CCP Rule Architecture

CONTENTS

I. INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

1. The Integrity Council for the Voluntary Carbon Market (ICVCM) is an independent governance body that sets and maintains a global threshold standard for high-integrity carbon credits through the **Core Carbon Principles** (CCPs) and the **Assessment Framework.** The CCPs and the Assessment Framework establish the principles, criteria, and requirements used by the ICVCM to assess carbon-crediting programs and methodologies for CCP-Eligibility and CCP-Approval.

2. This document establishes the **CCP rule architecture**: the structure, governance arrangements, and instruments through which the ICVCM governs the interpretation, technical application, clarification, and implementation of the **CCP rule base**.

3. The CCP rule architecture establishes a hierarchy of instruments operating within the CCP rule base. These instruments include:

    a) **Interpretations** adopted by the Governing Board;

    b) **Technical Notices** adopted by the Standards Oversight Committee under delegated authority from the Governing Board; and

    c) **Clarifications** issued by the Executive Secretariat under delegated authority from the Governing Board, exercised through Standards Oversight Committee oversight.

4. The CCP rule architecture also recognises **companion documents** that support the implementation, use, and understanding of the **CCP rule base**.

5. The CCP rule architecture **does not directly amend or revise** the CCPs or the criteria and requirements of the Assessment Framework. Rather, it establishes the governance arrangements through which existing provisions are interpreted, technically applied, clarified, and implemented over time.

6. The CCP rule architecture is designed to support the **consistent**, **transparent**, and **proportionate interpretation**, technical application, clarification, and implementation of the CCP rule base.

II. SCOPE AND RELATIONSHIP TO THE CCP RULE BASE

7. The **CCP rule architecture** governs the structure, hierarchy, implementation, and operation of the **CCP rule base** used by the ICVCM in the assessment and oversight of carbon-crediting programs and methodologies under the Core Carbon Principles (CCPs) and the Assessment Framework.

8. The **CCP rule base** includes:

   a) The CCPs and the Assessment Framework; and

   b) Interpretations, Technical Notices, and Clarifications in effect under the CCP rule architecture.

9. The **CCPs** and the **Assessment Framework** remain the **authoritative foundation** for assessments conducted by the ICVCM and establish the integrity threshold applied within the **CCP rule base**. Instruments developed under the CCP rule architecture operate within the scope of, and are subordinate to, the CCPs and the Assessment Framework.

10. The CCP rule architecture establishes the governance arrangements, hierarchy, and processes through which the ICVCM may:

    a) Develop and adopt **Interpretations**;

    b) Develop and adopt **Technical Notices**;

    c) Develop and issue **Clarifications;** and

    d) Support the implementation and application of the CCPs and the Assessment Framework.

11. Interpretations, Technical Notices, and Clarifications developed under the CCP rule architecture may support:

    a) Consistent interpretation and application of existing provisions;

    b) Response to scientific, technical, market, or regulatory developments;

    c) Response to assessment findings, assurance activities, and operational experience; and

    d) Improved clarity, accessibility and usability of the CCP rule base.

12. Companion documents may support the implementation, assessment, assurance, oversight, accessibility, and use of the CCP rule base. Further information regarding companion document categories, status, operational effect, publication, and maintenance is provided in **Annex 1: Companion Documents**.

III. STRUCTURE OF THE CCP RULE ARCHITECTURE

13. The CCP rule architecture establishes a **hierarchy** through which the CCP rule base is interpreted, implemented, and applied.

14. The **hierarchy** establishes the relative authority of the CCPs, the Assessment Framework, and each instrument tier and determines the applicable governance pathway and relationship between instruments within the CCP rule base.

15. The CCP rule architecture is structured through a **three-tier hierarchy**.

16. The three tiers of the CCP rule base are:

    a) **Tier 1 –** the **Core Carbon Principles** (CCPs) and the **Assessment Framework**;

    b) **Tier 2 – Interpretations** and **Technical Notices**; and

    c) **Tier 3 – Clarifications**.

17. **Tier 1** constitutes the authoritative foundation for assessments conducted by the ICVCM.

18. **Tier 2** instruments support the interpretation and technical application of the CCPs and the Assessment Framework and may affect how criteria and requirements are assessed.

19. **Tier 3** instruments support operational implementation and procedural application of the CCP rule base and are not intended to affect how criteria and requirements are assessed.

20. Instruments developed under the CCP rule architecture:

    a) Operate within the scope of, and subordinate to, the CCPs and the Assessment Framework;

    b) Support the interpretation, technical application, and implementation of existing provisions; and

c) **Do not directly amend or revise** the CCPs or the criteria and requirements of the Assessment Framework.

21. The governance authority, consultation requirements, transition measures, implementation approaches, and oversight applicable to each instrument tier may differ according to:

a) The nature and purpose of the instrument;

b) The potential material impact of the instrument;

c) The level of governance oversight required;

d) The role of the instrument within the CCP rule architecture; and

e) Whether the matter establishes precedent or broader implications for the CCP rule base.

