requirement*

12 3.10.1 Additionality shall be demonstrated and assessed in accordance with the requirements set
13 out in the methodology applied to the project.

14 3.11 Quantification of Recovered and Recycled Plastic Waste

15 *Concept*

16 Plastic waste recovered and/or recycled by projects is the basis for the volume of Plastic Credits
17 that can be issued. Recovered and recycled plastic waste shall be quantified in accordance with
18 the applied methodology(ies).

19 *Requirements*

20 3.11.1 The net volume of plastic waste recovered and/or recycled by the project shall be
21 quantified.

22 3.11.2 Where feasible, the volume of recovered plastic waste should be estimated for each plastic
23 type relevant for the project and baseline scenarios. The volume of recycled plastic waste
24 shall be estimated for each plastic type relevant for the project and the baseline scenarios.

25 3.11.3 Kilograms shall be used as the unit of measure.

26 3.12 Monitoring

27 *Concept*

28 The impacts of project activities on relevant plastic waste sources and proximate end-of-life
29 scenarios shall be monitored in order to determine the net plastic waste recovery and/or recycling
30 benefit. Projects shall be monitored in accordance with the applied methodology(ies).

31

1 *Requirements*

2 *Data and Parameters*

3 3.12.1 Data and parameters used for the quantification of plastic waste recovery and/or recycling
4 shall be provided in accordance with the methodology.

5 3.12.2 Quality management procedures to manage data and information shall be applied and
6 established. Where applicable, procedures to account for uncertainty in data and
7 parameters shall be applied in accordance with the requirements set out in the
8 methodology.

9 *Monitoring Plan*

10 3.12.3 The project proponent shall establish a plastic waste management information system for
11 obtaining, recording, compiling and analyzing data and information important for
12 quantifying and reporting plastic waste recovery and/or recycling relevant for the project
13 and baseline scenario.

14 3.12.4 A monitoring plan for the project that includes roles and responsibilities shall be
15 established.

16 3.12.5 Where measurement and monitoring equipment is used, the project proponent shall ensure
17 the equipment is calibrated according to the equipment's specifications and/or relevant
18 national or international standards.

19 *3.13 Stakeholder Engagement*

20 *Concept*

21 Stakeholders must be involved with projects on an ongoing basis. All stakeholder groups and
22 interested stakeholders shall have access to timely and adequate information and open
23 communication channels with project proponents.

24 *Requirements*

25 *Stakeholder Identification*

26 3.13.1 The project proponent shall use locally appropriate methods to identify all stakeholder
27 groups who could potentially be affected by the project.

28 3.13.2 Stakeholder groups should be described in the project description and updated as
29 necessary in monitoring reports (see Box 1 below for more information on stakeholders
30 and stakeholder groups).

31

32

Box 1: Stakeholders and Stakeholder Groups

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

A stakeholder group is composed of individual stakeholders who derive similar income, livelihood, well-being and/or cultural values from the project and whose values are different from those of other groups. Examples include Indigenous Peoples, women, youth or other social, cultural and economic groups. Every individual stakeholder must belong to at least one stakeholder group, but may belong to more than one (e.g., a woman community leader should be considered as a woman and as a community leader). Stakeholder groups will often be segments of the population, not officially designated assemblages.

In the Plastic Program, stakeholder groups may include, but are not limited to, people living in the vicinity of the project, local municipalities, project employees, informal waste workers, the waste management establishment and local environmental organizations.

Where the term 'stakeholders' is used in Plastic Program documents, it may refer to a person, entity or stakeholder group.

Note – Interested stakeholders comprise any person, group of persons, or entity that has shown an interest, or is known to have an interest, in the activities of the project but that will not be materially affected by those activities. Throughout the Plastic Program, unless otherwise specified, the term 'stakeholder' used on its own excludes interested stakeholders. Other potentially interested stakeholders—e.g., local or international NGOs—are identified as such.

1
2 3.13.3 Stakeholders who have rights to resources or land that may be affected by project
3 activities shall be clearly identified in the project description and updated as necessary in
4 the monitoring report.

5 Stakeholder Consultation & Participation

6 3.13.4 Stakeholders identified in Section 3.13.1 above shall be notified of the project development
7 process.

