



THE INTEGRITY COUNCIL
FOR THE VOLUNTARY CARBON MARKET



SECTION

ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK

April 2024, Version 3

SECTION 4

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PART I

REQUIREMENTS

FOR CARBON-

CREDITING

PROGRAMS

The Assessment Framework contains the requirements for carbon-crediting programs and requirements for Categories of carbon credits (Categories).

The Assessment Framework should be read in conjunction with the Summary for Decision Makers, the Definitions and the Assessment Procedure.

The Integrity Council for the Voluntary Carbon Market (Integrity Council or ICVCM) also notes that the Summary for Decision Makers contains an explanation of the rationale for the criteria and requirements in this Assessment Framework and an explanation of the approaches that will be taken in the assessment process in relation to certain Categories. Reading the Summary for Decision Makers is therefore recommended.

In this Assessment Framework, all Category criteria and requirements apply to all Categories except for Jurisdictional REDD+. Certain Category-level requirements are specific to Jurisdictional REDD+ Programs. This is the case for additionality (see criteria 8.9 and 8.10) and permanence (see criterion 9.5), and in those sections, only those requirements need to be met by Jurisdictional REDD+ Programs. However, no specific provisions were necessary for Jurisdictional REDD+ Programs in other Category-level requirements, notably robust quantification, so all of the criteria in section 10 apply. This means that for carbon-crediting programs with Jurisdictional REDD+ Programs, it will be important to note which criteria are applicable. As a result, this specific approach for Jurisdictional REDD+ Programs will have implications for how the assessment by the Categories Working Group (CWG) and, if relevant, the Multi-Stakeholder Working Group (MSWG), is undertaken.

A. GOVERNANCE

CORSIA-eligible programs are required to provide information on their CORSIA eligibility. CORSIA-eligible programs will have to provide relevant information for the additional requirements detailed in the Assessment Framework and included in the ICVCM Assessment Platform.

Carbon-crediting programs that have not yet applied for CORSIA eligibility will be required to demonstrate to the Integrity Council that they meet the requirements of CORSIA through their application to the ICVCM, as set out in the ICVCM Assessment Platform. They must also have to demonstrate that they meet the additional requirements detailed in the Assessment Framework included in the ICVCM Assessment Platform.

Carbon-crediting programs that have applied to CORSIA but have not achieved CORSIA eligibility should contact the [ICVCM](#) before applying as set out in the Assessment Procedure.

1. EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE

“

The carbon-crediting program shall have effective program governance to ensure transparency, accountability, continuous improvement and the overall quality of carbon credits.

”

CRITERION 1.1: EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE

Table 1.1
Effective governance

Requirements

- a) In addition to CORSIA requirements related to governance framework, the carbon-crediting program shall:
- 1) have a board comprised of independent board members who assume fiduciary responsibility for the organisation and operate according to robust bylaws;
 - 2) publish an annual report that contains the organisation's revenues, expenses, and net assets over the past year and provides an overview of the organisation's mission, major programs and activities, and governance;
 - 3) have processes in place to ensure corporate social and environmental responsibility;
 - 4) have robust anti-money laundering processes in place;
 - 5) follow practices consistent with robust anti-bribery and anti-corruption guidance and regulation.

CRITERION 1.2: PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT, CONSULTATION, AND GRIEVANCES

Table 1.2
Public engagement, consultation, and grievances¹

Requirements

- a) In addition to CORSIA requirements related to public engagement, consultation and grievances, the carbon-crediting program shall have a process for:
- 1) robust and transparent local and global stakeholder consultation, which provide for public comment and issue resolution;
 - 2) addressing grievances, for which the process shall be clear and transparent, ensure impartiality and where appropriate, confidentiality, in the filing and resolution of grievances and for which any applicable fees shall not impede legitimate access to the grievance process by civil society organisations or of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPs & LCs).

¹ See Criteria 7 in relation to safeguards relating to IPs & LCs

2. TRACKING

“

The carbon-crediting program shall operate or make use of a registry to uniquely identify, record and track mitigation activities and carbon credits issued to ensure credits can be identified securely and unambiguously.

”

CRITERION 2.1: EFFECTIVE REGISTRIES

Table 2.1

Effective registries (retirement and addressing erroneous issuance)

Requirements

- a) In addition to CORSIA requirements related to carbon credits in the carbon-crediting program registry, the carbon-crediting program shall:
 - 1) require identification of the entity on whose behalf the carbon credit was retired;
 - 2) require the identification of the purpose of retirement;
 - 3) have procedures to address erroneous issuance of carbon credits that identify remedial measures (e.g., cancellation, compensation through replacement) and the entities responsible for implementing these.

3. TRANSPARENCY



The carbon-crediting program shall provide comprehensive and transparent information on all credited mitigation activities. The information shall be publicly available in electronic format and shall be accessible to non-specialised audiences, to enable scrutiny of mitigation activities.



CRITERION 3.1: INFORMATION

Table 3.1
Information

Requirements

- a) In addition to CORSIA requirements, the carbon-crediting program shall ensure that in relation to each mitigation activity that requests registration or that is registered, all relevant documentation relating to the mitigation activity is made publicly available (subject to confidentiality and proprietary, privacy and data protection restrictions) including:
 - 1) all necessary information, such as spreadsheets used for calculations, to enable third parties to assess the social and environmental impacts of the mitigation activity and to replicate the GHG emission reduction or removal calculations (including baseline quantification), and assessment of additionality;
 - 2) a mitigation activity design document that includes:
 - i. a non-technical summary;
 - ii. detailed information on the mitigation activity, including its location and proponents;
 - iii. a description of the technologies or practices applied;
 - iv. the environmental and social impacts;
 - v. the methodology used;
 - vi. information on how the methodology is and has been applied for the purpose of determining the baseline, demonstrating additionality and quantifying GHG emission reductions or removals;
 - 3) For Categories listed in 9.1 b) 1, information relating to the monitoring and compensation period.
- b) The carbon-crediting program shall ensure all relevant program documents are publicly available and have processes to ensure that where requests are made in relation to information that is missing from its website and/or registry, that information is provided (subject to confidentiality and proprietary, privacy and data protection restrictions) and made public alongside other relevant public information.

4. ROBUST INDEPENDENT THIRD-PARTY VALIDATION AND VERIFICATION

“

The carbon-crediting program shall have program-level requirements for robust independent third-party validation and verification of mitigation activities.

”

CRITERION 4.1: ROBUST INDEPENDENT THIRD-PARTY VALIDATION AND VERIFICATION

Table 4.1

Robust independent third-party validation and verification

Requirements

- a) In addition to CORSIA requirements, in relation to validation of mitigation activities and verification of GHG emission reductions and removals, the carbon-crediting program shall:
 - 1) require validation and verification bodies (VVBs) to be accredited by a recognised international accreditation standard (e.g., according to the current edition of ISO 14065 and ISO 14066, or per rules relating to the UNFCCC Kyoto Protocol Clean Development Mechanism or Paris Agreement Article 6, paragraph 4 Supervisory Body);
 - 2) have a process for managing VVB performance, including systematic review of validation and verification activities, reports and remedial measures to address performance issues including measures to ensure that poor VVB performance is reported to the relevant accreditation body, and provisions to suspend or revoke the participation of a VVB in the carbon-crediting program.

B. EMISSIONS IMPACT

5. ROBUST QUANTIFICATION OF GHG EMISSION REDUCTIONS AND REMOVALS

“

The GHG emission reductions or removals from the mitigation activity shall be robustly quantified, based on conservative approaches, completeness and sound scientific methods.

”

CRITERION 5.1: METHODOLOGY APPROVAL PROCESS

Table 5.1
Methodology approval process

Requirements

- a) In addition to CORSIA requirements related to Clear Methodologies and Protocols and their Development Process, the carbon-crediting program shall have a process for developing and adopting updates to existing quantification methodologies.
 - b) Approved methodologies or general carbon-crediting program provisions shall address the following essential components:
 - 1) applicability or eligibility criteria;
 - 2) determination of the accounting boundary;
 - 3) determination of additionality (to the extent this is not covered in other general carbon-crediting program provisions);
 - 4) establishing the baseline scenario;
 - 5) quantification of GHG emission reductions or removals;
 - 6) monitoring practices.
 - c) The carbon-crediting program shall require that, prior to approval, new methodologies and major revisions of existing methodologies undergo review by a group of independent experts and a public stakeholder consultation.
 - d) The carbon-crediting program shall have procedures to review, suspend and/or withdraw the use of methodologies where the carbon-crediting program has determined, based on evidence, that GHG emission reductions or removals are being overestimated or that additionality might not be ensured.
-

CRITERION 5.2: REQUIREMENTS FOR QUANTIFYING GHG EMISSION REDUCTIONS OR REMOVALS

Table 5.2
Quantifying GHG emission reductions or removals

Requirements

- a) In addition to CORSIA requirements², the carbon-crediting program shall:
- 1) clearly define a carbon credit as one metric tonne of CO₂ equivalent of GHG emission reductions or removals;
 - 2) disclose the Global Warming Potential (GWP) values used to calculate the CO₂ equivalence;
 - 3) define the length of crediting periods, including the total length of combined crediting periods;
 - 4) provide guidance on steps and requirements for renewal of the crediting periods and any renewal of the crediting period shall include a reassessment of the baseline scenario, including whether the conditions and barriers at the start of the mitigation activity still prevail, and an update of relevant parameters used to calculate emissions reductions and removals;
 - 5) assess the overall uncertainty of emission reductions or removals associated with an activity type and/or require that the mitigation activity proponent assess the overall uncertainty in accordance with an approved methodology. In estimating overall uncertainty all causes of uncertainty shall be considered, including assumptions (e.g., baseline scenario), estimation equations or models, parameters (e.g., representativeness of default values); and measurements (e.g., the accuracy of measurement methods). The overall uncertainty shall be assessed as the combined uncertainty from individual causes;
 - 6) have a systematic approach to ensuring the conservativeness of quantification methodologies it approves for use;
 - 7) require in its program documents that existing government policies and legal requirements that lower GHG emissions (e.g., feed-in tariffs for renewable energy, minimum product efficiency standards, air quality requirements or carbon taxes) be included when determining the baseline emissions. The carbon-crediting program may have provisions to consider the level of enforcement of such policies and legal requirements as well as any associated grace periods.