22. The instrument development pathways are outlined in Section VII. The detailed governance arrangements and internal operating procedures supporting that pathway are maintained by the ICVCM.

23. Where an inconsistency arises between instruments developed under different tiers of the CCP rule base:

a) The **higher-tier instrument prevails**; and

b) The lower-tier instrument should be interpreted and applied in a manner consistent with the higher-tier instrument.

24. Companion documents support the implementation, assessment, assurance, and use of the CCP rule base. Companion documents do not constitute separate instrument tiers. Further information regarding companion documents is provided in **Annex 1: Companion Documents**.

25. The **CCP rule architecture** does not preclude future amendments or revisions to the **CCPs** or the **Assessment Framework** through separate governance processes.

IV. INSTRUMENTS

26. The CCP rule architecture establishes distinct categories of instruments with different purposes, governance pathways, and levels of oversight.

27. The principal distinction between instrument categories is whether the instrument may affect how criteria and requirements are interpreted, technically applied, or assessed.

28. **Tier 2** instruments consist of:

a) Interpretations; and

b) Technical Notices.

29. **Interpretations** and **Technical Notices** may affect **assessment or eligibility** and are subject to governance, consultation, and implementation requirements appropriate to their potential impact.

30. **Interpretations** are instruments adopted by the Governing Board that explain the meaning, scope, or intent of existing provisions within the CCP rule base and **establish an authoritative and precedential understanding** of how those provisions apply in new or evolving program, methodological, technical, or market contexts.

31. **Technical Notices** are instruments adopted by the Standards Oversight Committee under delegated authority from the Governing Board and are **operationally authoritative** instruments addressing the technical application of existing provisions within the CCP rule base, including methodologies, parameters, data sources, technical approaches, and other technical matters relevant to assessments.

32. **Following the effective date, Tier 2** instruments may, depending on the nature of the instrument, have one or more of the following impacts:

a) Changes in the assessment outcomes for future applicant programs and submitted methodologies and assurance outcomes for CCP-Eligible carbon-crediting programs and CCP-Approved methodologies;

b) Changes in the future issuances of credits tagged as CCP-Approved credits under a CCP-Approved methodology;

c) Introduction of new operational, monitoring, reporting, documentation or assurance expectations;

d) Material updates to program rules, methodologies, tools or systems;

e) Establishment of a new interpretive precedent relevant to multiple assessments of programs or methodologies.

33. **Tier 3** instruments consist of **Clarifications**.

34. **Clarifications** are limited to operational, procedural, administrative, or documentation matters. Clarifications are not intended to affect **eligibility** or **assessments** and must not establish new assessment expectations, new eligibility thresholds, or new interpretive positions regarding CCP or Assessment Framework provisions.

35. Clarifications may be issued by the Executive Secretariat under delegated authority, subject to applicable governance oversight.

36. Where a matter may materially affect how the CCPs or Assessment Framework criteria and requirements are interpreted, technically applied, or assessed, including where clarification of an apparent gap, ambiguity, or unintended outcome would require a new interpretative position, the matter should be considered through a **Tier 2 instrument**.

37. Governance arrangements, consultation processes, and instrument development pathways relating to Interpretations, Technical Notices, and Clarifications are outlined in Section VII. The detailed governance arrangements and internal operating procedures supporting that pathway are maintained by the ICVCM.

38. Instruments that establish material new obligations not reasonably foreseeable from the Assessment Framework or that materially expand the scope of an existing criteria and requirement are out of scope of this Rule Architecture and should be considered through other governance processes.

V. COMPANION DOCUMENTS

39. The CCP rule architecture includes **companion documents** that support the implementation and operational use of the CCP rule base.

40. Companion documents are organized into the **following categories:**

    a) Operational companion documents;

    b) Reference companion documents; and

    c) Explanatory companion documents.

41. The CCPs, the Assessment Framework, and instruments adopted or issued under the CCP rule architecture remain the **authoritative sources** for criteria, requirements, interpretation, and technical application. Companion documents do not constitute instruments.

42. Some companion documents may be required for assessment, assurance, oversight, implementation, or tagging activities, while others may be explanatory or informational in nature.

43. Further information regarding the companion document categories, the documents included within each category, their status, operational effect, publication, and maintenance is provided in **Annex 1: Companion Documents**.

VI. GOVERNANCE ROLES AND OVERSIGHT

44. The CCP rule architecture operates through the roles and responsibilities of the **Governing Board** and its committees, the **Expert Panel**, the **Executive Secretariat,** and other relevant ICVCM governance and advisory bodies, as well as the **Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities Engagement Forum**. These bodies may, within their respective mandates and Terms of Reference, propose matters for consideration under the CCP rule architecture.

Governing Board

45. The **Governing Board** retains overall authority and oversight under the CCP rule architecture.

46. The Governing Board:

a) Adopts the **Core Carbon Principles** (CCPs) and **the Assessment Framework**;

b) Adopts **Interpretations** and other decisions requiring Governing Board approval under the CCP rule architecture;

c) Retains authority over the interpretation of the **CCP rule base** and the integrity standards reflected in the **CCPs** and the **Assessment Framework**;

d) Safeguards the integrity and coherence of the CCP rule base; and

e) Exercises oversight of instruments adopted under delegated authority, including through review or non-objection arrangements established by the Governing Board.

