

PROPOSED UPDATES TO THE JNR REQUIREMENTS

1 INTRODUCTION

This document relates to proposed changes to the VCS Jurisdictional and Nested REDD+ (JNR) Requirements which would impact the development of jurisdictional REDD+ programs and reference levels. Our aim is to provide JNR programs with workable, practical and credible accounting and crediting requirements that are well-aligned with the UNFCCC and other major GHG programs. Successfully applying JNR should provide government REDD+ programs with a broad range of options for private-sector demand and markets, and advance progress towards the overall goals of the REDD+ program. Further information on JNR is available on the [Verra website](#).

Specifically, these updates include:

- 1) Details of three proposed updates to the JNR Requirements on which we are requesting detailed feedback (Section 2).
- 2) High-level descriptions of a number of other updates to the JNR Requirements that we intend to make (Section 3).

In addition to the updates described in this document, a number of updates that are described in the Proposed Updates to REDD+ Project Nesting consultation document may impact both REDD+ project nesting requirements and jurisdictional-level requirements, and therefore result in updates to the *JNR Requirements* and related JNR documents. Specifically, we expect that the following considerations described in the Proposed Updates to REDD+ Project Nesting consultation document will also have impacts on the *JNR Requirements* and related JNR documents: 1) Uncertainty rules and requirements (described in a footnote in Section 2.1); 2) Potential division of the IFM category (Section 3); 3) Non-Permanence risk (Section 6). Stakeholders are additionally encouraged to review and provide feedback on these considerations in the context of the development of JNR programs and reference levels.

2 PROPOSED UPDATES TO THE JNR REQUIREMENTS

We are requesting feedback on the specific proposed changes to existing rules in the *JNR Requirements* as set out below:

1) Shortening the JNR reference level reassessment period

Shortening the JNR reference level reassessment period from the current requirement of five to ten years, to four to six years would bring JNR into better alignment with the likely frequency of update of UNFCCC assessed reference levels and Biennial Update Reports (BURs) to the

UNFCCC. This would make it easier for a country to apply JNR in conjunction with its REDD+ program under the UNFCCC. Note that the *JNR Requirements* are already well aligned with the Warsaw Framework for REDD+¹. Furthermore, the rapidly changing dynamics in forest countries means 10 years is often too long for a reference level to maintain its relevance and accuracy.

This update would impact the following sections of the *JNR Requirements*, v3.4:

- Section 3.11.2: The jurisdictional baseline shall be fixed for a period of ~~5 to 10~~ 4 to 6 years as defined by the jurisdiction in the jurisdictional program description, and shall be updated according to such frequency.
- Section 3.11.6: Jurisdictional baselines shall be updated and revalidated every ~~5 to 10~~ 4 to 6 years.

2) Shortening the historical reference period where an historical average is used

Where a jurisdictional reference level uses the historical annual average GHG emissions or removals to determine the current jurisdictional reference level period, shortening the historical reference period would allow a reference level of greater accuracy to be developed, without being overly burdensome. This is because the historical reference period would be closer to the start of (and therefore more reflective of) the current jurisdictional reference level period.

This update would impact the following section of the *JNR Requirements*, v3.4:

- Section 3.11.12 (1) (a): The historical annual average GHG emissions or removals over the period of ~~8 to 12~~ 5 to 10 years ending within two years of the start of the current jurisdictional baseline period;

3) Removing requirements for including carbon decay in the calculation of baseline GHG emissions or removals

Removing requirements for including carbon decay in the calculation of baseline GHG emissions or removals would simplify jurisdictional accounting without losing significant accuracy, and would put the *JNR Requirements* in line with the UNFCCC and other major GHG program requirements.

This update would impact the following section of the *JNR Requirements*, v3.4:

- Section 3.11.12 (9) would be removed.

¹ For further analysis see: [A Gap Analysis of FCPF's Carbon Fund Methodological Framework and UNFCCC REDD+ Rulebook relative to the VCS Jurisdictional and Nested REDD+ Requirements](#)

3 HIGH-LEVEL DESCRIPTIONS OF PLANNED UPDATES TO THE JNR REQUIREMENTS

In addition to the proposed updates described in Section 2, above, we intend to make a number of other relatively straightforward updates to the *JNR Requirements*. These updates include:

- 1) Moving requirements for REDD+ project nesting from the *JNR Requirements* (and other relevant JNR documents) into the *VCS Standard*, *VCS Methodology Requirements*, and other relevant project-level documents. As described in the *Proposed Updates to REDD+ Project Nesting* consultation document, the existing requirements for nested projects (currently set out in the *JNR Requirements*) will be broadened and elaborated. In addition to helping to increase the user-friendliness of the VCS Program (e.g., by ensuring that project developers need to primarily reference requirements in one document, the *VCS Standard*), this will also ensure that the REDD+ project nesting requirements are clearly applicable to all VCS REDD+ projects, including those outside of VCS JNR programs or reference levels. Finally, this update will allow the *JNR Requirements* to solely focus on requirements for governments seeking jurisdictional level crediting for their REDD+ programs.
- 2) Promoting alignment of jurisdictional monitoring with the National Forest Monitoring System (NFMS) to the extent possible, and requiring an explanation if the forest definition (and other relevant definitions) are different from those used by the government in the national GHG and forest inventories (Section 3.11.4). This will help to strengthen consistency between JNR and government REDD+ programs, and the data and methods used to account for forest-related GHG emission reductions and removals contained in a country's existing or emerging UNFCCC GHG inventory.
- 3) Removing requirements for overlapping leakage belts (Section 3.12.14) and for projects crossing jurisdictional boundaries (Section 3.5.9). These requirements would rarely, if ever need to be employed and add a large amount of complicated text to the *JNR Requirements*.
- 4) Requiring jurisdictional proponents to notify Verra of a likely loss event within 30 days of discovery of the likely loss event (Section 3.15.6, *JNR Requirements*, v3.4 and Section 5.3.1, *JNR Registration and Issuance Process*, v3.0), in order to align with a recent updates to the *VCS Standard*, v4.0, and *VCS Registration and Issuance Process*, v4.0.
- 5) Changing the terminology used in the *JNR Requirements* (throughout) to refer to “jurisdictional baseline” as “jurisdictional reference level”, which will differentiate more clearly from the project level, and bring JNR into closer alignment with terminology used by governments and UN agencies.

- 6) Facilitating joint validation and verification between JNR and REDD+ Social and Environmental Standards (REDD+SES)² by:
 - a) Revising the *JNR Program Description Template* and *JNR Monitoring Report Template* to incorporate information necessary for a JNR program's validation and verification under REDD+SES; and
 - b) Updating the JNR expert panel requirements (Section 2.5.3, *JNR Validation and Verification Process*, v3.0) to include expertise relevant for REDD+SES.

These updates would allow jurisdictions interested in jointly applying both JNR and REDD+SES to do so in a streamlined manner.

² For further details see: <https://redd-standards.org/>