

STANDARD FOR THE VOLUNTARY CARBON MARKET

From differentiated responsibility to common
responsibility

PROCLIMA®

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Acronyms and abbreviations

AFOLU	Agriculture, Forestry, and Other Land Use
ART	Territory Renewal Agency (Agencia de Renovación del Territorio)
CAR	Autonomous Regional Corporation (Corporación Autónoma Regional)
CDM	Clean Development Mechanism
CH ₄	Methane
CO ₂	Carbon dioxide
CO _{2e}	Equivalent carbon dioxide
EOT	LandPlanning Scheme (Esquema de ordenamiento territorial)
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GHG	Greenhouse gases
HCV	High Conservation Value
IAF	International Accreditation Forum
ICA	Colombian Agricultural Institute (Instituto Colombiano Agropecuario)
ICONTEC	Colombian Institute of Technical Standards and Certification (Instituto Colombiano de Normas Técnicas y Certificación)
IDEAM	Institute of Hydrology, Meteorology and Environmental Studies (Instituto de Hidrología, Meteorología y Estudios Ambientales)
INGEI	National Greenhouse Gas Inventory (Inventario Nacional de Gases Efecto Invernadero)
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
ISO	International Organization for Standardization
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
LMT	Landscape management tools
MLA	Mutual Recognition Arrangement
MRV	Monitoring, reporting, and verification
N ₂ O	Nitrous oxide
NCRE	Non-Conventional and Renewable Energy Sources (NCRE)
ONAC	National Accreditation Body (Organismo Nacional de Acreditación)

PATR	Action Plan for Regional Transformation (Plan de Acción para la Transformación Regional)
PBOT	Basic Plan of Land Planning (Plan Básico de Ordenamiento Territorial)
PDET	Development Programs with a Territorial Approach (Programas de Desarrollo con Enfoque Territorial)
PES	Payments for Environmental Services
POMCA	Watershed Planning and Management Plan (Plan de Ordenación y Manejo de Cuencas)
POMIUAC	Integrated Planning and Management for Coastal Environmental Units (Plan de Ordenación y Manejo Integrado de Unidades Ambientales Costeras)
POT	Land use and regulation plan (Plan de Ordenamiento Territorial)
REAA	Unique Registry of Ecosystems and Environmental Areas (Registro Único de Ecosistemas y Áreas Ambientales)
REDD+	Reduction Emissions from Deforestation, Degradation and forest conservation, sustainable management, or improvement of carbon stocks in forests
RENARE	National Registry of GHG emissions reduction (Registro Nacional de Reducción de Emisiones de GEI)
RLFE	Reference Level on Forestry Emissions
RUNAP	National Unique Registry of Protected Areas (Registro Único Nacional de Áreas Protegidas)
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SIAC	Colombia's Environmental Information System (Sistema de Información Ambiental de Colombia)
SISCLIMA	National Climate Change System (Sistema Nacional de Cambio Climático)
SMBByC	Forest and Carbon Monitoring System (Sistema de monitoreo de bosques y carbono)
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

VCC Verified Carbon Credits
VVB Validation and Verification Bodies

1 Introduction

1.1 Background

According to the 2018 Report of the Global Commission on the Economy and Climate¹, "the impacts of rapid and unequivocal global warming are clear." Therefore, said commission considers that the current challenge is to accelerate the transition to a better, more inclusive, and newer climate economy, particularly in five key systems: energy, cities, land use and food, water, and industry. In this way, the path to low-carbon growth includes new opportunities for sustainable and more equitable development.

The IPCC special report (2018)² is a report that focuses on ethical considerations and, in particular, the principle of equity. In the same vein, this report recognizes that most of the impacts of global warming and some potential impacts of mitigation actions needed to limit warming to 1.5°C falls disproportionately on the poorest and most vulnerable communities.

The IPCC also suggests that limiting warming to 1.5°C is not impossible, but that it requires a series of unprecedented transitions in all areas of society, indicating that the following years are crucial. Consequently, the IPCC considers that ambitious, near-term mitigation actions are indispensable to achieve sustainable development and poverty eradication while limiting warming to 1.5°C.

On the other hand, the 2019³ Emissions Gap Report showed that *"to achieve the goal of keeping global warming to 2°C, between 2020 and 2030 global emissions would need to be reduced by about 3% each year, and to achieve the Paris Agreement goal of keeping global warming to 1.5°C, average annual reductions of more than 7% would need to be achieved."*

In this context, the GHG emissions trend is towards an emissions trajectory below the expected mitigation scenarios. Compliance with international objectives and

¹ <http://newclimateeconomy.report/>

² Allen, M.R., O.P. Dube, W. Solecki, F. Aragón-Durand, W. Cramer, S. Humphreys, M. Kainuma, J. Kala, N. Mahowald, Y. Mulugetta, R. Perez, M. Wairiu, and K. Zickfeld, 2018: Framing and Context. In: Global Warming of 1.5°C. An IPCC Special Report on the impacts of global warming of 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels and related global greenhouse gas emission pathways, in the context of strengthening the global response to the threat of climate change, sustainable development, and efforts to eradicate poverty [Masson-Delmotte, V., P. Zhai, H.-O. Pörtner, D. Roberts, J. Skea, P.R. Shukla, A. Pirani, W. Moufouma-Okia, C. Péan, R. Pidcock, S. Connors, J.B.R. Matthews, Y. Chen, X. Zhou, M.I. Gomis, E. Lonnoy, T. Maycock, M. Tignor, and T. Waterfield (eds.)]. In Press.

³ That is part of the inform "United in Science 2020 A multi-organization high-level compilation of the latest climate science information". In: public.wmo.int/en/resources/united_in_science

commitments to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions trend increases beyond the target set for 2030.

To achieve this goal requires societies that strive for the common good, run on renewable energy, and favors nature-based actions. The transition to this new "*low carbon growth*" economy may have begun, but it is clear that the pace of progress is not fast enough. Societies require to enunciate climate-smart solutions at all levels.

Thus, public and private organizations, companies, and citizens aim at voluntary carbon markets. They voluntarily assume their responsibility for climate change and their commitment to "neutralize" their GHG emissions by offsetting them with climate change mitigation Initiatives.

Voluntary GHG mitigation Initiatives, registered with PROCLIMA, are based on activities with an impact on climate economics and with the potential to help curb GHG emissions by building global adaptation and resilience actions.

1.2 Objectives

The objectives of the "Standard for the voluntary carbon market" (from now on referred to as this Standard) are:

- (a) establish the principles and requirements applicable to the voluntary GHG Mitigation Initiatives, to obtain the certification and registry on PROCLIMA;
- (b) provide the necessary conditions to ensure quality in the quantification and management of the GHG emission reduction and removals;
- (c) afford the requirements related to the baseline and additionality, uncertainty management, as well as the management of risks and leakages and non-permanence;
- (d) Promote projects conformity within the rules and application procedures for the certification and registry of the voluntary GHG Mitigation Initiatives;
- (e) ensure the overall efficiency and integrity of the PROCLIMA Program.

2 Version

This document constitutes Version 1.0. January 07, 2021.

This version of the Standard may be adjusted periodically and intended users should ensure that they are using the updated version of the document.

This document also complies with the documents referenced in this and other materials that make up the PROCLIMA Program.

3 Scope

This document is a standard for the certification and registration of voluntary GHG mitigation Initiatives.⁴

The certification and registration of mitigation Initiatives are possible within this Program's framework if such actions have been previously validated and verified by accredited Validation and Verification Bodies (from now on VVB), which comply with the dispositions by this document's section 13.