Standards Oversight Committee

47. The **Standards Oversight Committee** supports oversight, review, coordination, and escalation of matters requiring **higher-tier governance consideration** under the CCP rule architecture.

48. The **Standards Oversight Committee**:

    a) Reviews draft **Interpretations** and provides recommendations to the Governing Board;

    b) Adopts **Technical Notices** under delegated authority from the Governing Board, subject to any review or non-objection arrangements established by the Governing Board;

    c) Oversees the development and issuance of **Clarifications** by the Executive Secretariat;

    d) Oversees consultation processes and implementation arrangements required under the applicable instrument pathway; and

    e) Advises the Governing Board and relevant governance bodies on matters involving **materiality**, **precedent**, **scope**, or broader implications for the CCP rule base.

Expert Panel

49. The **Expert Panel** provides independent technical, scientific, methodological, and operational expertise relevant to the CCP rule architecture.

50. The Expert Panel supports:

    a) Identification of issues, development and review of instruments;

    b) Technical and scientific assessment of issues arising under the CCP rule architecture;

    c) Technical application and implementation approaches;

    d) Consideration of assessment and assurance experience;

    e) Consideration of scientific, methodological, and market developments; and

    f) Other matters relevant to the interpretation, technical application, and implementation of the CCP rule base.

51. The **Expert Panel** contributes to the CCP rule architecture through **technical support activities** or **formal review activities**, in accordance with its Terms of Reference. Technical

support activities may involve input from the Expert Panel, individual Expert Panel members, or other specialists to support technical, scientific, methodological, operational, or market analysis. Formal review activities involve consideration of draft instruments by the Expert Panel in accordance with the applicable governance pathway.

52. Where the Expert Panel considers that a proposed **Clarification** may materially affect **assessments**, **eligibility**, or **interpretive expectations**, it may recommend that the matter be referred to the Standards Oversight Committee for consideration.

Executive Secretariat

53. The **Executive Secretariat** supports the administration, implementation, and day-to-day operation of the CCP rule architecture.

54. The Executive Secretariat:

    a) Identifies, logs, triages, routes, and tracks matters arising under the CCP rule architecture;

    b) Prepares instruments and related supporting materials;

    c) Manages Expert Panel support activities, public consultation processes, stakeholder engagement, and related operational procedures required under the applicable instrument pathway;

    d) Issues **Clarifications** under delegated authority and subject to Standards Oversight Committee oversight; and

    e) Implements adopted instruments within assessment and assurance processes.

55. The Executive Secretariat escalates matters where required under the CCP rule architecture, including where issues involve **materiality, precedent, scope**, or the **need for a higher-tier instrument pathway**.

Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities Engagement Forum

56. The **Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities Engagement Forum** provides stakeholder perspectives, implementation experience, and other inputs relevant to the operation of the CCP rule architecture.

57. The Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities Engagement Forum contributes perspectives relevant to:

a) **Development and review of instruments**;

b) **Implementation experience** and operational impacts;

c) Stakeholder and market impacts; and

d) **Integrity considerations** and the practical operation of the CCP rule architecture.

VII. INSTRUMENT DEVELOPMENT AND DECISION PATHWAYS

58. The CCP rule architecture establishes pathways for the **development, review, consultation**, **adoption** or **issuance, implementation,** and **monitoring of instruments**.

Initiation

59. Requests, issues, or inputs for the development, revision, or consideration of an instrument may arise from governance bodies, advisory bodies, assessment and assurance activities, Continuous Improvement Work Program activities, stakeholder input, or developments in science, methodology, markets, or regulation. The **Executive Secretariat** collates such requests, issues, or inputs under the CCP rule architecture.

Readiness Assessment

60. The **Executive Secretariat** conducts an initial **readiness assessment** and determines whether support from the **Expert Panel or the Engagement Forum** is required to support the assessment. The readiness assessment shall consider:

a) Whether action under the CCP rule architecture may be required;
b) Whether sufficient technical background, evidence, or analysis is available;
c) The potential integrity significance of the matter;
d) The potential operational or market impact of the matter; and
e) Whether the matter is ready to proceed to triage and instrument development.

Triage and Pathway Selection

61. Following the readiness assessment, the **Executive Secretariat** determines the nature of the issue, the appropriate instrument pathway, and whether escalation, consultation,

transition measures, implementation arrangements, or additional oversight are required. Where the Executive Secretariat considers Expert Panel input necessary, it may consult the Expert Panel to support the pathway determination.

62. The principal consideration is whether the matter could materially affect how criteria and requirements are **interpreted**, **technically applied**, implemented, or **assessed** in practice.

63. Matters that could materially affect assessment or eligibility should normally proceed through a **Tier 2 instrument pathway**.