² CORSIA "Eligibility Criterion", "Carbon offset credits must be based on a realistic and credible baseline" and "Carbon offset credits must be quantified, monitored, reported and verified"

CRITERION 5.3: EX-POST DETERMINATION OF EMISSION REDUCTIONS OR REMOVALS

Table 5.3

Ex-post determination of emissions reductions or removals

Requirements

- a) Carbon credits that are issued *ex-ante* are not CCP-eligible. Where a carbon-crediting program supports both *ex-ante* and *ex-post* issuance, it shall have procedures in place to transparently identify units that are issued *ex-ante* and are thus ineligible under the ICVCM.

5.4 NEXT ITERATION OF THE ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK

Table 5.4

Next iteration of the Assessment Framework

| Threshold | Requirements |
|---------------------------|--|
| Relating to Criterion 5.1 | Carbon-crediting programs should regularly review and update their quantification methodologies to ensure continued environmental integrity. In the next iteration of the Assessment Framework, the ICVCM will include a minimum elapsed time (e.g., every five years) for this review and update. The ICVCM will consult with relevant stakeholders to understand existing practice and the best frequency for this review cycle. |
| Relating to Criterion 5.2 | The ICVCM understands the importance of a consistent approach to calculating CO ₂ equivalence and will introduce requirements in the next iteration of the Assessment Framework to align approaches used by carbon-crediting programs with the agreed values used internationally (e.g., 100-year GWP values from the 5th IPCC assessment report). ³ |

³ Or such other values as Parties to the UNFCCC may adopt as GWP values for use in national GHG inventories and for accounting for NDCs.

6. NO DOUBLE-COUNTING

“

The GHG emission reductions or removals from the mitigation activity shall not be double counted, i.e., they shall only be counted once towards achieving mitigation targets or goals. Double counting covers double issuance, double claiming, and double use.

”

CRITERION 6.1: NO DOUBLE ISSUANCE (DOUBLE REGISTRATION)

Table 6.1
No double issuance (double registration)

Requirements

- a) The carbon-crediting program shall have provisions to:
 - 1) prevent the registration of any mitigation activity that has been registered under another carbon-crediting program and is still active under that program; and
 - 2) ensure that it does not issue carbon credits for GHG emission reductions or removals where another program has issued credits to the same mitigation activity and/or for the same GHG emission reductions or removals and has not cancelled those credits for the purpose of avoiding double issuance.

CRITERION 6.2: NO DOUBLE USE

Table 6.2
No double use

Requirements

- a) The carbon-crediting program shall have registry provisions that prevent the further transfer, retirement or cancellation of a carbon credit once it has been cancelled or retired.

C. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT BENEFITS AND SAFEGUARDS

7. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT BENEFITS AND SAFEGUARDS

“

The carbon-crediting program shall have clear guidance, tools and compliance procedures to ensure mitigation activities conform with or go beyond widely established industry best practices on social and environmental safeguards while delivering positive sustainable development impacts.

”

CRITERION 7.1: ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL RISKS

Table 7.1

Assessment and management of environmental and social risks

Requirements

- a) In addition to CORSIA requirements relating to Safeguards System and Sustainable Development Criteria, the carbon-crediting program shall require mitigation activity proponents to:
 - 1) abide by national and local laws, objectives, programs and regulations and, where relevant, international conventions and agreements;⁴
 - 2) assess associated risks of negative environmental and social impacts with regard to the safeguards contained in criteria 7.2 to 7.8 (inclusive), taking into account the scope and scale of the mitigation activity;
 - 3) ensure free, prior and informed Consent (FPIC) processes for IPs & LCs, where applicable, and conduct stakeholder consultations, including local stakeholders, as part of project design and implementation in a manner that is inclusive, culturally appropriate, and respectful of local knowledge, take these consultations into account and respond to local stakeholders' views.
- b) Where, pursuant to criterion 7.1 a) 2) above, the mitigation activity proponents have assessed that the mitigation activity poses risks of negative environmental and/or social impacts with regard to any of criteria 7.2 to 7.8 (inclusive) the carbon-crediting program shall require the mitigation activity proponents to:
 - 1) include measures, commensurate with the identified risks, to minimise and address such negative environmental and/or social impacts, in validated design documents prior to registration;
 - 2) include information on the measures implemented pursuant to criterion 7.1 b) 1) above, commensurate with the identified risks in the monitoring report.

⁴ https://www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/wp-content/uploads/sites/19/2018/11/UNDRIP_E_web.pdf
<https://www.ohchr.org/en/what-are-human-rights/international-bill-human-rights>

CRITERION 7.2: LABOUR RIGHTS AND WORKING CONDITIONS

Table 7.2
Labour rights and working conditions

Requirements

- a) The carbon-crediting program shall require mitigation activity proponents to ensure that the mitigation activity:
 - 1) provides safe and healthy working conditions for employees;
 - 2) provides fair treatment of all employees, avoiding discrimination and ensuring equal opportunities;
 - 3) prohibits the use of forced labour, child labour, or trafficked persons, and protects contracted workers employed by third parties.
- b) The carbon-crediting program shall require that mitigation activity proponents confirm in validated design documents that the mitigation activity adheres to the above safeguards or that it has put in place the measures referred to in criterion 7.1 b) 1) above.

CRITERION 7.3: RESOURCE EFFICIENCY AND POLLUTION PREVENTION

Table 7.3
Resource efficiency and pollution prevention

Requirements

- a) The carbon-crediting program shall require mitigation activity proponents to ensure that the mitigation activity minimises:
 - 1) pollutant emissions to air;
 - 2) pollutant discharges to water, noise and vibration;
 - 3) generation of waste and release of hazardous materials, chemical pesticides and fertilisers.
- b) The carbon-crediting program shall require that mitigation activity proponents confirm in validated design documents:
 - 1) whether the mitigation activity results in pollutant emissions to air, pollutant discharges to water, noise and vibration, the generation of waste, the release of hazardous materials, chemical pesticides and fertilisers;
 - 2) where the mitigation activity results in any of the impacts listed in 1) above, that it has put in place the measures referred to in criterion 7.1 b) 1) above.

CRITERION 7.4: LAND ACQUISITION AND INVOLUNTARY RESETTLEMENT

Table 7.4
Land acquisition and involuntary resettlement

Requirements

- a) The carbon-crediting program shall require mitigation activity proponents to ensure that the mitigation activity avoids, or where this is not feasible, minimises forced physical and or economic displacement.
- b) The carbon-crediting program shall require that mitigation activity proponents confirm in validated design documents:
 - 1) whether the mitigation activity results in forced physical and/or economic displacement;
 - 2) where the mitigation activity results in the impacts listed in 1) above, that it has put in place the measures referred to in criterion 7.1 b) 1) above.

CRITERION 7.5: BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION AND SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF LIVING NATURAL RESOURCES

Table 7.5
Biodiversity conservation and sustainable management of living natural resources

Requirements

- a) The carbon-crediting program shall require mitigation activity proponents to ensure that the mitigation activity:
 - 1) avoids, or where this is not feasible, minimises negative impacts on terrestrial and marine biodiversity and ecosystems;
 - 2) protects the habitats of rare, threatened, and endangered species, including areas needed for habitat connectivity;
 - 3) does not convert natural forests, grasslands, wetlands, or high conservation value habitats;
 - 4) minimises soil degradation and soil erosion;
 - 5) minimises water consumption and stress in the mitigation activity.
- b) The carbon-crediting program shall require that mitigation activity proponents confirm in validated design documents:
 - 1) whether the mitigation activity has negative impacts on terrestrial and marine biodiversity and ecosystems, on habitats of rare, threatened, and endangered species, on soil degradation and soil erosion, and on water consumption and water stress;
 - 2) where the mitigation activity results in any of the impacts listed in 1) above, that it has put in place the measures referred to in criterion 7.1 b) 1) above.