This document provides the set of principles and requirements necessary for the certification and registry of voluntary GHG mitigation Initiatives, and the issuance of Verified Carbon Credits (from now on VCC), ensuring that they comply with the conditions established in this Standard.

The scope of this Standard is limited to:

- (a) the following greenhouse gases covered by the Kyoto Protocol: carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane (CH₄), and nitrous oxide (N₂O);
- (b) the voluntary mitigation Initiatives using a methodology developed or accepted by PROCLIMA, applicable to GHG removal activities and REDD+ activities;
- (c) quantifiable GHG emission reductions and removals generated by the implementation of GHG removal activities or REDD+ activities;
- (d) the voluntary mitigation Initiatives using a methodology developed or accepted by PROCLIMA, applicable to activities in the energy, transportation, and waste handling and disposal sectors;
- (e) quantifiable GHG emission reductions generated by the implementation of activities in the energy, transportation, and waste sectors;

⁴ In some sections of this document, reference will be made to mitigation initiatives, also understood as voluntary GHG mitigation initiatives.

This document presents the certification and registry requirements of initiatives, projects, actions, or activities whose purpose is to reduce GHG emissions and apply to the voluntary carbon market.

4 Area of application

This Program intends to serve:

- (a) any natural or legal person, public or private that seeks to register its voluntary GHG mitigation Initiative within PROCLIMA;
- (b) voluntary GHG mitigation Initiative holders;
- (c) independent entities that perform validation and verification processes of voluntary GHG mitigation Initiatives, meaning, Validation and Verification Bodies (VVB)
- (d) actors involved in the trading and transaction of GHG emission reductions and removals;
- (e) entities involved in climate change information management.

5 Principles

GHG mitigation Initiative holders and, in general, all those involved in the design, development, validation, verification, and certification of voluntary GHG mitigation Initiatives, should apply the following principles⁵:

5.1 Pertinence

To select sources, sinks, GHG reservoirs, data, and methodologies appropriate to the intended user.

5.2 Total coverage

Include all relevant GHG emissions and removals. Include all relevant information to support the criteria and procedures.

⁵ As set out in the ISO 14064-2 Standard

5.3 Coherence

Allow for meaningful comparisons in GHG-related information.

5.4 Accuracy

Reduce bias and uncertainty as much as possible.

5.5 Transparency

Disseminate sufficient and appropriate GHG-related information to enable future users to make decisions with reasonable confidence.

5.6 Conservative attitude

Use conservative assumptions, values, and procedures to avoid overestimating the emission reductions or the increase of GHG removals.

6 General terms

The following general terms apply for this Standard:

- (a) "Shall" indicates a requirement;
- (b) "Should" indicates a recommendation. Among several possibilities, this Standard suggests a course of action as particularly appropriate;
- (c) "May" is used to indicate that something is permitted.

7 Normative references

The following references are indispensable for the implementation of this Standard:

- (a) ISO 14064-2:2019(es). Greenhouse gases - Specification with Guidance, at the project level, for quantifying, monitoring, and reporting the reduction of emissions or the enhancement of removals of greenhouse gases, or that which updates it;
- (b) ISO 14064-3:2019(es). Greenhouse gases - Part 3: Specification with Guidance for validation and verification of greenhouse gas declarations, or its amendment;

- (c) ISO 14065:2013(es). Greenhouse gases - Requirements for bodies undertaking validation and verification of greenhouse gases for use in accreditation or other forms of recognition.
- (d) ProClima Methodological Documents and PROCLIMA Program Methodological Guides, applicable to the voluntary GHG Mitigation Initiatives.

8 General requirements

To certify voluntary GHG mitigation initiatives, GHG mitigation Initiative holders shall comply with the requirements describes below.

8.1 Project types

As noted in section 3 (Scope), this document provides the Standard for certification of voluntary GHG mitigation Initiatives.

Voluntary GHG mitigation initiatives include activities in the AFOLU, energy, transportation, and waste sectors. Initiatives in the AFOLU sector may include GHG removal activities and REDD+ activities. The energy sector activities comprise the energy generation from Non-Conventional and Renewable Energy Sources (NCRE). Transportation sectors involve the conversion of cars to Natural Gas systems. Finally, the waste sector includes the handling and final disposal of solid or liquid, industrial, household, or mixed waste.

8.1.1 GHG removal activities

The GHG removal activities are actions of GHG mitigation in the AFOLU sector, based on agricultural and forestry activities.

These may include silvopastoral systems (grasses and planted trees), agroforestry systems (agroforestry crops), commercial plantations (forest plantations), and other landscape management tools, as well as oil palm crops, as long as they are growing in areas other than natural forest or natural vegetation cover other than forest⁶.

NOTE: The areas at the geographical boundaries of the Project do not correspond to the category of forest (as defined by the Forest and Carbon Monitoring System), nor to natural

⁶ The names in parentheses correspond to the definitions contained in CORINE Land Cover adapted for Colombia. See Glossary of Terms.

vegetation cover other than wood at the start of project activities, nor five years before the project start date.

8.1.2 REDD+ activities

These are GHG mitigation Initiatives that implement REDD+ activities. They cover a specifically defined subnational geographic area, and public or private entities can own them. If publicly owned, they are within the framework of the functions assigned by the Law.

8.1.3 Activities in the energy sector

These activities are part of the mining and energy sector. They include the generation of energy with non-conventional sources of renewable energy. That is, the energy projects mentioned in Law 1715 of 2014⁷, based on Non-Conventional Energy Sources (FNCE)⁸, particularly those of renewable energies such as solar, wind, biomass, and hydraulic power, defined in Law 1715 of 2014, as follows:

Solar energy. Solar Energy. Energy obtained from a non-conventional renewable energy source. It involves electromagnetic radiation from the sun.

Wind energy. Wind Energy. Energy obtained from a non-conventional renewable energy source. It involves air masses movement.

Biomass energy. Energy obtained from a non-conventional source of renewable energy. It involves the spontaneous or induced degradation of any organic matter. The latter has its immediate origin as a result of a biological process. It also refers to plant photosynthesis products and products from heterotrophic organisms, provided that those products had not been in contact with traces of elements that confer some degree of danger on them.

Small hydroelectric power plants Energy. Energy obtained from a non-conventional renewable energy source. It bases on water bodies of a small scale.

Energy plants shall include only pico-hydro, mini-hydro, and small-hydroelectric plants (PCH, Spanish initials), i.e., with an installed capacity of less than 20,000 kW, run-of-the-river operation, applicable to both connected and non-connected to the national grid

⁷ The law aims to "promote the development and use of non-conventional energy sources, mainly those of a renewable nature, in the national energy system, through their integration into the electricity market, their participation in non-interconnected areas and other energy uses as a necessary means for sustainable economic development, the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and the security of energy supply.

⁸ They are those energy resources available worldwide that are environmentally sustainable, but that are not used in the country or are used marginally and are not widely marketed (Law 1715/2014).

(without the possibility of participating in electricity dispatch, less than 500 kW, and with the option of participating in electricity dispatch for areas higher than 10,000 kW)⁹.

8.1.4 Activities in the transportation sector

These voluntary GHG mitigation initiatives include the conversion of cars to Natural Gas systems.

8.1.5 Activities on waste handling and disposal

Treatment and final disposal of the solid or liquid, industrial, household, or mixed waste generates GHG emissions. ProClima can register waste handling and disposal projects that are GHG emission reduction projects focused on utilizing waste or eliminating GHG emissions.

This type of Project holders shall apply the methodologies classified on sector 13 of the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM): Waste handling and disposal.