64. Matters limited to operational, procedural, administrative, implementation, or documentation issues may be addressed through a **Tier 3 instrument pathway**.

Instrument Development and Review

65. The **Executive Secretariat** develops draft instruments through the applicable instrument pathway.

66. Instrument development includes drafting, review, consultation where applicable, approval or issuance, publication, implementation, and monitoring.

67. Instrument development may include technical, scientific, methodological, operational, or stakeholder input, including input from the **Expert Panel, the Engagement Forum** or other specialists where specialised expertise is required.

68. Draft instruments are reviewed through the applicable instrument pathway, including review by the **Expert Panel** and the **Standards Oversight Committee** where required.

Consultation, Adoption and Issuance

69. **Public consultation** may be undertaken in accordance with the applicable instrument pathway. Where applicable, proposed **transition measures** should be consulted on **as part of the same consultation process**.

70. **Interpretations** and **Technical Notices** that may **materially affect** assessments, eligibility, implementation expectations, or market participants shall be **subject to public consultation, unless the Standards Oversight Committee determines otherwise**.

71. Unless otherwise determined by the Standards Oversight Committee, **public consultations should remain open for 30 days**. Longer consultation periods may be approved where the

matter is technically complex, has significant implementation implications, or may materially affect assessments, eligibility, implementation expectations, or market participants.

72. The **Executive Secretariat** may engage in direct stakeholder consultations as part of the instruments development process or to complement public consultation.

73. **Interpretations** are adopted by the **Governing Board.**

74. **Technical Notices** are adopted by the **Standards Oversight Committee** under delegated authority from the Governing Board, subject to applicable review or non-objection arrangements.

75. **Clarifications** are issued by the **Executive Secretariat** under delegated authority and applicable oversight arrangements.

Transition Measures and Effective Dates

76. **Interpretations** and **Technical Notices** could affect how the CCPs or Assessment Framework criteria and requirements are interpreted, technically applied, implemented, or assessed and may therefore require **consultation** and **transition measures**.

77. **Clarifications** are intended to address operational, or implementation matters and are not intended to change how criteria and requirements are assessed. The effective date for a clarification is its date of issuance, unless otherwise stated.

78. Instruments are intended to **apply prospectively**. Detailed transition measures, effective date arrangements, implementation approaches, and grace period considerations are set out in **Annex 3: Transition Measures**.

Proportionate Escalation

79. The CCP rule architecture supports **proportionate escalation** by addressing matters through the **lowest appropriate instrument pathway** and escalating matters to a higher-tier instrument pathway where required under the CCP rule architecture.

80. Detailed transition measures, effective date arrangements, implementation approaches, and grace period considerations are set out in **Annex 2: Transition Measures**.

VIII. TRANSITION MEASURES AND PROSPECTIVE APPLICATION

81. The CCP rule architecture supports the **prospective** implementation of instruments through transition measures, implementation arrangements, and grace periods.

82. **Interpretations** and **Technical Notices** could affect how criteria and requirements are interpreted, technically applied, implemented, or assessed and may require **transition measures**, **implementation arrangements**, or **grace periods**, as determined through the applicable governance pathway.

83. **Clarifications** are intended to address operational, procedural, administrative, or implementation matters and are not normally expected to require transition measures, implementation arrangements, or grace periods.

84. Instruments developed under the CCP rule architecture apply **prospectively** unless otherwise expressly specified.

85. **Instruments** are **not intended to apply retroactively** to completed assessments, assurance decisions, or credits tagged as CCP-Approved unless expressly specified and justified through the applicable instrument pathway.

86. From the **effective date**, assessments and assurance activities shall be conducted in accordance with the applicable CCPs, the Assessment Framework criteria and requirements, and any relevant instruments adopted or issued under the CCP rule architecture. **The application of an instrument to existing CCP-Eligible programs and CCP-Approved methodologies shall be determined through the applicable transition measures and implementation arrangements**.

87. Detailed transition measures, implementation arrangements, grace periods, effective dates, and prospective application arrangements are set out in **Annex 2: Transition Measures**.

IX. PUBLICATION, ACCESSIBILITY, AND TRACEABILITY

88. The CCP rule architecture supports the **digital publication**, **accessibility**, and use of the CCP rule base.

89. The publication and organisation of the CCP rule base supports:

    a) Clear identification and categorisation of **instruments** and **companion documents**;

b) Visibility of the relationship between the **CCPs**, the **Assessment Framework**, **instruments**, and **companion documents**;

c) **Traceability** between CCP or Assessment Framework provisions and related instruments or companion documents;

d) The ability for users to identify and access all instruments and companion documents related to a particular CCP or Assessment Framework criterion or requirement;

e) Visibility of effective dates and implementation arrangements; and

f) Consistent referencing, codification, tagging, and **document management approaches**.

90. The CCP rule base should support **digital navigation**, **searchability**, and machine-readable publication formats.

91. CCP-Eligible carbon-crediting programs will be duly notified of any instruments adopted and issued, in accordance with any applicable Terms and Conditions.