CRITERION 7.6: INDIGENOUS PEOPLES, LOCAL COMMUNITIES, AND CULTURAL HERITAGE

Table 7.6

Indigenous Peoples, Local Communities, and cultural heritage

Requirements

- a) Where the mitigation activity directly or indirectly impacts IPs & LCs, including livelihoods, ancestral knowledge and cultural heritage, the carbon-crediting program shall require mitigation activity proponents to ensure that the mitigation activity:
 - 1) recognises, respects and promotes the protection of the rights of IPs & LCs in line with applicable international human rights law, and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and ILO Convention 169 on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples;⁵
 - 2) identifies the rights-holders possibly affected by the mitigation activity (including customary rights of local rights holders);
 - 3) when relevant to circumstances, has applied the FPIC process;
 - 4) does not force eviction or any physical or economic displacement of IPs & LCs, including through access restrictions to lands, territories, or resources, unless agreed upon with IPs & LCs during the FPIC process;
 - 5) preserves and protects cultural heritage consistent with IPs & LCs protocols/rules/plans on the management of cultural heritage or UNESCO Cultural Heritage conventions.
- b) Where the mitigation activity directly or indirectly impacts IPs & LCs, including livelihoods, ancestral knowledge and cultural heritage, the carbon-crediting program shall require that mitigation activity proponents confirm in validated design documents that the mitigation activity adheres to the above safeguards or that it has put in place the measures referred to in criterion 7.1 b) 1) above.

CRITERION 7.7: RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS, STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Table 7.7

Respect for human rights, stakeholder engagement

Requirements

- a) The carbon-crediting program shall require mitigation activity proponents to ensure that the mitigation activity:
 - 1) avoids discrimination and respects human rights;
 - 2) abides by the International Bill of Human Rights⁶ and universal instruments ratified by the host country;
 - 3) takes into account and responds to local stakeholders' views.
- b) The carbon-crediting program shall require that mitigation activity proponents confirm in validated design documents that the mitigation activity adheres to the above safeguards, or that it has put in place the measures referred to in criterion 7.1 b) 1) above.

⁵ https://www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/wp-content/uploads/sites/19/2018/11/UNDRIP_E_web.pdf

⁶ <https://www.ohchr.org/en/what-are-human-rights/international-bill-human-rights>

CRITERION 7.8: GENDER EQUALITY

Table 7.8
Gender equality

Requirements

- a) The carbon-crediting program shall require mitigation activity proponents to ensure that the mitigation activity:
 - 1) provides for equal opportunities in the context of gender;
 - 2) protects against and appropriately responds to violence against women and girls;
 - 3) provides equal pay for equal work.
 - b) The carbon-crediting program shall require that mitigation activity proponents confirm in validated design documents that the mitigation activity adheres to the above safeguards or that it has put in place the measures referred to in criterion 7.1 b) 1) above.
-

CRITERION 7.9: ROBUST BENEFIT-SHARING

Table 7.9
Robust benefit-sharing

Requirements

- a) Where the carbon-crediting program requires arrangements for benefit-sharing with IPs & LCs, the carbon-crediting program shall require that mitigation activity proponents:
 - 1) include in validated design documents information on how benefit-sharing arrangements that are appropriate to the context and consistent with applicable national rules and regulations will be designed and implemented through a benefit-sharing plan;
 - 2) confirm in validated design documents that the draft and final benefit-sharing plan have been shared with the affected IPs & LCs in a form, manner, and language understandable to them;
 - 3) make benefit-sharing outcomes that result from the benefit-sharing plan publicly available, subject to applicable legal restrictions.
-

CRITERION 7.10: CANCUN SAFEGUARDS

Table 7.10
Cancun Safeguards

Requirements

- a) The carbon-crediting program shall, for all REDD+ mitigation activities, require that the mitigation activity is consistent with all relevant Cancun Safeguards as set out in paragraph 71 of decision 1/CP.16 of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.⁷
-

CRITERION 7.11: ENSURING POSITIVE SDG IMPACTS

Table 7.11
Ensuring positive SDG impacts

Requirements

- a) The carbon-crediting program shall require that mitigation activity proponents, in validated design documents:
- 1) provide information on how the mitigation activity is consistent with the SDG objectives of the host country, where the SDG objectives are relevant, and such is feasible;
 - 2) demonstrate, if applicable, through qualitative assessment how the mitigation activity delivers positive SDG impacts for certain SDGs (excluding SDG 13), if any;
 - 3) provide information on any standardised tools and methods that were used to assess the SDG impacts.
-

⁷ <https://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2010/cop16/eng/07a01.pdf>

7.12: NEXT ITERATION OF THE ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK

Table 7.12
Next iteration of the Assessment Framework

| Threshold | Requirements |
|---|---|
| <i>Relating to Criterion 7 in general</i> | The ICVCM Framework recognises that approaches to environmental and social safeguards are currently evolving and that this is a clear area for improvement in the VCM. The ICVCM will consult with relevant stakeholders to understand how current practice can be improved (see section E of the Summary for Decision Makers) and how best to incorporate the requirements in the table below into the next iteration of the Assessment Framework. |
| <i>In relation to criterion 7.1</i> | Requirements ensuring: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> assessment by the carbon-crediting program of the environmental and social risks associated with the mitigation activity, activity type, or host country, which take into account the scope and scale of a mitigation activity; validation and verification requirements related to environmental and social safeguards; best practice with regard to local stakeholder consultations and FPIC processes for IPs & LCs, in particular how these can be designed to be more inclusive and reflect the views of women and vulnerable and/or marginalised groups. |
| <i>In relation to criterion 7.3</i> | Requirements ensuring that the mitigation activity promotes more sustainable use of resources, including energy and water. |
| <i>In relation to criterion 7.4</i> | Requirements ensuring: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the meaningful and informed participation of affected individuals and communities in the planning, implementation, and monitoring of resettlement activities, including, where applicable, FPIC; that where avoidance of displacement is not feasible, displacement only occurs with the consent of affected parties, with full justification and appropriate legal protection and compensation and is accepted by affected communities. |
| <i>In relation to criterion 7.5</i> | Requirements ensuring: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> consistency with conservation objectives for terrestrial and marine habitats; compliance with international, national and local laws regulating the introduction of invasive alien species of flora and fauna affecting biodiversity; no conversion of natural forests, grasslands, wetlands or high conservation value habitats; the protection of habitats of rare, threatened, and endangered terrestrial and marine species, including areas needed for habitat connectivity; the minimisation of soil degradation, soil erosion, water consumption, and water stress in the mitigation activity area. |

Table 7.12 [continued]
Next iteration of the Assessment Framework

| Threshold | Requirements |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| <i>In relation to criterion 7.6</i> | <p>Requirements ensuring:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • avoidance of negative impacts on land, territories, and resources protected under relevant laws and regulations concerning IPs & LCs; • avoidance of negative impacts on the self-determined climate, conservation, and sustainable development priorities, decision-making mechanisms, and forms of self-government of IPs & LCs as defined by them in alignment with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP)⁸ and ILO Convention 169 on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples;⁹ • respect for areas inhabited by or believed to be inhabited by uncontacted or isolated IPs & LCs; • translation of relevant documents into relevant and appropriate languages(s) including with regard to Article 13 of the UNDRIP. |
| <i>In relation to criterion 7.8</i> | <p>Requirements ensuring:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a gender assessment and gender action plan; • use of gender disaggregated data to monitor, assess and report on gender impacts. |
| <i>In relation to criterion 7.9</i> | <p>Requirements ensuring:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • transparency on use and management of revenues for benefit sharing. |

⁸ https://www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/wp-content/uploads/sites/19/2018/11/UNDRIP_E_web.pdf

⁹ https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO::P12100_ILO_CODE:C169

PART II

REQUIREMENTS

RELATING TO

CATEGORIES

B. EMISSIONS IMPACT

8. ADDITIONALITY

“

The GHG emission reductions or removals from the mitigation activity shall be additional, i.e., they would not have occurred in the absence of the incentive created by carbon credit revenues.¹⁰

”

¹⁰ There are multiple approaches for additionality that, depending on the type of mitigation activity, can provide strong assurances without the need for an investment analysis.

CRITERION 8.1: ADDITIONALITY DEMONSTRATION

Table 8.1
Additionality demonstration

Requirements

- a) The carbon-crediting program shall meet CORSIA requirements relating to additionality.¹¹
- b) The carbon-crediting program shall have provisions that:
 - 1) meet the requirements of **critterion 8.2 below** (existing host country legal requirements); **AND**
 - 2) meet the requirements of **critterion 8.3 below** (consideration of carbon credits); **AND**
 - 3) consistent with **critterion 8.4 below** (additionality approaches), meet the requirements of **critteria 8.5 to 8.8 below** (investment analysis, barrier analysis, market penetration/common practice, standardised approaches).
- c) Where a carbon-crediting program considers that its alternative additionality approaches meet the same threshold of additionality as achieved by the requirements in **critteria 8.4 to 8.9 below** in relation to one or more Categories it may, per section 3 of the Assessment Procedure, submit an explanation of such and shall make such explanation publicly available.
- d) Jurisdictional REDD+ Programs shall be required to meet the CORSIA requirements¹² relating to additionality and the requirements relating to additionality set out in **critteria 8.9 to 8.10**.