8 3.13.5 Effective consultation (see Box 2 below) shall be used to enable project stakeholders,
9 including all stakeholder groups, to influence project design and implementation. The
10 consultation shall be carried out with respect for local customs, values and institutions. It
11 shall provide an ongoing opportunity for self-identification of stakeholder groups that are
12 vulnerable (i.e., lacking ability to anticipate, cope with, resist and recover from stresses or
13 shocks due to physical, social, economic and environmental factors or processes) and/or
14 marginalized (i.e., unable to participate fully in economic, social, political and cultural life).
15 Where those groups are identified, the project proponent shall emphasize optimizing
16 benefits to them.

Box 2: Guidance on Effective Consultation

Effective consultation requires project proponents to inform and engage broadly with stakeholder groups using socially and culturally appropriate methods to enable meaningful influence on the subject of consultation. Consultations must be gender and inter-generationally sensitive with special attention to vulnerable and/or marginalized people and must be conducted at mutually agreed locations and through representatives who are designated by the groups themselves in accordance with their own procedures. Such special attention shall be mutually acknowledged and agreed upon by both project proponents and marginalized and/or vulnerable people. Different approaches may be appropriate for different stakeholder groups.

Stakeholders should have an opportunity to evaluate impacts and raise concerns about potential negative impacts, express desired outcomes and provide input on the project design, both before the project design is finalized and during implementation. Consultations should include participatory identification of ecosystem services important for stakeholders (e.g., through participatory mapping). Consultations should also include an evaluation of the type and magnitude of impacts resulting from project activities and participatory design of feedback and grievance redress procedures.

- 1
2 3.13.6 All communications, consultations and participatory processes shall be undertaken with
3 stakeholders directly or through their legitimate representatives, ensuring adequate and
4 timely levels of information sharing with the members of the stakeholder groups in a form
5 they understand. Information sharing shall include provision of information about potential
6 costs, risks and benefits to all stakeholder groups. Different stakeholder groups may
7 require different communication and consultation methods; communication and
8 consultation shall be implemented in a culturally appropriate and gender sensitive manner.
- 9 3.13.7 The project proponent shall document consultations in the project description and indicate
10 whether and how the project design and implementation has been revised based on such
11 input. Special attention paid to marginalized and/or vulnerable groups shall be mutually
12 acknowledged and agreed upon by both project proponents and marginalized and/or
13 vulnerable groups.
- 14 3.13.8 A plan shall be developed, described in the project description and implemented to
15 continue communication and consultation between the project proponent and all
16 stakeholder groups about the project and its impacts. This information exchange should
17 facilitate adaptive management throughout the life of the project. This plan shall include
18 measures to enable the meaningful influence of all stakeholder groups that want and need
19 to be involved in evolving project design, implementation, monitoring and assessment
20 throughout a project lifetime.
- 21 **Anti-Discrimination**
- 22 3.13.9 Appropriate measures shall be taken to ensure that the project proponent and all other
23 entities involved in project design and implementation are not involved or complicit in any
24 form of discrimination or sexual harassment with respect to the project.

1 **Grievance Redress Procedure**

2 3.13.10 Projects shall establish a clear feedback and grievance redress procedure to address
3 disputes with stakeholders that may arise during project planning and implementation. The
4 feedback and grievance redress procedure shall take into account traditional methods that
5 stakeholders use to resolve conflicts.

6 3.13.11 The feedback and grievance redress procedure shall be set out in the project description
7 as well as publicized and accessible to all project stakeholders, including any interested
8 stakeholders. Grievances and project responses, including any redress, shall be
9 documented in the next project description or monitoring report.

10 *Note – Where a complaint is an objection to a decision taken by Verra or an aspect of how*
11 *it operates the Plastic Program, or a claim that the Plastic Program rules have had an*
12 *unfair, inadvertent or unintentional adverse effect, it shall be submitted following the*
13 *procedure set out in the Verra Appeals, Complaints and Conduct Policy, which is available*
14 *on the Verra website.*

15 **Access to Information**

16 3.13.12 Full project documentation, including project description and monitoring reports as they
17 become available, shall be accessible to all stakeholders, including interested
18 stakeholders. Special attention shall be paid to making full project documentation
19 accessible to marginalized and/or vulnerable stakeholder groups.