92. Detailed publication, accessibility, traceability, codification, tagging and metadata arrangements may be established by the ICVCM to support the implementation of this section.

X. FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS

93. The **CCP rule architecture** supports the ongoing interpretation, technical application, clarification, and implementation of the **CCP rule base** through **instruments** developed under this document.

94. The CCP rule architecture supports the continued operation of the CCP rule base while maintaining stability, predictability, and coherence in the **CCPs** and the **Assessment Framework**.

95. The development and use of instruments under the CCP rule architecture does not directly amend or revise the **CCPs** or the criteria and requirements of the **Assessment Framework**.

96. Nothing in the CCP rule architecture prevents the future amendment or revision of the CCPs or the Assessment Framework through separate governance processes.

97. The CCP rule architecture may support the identification and consideration of emerging issues, implementation experience, and integrity risks relevant to the operation and implementation of the CCP rule base.

XI. ANNEXES

98. The CCP rule architecture is supported by Annexes that provide governance, procedural, implementation, or operational detail relating to the CCP rule architecture.

99. Annexes may be issued, maintained, revised, or updated separately from this document in accordance with applicable governance arrangements.

100. The annexes associated with the CCP rule architecture are:

a) **Annex 1: Companion Documents**;

b) **Annex 2: Transition Measures**.

XII. GLOSSARY

101. For the purposes of the CCP rule architecture:

a) **Assessment Framework** (CCP Assessment Framework) means the criteria and requirements used to assess carbon-crediting programs as CCP-Eligible and methodologies as CCP-Approved so that CCP-Eligible programs are able to tag CCP-Approved carbon credits. This does not include explanatory, procedural, or companion materials associated with those criteria and requirements;

b) **Clarification** means a Tier 3 instrument issued under the CCP rule architecture to address operational, procedural, administrative, or implementation matters that do not affect how CCP or Assessment Framework criteria and requirements are assessed;

c) **Companion document** means a supporting document associated with the CCP rule architecture that supports the implementation, operation, accessibility, or use of the CCP rule base and does not constitute an instrument;

d) **Core Carbon Principles** (CCPs) means the high-level principles adopted by the ICVCM that establish the fundamental integrity criteria for high-quality carbon credits;

e) **CCP rule architecture** means the governance, instrument, oversight, and implementation structure established to support the interpretation, technical application, clarification, implementation, and accessibility of the CCP rule base;

f) **CCP rule base** means the CCPs, the Assessment Framework, and instruments adopted, or issued and in effect under the CCP rule architecture;

g) **Effective date** means the date from which an instrument becomes applicable;

h) **Expert Panel** means the body of independent technical experts established under the ICVCM. Its independent members provide advice, analysis, and recommendations as and when requested by the Governing Board or the Standards Oversight Committee (SOC) to support the processes and decision-making of the Governing Board and ICVCM as a panel or as individuals;

i) **Grace period** means a defined period between the adoption or issuance of an instrument and its effective date;

j) **Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities Engagement Forum** means the self-led Forum established by the ICVCM to facilitate the participation of Indigenous Peoples‘ and local communities’ in the carbon market and to uphold their status as rights holders.

k) **Implementation arrangement** means an operational arrangement governing how and when an instrument applies to assessments, assurance, methodologies, programs, or future issuances;

l) **Instrument** means a formal document developed, adopted, or issued under the CCP rule architecture, including Interpretations, Technical Notices, and Clarifications;

m) **Interpretation** means a Tier 2 instrument adopted by the Governing Board that explains the meaning, scope, or intent of provisions within the CCP rule base and establishes an authoritative and precedential understanding of those provisions;

n) **Material impact** means an impact that could affect how CCP or Assessment Framework criteria and requirements are interpreted, technically applied, or assessed, including impacts on assessments or eligibility;

o) **Prospective application** means the application of instruments from their effective date forward, rather than to prior assessments or decisions unless otherwise expressly specified;

p) **Standards Oversight Committee** (SOC) means the sub-committee of the Governing Board of the ICVCM, comprising Independent Governing Board members, and established by decision of the Governing Board pursuant to 2.4.10 of the Modalities and Procedures. The Standards Oversight Committee supports the processes and decision-making of the Governing Board including in relation to assessment and assurance of carbon-crediting programs and categories/methodologies and in relation to the evolution of the Assessment Framework;

q) **Technical Notice** means a Tier 2 instrument adopted by the Standards Oversight Committee under delegated authority to address the technical application of existing provisions within the CCP rule base, including methodologies, parameters, data sources, technical approaches, or other technical matters relevant to assessments; and

r) **Transition measure** means the implementation approach applied to an instrument, including grace periods, phased implementation arrangements, delayed effective dates, sequencing arrangements, or other implementation safeguards.

102. Additional operational, publication, and implementation terminology may be further described in annexes, supporting materials or companion documents associated with the CCP rule architecture.

Annex 1: Companion Documents

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XIII. PURPOSE

103. This annex describes the **categories**, **status**, and **operational effect** of companion documents that support the implementation, operation, accessibility, and use of the **CCP Rule Base**.