Project proponents may classify as renewable energy or energy efficiency, some projects that include waste handling and disposal components. For this Program's purposes, those methodologies that the latest version of the guidance for the certification and registration of Non-Conventional and Renewable Energy Sources (NCRE) do not consider and contain both waste and energy components classify as Waste Sector projects.

Waste handling and disposal projects can include the following activities:

- (a) Burning, oxidation, or use of gas in a landfill;
- (b) Recovery and recycling of materials coming from waste;
- (c) Use of gases, including syngas as a renewable energy source;
- (d) Use or replacement of technology to eliminate or reduce the generation of GHG in solid waste treatment systems;
- (e) Use or replacement of technology to eliminate or reduce the generation of GHG in wastewater treatment;
- (f) Burn or use of gas in systems of wastewater treatment.

⁹ According to the classification of the hydropower plants in the Atlas of the Hydropower Potential of Colombia (2015).

8.2 Start date

The start date for GHG mitigation Initiatives is when activities that result in actual reductions/removals of GHG emissions begin. That is when the implementation, construction, or real action of a GHG initiative begins.

For GHG removal forestry activities and oil palm cultivation, this start date corresponds to the time on which site preparation, the establishment of crop, commencement of restoration activities, or other actions related to mitigation Initiative activities begin.

For REDD+ projects, the start date is when the Project's activities reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation. For instance, those may be forest management strategies' start and, when applicable, forest resource conservation plans. In other words, concrete actions to reduce deforestation/degradation.

GHG voluntary Projects may only certify and register under Proclima Program, initiatives whose starting date is December 31, 2010, or later.

Projects with a start date equal to or before December 31, 2016, shall complete the validation before August 28, 2021.

Projects with a start date of January 1, 2017, or later shall complete the validation within five years of the project start date.

8.3 Quantification periods

The quantification periods of GHG emission reductions or removals are as follows:

- (g) for GHG removal projects, a minimum of 20 years and a maximum of 30 years;
- (h) for REDD+ projects, a minimum of 30 years and a maximum of 60 years;
- (i) for sectoral mitigation Initiatives in the energy, transportation, and waste sectors, the same rules on quantification periods (crediting period), as defined by the Clean Development Mechanism, shall apply. A maximum of seven years, renewable at most twice, or a maximum of ten years with no renewal option.

8.4 Methodologies for quantification and monitoring of GHG emission reductions and removals

GHG voluntary Projects shall use methodologies developed and adopted by the PROCLIMA Certification Program, and these shall be applied in their entirety, including the full application of the methodological guides referred to in the methodology, if any.

Those mentioned above contain the applicability criteria and detailed steps for quantifying and monitoring results against GHG mitigation Initiatives' design and implementation by given project type.

Although the methodological documents contain specific guidance for each type of Project, what describes in these documents adheres to the general principles and requirements of this Program document.

All methodological documents developed by PROCLIMA and, when applicable to approved by the PROCLIMA Technical Committee, are available on the PROCLIMA Website.

GHG voluntary Projects shall always use the last version of the methodologies and methodological documents. The Initiative holder can propose activities that imply using different methodologies in the same GHG mitigation Initiative, as long as it meets applicability conditions and the requirements in the methodologies applied together.

Once it appears new requirements, procedures, or documents certified initiatives, in ordered to demonstrate compliance, shall comply with the transition plans defined by this Program.

8.5 Baseline or reference scenario

GHG mitigation initiative holders shall establish a baseline or reference scenario, meaning the situation representing the GHG emissions that would occur in the absence of a GHG mitigation Initiative, they comply with the methodology applicable to the GHG emission reductions or removal activities.

Definition of the reference scenario shall follow the provisions contained in the PROCLIMA methodological documents and the other methodologies applicable to projects, in their most recent version and:

- (a) transparently regarding assumptions, methods, parameters, data sources, and factors;
- (b) considering uncertainty and using prudential assumptions;
- (c) specifically, for each GHG mitigation Initiative;
- (d) considering relevant national as also when applicable to sectoral policies and circumstances;

- (e) maintaining consistency with the emission factors, activity data, projection variables of GHG emissions, and the other parameters used for the construction of the reference scenario;
- (f) implementing procedures to ensure data quality under ISO 14064-2 and the requirements of the selected methodology;
- (g) in such a way that no GHG reductions or removals can obtain, due to decreases in an activity outside the project business;
- (h) covering emissions and removals of all gases, defined in the applied methodologies, included in the project boundary under consideration.

8.6 Additionality

In general, GHG emission reductions or removals are additional if the GHG mitigation Initiative proponent demonstrates that they would not have occurred in the absence of the Project, and they generate a net benefit to the atmosphere additional to their baseline.

For the activities in sector AFOLU and transportation, the ProClima methodological documents shall be applied. For projects in the energy and waste sectors, it is necessary to use TOOL01. Tool for the demonstration and assessment of additionality. Version 07.0.0.¹⁰

8.7 Leakage and non-permanence

GHG voluntary Projects should use methodologies that define a mechanism for managing the risk of leakage and managing uncertainty in baseline quantification and mitigation results.

Likewise, the mitigation Initiative holder shall ensure the permanence of the project activities to quantify the GHG reductions or removals, following the conditions set forth by this Program. The monitoring of project activities, through verifications, shall evaluate the permanence of project activities.

In any case, GHG voluntary Projects in the AFOLU sector shall quantify GHG reductions or removals (based on the selected quantification methodology) and then discount and maintain a reserve of 15% on the total quantified GHG reductions or removals for each verified period. This reserve guarantees the replacement of lost credits by occurs events

¹⁰ Available in <https://cdm.unfccc.int/methodologies/PAMethodologies/tools/am-tool-01-v7.0.0.pdf>

that require the replacement of credits placed in the market. PROCLIMA periodically reviews this percentage and, if necessary, adjust it.

The Program holds the 15% discount on Verified Carbon Credits in each verification period in a reserve account for the mitigation Initiative they belong to.

Verified Carbon Credits placed in the reserve account may be released and placed on the market at a later verification. Provided that there has been no cancellation of such credits, as described above.

8.8 Conservative approach and uncertainty management

GHG voluntary mitigation Initiative holders should use methodologies that define a mechanism for managing uncertainty in baseline quantification and mitigation results.

According to the International Organization for Standardization (ISO), "*uncertainty is the parameter associated with the result of quantification, which characterizes the dispersion of values that could reasonably be attributed to the quantified quantity. Uncertainty information generally specifies quantitative estimates of the likely dispersion of values and a qualitative description of the likely causes of the dispersion*"¹¹.

As a good practice, the Initiative holders should use national or local values and data when available. Given this, mitigation Initiative holders may use the IPCC default values if and only if local or national data (for the type of Project and parameter required) are not available. When using default values, to follow the conservative principle, traditional values of settings should be used¹², for example, by the use of the lower limit of the range of data as long as it corresponds to the most conservative assumption¹³.

Finally, if reference the Project makes references to external documents susceptible to updates, such as the IPCC Guidelines for National GHG Inventories, the Initiative holders shall use the most recent version of those documents.

To manage uncertainty in projects in the AFOLU sector, ProClima determines criteria and guidelines to comply with the uncertainty management associated with models to estimate emission reductions in GHG removal REDD+ activities¹⁴.

¹¹ ISO 14064-2:2019(en)

¹² The conservative principle for a parameter refers to the value that, when used in calculations, is more likely to result in underestimation rather than overestimation of GHG emission reductions or removals (ISO 14064-2:2019).

¹³ The conservative principle shall be ensured by the appropriate choice of parameters affecting the project's GHG emissions, removals, sinks and reservoirs.

¹⁴ Contained in the methodological documents, developed by sector or Project type.

