

Options for REDD+ Voluntary Certification



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There are many concerns about international mechanisms aimed at sequestering carbon and reducing land based emissions such as the CDM and REDD

- Veracity of ERs and C sequestration claimed by projects or programmes
- Negative impacts on local communities and indigenous peoples
- Environmental externalities
 - Biodiversity
 - Water resources



The voices of indigenous and local peoples have been heard in the international debate around forests from the outset, and that voice has consistently sounded a note of caution.

- UNDRIP
- FPIC

Environmental advocacy groups are also expressing concern very vocally



There have been responses at several levels to these concerns

- CDM modalities require countries to certify the SD benefits of projects
- Draft REDD+ text includes:
 - safeguards,
 - eligibility criteria,
 - recognition of UNDRIP
- Civil society and the private sector have been developing and promoting standards as a means to ensure the integrity of projects

We reviewed 10 standards in this study, which can be grouped into three categories

Sustainable Forest Management Standards	REDD+ Project/Program Design Standards	GHG Accounting Standards
Forest Stewardship Council (FSC)		ISO 14064:2006 Parts 2 and 3
Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC)		Voluntary Carbon Standard (VCS)
	SOCIALCARBON Standard	
CCBA REDD+ Social & Environmental (S&E) Standards		
Climate, Community and Biodiversity (CCB) Standards		
CarbonFix Standard (CFS)		
Global Conservation Standard (GCS)		
Plan Vivo Standards		



Forestry standards

PEFC

- Endorses national or regional forest certification systems
- Promotes SFM through development of standards and policies designed to ensure forests are managed for multiple objectives
- Intended for use by national governing bodies

FSC

- Seeks to achieve environmentally appropriate, socially responsible, and economically viable use of natural resources
- Intended for use by private companies



GHG accounting standards

ISO 14064-2&3:2006

- Specific guidance at the project level for quantification, monitoring, and reporting of GHG ERs or removal enhancements
- Specific guidance for the validation and verification of GHG assertions
- ISO does not certify GHG projects or issue carbon credits

VCS

- Based on the principles of ISO
- Standards available for A/R, revegetation; agricultural land management; improved forest management; and REDD
- Seeks to provide GHG accounting standard for carbon offset projects in the voluntary market



CCB standards

CCBA

- Focus on general design and specific carbon, biodiversity, and community benefits
- Several levels of certification
- Intended for use by project-developing organizations

CCB REDD+ S&E

- Encourage social and environmental integrity of REDD+ programs, policies, and measures
- Intended for use by governments for programs at national or sub-national level and for either fund-based or market-based REDD+ initiatives



Project design standards

CarbonFix Standard

- Sequester carbon, restore forests, and deliver benefits to people and the environment
- Combines criteria on SFM, GHG accounting, and permanence
- Intended for project developers for A/R in the voluntary market

SOCIALCARBON Standard

- A set of analytical tools
- Assess and improve socioeconomic and environmental, and performance of GHG mitigation projects
- Requires application of other GHG accounting standards to generate VERs for the voluntary carbon market.



Project design standards

Global Conservation Standard

- Facilitates the monetization of conservation assets
- Focuses on carbon sinks and other environmental services
- Intended for use by government or private landowners and license holders of conservation areas

Plan Vivo

- Aims to promote sustainable livelihoods and deliver ecosystem services such as carbon and water;
- Promotes protection and planting of native and naturalized tree species
- Intended for use by project developers





Evaluation criteria

Poverty alleviation

- Land tenure
- Governance (international treaties and conventions)
- Participation of local populations and stakeholders
- Conflict resolution mechanisms
- Impacts outside the project areas
- Capacity building
- Equitable benefit sharing
- Food security

Biodiversity

- Separation of production forestry and conservation areas
- Protection of rare and endangered species
- Local population's social and cultural values of biodiversity.



Evaluation criteria

SFM

- Governance issues
- Requirements to develop long-term forest management plans
- Approaches to:
 - ecosystem services
 - conversion of natural forests
 - land use planning

Certification procedures

- Involvement of accredited third-party auditors
- Periodicity of certification
- Stakeholder consultations during certification process



Evaluation criteria

Monitoring & reporting

- Length of monitoring and reporting over the project lifetime
- Periodicity
- MR principles

GHG accounting framework

- Applicability for certifying GHG benefits from AFOLU projects
- Compliance with IPCC principles
- Address leakage
- Guarantee permanence



Forestry standards



PEFC



FSC standard

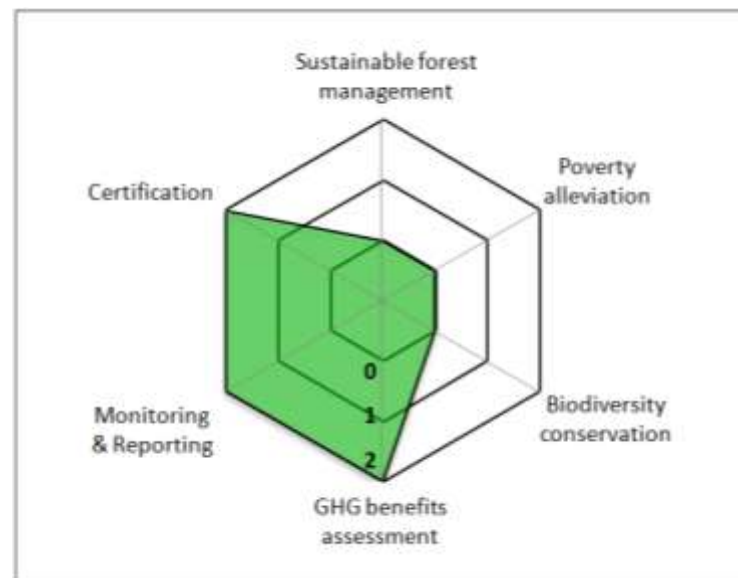




GHG accounting standards



ISO 14064: 2006



VCS



Project design standards



CCBA



CCBA REDD S&E



SOCIALCARBON



Project design standards



Global Conservation Standard



CarbonFix



Plan Vivo



Conclusions

- None of the standards that we evaluated covered the 6 areas of evaluation comprehensively.
- Carbonfix and GCS provide the most comprehensive coverage.
- In practice, the choice of the standards will depend on the project modalities, scale, scope, and the expectations of the prospective sponsors.



Conclusions

- Projects seeking certification may need to consider combining certification by two or more standards
 - Either of the CCB standards may be combined with either of the forestry standards
 - Project design standards and Forestry standards should be combined with GHG accounting standards
- Transactions costs will likely increase for each standard used by a project.



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THINKING beyond the canopy