104. Companion documents are supporting documents associated with the **CCP Rule Architecture** that provide governance, procedural, operational, administrative, explanatory, reference, and other supporting materials relevant to assessments, assurance activities, oversight functions, implementation arrangements, and stakeholder use.

105. Companion documents sit alongside the **instrument tiers** within the CCP Rule Architecture and support the implementation and use of the **CCP Rule Base**.

106. Companion documents can serve purposes beyond supporting the implementation, operation, accessibility, and use of the **CCP Rule Base.**

107. The **CCPs**, the **Assessment Framework**, and **instruments adopted or issued under the CCP Rule Architecture** remain the authoritative sources for criteria, requirements, interpretation, and technical application.

108. This annex clarifies the **role, status, and categories of companion documents** within the **CCP Rule Architecture**.

XIV. COMPANION DOCUMENT CATEGORIES

109. Companion documents serve **different functions** within the CCP Rule Architecture and have different **governance arrangements**, **intended audiences**, **publication pathways**, and **operational effects**.

110. Companion documents are categorised according to their **primary purpose** and **operational effect**. These categories do not affect the status of companion documents, which do not constitute instruments under the CCP Rule Architecture. The **companion document categories** under the CCP Rule Architecture include the following:

Category	Description
Operational Companion Documents	Documents supporting assessment, assurance, oversight, implementation, administrative, or other operational activities conducted under the CCP Rule Architecture.
Reference Companion Documents	Documents supporting consistent terminology, interpretation, navigation, and use of the CCP Rule Base.
Explanatory Companion Documents	Documents supporting transparency, accessibility, understanding, and stakeholder use of the CCP Rule Base.

111. Companion documents serve **different audiences**, including **ICVCM governance bodies**, **operational users**, **carbon-crediting programs**, **market participants**, **stakeholders**, and the **public**.

112. The categories described in this annex **do not limit** the types of companion documents that may be established to support the CCP Rule Architecture.

XV. COMPANION DOCUMENT INVENTORY

113. The companion documents currently recognized within each companion document category include, inter alia, the following:

Document	Category	Function
Assessment Procedure	Operational	Describes the processes through which programs and methodologies are assessed for CCP-Eligibility and CCP-Approval. Adopted by the Governing Board.
Assurance Manual	Operational	Supports assurance activities and the application of assessment and assurance requirements.
Tagging Manual	Operational	Supports the identification, tagging, and administration of credits tagged as CCP-Approved.
Terms and Conditions	Operational	Establishes operational requirements and arrangements applicable to participation in ICVCM assessment and assurance processes. Confidential and agreed with relevant parties.

Definitions	Reference	Provides terminology and definitions used across the CCP Rule Base and associated companion documents.
Summary for Decision Makers	Explanatory	Provides context, rationale, and explanatory information relating to the CCPs and Assessment Framework.
Guidance Materials	Explanatory	Provide explanatory information regarding implementation approaches and operational matters.
FAQs and Public Information Materials	Explanatory	Support accessibility, transparency, and stakeholder understanding of the CCP Rule Base.

XVI. STATUS AND OPERATIONAL EFFECT

114. Companion documents may have different **purposes**, **governance arrangements**, **operational effects** and **intended uses**.

115. Certain companion documents may be **required** for the **implementation** of operational activities, such as assessment, assurance, oversight or tagging or carbon credits. Other companion documents may be **informational** or **explanatory** in nature**.**

116. Companion documents shall be interpreted and applied consistently with the **CCPs**, the **Assessment Framework**, and **instruments adopted or issued** under the **CCP Rule Architecture**. Where an inconsistency arises, the CCPs, the Assessment Framework, or the applicable instrument shall **prevail**.

XVII. PUBLICATION AND MAINTENANCE

117. Companion documents may be **published**, **revised**, **replaced**, **consolidated**, **withdrawn**, or **retired** in accordance with the applicable governance pathway or administrative arrangements.

118. The **publication**, **maintenance arrangements**, **version control measures**, and **accessibility provisions** applicable to a companion document may vary according to its **purpose**, **category**, and **operational effect**.

119. The **Executive Secretariat** maintains and makes available **current versions** of companion documents in accordance with applicable governance and publication arrangements.

120. Companion documents shall be published and maintained in a manner that supports **accessibility**, **transparency**, **usability**, and the effective operation of the **CCP Rule Base**.

Annex 2: Transition Measures

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XVIII. PURPOSE

121. This Annex sets out the principles and approaches applicable to **transition measures** adopted in connection with instruments developed under the **CCP Rule Architecture**.

122. Transition measures are intended to support the **orderly**, **predictable**, and **proportionate** implementation of instruments while preserving the integrity of the **CCP rule base**.

123. This annex applies primarily to **Interpretations** and **Technical Notices**, which may materially affect assessments, eligibility, implementation expectations, or market participants.

124. Terms used in this annex have the meanings set out in the **glossary** to the **CCP Rule Architecture**.

125. Transition measures may include effective dates, grace periods, implementation arrangements, phased implementation approaches, or other implementation safeguards determined through the applicable governance pathway.