Data and parameters applied to estimate the reduction or removal of GHG emissions shall be consistent with the emission factors, activity data, projection of GHG emissions, and the other parameters used to construct the inventory national of GHG and the national reference scenario. If that's so, it is unnecessary to apply the percentages defined for the discount factor provided in the guidelines for managing uncertainty¹⁵.

8.9 Mitigation results

The GHG voluntary mitigation Initiative proponents shall ensure that GHG mitigation results, obtained because of their implementation, are verifiable within the framework of ISO 14064-3:2019 or those norms that update it.

8.10 Compliance with applicable legislation

The GHG voluntary mitigation Initiative holder shall demonstrate compliance with legislation related to the activities carried out in the area of GHG mitigation.

In this sense, the Initiative holder shall have a documented procedure, the Documentary Management System. This procedure identifies relevant legislation and regulations access them on an ongoing basis, demonstrating that it has a process for periodically reviewing compliance.

Accordingly, the mitigation Initiative holder shall maintain an updated list of all legislative requirements that apply to its GHG mitigation Initiative activities.

Besides, in compliance with these documented procedures, the GHG mitigation Initiative holder shall¹⁶:

- (a) determine and have access to legal and other requirements related to its activities;
- (b) determine how these legal and other requirements applicable to the mitigation Initiative;
- (c) take these legal and other requirements into account when establishing, implementing, maintaining, and continuously improving its document management system;

¹⁵ This does not refer to the 15% that will go to the reserve account. That is related to the management of leakages and non-permanence for the AFOLU sector.

¹⁶ Adapted from NORMA TÉCNICA COLOMBIANA NTC-ISO 14001. SISTEMAS DE GESTIÓN AMBIENTAL. REQUISITOS CON ORIENTACIÓN PARA SU USO. 2015-09-23.

8.11 Carbon ownership and rights

Carbon rights are the ownership of verified carbon credits (VCC) and, when applicable, the rights to benefit from the sale of credits or other payments or interests received from GHG emissions reductions or removals. That is, carbon rights are the right to benefit from GHG emission reductions or removals. In this sense, GHG mitigation Initiative holders shall demonstrate full legal ownership of the VCCs.

Carbon rights shall demonstrate transparency and, if necessary, with evidence of a process based on full, prior, and informed consent.

In particular, when the Project develops activities within territories of ethnic groups or traditional local communities, both its members, individuals, and environmental authorities shall ensure respect for their rights. They shall warn and develop the procedures in article 330 of the Political Constitution, Law 21 of 1991, Law 99 of 1993 article 76, Decree 1320 of 1998, and other rules that complement, amend, and add them.

Consequently, in cases where the Initiative holder is a natural or legal person other than the local ethnic groups or traditional communities, the sectoral GHG mitigation Project or REDD+ Project holders shall first request the Pre-Consultation Directorate of the Ministry of the Interior, the Certification Procedure. This certificate establishes whether the project or initiative area has registered ethnic communities to whom Basic Rights should be guaranteed.¹⁷

Initiative holders shall demonstrate carbon rights, with agreements and documents that ensure this requirement is met, with at least the following information:

- (a) parties who sign the agreement(s);
- (b) agreement objectives;
- (c) agreement date;
- (d) name of the GHG mitigation Initiative;
- (e) period of quantification of GHG reductions/removals;
- (f) responsibilities, obligations, and rights of each of the signatory parties.

¹⁷ <https://www.mininterior.gov.co/mision/direccion-de-consulta-previa/certificacion-de-presencia-de-grupos-etnicos-ano-2013-mayo/certificaciones-de-presencia-de-grupos-etnicos>

If the GHG mitigation Initiative includes ethnic groups as participants, the Initiative holder shall present proof. This proof is the registration of election for a legal representative and board of directors for black communities. The proof for indigenous communities is the registration of town hall's, issued by the due municipal mayor's office.

If the territory occupying the ethnic community transcends a territorial entity's geographical boundaries, the municipality's administrative authority shall issue proof that includes a significant land extension of the ethnic territory.

It shall also submit the certificate of registration in the Single Registry for Black and Indigenous Communities maintained by the Ministry of the Interior, through the Directorate of Black, ""Raizal"", and ""Palenque"" Communities and the Directorate of Indigenous Affairs and Minorities, ROM.

If the GHG mitigation Initiative holder is the ethnic community, documentation should be submitted by the authority legitimately representing them. The certificate of registration shall demonstrate this community is in the single registry for ethnic communities of the Ministry of the Interior. When applicable, it shall include the mayor's office or governor's office registration.

In some cases, carbon rights are together with other ones, such as land tenure rights, i.e., in the AFOLU sector Projects. Section 8.12 land ownership details requirement.

8.12 Land ownership

In the case of AFOLU projects, the GHG voluntary mitigation Initiative holder shall demonstrate land tenure, as set out in CONPES 3859¹⁸, as well:

- (a) the owner is the one who holds the right in rem of ownership, as stated in a real estate registration document;
- (b) a person has a private immovable property who acts in the spirit of ownership with the conviction of being an owner, but without being able to demonstrate compliance with the requirements of the real estate tradition to prove his legal ownership;

¹⁸ Departamento Nacional de Planeación. Consejo Nacional de Política Económica y Social. (junio, 2106). Documento CONPES 3859. POLÍTICA PARA LA ADOPCIÓN E IMPLEMENTACIÓN DE UN CATASTRO MULTIPROPÓSITO RURAL-URBANO.

(c) it is a "holder"¹⁹ who uses and enjoys a property for which an owner's existence is recognized.

The Initiative holder shall demonstrate that he or she holds land tenure on the property where the mitigation Initiative activities are taking place, at least during the period of quantification of GHG reductions or removals. If the Initiative holder does not represent the "holder," he shall demonstrate that he has an agreement with the holder of the land tenure right.

8.13 Environmental aspects

GHG mitigation Initiative holders shall carry out an environmental evaluation, analyzing the foreseeable effects on the biodiversity and the ecosystems within the Project's limits. This evaluation shall be reliable, and recent references shall support the analysis. This requirement proceeds even though the mitigation Initiative can be obliged to develop an environmental management plan, in terms indicated by what regulates environmental licenses.

If the GHG mitigation Initiative activities can generate adverse effects, the Initiative holder shall define actions and corrective measures to manage and minimize the impact derived.

8.14 Socioeconomic aspects

GHG mitigation Initiative holders shall analyze significant socioeconomic impacts of project activities within the project boundaries, clearly explaining assumptions used and justifying review results. This assessment shall also refer to related documentation and evidence.

If this assessment concludes that adverse effects are generated, the Initiative holder shall define actions and corrective measures to prevent them. When applicable, these actions shall diminish socioeconomic effects due to the development of GHG mitigation Initiative activities.

8.15 Sustainable Development Goals

GHG mitigation Initiatives shall be conducive to climate action, based on sustainable development and the common good. To this end, GHG mitigation Initiative holders shall

¹⁹ "tenedor" in Spanish

assess the contribution of the GHG mitigation Initiative to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

To demonstrate compliance with this requirement, GHG mitigation Initiative holders shall demonstrate the Project's contribution to sustainable development goals with relevant criteria and indicators.

The 17 objectives of sustainable development include recognition and efforts regarding fundamental rights and actions to improve well-being and quality of life, such as food security, healthy living, education, gender equality, access to water and energy, economic growth, and sustainable use of ecosystems and peaceful societies.