CRITERION 8.2 EXISTING HOST COUNTRY LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

Table 8.2
Existing host country legal requirements

Requirements

- a) In addition to CORSIA requirements related to additionality, the carbon-crediting program shall:
 - 1) ensure that the mitigation activity is registered only if the resulting carbon credits represent emission reductions or removals that exceed those required due to relevant legal requirements that are enforced. For high-income countries¹³, all legal requirements shall be deemed to be enforced. For countries other than high-income countries, legal requirements shall only be deemed to be unenforced based on authoritative and up-to-date information of non-enforcement that is relevant and applicable to the mitigation activity;
 - 2) require that the evaluation of 1) above to be conducted either by the mitigation activity proponents and be validated by a VVB and/or the carbon-crediting program. The evaluation shall be conducted:
 - i. prior to the registration of the mitigation activity; and
 - ii. at an appropriate frequency thereafter, for example, at each renewal of a crediting period or at every verification where the crediting period is longer than five years.

¹¹ CORSIA "Eligibility Criterion", "Carbon offset programs must generate units that represent emission reductions, avoidance, or removals that are additional".

¹² Ibid.

¹³ https://blogs.worldbank.org/opendata/new-world-bank-group-country-classifications-income-level-fy24#_ftn1

CRITERION 8.3 CONSIDERATION OF CARBON CREDITS (PRIOR CONSIDERATION)

Table 8.3
Consideration of carbon credits (prior consideration)

Requirements

Consideration of carbon credits may be demonstrated by either Approach A AND/OR Approach B below.

Approach A: Demonstration through evidence

- a) The carbon-crediting program shall:
 - 1) require mitigation activity proponents to provide publicly available documented evidence of the consideration of carbon credits (e.g., stakeholder consultations) prior to the start date of the mitigation activity, and for the documented evidence to be assessed by a VVB and/or by the carbon-crediting program as part of validation of the mitigation activity; **AND**
 - 2) require mitigation activity proponents to provide the documented evidence to the carbon-crediting program no later than one year after the start date of the mitigation activity; **AND**
 - 3) limit the allowed time period between the documented date of the evidence and the later date of registration of the mitigation activity to a reasonable period of time; **AND/OR**
 - 4) allow mitigation activity proponents to provide publicly available or credible third-party attested evidence that they considered carbon credits prior to the start date of the mitigation activity and shall require that the evidence be assessed by a VVB and/or the carbon-crediting program.

Approach B: Alternative approach based on limitation of time between start date and validation/ submission for registration

- b) The carbon-crediting program shall have provisions that establish a reasonable maximum period between the start date of the mitigation activity and validation by a VVB (and/or the carbon-crediting program) or submission for registration, taking into account the time needed to submit the relevant documentation (e.g., two to three years, depending on the Category type).

CRITERION 8.4 ADDITIONALITY APPROACHES

Table 8.4
Additionality approaches

Requirements

- a) The carbon-crediting program shall have provisions requiring the mitigation activity to demonstrate additionality through any of the following:
 - 1) an investment analysis combined with a market penetration/common practice assessment per **criteria 8.5 and 8.7 below** (optionally combined with further approaches);
 - 2) a barrier analysis combined with a market penetration/common practice assessment per **criteria 8.6 and 8.7 below** (optionally combined with further approaches);
 - 3) a standardised approach per **criterion 8.8 below** (optionally combined with further approaches).

CRITERION 8.5 ADDITIONALITY APPROACH - INVESTMENT ANALYSIS

Table 8.5
Investment analysis

Requirements

- a) Where a carbon-crediting program allows use of investment analysis to demonstrate additionality, it shall require all of the following:
- 1) a suitable financial indicator, such as the net present value (NPV) or internal rate of return (IRR), to be used in the calculation;
 - 2) the calculation of the financial indicator to include all relevant costs (CAPEX, OPEX) and all revenues, including subsidies or official development aid, where applicable;
 - 3) the assumptions, data and conclusions in the investment analysis to be:
 - i. transparently documented in the documentation submitted for registration;¹⁴
 - ii. appropriately justified and substantiated by evidence; **AND**
 - iii. consistent with information presented to the company's decision-making management and investors/lenders;
 - 4) that all parameters and assumptions used in the analysis are internally consistent (i.e., cash flows shall be expressed in either real or nominal terms consistently, and the calculation shall be consistent with the indicator used, such as project IRR or equity IRR);
 - 5) in case of the benchmark analysis, that the financial benchmark used is consistent with the weighted average cost of capital (or the cost of equity, as applicable) that is commonly applicable to the country, sector and type of mitigation activity;
 - 6) in case of the benchmark analysis, that additionality is demonstrated if the analysis shows that:
 - i. the mitigation activity would not meet the required financial benchmark without carbon credit revenues; **AND**
 - ii. the economic performance of the mitigation activity increases decisively through carbon credit revenues; **AND**
 - iii. carbon credit revenues can raise the economic performance at or above the required financial benchmark;
 - 7) that the period of assessment shall reflect the period of expected operation of the underlying mitigation activity or shall be a period of at least ten years and include the value of the assets at the end of the assessment period;
 - 8) in case of the investment comparison analysis:
 - i. that the alternative scenarios considered are mutually exclusive and provide the same type of products or service levels as the mitigation activity, where applicable;
 - ii. that additionality is demonstrated if the analysis shows that the mitigation activity would not be the economically most attractive scenario in absence of carbon credits;
 - 9) that a sensitivity analysis shall be conducted to show whether the conclusion regarding the financial attractiveness is robust to reasonable variation in the critical assumptions;
 - 10) that all elements of the investment analysis are assessed as part of the validation by a VVB and/or the carbon-crediting program.
- b) Where a carbon-crediting program considers that its alternative additionality approaches meet the same threshold of additionality as achieved by the requirements above in relation to one or more Categories it may, per section 3 of the Assessment Procedure, submit an explanation of such and all relevant provisions to the ICVCM and shall make such explanation publicly available.

¹⁴ Note criteria 3.1 a) and b) in relation to information being made publicly available subject to confidentiality and proprietary, privacy and data protection restrictions.

CRITERION 8.6 ADDITIONALITY APPROACH: BARRIER ANALYSIS

Table 8.6
Barrier analysis

Requirements

- a) Where a carbon-crediting program allows the use of barrier analysis to demonstrate additionality, it shall require all of the following:
- 1) that the types of barriers that may be considered are limited to the following:
 - i. financial barriers (e.g., loans or other forms of financing are not accessible for the type of mitigation activity and country due to financier's assessment of risks);
 - ii. institutional barriers (e.g., the investor not being the beneficiary of cost savings associated with the investment);
 - iii. information barriers (e.g., lack of awareness in households of the lifecycle costs of energy efficient appliances); OR
 - iv. other barriers specific to the mitigation activity and/or region where the mitigation activity is implemented if these barriers are explicitly identified and elaborated in the relevant quantification methodology or other program documents;
 - 2) that the mitigation activity proponents shall be required:
 - i. to identify specific barriers, and where possible, quantify such barriers; AND
 - ii. to provide verifiable evidence to demonstrate each identified barrier and verifiable evidence that the carbon credit revenues are the decisive element in overcoming each identified barrier; AND
 - iii. to demonstrate that at least one other alternative to the mitigation activity does not face significant barriers, including the barriers faced by the mitigation activity;
 - 3) that the evidence used shall be applied conservatively. In case of uncertainty in the level of the identified barrier, the evidence or the value shall be interpreted to assure that it is very unlikely¹⁵ that the effect of the barrier is overestimated. Such evidence may include independent studies, publicly available surveys, relevant market data, or data from national or international statistics;
 - 4) that all elements of the barrier analysis are assessed as part of the validation by a VVB and/or the carbon-crediting program.
- b) Where a carbon-crediting program considers that its alternative additionality approaches meet the same threshold of additionality as achieved by the requirements above in relation to one or more Categories it may, per section 3 of the Assessment Procedure, submit an explanation of such and all relevant provisions to the ICVCM and shall make such explanation publicly available.

¹⁵ The term very unlikely is used per IPCC (zero to ten percent probability) and how it defines confidence levels, and to the extent any multi-stakeholder working group assesses a Category against this requirement, the assessment would be guided by the IPCC usage.

CRITERION 8.7 ADDITIONALITY APPROACH - MARKET PENETRATION/COMMON PRACTICE

Table 8.7
Market penetration/common practice

Requirements

- a) Where a carbon-crediting program allows market penetration/common practice assessments to demonstrate additionality, it shall require all of the following:
 - 1) market penetration/common practice approaches to be appropriately defined in terms of recent uptake or existing stock/diffusion of technologies, services or practices in relation to a realistic maximum market size or potential, taking into account any constraints for the uptake of the relevant technology, service, or practice;¹⁶
 - 2) an appropriate geographical boundary for assessing market penetration/common practice for the type of technology, service or practice, taking into account relevant market boundaries, where applicable;
 - 3) that the additionality assessment is only passed if the market penetration/common practice approach does not surpass an appropriate threshold defined by the carbon-crediting program, taking into account the type of mitigation activity;
 - 4) that all elements of the market penetration/common practice assessment, including adherence to the provisions above, are assessed as part of the validation by a VVB and/or the carbon-crediting program.