20 3.13.13 Stakeholders shall receive timely information about the validation/verification body's site
21 visit before a site visit occurs. The project proponent shall facilitate direct and independent
22 communication between stakeholders or their representatives and the assessor.

23 **Public Comment Period**

24 3.13.14 All projects are subject to a 30-day public comment period at the beginning of each
25 assessment (validation, verification and crediting period renewal) that will be hosted on the
26 Verra website. The date on which the project is listed on the Verra registry marks the
27 beginning of the project's first 30-day public comment period (see the Plastic Program
28 document *Plastic Program Guide* for more information on the project listing process).

29 3.13.15 The public comment function shall remain on the project record on the Verra registry for
30 the entirety of the project's 30-day public comment period so that the public and
31 stakeholders are aware of the upcoming assessment and can provide feedback on project
32 performance.

33 3.13.16 Any comments shall be submitted to Verra through the public comment function on the
34 project record on the Verra registry, and respondents shall provide their name,
35 organization, country and email address. At the end of the public comment period, Verra
36 provides any and all comments received to the project proponent. All comments received
37 are posted publicly on the project record on the Verra registry.

1 3.13.17 The project proponent shall take due account of any and all comments received during the
2 consultation, which means it will need to either update the project documentation or
3 demonstrate the insignificance or irrelevance of the comment. It shall demonstrate to the
4 validation/verification body what action it has taken and shall address all comments
5 received during this period prior to their project's certification.

6 3.14 Safeguards

7 *Concept*

8 Project activities should not negatively impact the natural environment or local communities.
9 Project proponents shall identify and address any negative social and environmental impacts of
10 project activities.¹⁰

11 *Requirements*

12 3.14.1 The project proponent shall identify potential intended or unintended negative social and
13 environmental impacts, including but not limited to the impacts addressed in Sections
14 3.14.2 – 3.14.15 below, and shall take steps to mitigate them in a manner appropriate to
15 the local context.

16 *Health and Safety*

17 3.14.2 Preventative measures shall be put in place to reduce health impacts within the project
18 boundary on the project actors and community. Preventative measures may include,
19 among others, pollution prevention, provision of equipment ergonomically appropriate for
20 the project activity and avoided exposure to toxic substances.

21 3.14.3 The project proponent shall implement measures to address potential hazards and safety
22 risks associated with the implementation of the project activity. These may include, among
23 others, education and training on safe working practices, provision of adequate gear (such
24 as personal protective equipment), and development and communication of emergency
25 protocols.

26 *Labor*

27 3.14.4 In its communications with relevant stakeholders, the project proponent shall include a list
28 of all relevant laws and regulations covering workers' rights in the host country.

29 3.14.5 The project proponent shall ensure that any employment provided in the course of project
30 activities is fairly and equitably compensated in, at minimum, the following ways:

¹⁰ Use of one or more causal chains is recommended, in combination with consistent stakeholder engagement, to identify and mitigate the risk of negative intended or unintended outcomes and impacts resulting from the implementation of project activities. A causal chain is a conceptual diagram tracing the process by which an activity leads to positive and negative impact(s) through a series of interlinked logical and sequential stages of cause-and-effect relationships.

- 1 1) There shall be no forced labor¹¹ (including contractually bound labor without
2 compensation) in the implementation of the project activity.
- 3 2) In the absence of legally recognized employment contracts, the project proponent shall
4 ensure that all project actors earn at least a regionally prevailing industry wage and
5 strive to ensure a living wage for all project actors, where a living wage is sufficient to
6 meet basic needs.¹²
- 7 3) The project proponent shall not withhold wages as a means of disciplinary action
8 unless permitted by relevant laws.
- 9 4) The project proponent shall ensure that project actors are compensated for hours
10 worked beyond the regionally recognized workweek.
- 11 3.14.6 The project proponent shall strive to eliminate the involvement of all project actors under
12 the age of 18.
- 13 3.14.7 The project proponent shall eliminate child labor¹³ in the implementation of the project
14 activity by ensuring that project actors under the age of 18:
 - 15 1) Are older than the nationally determined age of completion of compulsory schooling, or
16 15 years of age, whichever is greater;¹⁴
 - 17 2) Do not work in conditions likely to jeopardize their health, safety or morals; receive
18 protective equipment where relevant;
 - 19 3) Are paid equivalent wages to other project actors;
 - 20 4) Work outside of school hours when subjected to compulsory education laws; and,