126. **Clarifications** are not normally expected to require **transition measures**, **grace periods**, or **implementation arrangements** because they are limited to operational, procedural, administrative, documentation, or implementation matters and are not intended to affect **assessments** or **eligibility**. However, the Standards Oversight Committee may determine, in accordance with the CCP Rule Architecture, that transition measures or implementation arrangements are required where necessary to support implementation or market feasibility.

127. Transition measures shall be considered, determined, and adopted in connection with the relevant instrument and through the **applicable governance pathway**.

XIX. APPLICATION OF TRANSITION MEASURES

128. **Transition measures** shall be considered where an **Interpretation** or **Technical Notice may materially affect** assessments, eligibility, implementation expectations, methodologies, programs, future issuances, or market participants.

129. In determining whether **transition measures** are required, the following factors shall be considered:

a) The nature and purpose of the instrument;

b) The anticipated integrity benefit of the instrument;

c) The potential impact on assessments, assurance activities, methodologies, programs, future issuances, or market participants;

d) The complexity of implementation;

e) The urgency of the integrity issue being addressed; and

f) The need to support predictability, operational feasibility, and market stability.

130. Transition measures are not normally required where an instrument is not expected to materially affect assessments, eligibility, implementation expectations, methodologies, programs, future issuances, or market participants.

131. Where transition measures are proposed for a **Clarification**, consideration shall be given to whether the matter should instead proceed through a **Tier 2 pathway**.

132. Transition measures should be proportionate to the **anticipated integrity benefit** of the instrument and the **expected implementation impact**.

133. Transition measures should be designed to support **prospective application**, **orderly implementation**, and **continued confidence** in the CCP Rule Base.

XX. TYPES OF TRANSITION MEASURES

134. Transition measures may take different forms depending on the nature, purpose, and anticipated impact of the instrument.

135. Transition measures may include:

a) **Grace period**: a defined period between the adoption or issuance of an instrument and its effective date;

b) **Delayed effective date**: a future effective date adopted to allow time for implementation before the instrument becomes applicable;

c) **Implementation arrangement**: an operational arrangement governing how and when an instrument applies to specified assessments, assurance activities, methodologies, programs, or future issuances;

d) **Phased implementation**: application of requirements in stages over a defined period;

e) **Sequenced implementation**: application of related requirements or instruments in a defined order;

f) **Fixed implementation window**: a defined period during which specified implementation actions must occur;

g) **Coordinated implementation cycle**: alignment of implementation timing across multiple related instruments; or

h) **Other implementation safeguards**: other implementation measures adopted through the applicable governance pathway.

136. Transition measures may have different implementation effects for:

a) **Completed assessments** or **assurance decisions**;

b) **Ongoing assessments** or **assurance activities**;

c) **Future assessments**;

d) **Future issuances** under CCP-Approved methodologies; and

e) **New program** or **methodology applications**.

137. **Transition measures** shall clearly identify the categories of assessments, assurance activities, methodologies, programs, or future issuances to which they apply.

138. **Transition measures** may provide different implementation approaches for different categories of assessments, assurance activities, methodologies, carbon-crediting programs, and methodologies, where justified by the nature of the instrument or the implementation impacts involved.

139. **Transition measures** shall be clearly documented and communicated as **part of the relevant instrument package**, including any applicable effective dates, implementation arrangements, or grace periods.

XXI. EFFECTIVE DATES AND GRACE PERIODS

140. Instruments adopted or issued under the CCP Rule Architecture shall specify an **effective date** unless otherwise determined through the applicable governance pathway.

141. The applicable **effective date** shall be determined having regard to:

c) The nature and purpose of the instrument;

d) The anticipated integrity benefit of the instrument;

e) The complexity of implementation;

f) The anticipated implementation impact;

g) The need to support predictability, operational feasibility, and market stability; and

h) Any applicable consultation input.

142. A **grace period** may be established where additional time is required to support orderly implementation.

143. Unless otherwise determined through the applicable governance pathway, the default **grace period** for **Interpretations** and **Technical Notices** with material implementation impacts is **12 months**.

144. **Longer** or **shorter grace periods** may be adopted where justified by the nature of the instrument, the urgency of the integrity issue, implementation considerations, or other relevant circumstances.

145. **Transition measures**, including **grace periods,** may be determined on **a case-by-case basis** or **coordinated across multiple related instruments**.

146. Under a **case-by-case approach**, the applicable **grace period** or **effective date** is determined individually for each instrument.

147. Where multiple instruments address related matters, ICVCM may establish **coordinated implementation cycles, common implementation dates, or coordinated grace periods** to support efficiency, predictability, and operational consistency.

148. The applicable **effective date**, **grace period**, and any associated **implementation arrangements** shall be specified as part of the relevant instrument package.

149. The rationale for any material departure from the applicable implementation approach shall be documented through the applicable governance pathway.

XXII. TRANSITION TIMING APPROACHES

150. In addition to **case-by-case** transition measures, ICVCM may establish **transition timing approaches** applicable across **multiple instruments**.