CRITERION 8.8 ADDITIONALITY APPROACH – STANDARDISED APPROACHES

Table 8.8
Standardised approaches

Requirements

- a) Where a carbon-crediting program allows use of standardised approaches to demonstrate additionality, it shall set out a clear process by which the carbon-crediting program may develop standardised approaches, including objective justification of criteria and expert review, and require all of the following:
 - 1) that the standardized approach is to be defined at an appropriate level of aggregation of technologies/ activities and at a high level of stringency comparable to criteria 8.1 to 8.7;
 - 2) that methodological approaches and data used to derive each standardised approach shall be made publicly available, together with a detailed explanation justifying the assessment of additionality;
 - 3) that analysis underlying each standardized approach shall be reviewed regularly (e.g., every three years), to ensure that any changing circumstances are appropriately reflected (e.g., reduced costs for the relevant technology). Any update resulting from a review is not required to retroactively apply to registered mitigation activities;
 - 4) that the adherence of a mitigation activity to the criteria of the standardized approach is assessed as part of the validation by a VVB and/or the carbon-crediting program.
- b) Where a carbon-crediting program considers that its alternative additionality approaches meet the same threshold of additionality as achieved by the requirements above in relation to one or more Categories it may, per section 3 of the Assessment Procedure, submit an explanation of such and all relevant provisions to the ICVCM and shall make such explanation publicly available.

¹⁶ This requirement does not preclude the carbon-crediting program's program documents from allowing the assessment to exclude the mitigation activity itself, where appropriate.

CRITERION 8.9 ADDITIONALITY FOR JURISDICTIONAL REDD+ PROGRAMS: DEMONSTRATION OF NEW MITIGATION ACTIONS OR ENHANCED IMPLEMENTATION OF ONGOING MITIGATION ACTIONS

Table 8.9

Jurisdictional REDD+: Demonstration of new mitigation actions or enhanced implementation of ongoing mitigation

Requirements

- a) The carbon-crediting program shall have provisions in place that require:
 - 1) the Jurisdictional REDD+ Program proponent to:
 - i. submit an implementation plan (meaning a comprehensive and strategic implementation document(s), containing the scope of the program and planned actions that may include, *inter alia*, policies, laws, proposed regulatory frameworks, technical assistance programs, enforcement measures, regulations, legal rights frameworks, and/or incentive mechanisms);
 - ii. identify the new mitigation actions or enhanced implementation of ongoing mitigation actions and demonstrate that they are designed for the purpose of significantly addressing key drivers of deforestation and degradation at jurisdictional scale in order to reduce emissions (and where applicable, enhance removals). This information shall be included in the implementation plan;
 - iii. report on the implementation of the new mitigation actions or enhanced implementation of ongoing mitigation actions in monitoring reports;
 - 2) validation/verification of the requirements in 1) above by a VVB and/or the carbon-crediting program;
 - 3) the Jurisdictional REDD+ Program proponent to provide evidence to the carbon-crediting program demonstrating that expected revenues from carbon credits (or results-based finance) are decisive for enabling the implementation of the Jurisdictional REDD+ Program (for example, by providing information on how expected revenues catalyse mitigation actions and/or how expected revenues are instrumental in financing the mitigation actions).
- b) Where a carbon-crediting program considers that its alternative additionality approaches meet the same threshold of additionality as achieved by the requirements above it may, per section 3 of the Assessment Procedure, submit an explanation of such and all relevant provisions to the ICVCM and shall make such explanation publicly available.

CRITERION 8.10 ADDITIONALITY FOR JURISDICTIONAL REDD+ PROGRAMS: CONSIDERATION OF CARBON CREDITS

Table 8.10
Jurisdictional REDD+: Consideration of carbon credits

Requirements

The requirements of Approach A or Approach B shall be met.

Approach A: Demonstration through evidence

- a) The carbon-crediting program shall have provisions in place that:
 - 1) require the Jurisdictional REDD+ Program proponent to provide documented evidence that the Jurisdictional REDD+ Program proponent considered carbon credits or results-based finance related payments prior to the implementation of the new mitigation actions or the enhanced implementation of ongoing mitigation actions;
 - 2) specify that the documented evidence in 1) above may include either or both of:
 - i. a formal document of intent (e.g., notification; minutes of meetings of relevant jurisdictional authorities; investment documents; proof of participation in readiness activities) showing a decision to participate in voluntary carbon markets or a results-based finance framework; or
 - ii. proof of a public stakeholder consultation on the proposed Jurisdictional REDD+ Program.

Approach B: Alternative approach based on limitation of time

- b) The carbon-crediting program shall have provisions that establish a reasonable maximum period between the start date of the mitigation activity and validation by a VVB (and/or the carbon-crediting program) or submission for registration, taking into account the time needed to submit the relevant documentation for the Jurisdictional REDD+ Program under the carbon-crediting program.¹⁷

¹⁷ The carbon-crediting program must address the risk that carbon credits are issued in respect of declining deforestation or degradation rates during this time period that do not result from the new mitigation actions or enhanced implementation of ongoing mitigation actions (referred to in criterion 8.9 a) 1) ii).

8.11 NEXT ITERATION OF THE ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK

Table 8.11
Next iteration of the Assessment Framework

| Threshold | Requirements |
|--|--|
| <i>In relation to criterion 8.1</i> | The ICVCM may consider requiring reassessment of additionality at renewal of the crediting period for certain Categories. |
| <i>Prior consideration</i> | The ICVCM recognizes the important role that prior consideration of carbon credits plays in ensuring the additionality of credited mitigation activities and that current market practice addresses this issue in a variety of ways. In the next iteration of the Assessment Framework, the ICVCM will consider criteria that limit the allowed time period based on an assessment of the reasonable amount of time to produce documentation and/or a reasonable amount of elapsed time between activity start date and registration, including for Jurisdictional REDD+ Programs. |
| <i>In relation to criterion 8.3</i> | The ICVCM may exclude criterion 8.3 Approach B and criterion 8.3 Approach A a) 4 in order to ensure that carbon-crediting programs have developed requisite rules to address additionality in line with criterion 8.3 Approach A a) 1) to 3). |
| <i>In relation to criterion 8.9 and 8.10</i> | The ICVCM may exclude criterion 8.9 Approach B and criterion 8.10 Approach B in order to ensure that carbon-crediting programs have developed requisite rules to address additionality in respect of prior consideration of carbon credits and/or results-based finance and the applicability of financial additionality to Jurisdictional REDD+ Programs. ¹⁸ |

¹⁸ Note also the Continuous Improvement Work Program on jurisdictional approaches.

9. PERMANENCE



The GHG emission reductions or removals from the mitigation activity shall be permanent or, where there is a risk of reversal, there shall be measures in place to address those risks and compensate for reversals.



CRITERION 9.1 CATEGORIES TO WHICH PERMANENCE REQUIREMENTS APPLY

Table 9.1
Categories to which permanence requirements apply

| Requirements |
|--|
| <p>a) The CORSIA requirements relating to permanence¹⁹ shall be met.</p> <p>b) The following Categories of mitigation activity are considered to have a material risk of reversal. Carbon credits issued for mitigation activities in the Categories below may only be CCP-Approved if all the requirements in criteria 9.2 to 9.5 related to permanence are met:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) storage and protection of carbon in biogenic reservoirs, including: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. conservation and avoided conversion (e.g., grassland/rangeland management, avoided deforestation); ii. agriculture soil carbon sequestration; iii. forestry sequestration (improved forest management, afforestation/reforestation, agroforestry); iv. wetland and marine ecosystem restoration/management (including seagrasses, saltmarshes, mangroves, peatlands). <p>c) The carbon-crediting program shall assess the risk of reversals and where material risk is identified, have appropriate measures to avoid material risks of reversals for the following Categories:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) mitigation activities involving the displacement of non-renewable biomass; 2) biochar; 3) CCS with geological storage; 4) enhanced weathering; 5) CCS with mineralization; 6) CO₂ in concrete utilization. <p>d) Jurisdictional REDD + Programs shall be required to meet only the requirements for permanence set out in criterion 9.5 below.</p> |

¹⁹ CORSIA "Eligibility Criterion", "Permanence - Carbon offset credits must represent emissions reductions, avoidance, or carbon sequestration that are permanent. If there is risk of reductions or removals being reversed, then either (a) such credits are not eligible or (b) mitigation measures are in place to monitor, mitigate, and compensate any material incidence of non-permanence".

CRITERION 9.2 COMPENSATION FOR REVERSALS

Table 9.2
Compensation for reversals

Requirements

- a) The carbon-crediting program shall cancel a carbon credit for each tonne of CO₂ equivalent reversed. OR
 - b) The carbon-crediting program shall require the mitigation activity proponents to cancel a carbon credit for each tonne of CO₂ equivalent reversed.
-

CRITERION 9.3 MONITORING AND COMPENSATION PERIOD

Table 9.3
Monitoring and compensation period

Requirements

- a) The carbon-crediting program shall in relation to Categories listed in criterion 9.1 b) 1) above:
 - 1) require a monitoring and compensation period for such mitigation activities of at least forty years from the start of the first crediting period or to at least the end of the crediting period, whichever is the later;
 - 2) require mitigation activity proponents²⁰ to monitor and report any reversals for the full monitoring and compensation period and compensate for avoidable reversals;
 - 3) refrain from issuing further carbon credits until avoidable reversals have been compensated;
 - 4) draw upon the pooled buffer reserve if avoidable reversals are not compensated per a) 2) above;
 - 5) treat cessation of monitoring and verification as an avoidable reversal.
-

²⁰ Or the carbon-crediting program or host country, if applicable.