¹¹ All work or service which is exacted from any person under the threat of any penalty and for which the person has not offered themselves voluntarily. Modified from International Labour Organization (1930). *C029 - Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29)* by the substitution of 'threat' for 'menace' and 'themselves' for 'himself'. Available at: https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO::P12100_ILO_CODE:C029.

¹² A living wage is the remuneration received for a standard work-week by a worker in a particular place sufficient to afford a decent standard of living for the worker and their family. Elements of a decent standard of living include food, water, housing, education, health care, transportation, clothing, and other essential needs including provision for unexpected events. Modified from Global Living Wage Coalition (n.d.). *What is a Living Wage?* by the substitution of 'their' for 'her or his'. Available at: <https://www.globallivingwage.org/about/what-is-a-living-wage/>. A living wage must at least meet legal or industry minimum standards or collective bargaining agreements. From Social Accountability International (2014). *Social Accountability 8000 International Standard (2014)*. Available at: <https://2imd8u2t64kh14lne52j2jh2-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/SA8000Standard2014.pdf>.

¹³ Work that deprives children of their childhood, their potential and their dignity, and that is harmful to physical and mental development. It refers to work that is mentally, physically, socially or morally dangerous to children and/or interferes with their schooling by: depriving them of the opportunity to attend school; obliging them to leave school prematurely; or requiring them to attempt to combine school attendance with excessively long and heavy work. From International Labor Organization (n.d.). *What is Child Labor*. Available at: <https://www.ilo.org/ipec/facts/lang-en/index.htm>.

¹⁴ International Labor Organization (1973). *C138 - Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138)*. Available at: https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO::P12100_ILO_CODE:C138.

1 5) That their school, work and transportation time do not exceed a combined total of 10
2 hours per day.¹⁵

3 3.14.8 The project proponent shall ensure that income-generating activities are maximized and
4 economic growth is prioritized for the most vulnerable workers. Where a project proponent
5 must eliminate existing income-generating activities, the project proponent shall ensure the
6 creation of alternative activities that generate the same or increased income and require
7 similar knowledge and skills. Should loss of employment be greater than creation of
8 employment as a result of the project, the situation shall be described and justified in the
9 project description.

10 Energy Efficiency and Greenhouse Gas Emissions

11 3.14.9 The project proponent shall ensure that energy consumption is conservative for the activity
12 type. Measures to manage consumption of energy include, among others, installation of
13 energy meters, use of energy efficient air filters and lighting and use of on-site combined
14 heat and power.

15 3.14.10 The project proponent shall demonstrate that all technologies used in the project activity
16 have similar or greater energy efficiencies than equivalent technologies used in the region.

17 3.14.11 The project proponent shall monitor greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and ensure that any
18 increase in emissions as a result of project activities, where unavoidable, is minimal.
19 Sources of GHG emissions in the project boundary may include, among others, energy
20 consumption, transportation and land-use change. Measures to manage GHG emissions
21 (with varying relevance for different project activity types) may include, among others,
22 maximum compression of plastic waste for increased transportation efficiency,
23 replacement of fossil fuel with renewable energy sources and fuel switching.

24 3.14.12 The project proponent shall, where feasible, implement the least GHG emission-intensive
25 activities and/or technologies.

26 3.14.13 The project proponent shall ensure that energy recovery included in the project boundary
27 is displacing a more GHG intensive source(s) of energy.

28 Condition of Natural Resources

29 3.14.14 The project proponent shall, where appropriate, use the following strategies, among
30 others, to identify and avoid or mitigate impacts of project activities on natural resources in
31 the project boundary:

32 1) Air quality: technology or proper operational controls for air pollution, no open burning
33 of plastic waste, controlled incineration and properly managed landfills.