When applicable, Mitigation Initiative holders shall determine whether the Initiative contributes to actions such as²⁰:

- (a) To reduce the proportion of men, women, and children of all ages living in poverty in all dimensions according to national definitions;
- (b) To ensure that all men and women, particularly the poor and vulnerable, have equal rights to economic resources and access to essential services, ownership, and control of land and other property;
- (c) To improve agricultural productivity and the income of small-scale food producers, women, indigenous peoples, family farmers, livestock, and fishers;
- (d) To ensure the sustainability of food production systems and implement resilient agricultural practices that increase productivity and production, contribute to the maintenance of ecosystems, and strengthen adaptive capacity;
- (e) To achieve universal sanitary coverage, including protection from financial risks, access to quality essential health services, and access to safe, effective, affordable, and quality medicines and vaccines for all;
- (f) To reduce the number of deaths and illnesses caused by hazardous chemicals and by pollution and contamination of air, water, and soil;
- (g) To ensure the full and active participation of women and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic, and public life;

²⁰ Variables based on the 2030 Agenda in Colombia (adapted from some of the Agenda indicators)

- (h) To give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control of land and other property, financial services, inheritance, and natural resources;
- (i) To support the efficient use of water resources and ensure the sustainability of freshwater extraction and supply to address water scarcity;
- (j) To provide full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of fair value;
- (k) To protect labor rights and promote a safe and secure working environment for all workers, including migrant workers, migrant women, and persons in precarious employment;
- (l) To promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and significantly increase the industry's contribution to work and gross domestic product under national circumstances.

It is mandatory to perform monitoring that demonstrates compliance with the Initiative holder's criteria and indicators concerning the ODS.

8.16 Stakeholder consultation

GHG mitigation Initiative owners shall do a stakeholder consultation before validation, report on project activities and design, and facilitate access to all information related to the Project's potential environmental and social effects.

This stakeholder consultation is different from the ones explained in section 8.11 of this document.

Initiative holders shall establish appropriate mechanisms for stakeholders to comment on the Project and demonstrate how stakeholders are appropriately engaged.

The stakeholder consultation scope shall include a description of the Project's potential effects, positive and negative, and answers to stakeholder comments.

The GHG mitigation Initiative holders shall invite, at least, representatives of directly affected local stakeholders and representatives of local authorities, environmental and governmental, relevant to the Project's activities.

GHG mitigation Initiative holders shall provide evidence of sent invitations to stakeholders and deep consideration and analysis of their comments. If any of the relevant

stakeholders did not receive an invitation, the Initiative holders should provide appropriate justification.

8.17 REDD+ Safeguards

The implementation of REDD+ activities can generate benefits for communities and the environment and reduce GHG emissions. However, there may be some social and environmental risks associated with their implementation. In this sense, REDD+ safeguards are measures aimed at preventing the impairment of fundamental social, economic, or environmental rights and the occurrence of negative impacts from the design and implementation of REDD+ activities. It also includes measures to improve the obtainment and distribution of benefits generated by REDD+ activities.

The national interpretation of safeguards for REDD+ defines 15 safeguard elements in Colombia. They are identified with a letter referring to the Cancun safeguard to which they correspond and a number. They are organized into three themes: institutional, social and cultural, and environmental and territorial.

The REDD+ Project holders shall demonstrate compliance with national REDD+ safeguards, including the definition of indicators for monitoring, reporting, and verification²¹.

8.18 Monitoring plan

As part of the project document, Initiative holders shall submit a monitoring plan that contains the following:

- (a) necessary data and information to estimate GHG reductions or removals during the Project's quantification period;
- (b) data and supplementary information for determining the baseline or reference scenario;
- (c) specification of all potential emissions that occur outside the project boundaries, attributable to the activities of the GHG mitigation Initiative (leakage);
- (d) information related to the assessment of environmental effects of GHG mitigation activities;

²¹ Camacho A., Lara I., Guerrero R. D. 2017. "Interpretación Nacional de las Salvaguardas Sociales y Ambientales para REDD+ en Colombia" MADS, WWF Colombia, ONU REDD Colombia. Bogotá-Colombia.

- (e) procedures established for the management of GHG reductions or removals and related quality control for monitoring activities;
- (f) description of the methods defined for the periodic calculation of GHG reductions or removals and leakage;
- (g) for oil palm crops, activities proposed to invest 20% of the gross revenue from the sale of Verified Carbon Credits in conservation and watershed management actions, as described in section 11.10 of this document;
- (h) the assignment of roles and responsibilities for monitoring and reporting the variables relevant to the calculation of reductions or removals;
- (i) the related procedures whith the assessment of the mitigation Initiative contribution whith the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs);
- (j) criteria and indicators related to the contribution of the Project or initiative to sustainable development objectives;
- (k) procedures associated with the monitoring of co-benefits of the special category;
- (l) criteria and indicators defined to demonstrate the additional benefits and measurement of co-benefits and the specific category.

The monitoring plan shall base on a monitoring methodology approved within the framework of the methods referred to in section 8.4 and the following:

- (a) national circumstances and the context of the GHG mitigation Initiative;
- (b) monitoring good practices, adequate for the follow-up, and control of the activities of the GHG mitigation effort;
- (c) procedures to ensure data quality under ISO 14064-2

GHG mitigation Initiative holders shall execute the monitoring plan validated by the VVB. Execution of the approved monitoring plan and, where appropriate, its modifications, shall be a requirement for verification.

During the verification process, the Initiative holders shall submit the report under the monitoring plan. Any revisions to the monitoring plan, either to increase its accuracy or information completeness, shall be justified and submitted to the VVB.

The VVB shall follow the GHG mitigation Initiative holder's methodology for the monitoring plan and evaluate the estimates of GHG reductions or removals and the baseline scenario.

9 Co-benefits

Definition and measurement of co-benefits are mandatory requirements to achieve certification and registration of voluntary GHG mitigation Initiatives. GHG mitigation Initiative holders can define actions on social and environmental components, demonstrate monitoring criteria and indicators, and verify their compliance.

Based on demonstrated performance with co-benefits, mitigation Initiatives shall obtain at least one special category. This category considers the applicability and compliance with the conditions described in the following sections.

To reach one of these categories, the mitigation Initiative shall comply with the conditions defined for each of the four components that constitute additional benefits (biodiversity conservation, benefits on communities, gender equity, and adaptation to climate change). The categories and conditions required to obtain a special category are in section 9.2.

GHG voluntary mitigation Initiative holders should propose criteria and indicators that monitor each condition and demonstrate compliance with them. The monitoring plan should include a section that provides measurement and tracking of co-benefits.

9.1 Special categories components

9.1.1 Biodiversity conservation

When applicable, the GHG mitigation Initiative holder demonstrates that:

- (a) develops practical actions and measures to halt the loss of biological diversity, enabling ecosystems to continue to provide essential services;
- (b) sets objectives and activities in support of the Aichi Targets 31 for Biodiversity;
- (c) executes restoration activities of degraded ecosystems in areas included in the Unique National Register of Protected Areas (RUNAP) or the Unique Register of Ecosystems and Environmental Areas (REAA);
- (d) demonstrates High Conservation Values (HCV) in the project area²²;
- (e) demonstrates there is no presence of invasive species as a result of the project activities;

²² Based on criteria defined by the High Conservation Value (HCV) network

- (f) demonstrates that the project area is in areas where globally threatened species are present (according to the UICN Red List²³) and that the mitigation Initiative is taking action to conserve these species;
- (g) incorporates, in its administration and management systems, the traceability of raw materials from biodiversity.

9.1.2 Benefits related to the community

The benefits to communities shall be real actions of public value creation and local development, emphasizing those that improve communities' quality of life. These criteria shall not include Project's employment generation as a co-benefit.