CRITERION 9.4 COMPENSATION MECHANISM

Table 9.4
Compensation mechanism

Requirements

- a) The carbon-crediting program shall, in relation to Categories listed in criterion 9.1 b) 1), above:
- 1) require estimation of the reversal risk using a clearly defined methodology that is made publicly available;
 - 2) require or incentivise mitigation activity proponents to take measures to mitigate potential reversal risks;
 - 3) define and apply clear criteria for determining whether a reversal is avoidable or unavoidable;
 - 4) implement a pooled buffer reserve to compensate for reversals to which all relevant mitigation activities contribute, and from which reversals from any contributing mitigation activities may be compensated (in order to meet the requirements of criterion 9.2);
 - 5) with respect to the pooled buffer reserve:
 - i. ensure that the proportion of carbon credits placed in the pooled buffer reserve are at least twenty percent of the total carbon credits issued to contributing mitigation activities; OR
 - ii. ensure that the carbon credits placed in the pooled buffer reserve are proportional to the reversal risk of the mitigation activity over the full length of the monitoring and compensation period and account for the risk that the mitigation activity proponents do not compensate for avoidable reversals; AND
 - iii. make publicly available information on the pooled buffer reserve contents, including origin of carbon credits (e.g., mitigation activity, activity type and vintage).
-

CRITERION 9.5 JURISDICTIONAL REDD+ PERMANENCE

Table 9.5
Jurisdictional REDD+ Permanence

| Requirements |
|---|
| <p>a) In relation to a Jurisdictional REDD+ Program, the carbon-crediting program shall:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) implement a pooled buffer reserve to which each participating Jurisdictional REDD+ Program proponent shall contribute and from which reversals that occur within in the accounting boundaries of the Jurisdictional REDD+ Program while the Jurisdictional REDD+ Program proponent is participating in the carbon-crediting program may be compensated; 2) require that the percentage of carbon credits that a Jurisdictional REDD+ Program proponent must place into the pooled buffer reserve is proportional to the reversal risk and adequate to compensate for potential reversals for a minimum of forty years from the start of the first crediting period; 3) where a reversal exceeds the total contribution to the pooled buffer reserve made by the relevant Jurisdictional REDD+ Program proponent prior to the reversal, require the participating Jurisdictional REDD+ Program proponent to replenish the pooled buffer reserve to return the pooled buffer reserve to a percentage proportionate to the risk per 9.5 a) 2) above; 4) require that all the carbon credits in the pooled buffer reserve contributed by that Jurisdictional REDD + Program proponent be immediately cancelled when that Jurisdictional REDD + Program proponent leaves the carbon-crediting program; 5) provide evidence to support 9.5 a) 2) above. |

9.6 NEXT ITERATION OF THE ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK

Table 9.6
Next iteration of the Assessment Framework

| Threshold | Requirements |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| <i>In relation to permanence</i> | The ICVCM will consider longer monitoring and compensation periods (e.g., one hundred years) and shifting the monitoring and compensation oversight to the carbon-crediting program or the jurisdiction aligned with existing and emerging best practice among carbon-crediting programs. Given the relative newness of Jurisdictional REDD+ approaches and the lack of experience with jurisdictional programs to date, the ICVCM will continue to analyse the adequacy of the Jurisdictional REDD+ permanence criteria and consider specific criteria related to permanence for future iterations of the Assessment Framework. ²¹ |
| <i>In relation to criterion 9.4</i> | In the next iteration of the Assessment Framework, the ICVCM will require the carbon-crediting program to have provisions in place to ensure the continued operation of the pooled buffer reserve until the latest date of expiry of the monitoring and compensation period of all registered and completed mitigation activities. This may be, for example, when the carbon-crediting program ceases to exist or is otherwise prevented from operating the pooled buffer reserve. |

²¹ Note also the Continuous Improvement Work Program on permanence.

10. ROBUST QUANTIFICATION



The GHG emission reductions or removals from the mitigation activity shall be robustly quantified, based on conservative approaches, completeness and sound scientific methods.



CRITERION 10.1 ROBUST QUANTIFICATION OF EMISSION REDUCTIONS OR REMOVALS

Table 10.1
Robust quantification of emission reductions or removals

Requirements

- a) Quantification approaches shall meet CORSIA requirements.
- b) The quantification approaches in quantification methodologies and other program documents applicable to the Category shall ensure conservativeness so that:
 - 1) it is likely²² that the quantified emission reductions or removals from the mitigation activities using that quantification methodology and other program documents are not overestimated, taking into account the overall uncertainty in quantifying the emission reductions or removals;
 - AND**
 - 2) it is very unlikely²³ that emission reductions or removals from a mitigation activity using the quantification methodology and other program documents can be very significantly overestimated.
- c) The overall uncertainty to be taken into account per criterion 10.1 b) 1) above shall include all causes of uncertainty, including in assumptions (e.g., baseline scenario), estimation equations or models, parameters (e.g., representativeness of default values) and in measurement approaches (e.g., the accuracy of measurement methods) and overall uncertainty is required to be assessed as the combined uncertainty from individual causes.
- d) The carbon-crediting program shall ensure overall conservativeness per criterion 10.1 b) and robust quantification through the specific provisions in criteria 10.2 to 10.8 below.²⁴
- e) Where a carbon-crediting program considers that its alternative quantification approaches meet the same threshold as the requirements achieved in criteria 10.2 to 10.8 below in relation to one or more Categories it may, per section 3 of the Assessment Procedure, submit an explanation of such and shall make such explanation publicly available.

²² The term likely is used per IPCC (sixty-six to one hundred percent probability) and how it defines confidence levels, and to the extent any multi-stakeholder working group assesses a Category against this requirement, the assessment would be guided by the IPCC usage.

²³ The term very unlikely is used per IPCC (zero to ten percent probability), and as described above (see footnote 21).

²⁴ One possible means, among others, to ensuring conservativeness, is through applying in the quantification methodology a discount factor commensurate to the overall uncertainty of quantified emission reductions.

CRITERION 10.2 BOUNDARY FOR THE MITIGATION ACTIVITY

Table 10.2
Boundary for the mitigation activity

Requirements

- a) The following approaches are considered to enable conservativeness and robust quantification:
- 1) the quantification methodology or applicable program documents require mitigation activity proponents to account for all significant emission sources or sinks altered by the mitigation activity, unless the omission leads to a more conservative quantification of emission reductions or removals and the omission is duly justified in the quantification methodology;
 - 2) the quantification methodology or applicable program documents require mitigation activity proponents to delineate the boundary of the mitigation activity (e.g. physical, administrative, geographic, jurisdictional, as appropriate) including the altered emission sources and sinks and, where practicable, the location of the emission sources and sinks unless the omission leads to a more conservative quantification of emission reductions or removals and the omission is duly justified in the quantification methodology.
-

CRITERION 10.3 DETERMINATION OF THE BASELINE SCENARIO AND QUANTIFICATION OF BASELINE EMISSIONS OR REMOVALS

Table 10.3

Determination of the baseline scenario and quantification of baseline emissions or removals

Requirements

- a) The following approaches are considered to enable conservativeness and robust quantification:
- 1) the quantification methodology or applicable program documents ensure that the baseline scenario to be used is selected in a conservative manner, including by:
 - i. considering different scenarios, including the best available technology (BAT) or practice in the country/region of the mitigation activity or statistically relevant historical information;
 - ii. considering uncertainties in choosing between different candidate baseline scenarios;
 - iii. ensuring that existing government policies and legal requirements are considered in determining the baseline scenario (i.e., as long as their enforcement is widespread, except for high-income countries where government policies and legal requirements are considered enforced); and
 - iv. ensuring that rebound effects (i.e., an increase in product use or service level as a result of the implementation of a mitigation activity, e.g., when introducing energy-efficient appliances) are accounted for;
 - 2) the quantification methodology or applicable program documents ensure that the overall degree of conservativeness in the quantification of baseline emissions or removals is based on the level of the overall uncertainty, taking into account the choice of assumptions, models, parameters, data sources, measurements methods and other factors;²⁵
 - 3) the quantification methodology or applicable program documents ensure that any potential perverse incentives for the mitigation activity proponent to inflate quantified baseline emissions (or depress baseline removals) are taken into account; and
 - 4) the quantification methodology or applicable program documents ensure that the baseline scenario and quantification of baseline emissions or removals are updated or reviewed at a frequency that appropriately reflects changing circumstances. These circumstances could include changes in government policies and legal requirements.

²⁵ For example, in the Category of avoided unplanned deforestation, conservativeness could be facilitated through ensuring that the baseline for expected deforestation in the crediting period, or key parameters for setting the baseline, are provided by the carbon-crediting program or an independent third party chosen by the carbon-crediting program and ensuring that the baseline is derived from larger-scale jurisdictional or regional activity data, if this is available and such is possible, and based on an assessment of risk of deforestation in the mitigation activity area.