¹⁵ Social Accountability International (2016). *Guidance Document for Social Accountability 8000 (2014)*. Available at: <https://sa-intl.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/SA8000-2014-Guidance-Document.pdf>.

- 1 2) Water quantity and quality: water risk assessments, monitoring of water consumption,
2 efficient water usage, adequate water treatment and management of effluents before
3 release into the environment.
4 3) Impacts on soil quality: adequate treatment of effluents before release into the
5 environment and properly managed landfills.
6 4) Biodiversity and ecosystem health: monitoring of habitat conversion and proximity to
7 protected areas.
8 3.14.15 Impact on threatened and endangered species shall be avoided.

9 Additional Impact Certifications

10 3.14.16 Additional certification standards may be applied to demonstrate positive social and
11 environmental impacts. For validation, the additional certification must apply to the lifetime
12 of the project. For verification, the additional certification must be for a period that fully
13 encompasses the monitoring period undergoing assessment.

14 3.15 Methodology Deviations

15 *Concept*

16 Projects may deviate from the procedures set out in methodologies in certain cases, where
17 alternative methods may be more efficient for project-specific circumstances, and where the
18 deviation will achieve the same level of accuracy or is more conservative than what is set out in
19 the methodology.

20 *Requirements*

21 3.15.1 Deviations from the applied methodology are permitted where they represent a deviation
22 from the criteria and procedures relating to monitoring or measurement set out in the
23 methodology (i.e., deviations are permitted where they relate to data and parameters
24 available at validation, data and parameters monitored, or the monitoring plan).

25 3.15.2 Methodology deviations shall not negatively impact the conservativeness of the
26 quantification of recovered and/or recycled plastic waste, except where they result in
27 increased accuracy of such quantification. Deviations relating to any other part of the
28 methodology shall not be permitted.

29 3.15.3 Methodology deviations shall be permitted at validation or verification and their
30 consequences shall be reported in the validation or verification report, as applicable, and
31 all subsequent verification reports. Methodology deviations are not considered to be
32 precedent setting.

33

1 3.16 Project Description Deviations

2 *Concept*

3 Projects may deviate from the procedures set out in methodologies in certain cases, where
4 alternative methods may be more efficient for project-specific circumstances, and where the
5 deviation will achieve the same level of accuracy or is more conservative than what is set out in
6 the methodology.

7 *Requirements*

8 3.16.1 Deviations from the project description are permitted at verification.

9 3.16.2 The procedures for documenting a project description deviation depend on whether the
10 deviation impacts the applicability of the methodology, additionality or the appropriateness
11 of the baseline scenario. The procedures are as follows:

12 1) Where the deviation impacts the applicability of the methodology, additionality or the
13 appropriateness of the baseline scenario, the deviation shall be described and justified
14 in a revised version of the project description. This shall include a description of when
15 the changes occurred, the reasons for the changes and how the changes impact the
16 applicability of the methodology, additionality and/or the appropriateness of the
17 baseline scenario.

18 An example of such a deviation is a change in project capacity where a different
19 baseline scenario would be more plausible, the applied methodology would no longer
20 be applicable, or there would be a significant impact on the investment analysis used
21 by the project to demonstrate additionality. Other examples include changes to the
22 project that might have similar impacts such as the addition of a new source of plastic
23 waste or new types of project activities.

24 2) Where the deviation does not impact the applicability of the methodology, additionality
25 or the appropriateness of the baseline scenario, and the project remains in compliance
26 with the applied methodology, the deviation shall be described and justified in the
27 monitoring report. This shall include a description of when the changes occurred and
28 the reasons for the changes. The deviation shall also be described in all subsequent
29 monitoring reports.

30 Examples of such deviations include changes in the procedures for measurement and
31 monitoring, or project design changes that do not have an impact on the applicability of
32 the methodology, additionality or the appropriateness of the baseline scenario.

33 Note that project proponents may apply project description deviations for the purpose
34 of switching to the latest version of the methodology, or switching to a different
35 methodology. For example, a project proponent may want to switch to the latest

1 version of a methodology where such version includes additional types of project
2 activities.

