



THE INTEGRITY COUNCIL  
FOR THE VOLUNTARY CARBON MARKET

SECTION

# 1

## INTRODUCTION

January 2024, Version 1.1

# SECTION 1

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# INTRODUCTION

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**The Integrity Council for the Voluntary Carbon Market (Integrity Council or ICVCM) is an independent governance body for the voluntary carbon market (VCM). Its purpose is to ensure that the VCM accelerates progress toward the objective of combatting climate change.**

To achieve this, the Integrity Council has established a global threshold standard for carbon credit quality, drawing on the best science and expertise available, with a view to ensuring that high-quality carbon credits efficiently mobilise finance towards urgent climate action.

The Core Carbon Principle (CCP) label will provide a credible, rigorous, and readily accessible means of identifying high-quality carbon credits. The Integrity Council's work on the high-integrity supply of carbon credits complements that of the Voluntary Carbon Markets Integrity Initiative ([VCMII](#)) which, in June 2023, published its Claims Code of Practice. The VCMII Claims Code addresses integrity on the demand side by informing companies and other non-state actors on the voluntary use of carbon credits as part of their climate commitments and on the associated claims they can make regarding the use of those credits. It provides clarity, transparency and consistency on what these commitments and claims mean and will help build confidence in VCM.

The threshold standard set by the Integrity Council's CCPs will be implemented through the Assessment Framework and the Assessment Procedure. This publication forms the complete process and operational requirements that the Integrity Council will follow to assess carbon-crediting programs and Categories of carbon credits. It replaces the components published in March 2023.

# DOCUMENT OVERVIEW



**Section Two** of this document sets out the **CCPs**. These are the ten principles that need to be considered to identify whether carbon credits create real, additional and verifiable climate impact with high environmental and social integrity, based on the latest science and evolving best practice.

**Section Three** is the **Summary for Decision Makers**. This summary provides the context and supporting rationale for the Assessment Framework, explaining how the CCPs are met through the application of criteria and requirements in the Assessment Framework.

**Section Four** is the **Assessment Framework**. The CCPs are operationalised through the Assessment Framework, which details the criteria and requirements to be met for the CCPs at the Program-level and Category-level.

**Section Five** contains **Definitions** applicable to the Core Carbon Principles, the Assessment Framework and the Assessment Procedure.

**Section Six** is the **Assessment Procedure**, the process through which carbon-crediting programs apply to become CCP-Eligible and carbon credits may become CCP-Approved.

# ASSESSMENT PROCESS

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**With the publication of this document, carbon-crediting programs can now apply to the Integrity Council for assessment against the CCPs. Applications will be assessed in accordance with the process set out in the Assessment Procedure, with the accompanying Terms and Conditions specifying how the relationship between the ICVCM and eligible carbon-crediting programs will be managed.**

All Categories of carbon credits (Categories) will be provisionally grouped for assessment, where some will undergo an internal assessment process for approval, while other Categories will undergo assessment by a multi-stakeholder working group. The multi-stakeholder working groups will be organised by sectoral expertise and Categories will be prioritised for assessment depending on their current and trending market share. The multi-stakeholder working groups will provide advice to the Integrity Council on Category assessments. Following the multistakeholder assessment, the Category may be approved, not approved, or awarded conditional approval, stipulating matters that an eligible carbon-crediting program needs to remediate for the Category to be approved.

The Integrity Council will engage in a process of continual improvement of the CCPs and their related criteria and requirements in the Assessment Framework to drive greater ambition in the VCM. It expects to publish the next iteration of the CCPs in 2025, aimed at implementation starting in 2026. This will be informed by a series of thematic multi-stakeholder work programs as set out in Section C of the Summary for Decision Makers.

The Integrity Council continues to encourage feedback from the public and all stakeholders, which can be submitted to [info@icvcm.org](mailto:info@icvcm.org) with the word “feedback” included in the subject line of the email. All feedback will be considered, and the Integrity Council may update these documents or adopt further guidance or procedures from time to time.