When applicable, the GHG mitigation Initiative holder demonstrates that:

- (a) identifies and strengthens mechanisms for social and community participation at the local and regional levels;
- (b) implements sustainable production systems, combining production and conservation actions to generate local development;
- (c) considers pre-existing social conflicts and supports the development of efficient models with the management of post-conflict scenarios;
- (d) creates short and long-term benefits to small-scale productive projects with community members in the project area;
- (e) generates actions that improve the capacities and access to opportunities of community groups in vulnerable situations;
- (f) defines possible impacts on cultural, archaeological, or historical heritage and describes measures to prevent or mitigate such effects;
- (g) produces an average net increase in the income of local, low-income producers.

9.1.3 Gender equity

According to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), it is clear that "*climate change has a more pronounced impact on women, especially indigenous*

²³ <https://www.iucnredlist.org/>

and peasant women whose agricultural dependence, living conditions and marginalization expose them more to changes in climate, loss of diversity and pollution."

Also, according to López (2017)²⁴, *"international agreements on forests, biodiversity, and climate change mention the need to mainstream gender, all of which is required by Article 2, which calls on States Parties to appropriate the principle of equality between men and women (...)to ensure a remedy for discrimination against women"*.

In this context, the GHG mitigation Initiative holder shall consider determinants set out in the gender-related policy framework:

- (a) Law 731/02 on rural women;
- (b) Policy Guidelines for Women's Equity 2012;

The Initiative holder shall include among its activities, strategies, or actions that support the goals related to the ODS *"achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls"*²⁵:

- (a) ensures the full and active participation of women and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in the project area;
- (b) supports actions that give women the right to equal economic resources and access to ownership and control of land and other property, financial services, inheritance, and natural resources by national laws;
- (c) ensures gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls at all levels within the Project's scope.

9.1.4 Climate change adaptation

I. If applicable, the GHG mitigation Initiative holder demonstrates that:

- (a) considers one or more of the activities proposed in the National Climate Change Policy;

²⁴ Salvaguardas y Género - Documento de Recomendaciones. Diana López Consultora de Género para el Programa ONU REDD Colombia. Marzo de 2017.

²⁵ Goals adapted (at project level) from the document: Camacho, A., López, D., Ome, E., Yepes, A., García, P., Leguía, D. & Rodríguez, M. 2018. BOSQUES, GÉNERO Y REDD+: Un insumo para Bosques Territorios de Vida-Estrategia Integral de Control a la Deforestación y Gestión de los Bosques. Programa ONU-REDD Colombia. Bogotá, 2018. In: http://americalatinagenera.org/newsite/images/cdr-documents/2019/02/PNUD_GENERO_25012019.pdf

- (b) improves conditions for the conservation of biodiversity and its ecosystemic services, in the areas of influence, outside the project boundaries (i.e., natural cover on environmentally key areas);
 - (c) implements activities that generate sustainable and low-carbon productive landscapes;
 - (d) proposes restoration processes in areas of specific environmental importance;
 - (e) designs and implements adaptation strategies based on an ecosystemic approach.
- II. For activities in the AFOLU sector, the Initiative holder shall develop either actions or measures to adapt to climate change, such as:
- (a) agricultural, forestry, and fisheries production systems better adapted to high temperatures, droughts, or floods, to improve competitiveness, income, and food security, especially in vulnerable areas;
 - (b) integrated actions that assist in the efficient use of soil, including, i. e., the conservation of existing natural cover, land use consistent with land vocation and agro-ecological conditions, family farming, and agricultural technology transfer that increases competitiveness by reducing vulnerability to climate change;
 - (c) reduction of GHG emissions from agricultural activities, compared to the non-project scenario (i. e., replacement of pastures for livestock feed and use of planting methods that reduce emissions from crop management);
 - (d) actions causally related to climate change adaptation measures, such as use and management of seeds resistant to temperature change, water management through rainwater harvesting, recycling, drainage, and irrigation, reforestation of watersheds to prevent erosion, soil management with practices that reduce compaction, and techniques to reduce fertilizer use.

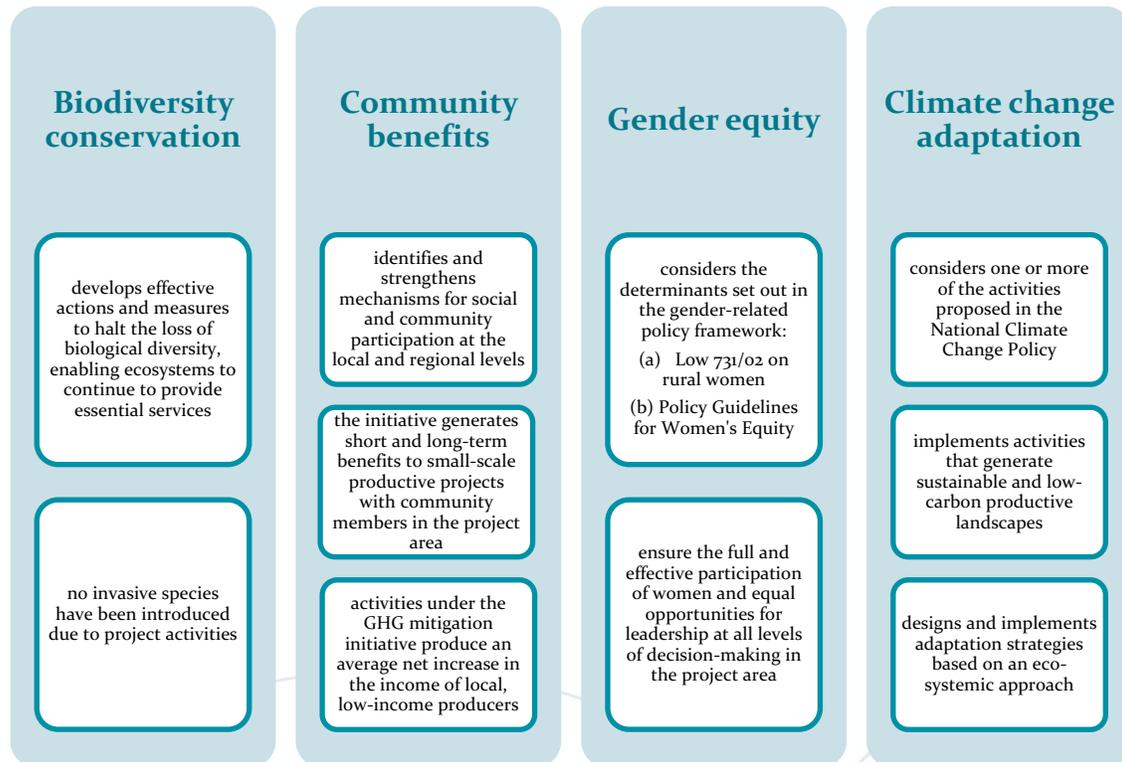
9.2 Categories and additional benefits (co-benefits)

9.2.1 Category 1. Orchid

Orchids are the most diverse and evolving group of flowering plants on the planet, with about 25,000 to 30,000 species worldwide, of which 4,270 are native to Colombia, and

1,572 are endemic. Colombia's national flower is the *Cattleya trianae* orchid²⁶. Figure 1 shows the requirements to obtain the Orchid Category.

Figure 1. Orchid category requirements



Source: PROCLIMA, 2020.