151. **Transition timing approaches** may include:

a) **Fixed implementation windows**;

b) **Common implementation dates**; or

c) **Coordinated implementation cycles** across related instruments.

152. Under a **fixed implementation window** approach, instruments take effect on predetermined implementation dates unless earlier implementation is required to address material integrity concerns or operational risks.

153. **Common implementation dates, coordinated implementation cycles,** or **coordinated grace periods** may be established to support predictability, operational efficiency, and the orderly implementation of related instruments.

XXIII. PROSPECTIVE APPLICATION

154. Transition measures shall support the **prospective application** of instruments adopted or issued under the **CCP Rule Architecture**.

155. Unless otherwise expressly specified and justified through the applicable governance pathway, instruments shall apply from their **effective date**.

156. Instruments are not intended to apply **retroactively** to **completed assessments**, **completed assurance decisions**, previously approved programs or methodologies, or credits **previously tagged as CCP-Approved** unless otherwise expressly specified and justified through the applicable governance pathway.

157. Any departure from **prospective application** shall be separately justified, approved through the applicable governance pathway, be subject to public consultation, and should be limited to cases where significant integrity risks have been identified.

158. The applicable **transition measures**, **implementation arrangements**, **effective dates**, **grace periods**, and any departure from prospective application shall be clearly documented as part of the relevant instrument package.

XXIV. APPLICATION TO ASSESSMENTS AND ASSURANCE ACTIVITIES

159. **Transition measures** shall specify how the relevant instrument applies to assessments and assurance activities.

160. **Ongoing assessments** and **ongoing assurance activities** are not required to be reassessed solely because of the adoption or issuance of a new instrument unless otherwise expressly specified and justified through the applicable governance pathway. Any departure from this provision shall be expressly justified and documented through the applicable governance pathway.

161. Transition measures may specify alternative arrangements to address **material integrity concerns, implementation risks**, or other exceptional circumstances through the applicable governance pathway.

162. Where transition measures apply differently to **completed assessments**, **ongoing assessments**, **future assessments**, completed assurance **activities**, or **ongoing assurance activities**, those distinctions shall be clearly specified as part of the relevant instrument package.

163. The treatment of assessments and assurance activities shall support **predictability**, **operational feasibility**, and confidence in the integrity of the **CCP Rule Base**.

XXV. APPLICATION TO METHODOLOGIES AND FUTURE ISSUANCES

164. **Transition measures** shall specify how the relevant instrument applies to methodologies, programs, and **future issuances**.

165. Unless otherwise specified, **future assessments** shall be conducted against the applicable **CCPs**, the criteria and requirements of the **Assessment Framework**, and any applicable instruments in effect on the relevant **effective date**.

166. Transition measures may distinguish between:

a) Existing CCP-Eligible methodologies;

b) New methodology applications;

c) Existing CCP-Eligible programs;

d) New program applications; and

e) Future **issuances** under existing CCP-Eligible methodologies.

167. Transition measures may establish different **implementation arrangements** for different categories of methodologies or programs, where justified by the nature of the instrument or its implementation impacts.

168. Transition measures may include **methodology sunset arrangements** to support the orderly implementation of new requirements, technical approaches, or assessment expectations.

169. **Methodology sunset arrangements** may establish conditions, implementation periods, or end dates after which credits issued under specified methodologies or versions thereof **may no longer be tagged as CCP-Approved**. Such arrangements may, for example, permit tagging until the end of an applicable grace period, the end of the relevant mitigation activity's current crediting period, a specified period following the effective date of the instrument, or whichever of these occurs first.

170. Any **methodology sunset arrangements** shall be clearly documented, subject to public consultation, and justified through the applicable governance pathway.

171. The treatment of methodologies, programs, and future issuances shall support **predictability**, **operational feasibility**, **market stability**, and continued confidence in the **CCP Rule Base**.

XXVI. MONITORING AND REVIEW

172. The **Executive Secretariat** shall monitor the implementation and operational experience of transition measures adopted under the CCP Rule Architecture.

173. Monitoring activities may include:

a) Review of implementation experience;

b) Review of assessment and assurance findings;

c) Review of operational or market impacts;

d) Identification of implementation issues or unintended consequences;

e) Consideration of whether additional instruments, companion documents, or implementation measures may be required; and

f) Consideration of whether further governance review or escalation may be appropriate.

174. The **Standards Oversight Committee** may receive updates regarding the implementation of transition measures involving material implementation, operational, or market impacts.

175. Where monitoring identifies matters requiring further consideration under the CCP Rule Architecture, the **Executive Secretariat** refers the matter for consideration in accordance with the CCP Rule Architecture and applicable instrument development pathways.

176. Monitoring and review activities shall support continuous improvement, predictability, operational effectiveness, and the integrity of the CCP Rule Base.

THE INTEGRITY COUNCIL
FOR THE VOLUNTARY CARBON MARKET

Version Control

Version	Date	Summary of Changes
1.0	6th August 2026	This, original version