3 3.16.3 The deviation shall be assessed by a validation/verification body and the process, findings
4 and conclusions shall be reported in the verification report. The assessment shall
5 determine whether the deviation is appropriately described and justified, and whether the
6 project remains in compliance with the Plastic Program rules. The deviation shall also be
7 reported on in all subsequent verification reports. Project description deviations are not
8 considered to be precedent-setting.

9 3.16.4 The validation/verification body assessing the project description deviation shall be
10 accredited for the validation, recognizing that assessment of project description deviations
11 is a validation activity, as further set out in the *Plastic Program Guide*.

12 3.17 Records and Information

13 *Concept*

14 The project proponent shall make relevant information available to the validation/verification body
15 during each validation and verification, and retain documents and records related to the project for
16 future reference.

17 *Requirements*

18 *Records Relating to the Project*

19 3.17.1 The project proponent shall ensure that all documents and records are kept in a secure
20 and retrievable manner for at least two years after the end of the project crediting period.

21 *Information for the Validation/Verification Body*

22 3.17.2 For validation, the project proponent shall make available to the validation/verification body
23 the project description, evidence of project ownership and any requested supporting
24 documentation needed to support statements and data in the project description.

25 3.17.3 For verification, the project proponent shall make available to the validation/verification
26 body the project description, validation report, monitoring report applicable to the
27 monitoring period and any requested supporting documentation needed to support
28 statements and data in the monitoring report.

4 VALIDATION AND VERIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

This section sets out the rules and requirements for validation and verification of projects participating in the Plastic Program as well as accreditation requirements for third-party validation/verification bodies (VVBs). Validation/verification bodies must assess projects' compliance with Plastic Program rules and requirements and the applied methodology(ies) in accordance with the sections below. Validation/verification bodies must be approved by Verra to participate as validation/verification bodies under the Plastic Program, and meet the eligibility criteria set out in the *Plastic Program Guide*.

4.1 Introduction and General Requirements

Concept

Validation is the independent assessment of a project by a validation/verification body through the provision of objective evidence, of the reasonableness of the project design and its conformance with the *Plastic Standard*. Verification is the periodic ex-post independent assessment by a validation/verification body, conducted in accordance with the Plastic Program rules, of the plastic recovered and/or recycled by the project during the monitoring period.

Requirements

General

4.1.1 Validation and verification are risk-based processes and shall be carried out in conformance with *ISO 14065:2013*.¹⁶ Additional requirements with respect to validation and verification are set out in this section and shall be adhered to.

4.1.2 The validation/verification body shall select samples of data and information to be validated or verified, and the following shall apply:

- 1) The level of assurance shall be reasonable, with respect to material errors, omissions and misrepresentations, for both validation and the first verification, and every three years after the first verification. The level of assurance may be limited for all other years.

¹⁶ *ISO 14065:2013* will be valid until Verra communicates a required transition to *ISO/IEC 17029:2019* for the scope of *ISO 14065:202X*, which is currently under development. Verra plans to develop requirement(s) specifically for plastic waste recovery and recycling validation and verification and for the accreditation requirements of VVBs.

- 1 2) The criteria for validation and verification shall be the Plastic Program Version 1. The
2 validation or verification shall ensure conformance of the project with the Plastic
3 Program rules.
- 4 3) The objectives of validation or verification shall be in conformance with the Plastic
5 Program rules and the methodology applied to the project.
- 6 4) The threshold for materiality with respect to the aggregate of errors, omissions and
7 misrepresentations relative to the total reported recovered and/or recycled plastic shall
8 be five percent where a reasonable level of assurance is required. The threshold for
9 materiality shall be dependent on the expert judgment of the validation/verification body
10 where the level of assurance is limited.
- 11 4.1.3 The project shall be validated and plastic waste recovered and/or recycled verified by a
12 validation/verification body that meets the eligibility requirements set out in the *Plastic*
13 *Program Guide*.
- 14 4.1.4 Validation and verification of the project may be undertaken by the same
15 validation/verification body, noting the rules on rotation of validation/verification bodies set
16 out in Section 4.1.21 below. Validation may occur before the first verification or at the same
17 time as the first verification.
- 18 4.1.5 The project shall be listed on the Verra registry before the validation/verification body
19 begins the validation process (i.e., before the opening meeting between the
20 validation/verification body and the project proponent. However, this does not include any
21 pre-engagement activities required to create proposals to conduct validation/verification
22 services). The validation/verification body is responsible for checking that the project is
23 listed on the Verra registry and shall not conduct the opening meeting or otherwise begin
24 validation until such time as the project is listed.
- 25 4.1.6 The public comment period for the draft verification documents shall be open on the Verra
26 registry before the validation/verification body begins the verification process (i.e., before
27 the opening meeting between the validation/verification body and the project proponent.
28 However, this does not include any pre-engagement activities required to create proposals
29 to conduct verification services). The validation/verification body is responsible for
30 checking that the public comment period is open on the Verra registry and shall not
31 conduct the opening meeting or otherwise begin verification until the project's status is
32 updated to *under verification*.
- 33 4.1.7 Validation/verification bodies are expected to follow the guidance provided in the *Plastic*
34 *Standard Validation and Verification Manual (to be developed)* when validating or verifying
35 projects and conducting methodology assessments under the Plastic Program.