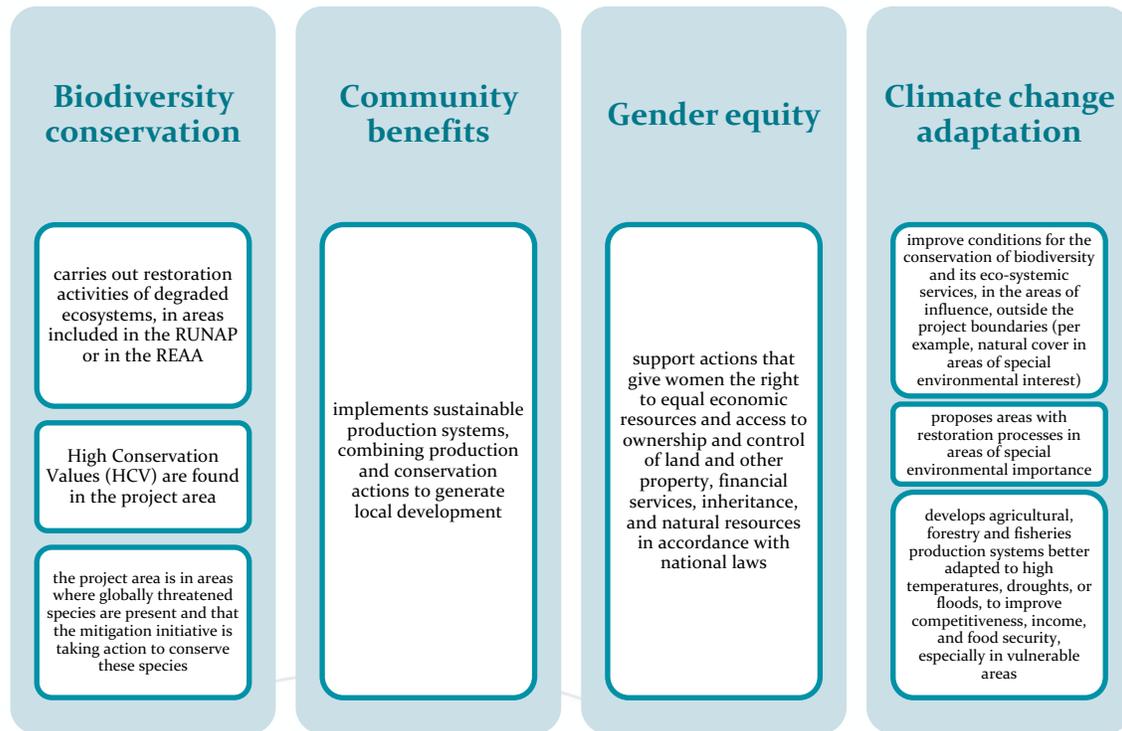
9.2.2 Category 2. Wax Palm

The Wax Palm (*Ceroxylon quindiuense*) grows in one of the most threatened ecosystems globally, the Tropical Foggy Forest. The *Ceroxylon quindiuense* palms constitute one of the most spectacular landscapes of the Colombian Andes. Despite representing Colombia's national tree, the species was categorized as endangered (EN) by Galeano & Bernal (2005). Although there are still large populations in some sectors of the central mountain range, their habitat has been considerably reduced, and it is estimated that their

²⁶ Castellanos-Castro, C., y Torres-Morales, G. (Eds.) 2018. Guía para la identificación y el cultivo de algunas especies de orquídeas nativas de Cundinamarca. Pontificia Universidad Javeriana, Jardín Botánico de Bogotá "José Celestino Mutis", Corporación Colombiana de Investigación Agropecuaria Corpoica, Instituto de Investigación de Recursos Biológicos Alexander von Humboldt, Gobernación de Cundinamarca. Bogotá D.C., Colombia. 192 p. In <http://repository.humboldt.org.co/handle/20.500.11761/34286>

populations have decreased by more than 50% in the last three generations (210 years)²⁷. Figure 2 shows the requirements to obtain the Wax Palm Category.

Figure 2. Wax Palm requirements



Source: PROCLIMA, 2020.

9.2.3 Category 3. Andean Condor

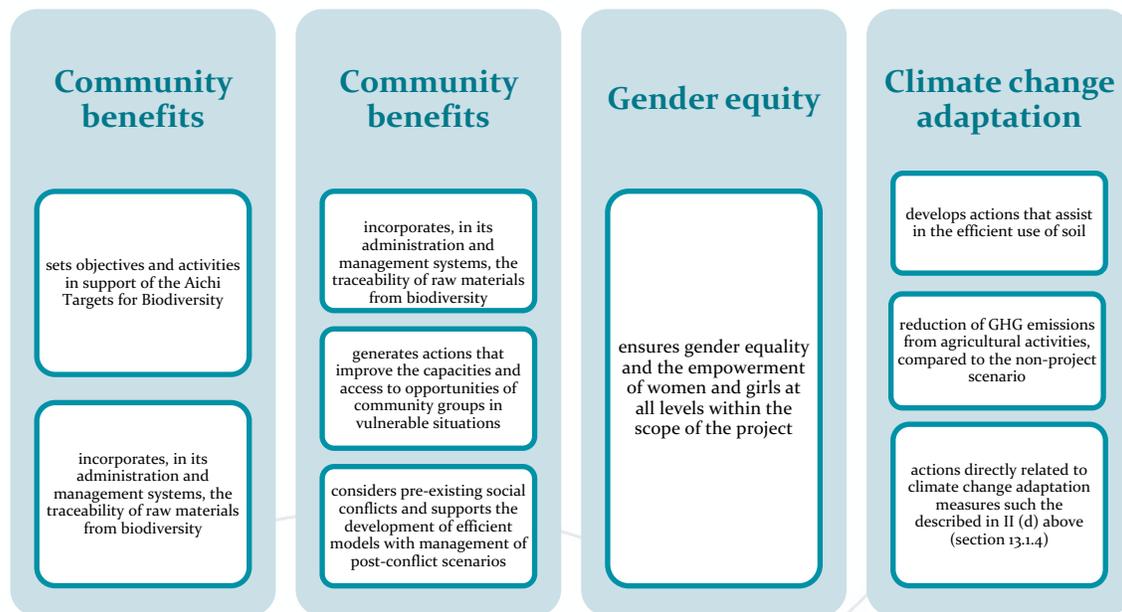
The Andean Condor (*Vultur gryphus*), the sun's messenger, is considered the most giant and most massive flying bird in the world²⁸. It is also one of the birds that fly at the highest altitudes, it can fly using the vertical thermal updrafts of warm air, and it can reach up to 6500 meters of height; then, it can glide for hundreds of kilometers almost without

²⁷ Ministerio de Ambiente y Desarrollo Sostenible. 2015. Plan de conservación, manejo y uso sostenible de la palma de cera del Quindío (*Ceroxylon quindiuense*), Árbol Nacional de Colombia. Textos: Bernal R., G. Galeano, M. J. Sanín. Ministerio de Ambiente y Desarrollo Sostenible - Universidad Nacional de Colombia, Bogotá. 80 pp. In: https://www.minambiente.gov.co/images/BosquesBiodiversidadyServiciosEcosistemicos/pdf/Programas-para-la-gestion-de-fauna-y-flora/Plan_de_conservaci%C3%B3n_manejo_y_uso_sostenible_de_la_palma_de_cera_del_Quind%C3%ADo.pdf

²⁸ Ministerio de Ambiente, Vivienda y Desarrollo Territorial. Sin fecha. Programa nacional para la conservación del cóndor andino en Colombia. Plan de acción 2006-2016. 32 pp. In: https://www.minambiente.gov.co/images/BosquesBiodiversidadyServiciosEcosistemicos/pdf/Programas-para-la-gestion-de-fauna-y-flora/4023_100909_prog_conserv_condor.pdf

moving its extended wings. The natural distribution of Andean Condor covers the Andes Mountains, from southern Tierra del Fuego (Argentina and Chile) to western Venezuela. One of its significant habitats is in the Colca Canyon (Peru). The Andean Condor is considered a near-threatened species by the UICN (International Union for Conservation of Nature), threats to the population include habitat loss and secondary poisoning²⁹. Figure 3 shows the requirements for the Andean Condor category.