CRITERION 10.4 QUANTIFICATION OF EMISSIONS OR REMOVALS FROM THE MITIGATION ACTIVITY

Table 10.4

Quantification of emissions or removals from the mitigation activity

Requirements

- a) The following approaches are considered to enable conservativeness and robust quantification:
- 1) the quantification methodology or applicable program documents use approaches to quantify emissions or removals from the mitigation activity that are conservative in light of the uncertainties, taking into account the choice of assumptions, models, parameters, data sources, default factors, measurements methods and other factors;
 - 2) the quantification methodology or applicable program documents use comparable quantification approaches for both baseline and mitigation activity emissions or removals.

CRITERION 10.5 QUANTIFICATION OF LEAKAGE EMISSIONS

Table 10.5

Quantification of emissions or removals from the mitigation activity

Requirements

- a) The following approaches are considered to enable conservativeness and robust quantification:
- 1) the quantification methodology or related program documents ensure that all relevant potential sources of leakage associated with the type of mitigation activity are considered;
 - 2) the quantification methodology or related program documents includes all material sources of leakage in the quantification of emission reductions or removals, except where the omission of leakage sources is conservative, and consider the following potential sources of leakage, where material:²⁶
 - i. Upstream/downstream emissions;²⁷
 - ii. Activity-shifting;
 - iii. Market leakage;
 - iv. Ecological leakage;
 - 3) the quantification methodology or related program documents ensure minimization of any material sources of leakage emissions through requirements in the respective quantification methodologies (e.g., through requirements that avoid leakage);
 - 4) the quantification methodology or related program documents ensure estimation and deduction of any residual leakage emissions in the quantification of emission reductions or removals including through specific tools or standardized approaches; and
 - 5) the quantification methodology or related program documents ensure that the estimation of leakage emissions is robust and conservative in the light of the uncertainties, taking into account the choice of assumptions, models, parameters, data sources, measurements methods and other factors.

²⁶ Some methodologies may include leakage emissions directly in the calculation of (net) emission reductions, while others may account for leakage emissions separately. Whether an increase in emissions caused by a mitigation activity is formally designated as “leakage” is not important, as long as all material effects of an activity on emissions are accounted for.

²⁷ i. to iv. – see Definitions.

CRITERION 10.6 ATTRIBUTABILITY OF THE QUANTIFIED EMISSION REDUCTIONS OR REMOVALS TO THE MITIGATION ACTIVITY

Table 10.6

Attributability of the quantified emission reductions or removals to the mitigation activity

Requirements

- a) The following approaches are considered to enable conservativeness and robust quantification:
- 1) the quantification methodology or related program documents ensure that the credited emission reductions or removals result from the implementation of the mitigation activity and not from changes in exogenous factors that are not related to the mitigation activity.
-

CRITERION 10.7 AGGREGATE DURATION OF ALL CREDITING PERIODS

Table 10.7

Aggregate duration of all crediting periods

Requirements

- a) The following approaches are considered to enable conservativeness and robust quantification:
- 1) the quantification methodology or related program documents ensure that aggregate crediting periods are short enough to allow for a progressive increase in ambition over time; and
 - 2) the quantification methodology or related program documents ensure that crediting periods are appropriate to the type of mitigation activity, based on, *inter alia*, the rate of technological change, lifetime of equipment used in the baseline scenario or change in the regulatory environment.
-

CRITERION 10.8 MONITORING APPROACHES

Table 10.8
Monitoring approaches

Requirements

- a) The following approaches are considered to enable conservativeness and robust quantification:
- 1) the quantification methodology or applicable program documents ensure robust monitoring by:
 - i. requiring the establishment of an operational and management plan for monitoring that addresses the assignment of responsibilities of various parties and the operational process of monitoring;
 - ii. specifying the monitoring approach(es) for all parameters needed for the quantification of emission reductions or removals;
 - iii. ensuring that the approaches related to use of measurements, sampling, data from third parties (e.g., studies, statistics, satellite data) or default values are robust, statistically representative or conservative;
 - iv. ensuring that the choice of the approaches, data, measurement methods or default values appropriately addresses uncertainty and leads to a conservative estimate of emission reductions or removals;
 - v. requiring appropriate quality assurance and quality control measures, such as cross-checking the monitoring results with other sources of data; and
 - vi. requiring a plan or procedure for conservative treatment and deduction of emission reductions or removals in case of unexpected interruption or errors in monitoring equipment or procedures;
 - 2) the quantification methodology or applicable program documents may provide for alternative monitoring approaches to be used when the mitigation activity becomes inaccessible for temporary periods (e.g., is in a conflict zone, or where human movement restrictions are in place, e.g., due to pandemic).
-

10.9 NEXT ITERATION OF THE ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK

Table 10.9
Next iteration of the Assessment Framework

| Threshold | Requirements |
|--|--|
| | The ICVCM emphasises the importance of robust quantification and the need to create robust and sufficiently refined methodologies to lower the risk that credited emission reductions or removals are overestimated and will continue to consider ways to set criteria that reduce the likelihood of overestimation and criteria that will ensure that the ambition of the baseline is enhanced upon update and/or review. ²⁸ |
| <i>In relation to Jurisdictional REDD+</i> | The ICVCM will consider whether to require carbon-crediting programs to have provisions requiring that where it has a registered Project-based mitigation activity within a Jurisdictional REDD+ Program ²⁹ (as defined), that the Project-based mitigation activity takes into account the provisions of that Jurisdictional REDD+ Program where the Jurisdiction requires it. |
| <i>In relation to criterion 10.3</i> | The ICVCM will consider whether to require quantification methodologies to ensure that the approach to updating and reviewing the baseline increases the ambition of the baseline over time. |

28 See also the Continuous Improvement work program on Paris Alignment in the context of baselines that relates to assessing how baseline scenarios and baseline emission and removal quantification can take into account and be aligned to Paris Agreement goals, the host country NDC, and the LT-LEDs of the host country, if any.

29 See definitions: A "Project-based mitigation activity within a Jurisdictional REDD+ Program" refers to a project-based mitigation activity aimed at reducing emissions and/or enhancing removals (reduced emissions for deforestation and forest degradation, enhancement or conservation of forest carbon stocks, sustainable management of forests) that is located within a jurisdiction covered by a registered Jurisdictional REDD+ Program and for which the accounting boundaries overlap with the Jurisdictional REDD+ Program.

11. NO DOUBLE-COUNTING

“

The GHG emission reductions or removals from the mitigation activity shall not be double counted, they shall only be counted once towards achieving mitigation targets or goals. Double counting covers double issuance, double claiming, and double use.

”

CRITERION 11.1: NO DOUBLE ISSUANCE (OVERLAPPING CLAIMS)

Table 11.1
No double issuance (overlapping claims)

Requirements

- a) For Categories where there is a material risk of overlapping claims, the carbon-crediting program shall have provisions to identify potential overlaps between different mitigation activities and ensure that where there are overlapping GHG accounting boundaries between mitigation activities, it will only issue one carbon credit for the GHG emission reductions or removals that occur within the GHG accounting boundaries of more than one mitigation activity, including by:
 - 1) disallowing registration of any mitigation activity whose GHG accounting boundaries overlap with the GHG accounting boundaries for carbon-crediting of another mitigation activity;
 - 2) disallowing carbon credits for GHG emission reductions or removals that occur within the GHG accounting boundaries of another mitigation activity, under the same program.
- b) The carbon-crediting program ('program A') shall also have provisions in place to apply, where practicable, the requirements set out in a) above in respect of mitigation activities registered under another carbon-crediting program ('program B'), that have GHG accounting boundaries that overlap with mitigation activities that are registered with the carbon-crediting program (program A).

CRITERION 11.2: NO DOUBLE CLAIMING WITH MANDATORY DOMESTIC MITIGATION SCHEMES

Table 11.2

No double claiming with mandatory domestic mitigation schemes

Requirements

- a) For Categories where there is a material risk of double claiming, the carbon-crediting program shall have provisions to ensure either that:
- 1) mitigation activities that generate GHG emission reductions or removals that overlap with mandatory domestic mitigation schemes (e.g., emissions trading systems or renewable energy quotas) are not registered and/or carbon credits are not issued; or
 - 2) when carbon credits are associated with GHG emission reductions or removals that are also covered by the mandatory domestic mitigation scheme, the mandatory domestic mitigation scheme has measures in place to ensure that any relevant impacts of the mitigation activity (e.g., the GHG emission reductions achieved or the kilowatt-hours of renewable electricity produced) are not counted towards the achievement of targets or obligations under the mandatory domestic mitigation scheme (e.g., by cancelling allowances from the emissions trading system before issuing carbon credits).

CRITERION 11.3: NO DOUBLE CLAIMING OF GHG MITIGATION ARISING FROM OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL CREDITS

Table 11.3

No double claiming of GHG mitigation arising from other environmental credits

Requirements

- a) For Categories where there is a material risk of double claiming, the carbon-crediting program shall have provisions to ensure that carbon credits are not issued for GHG emission reductions or removals achieved by a mitigation activity where units related to the same climate impacts of the mitigation activity are traded in other environmental markets or accounting frameworks (e.g., Renewable Energy Certificates generated from renewable energy projects).

C. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT BENEFITS AND SAFEGUARDS

12. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT BENEFITS AND SAFEGUARDS

“

The carbon-crediting program shall have clear guidance, tools and compliance procedures to ensure mitigation activities conform with or go beyond widely established industry best practices on social and environmental safeguards while delivering positive sustainable development impacts.

”

The Program-level criteria contain numerous requirements applicable to how carbon-crediting programs ensure mitigation activities have addressed risks relating to safeguards and sustainable development. See also Table 7.12 above in relation to the next iteration of the Assessment Framework, the Continuous Improvement work program that will address all points listed in Table 7.12 and Attribute 3 relating to Quantified SD benefits.

The ICVCM is aware that carbon-crediting programs have more recently or are currently developing new and expanded requirements in this area and, as a result, carbon credits issued in the past might not have been subject to the more advanced criteria in section 7 that apply to CCP-Eligible carbon-crediting programs. As such, in order to establish criteria applicable to all carbon credits, including those that might have been issued earlier, the ICVCM have created the baseline Category-level criteria in 12.1 and 12.2 below.

CRITERION 12.1 SAFEGUARDS

Table 12.1
Safeguards

Requirements

- a) Mitigation activities shall meet CORSIA requirements related to Safeguards systems.
 - b) Where a Category is typically also operating under a third party-linked certification scheme or third party-linked robust set of requirements that are relevant to safeguards (e.g., IFC Environmental and Social Performance Standards) or to specific further requirements of the carbon-crediting program relating to safeguards, the carbon-crediting program shall provide such information for the assessment process in the Assessment Platform.
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CRITERION 12.2 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT BENEFITS

Table 12.2
Sustainable Development benefits

Requirements

- a) Mitigation activities shall meet CORSIA requirements related to sustainable development.
 - b) Where a Category is typically also operating under a third party linked certification scheme or third party-linked robust set of requirements³⁰ that are relevant to sustainable development benefits, or to specific further requirements of the carbon-crediting program relating to sustainable development, the carbon-crediting program shall provide such information for assessment in the Assessment Platform.
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³⁰ For example, Gold Standard SDG Impact Tool (operated by the Gold Standard), Sustainable Development Verified Impact Standard (SD Vista) (operated by Verra), Climate, Community & Biodiversity Standards (CCB) (operated by Verra).

12.3 NEXT ITERATION OF THE ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK

Table 12.3
Next iteration of the Assessment Framework

| Threshold | Requirements |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| <i>General</i> | The ICVCM is aware that further work is needed to improve sustainable development benefits and safeguards associated with mitigation activities. For the next iteration of the Assessment Framework, and through the Continuous Improvement work program, the ICVCM will draw upon available safeguards and SDG impact measurement and management protocols including third party certification requirements to develop further criteria and a risk and impact rating framework for Categories. |
| <i>In relation to criterion 12.2</i> | <p>The ICVCM will consider requiring methodologies to require evidence of level of change achieved and the degree to which sustainable development benefits can be attributed to the mitigation activity.</p> <p>The ICVCM will consider requiring methodologies to include provisions promoting net positive sustainable development benefit.</p> |

13 CONTRIBUTION TO NET ZERO TRANSITION

“

The mitigation activity shall avoid locking-in levels of GHG emissions, technologies or carbon-intensive practices that are incompatible with the objective of achieving net zero GHG emissions by mid-century.

”

CRITERION 13.1 CATEGORIES INCOMPATIBLE WITH CONTRIBUTION TO NET ZERO TRANSITION

Table 13.1
Categories incompatible with contribution to net zero transition

Requirements

- a) Carbon credits issued under Categories listed in criterion a) 1) below are not eligible to be CCP-Approved:
- 1) categories:
 - i. mitigation activities that directly lead to an increase in the extraction of fossil fuels (e.g., exploration and extraction of fossil fuels);
 - ii. mitigation activities relating to coal-fired electricity generation;
 - iii. mitigation activities that involve any other unabated fossil fuel-powered electricity generation, other than new gas-fired generation that is part of increased zero-emissions generation capacity in support of national low carbon energy transitions;
 - iv. mitigation activities focused on road transport that rely on the continued use of solely fossil fueled powered engines.

CRITERION 13.2 CONTRIBUTION TO NET ZERO TRANSITION

Table 13.2
Contribution to net zero transition

Requirements

- a) Carbon-crediting programs shall ensure that new or revised methodologies require mitigation activity proponents to assess compatibility of the mitigation activity with transition to net zero by reference to the net zero objectives of the host country.

13.3 NEXT ITERATION OF THE ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK

Table 13.3
Next iteration of the Assessment Framework

| Threshold | Requirements |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| <i>In relation to criterion 13.2</i> | The ICVCM will consider extending assessment of compatibility with transition to net zero to existing active methodologies, by requiring a dedicated section in all methodologies requiring that mitigation activities using the methodology describe how the mitigation activity is compatible with a transition towards net zero in the relevant host country, including the potential contribution of the mitigation activity. |

PART III

REQUIREMENTS RELATING TO CCP ATTRIBUTES

CCP ATTRIBUTE 1: HOST COUNTRY AUTHORIZATION PURSUANT TO ARTICLE 6 OF THE PARIS AGREEMENT

Table 1
CCP Attribute 1: Host country authorization pursuant to Article 6 of the Paris Agreement

Requirements for the CCP Attribute

- a) The carbon-crediting program shall have a unique tag for this CCP Attribute that shall be different from other CCP Attributes.
- b) The carbon-crediting program shall ensure an Article 6 authorization associated with the carbon credits has been provided by the host country before it grants the carbon credits the Attribute of Article 6 authorization and marks the carbon credits accordingly in the carbon-crediting program registry.
- c) The carbon-crediting program shall make the information received in relation to Article 6 authorizations publicly available and ensure the information is kept up to date on its website.
- d) The carbon-crediting program shall prepare regular reports on the status of carbon credits associated with Article 6 authorizations and make these reports publicly available, including data disaggregated by host country, mitigation activity and vintage. The carbon-crediting program shall provide each host country with information relating to carbon credits associated with Article 6 authorizations by that country, including information relating to mitigation activities and vintages.³¹
- e) The carbon-crediting program shall regularly seek evidence of the appropriate application of corresponding adjustments pursuant to Article 6 authorization by the host country. If such evidence cannot be obtained within two years of the required application of corresponding adjustments pursuant to Article 6 of the Paris Agreement, the carbon-crediting program shall withdraw this Attribute from carbon credits in its registry and inform the relevant account holders.

³¹ This provision facilitates the application of corresponding adjustments by host countries in cases where the “first international transfer” for OIMP has been defined as the “use or cancellation”, in accordance with paragraph 2.b of the Article 6, paragraph 2 (decision 2/CMA.3).

CCP ATTRIBUTE 2: SHARE OF PROCEEDS FOR ADAPTATION

Table 2

CCP Attribute 2: Share of Proceeds for Adaptation

Requirements for the CCP Attribute

- a) The carbon-crediting program shall have a unique tag for this CCP Attribute that shall be different from other CCP Attributes.
- b) The carbon-crediting program shall ensure that the following requirement has been satisfied before it grants the carbon credits the Attribute of a Share of Proceeds for Adaptation and marks the carbon credits accordingly in the carbon-crediting program registry:
 - 1) the mitigation activity proponents have provided satisfactory information to demonstrate that:
 - i. a monetary contribution that the mitigation activity proponents have confirmed is equivalent to five percent of the revenue associated with the issued carbon credits has been made to the Adaptation Fund; and/or
 - ii. at least five percent of issued carbon credits have been forwarded to a dedicated registry account managed by or on behalf of the Adaptation Fund.
- c) The carbon-crediting program shall make the information in relation to monetary contributions and/or carbon credits forwarded to the Adaptation Fund publicly available on its website and ensure the information is kept up to date.

CCP ATTRIBUTE 3: QUANTIFIED POSITIVE SDG IMPACTS

Table 3

CCP Attribute 3: Quantified positive SDG impacts

Requirements for the CCP Attribute

- a) The carbon-crediting program shall have a unique tag for this CCP Attribute that shall be different from other CCP Attributes.
- b) The carbon-crediting program shall ensure the following requirements have been satisfied before it grants the carbon credits the Attribute of quantified positive SDG impacts, and marks the carbon credits accordingly in the carbon-crediting program registry:
 - 1) the SDG impacts of the mitigation activity have been monitored and quantified ex-post using a method, tool or standard³² recognised by a CCP-Eligible carbon-crediting program;
 - 2) the application of the method, tool or standard³³ demonstrates quantified positive impact for one or more SDGs (other than SDG 13);
 - 3) the quantification of the positive SDG impacts according to the method, tool or standard has been verified by a VVB.

³² Including third-party linked certification scheme or third-party linked robust set of requirements.

³³ Carbon-crediting programs can refer to or be guided by existing methods of quantification including Gold Standard SDG Impact Tool (operated by the Gold Standard), Sustainable Development Verified Impact Standard (SD Vista) (operated by Verra), Climate, Community & Biodiversity Standards (CCB) (operated by Verra) or other relevant programs.