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1 Validation and Verification Process

2 4.1.8 Where the project does not fully comply with the methodology, the validation/verification
3 body shall determine whether this represents a methodology deviation or a methodology
4 revision (in accordance with the specifications for each), and the case shall be handled
5 accordingly.

6 4.1.9 Where the project does not meet the criteria for validation or verification, the
7 validation/verification body shall produce a negative validation conclusion and provide the
8 validation or verification report and project description, or monitoring report, to Verra. The
9 project shall be ineligible for registration until such time as corrective action is taken and
10 the (same) validation/verification body has provided a positive validation or verification.

11 4.1.10 Validation/verification bodies may conduct batch verifications, for which a
12 validation/verification body shall be selected by Verra to conduct all verifications of eligible
13 projects in a particular region in a given year.

Question: The batch verification process and requirements will be further developed, to be operationalized when the Program and market are more established. Batch verification is a way of grouping projects by scale, type or geographic region, and assigning one or more auditors to verify those projects in a given time period. It could reduce costs and streamline assessment processes. Should the Plastic Program include a batch verification option? Does the temporal boundary of one year make sense, or could the program allow the same VVB to conduct verification of eligible projects in a three-year time frame, given that Plastic Program projects are required to achieve a reasonable level of assurance during verification every three years?

14 Competence

15 4.1.11 The validation/verification body and validation and verification team shall meet the
16 competence requirements set out in *ISO 14065:2013*.¹⁷

17 4.1.12 The validation/verification body shall demonstrate competence in environmental and social
18 auditing, with preferred experience in waste management systems, as set out in the *Plastic*
19 *Program Guide*.

20 4.1.13 Verra shall provide a roster of qualified local experts for approved validation/verification
21 bodies to utilize (*to be developed*). The roster is not exhaustive and serves as a resource
22 for approved validation/verification bodies seeking to recruit local experts, as needed.
23 Validation/verification bodies may recruit local experts not included on the roster.

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¹⁷ ISO 14065:2013 will be valid until Verra communicates a required transition to ISO/IEC 17029:2019 for the scope of ISO 14065:202X, which is currently under development. Verra plans to develop requirement(s) specifically for plastic waste recovery and recycling validation and verification and for the accreditation requirements of VVBs.

1 **Validation and Verification Reporting**

2 4.1.14 The validation report describes the validation process, any findings raised during validation
3 and their resolutions, and the conclusions reached by the validation/verification body. The
4 validation/verification body shall use the *Plastic Program Validation Report Template (to be*
5 *developed)* or an approved combined validation report template *(to be developed)*
6 available on the Verra website, and adhere to all instructional text within the template. The
7 validation report shall be accompanied by a validation representation, which shall be
8 prepared using the *Plastic Program Validation Deed of Representation Template (to be*
9 *developed)*.

10 4.1.15 The verification report describes the verification process, any findings raised during
11 verification and their resolutions, and the conclusions reached by the validation/verification
12 body. The validation/verification body shall use the *Plastic Program Verification Report*
13 *Template (to be developed)* or an approved combined verification report template *(to be*
14 *developed)* available on the Verra website, and adhere to all instructional text within the
15 template. The verification report shall be accompanied by a verification representation,
16 which shall be prepared using the *Plastic Program Verification Deed of Representation*
17 *Template (to be developed)*.

18 4.1.16 Where a monitoring report and associated verification report divide a verification period
19 into vintages, separate Plastic Credit issuance records in accordance with vintage periods
20 may be issued, as set out in the Plastic Program document *Plastic Program Guide*.

21 **Validation and Verification Statement**

22 4.1.17 The validation report and the verification report shall contain a validation statement and a
23 verification statement, respectively.

24 4.1.18 Validation and verification statements shall:

- 25 1) Describe the level of assurance of the validation or verification.
- 26 2) Describe the objectives, scope and criteria of the validation or verification.
- 27 3) Describe whether the data and information supporting the assertion of plastic waste
28 recovered and/or recycled were hypothetical, projected and/or historical in nature.
- 29 4) Include the validation/verification body's conclusion on the assertion of plastic waste
30 recovered and/or recycled, including any qualifications or limitations.

31 4.1.19 The verification statement shall state the volume of plastic waste recovered and/or
32 recycled during the monitoring period that have been verified.

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1 [Records of Validation and Verification](#)

2 4.1.20 The validation/verification body shall keep all documents and records in a secure and
3 retrievable manner for at least two years after the end of the project crediting period, even
4 where they do not conduct verification for the whole project crediting period.

5 [Rotation of Validation/Verification Bodies](#)

6 4.1.21 Rotation of validation/verification bodies is required in respect of validation and verification,
7 as follows:

- 8 1) Validation (including project crediting period renewal validation) and the verification of
9 the first three consecutive years of a project (in a given project crediting period) may be
10 undertaken by the same validation/verification body. However, the subsequent
11 verification shall be undertaken by a different validation/verification body. For example,
12 if validation and verification were undertaken at the same time, and the joint validation
13 and verification covered a monitoring period of three years, the subsequent verification
14 would have to be undertaken by a different validation/verification body. If validation
15 were undertaken first (i.e., separately), the first verification of up to three consecutive
16 years could be undertaken by the same validation/verification body, but the subsequent
17 verification would have to be undertaken by a different validation/verification body.
- 18 2) A validation/verification body may not verify more than three consecutive years of a
19 project's recovered and/or recycled plastic. The validation/verification body may
20 undertake further verification for the project only when at least three years of the
21 project's recovered and/or recycled plastic have been verified by a different
22 validation/verification body. Additionally, where a validation/verification body verifies
23 the final three consecutive years of a project crediting period, the project crediting
24 period renewal validation shall be undertaken by a different validation/verification body.

Question: Under other programs, including the [VCS Program](#), Verra requires VVB rotation every six years. Under the Plastic Program, we selected three years in order to align the timeline with our proposal to require a reasonable level of assurance every three years. Is the three year rotation requirement sufficient? Could a three year VVB rotation requirement increase costs for projects and/or auditors?

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26 [Validation and Verification Requirements for Grouped Projects](#)

27 4.1.22 Validation and verification of grouped projects shall assess conformance of the project with
28 the requirements for grouped projects set out in the Plastic Program rules.

29 4.1.23 New project activity instances shall be validated, based on the information reported in the
30 monitoring report, against the applicable set of eligibility criteria. The validation/verification
31 body shall specify which instances meet the eligibility criteria for inclusion in the project.
32 Such validation may be reported in the verification report or a separate validation report.

1 4.1.24 Where, due to the number of project activity instances, it is unreasonable to undertake an
2 individual assessment of each initial or new instance, the validation/verification body shall
3 document and explain the sampling methods employed for the validation of such
4 instances. Such sampling methods shall be statistically sound. The number of instances
5 included in the project that are eligible for monitoring and generation of Plastic Credits
6 shall be proportional to the percentage of sampled instances found to be in compliance by
7 the validation/verification body.

8 4.1.25 The verification report for grouped projects shall document and explain the sampling
9 methods employed by the validation/verification body for the verification of plastic waste
10 recovered and/or recycled by the project. Such methods shall be statistically sound. Any
11 subsequent changes to the sampling method(s) required as a result of the verification
12 findings shall be documented.