Figure 3. Requirements for the Andean Condor category



Source: PROCLIMA, 2020.

10 Other requirements

- I. For cases where applicable, the Initiative holder shall demonstrate that the areas in which the GHG voluntary mitigation Initiative activities take place:
 - (a) do not involve physical resettlement or economic displacement of the population;
 - (b) are not located on lands that require the free and sustained use of properties that are restored or in the process of restitution by third parties;
 - (c) are not situated on lands or territories over which there is a judicial dispute for the use of force or unlawful means of territorial appropriation;

²⁹ <https://birdscolumbia.com/>

- (d) are not located in strategic, environmentally protected areas, which contradict environmental management plans.
- II. The GHG mitigation Initiative holder shall demonstrate the fulfilling of the following special conditions:
- (a) the activities of the GHG mitigation Initiative matches with the Regional Transformation Action Plan (RTP) if they are in a PDET area;
 - (b) the holder of the effort does not impede ongoing land restitution processes or restitution claims.
- III. If applicable, the Initiative holder shall present the following documentation as evidence:
- (a) certification by the Municipal Planning Office, in respect of the Basic Land Use Plan (PBOT), Land Use Plan (POT), or Land Use Scheme (EOT), demonstrating that the defined land use allows for project activities;
 - (b) certification by the competent environmental authority of the compatibility of the activities of the GHG mitigation Initiative with the River Basin Management Plan - POMCA or with the respective Integrated Management Plan for Coastal Environmental Units - POMIUAC;
 - (c) certification from the Land Restitution Unit, demonstrating that the Project is developed on land restitution sites to the communities, in case of communities with this characteristic participate in the Project;
 - (d) if the project boundaries are within the areas registered in the National System of Protected Areas, certification from the corresponding environmental authority demonstrating that the activities proposed in the GHG mitigation Initiative are under the permitted activities within the protected area's land use categories;
 - (e) certification by the Land Renewal Agency, which confirms that the GHG mitigation Initiative matches with the PATR for the PDET area;
 - (f) certification from the Regional Environmental Authority (CAR) confirming whether in the Environmental Information System for Colombia (SIAC), the property is in the Single National Registry of Protected Areas (RUNAP) or the Single Registry of Ecosystems and Environmental Areas (REAA);
 - (g) the certification exported by the SIAC (<http://www.siac.gov.co/runap> and <http://www.siac.gov.co/reaa>).
- IV. If applicable, the GHG mitigation Initiative holder shall consider assessing risks and impacts on water resources in the watersheds in the Project's area. The water resource impact assessment should consider:

- (a) precipitation regimes;
- (b) basin and water bodies around influence;
- (c) affecting the quality of surface and groundwater bodies; and
- (d) affecting the availability of the resource to populations and ecosystems around the influence area.

The Initiative holder shall contemplate water resource management plans, promote resource conservation, and consider alternatives for efficient use, such as reducing freshwater consumption, reuse of water, and treatment before final disposal.

V. GHG mitigation Initiatives shall comply with applicable national regulations on water resource management, including:

- (a) Guide for the efficient use and saving of water, Ministry of the Environment and Sustainable Development, 2018;
- (b) Resolution 0883 of 2018. Which establishes the parameters and maximum permissible limit values for specific discharges into marine water bodies and other provisions;
- (c) Resolution 631 of 2015. This resolution establishes the parameters and maximum permissible limits for specific discharges into surface water bodies and public sewerage systems, as well as other provisions;
- (d) Resolution 1207 of 2014 Adopting provisions related to the use of treated wastewater.

VI. In the case of activities in the AFOLU sector, in compliance with current regulations, the GHG mitigation Initiative holder shall demonstrate, providing the necessary evidence, that the crop is under the register of the Colombian Agricultural Institute (ICA) and that:

- (a) has permanent technical assistance;
- (b) follows a phytosanitary management plan for the harvest;
- (c) uses inputs registered with the ICA;
- (d) implements the management and technical control of official control pests, following the phytosanitary measures established by the Institute in Resolution No. 4170 of December 2, 2014.

Finally, voluntary GHG mitigation Initiative holders with oil palm crops shall dedicate 20% of the gross income from the sale of Verified Carbon Credits to watershed conservation and management actions. In turn, the activities proposed to comply with this requirement shall be included in the project document and contemplated in the monitoring plan.

11 Grouped projects

Projects may be in the developing framework of grouped projects. Grouped projects are those projects in which the addition of new areas (in the case of projects in the AFOLU sector) and instances (in the other industries) is allowed mitigation Initiative after the GHG mitigation Initiative's validation. That is, projects can expand without the need for a new validation of the project description. These projects shall comply with the conditions for bundling described below.

11.1.1 Activities in the AFOLU sector

Activities classified as GHG removal activities and REDD+ projects may add areas to the Project (after validation). To do so, the mitigation Initiative holder shall:

- (a) identify the expansion area of the Project during the validation process and define the criteria for the addition of the new regions;
- (b) comply with the guidelines of the Certification and Registration Program for GHG Mitigation Initiatives and other Greenhouse Gas Projects, in its most recent version;
- (c) comply with all the provisions of the PROCLIMA methodological documents that apply in their latest release;
- (d) include emission reductions or removals only for validated project activities;
- (e) implement the GHG emission reduction or removal activities described in the validated project document;
- (f) demonstrate that baseline scenario, land tenure, and additionality considerations are consistent and valid for the new areas;
- (g) provide evidence of the start date of activities in the new regions, demonstrating that this date is later than the date of commencement of GHG removal activities in the areas included in the validation;

- (h) in the case of REDD+ projects, further, demonstrate that the causes and drivers of deforestation/degradation and the reference scenario are consistent with the validated characteristics for the primary project areas;
- (i) Similarly, for REDD+ projects, considering that in some cases, the leakage belt may overlap with the validated expansion area, the Initiative holder shall update the leakage belt to include potential displacement of deforestation by the implementation of the REDD+ project activities.

11.1.2 Activities in the energy, transportation, and waste sectors

Similarly, GHG mitigation Initiative holders that involve activities in those sectors may develop grouped projects. To this end, they shall meet the following requirements:

- (a) identify, during the validation process, the geographical area(s) within which (initial³⁰ and additional) instances of the Project are developed and define the criteria for the addition of new cases;
- (b) comply with the guidelines for the certification and registration program for GHG mitigation Initiatives and other greenhouse gas projects, in their most recent version;
- (c) comply with all the provisions of the PROCLIMA methodological documents they apply, in their latest release;
- (d) include emission reductions only for validated project activities;
- (e) implement the GHG emission reduction activities described in the validated project document;
- (f) demonstrate that the new instances meet the conditions of applicability described in the methodology applied;
- (g) demonstrate that geographic areas (to be included in project boundaries) in which there are no initial instances are subject to the same baseline scenario conditions and additionality as the areas in which are the initial instances;
- (h) provide evidence of the start date of activities in the new instances, demonstrating that this date is later than the start date of the GHG emission reduction activities in the cases included in the validation (initial instances);

³⁰ The initial instances are those included in the project description during validation.

- (i) determine the baseline scenario and demonstrate additionality based on the initial instances of the Project;
- (j) confirm that each instance complies with all methodology applied provisions, including the capacity limits set out in the methods and carbon standards applicable to the project type.

The PROCLIMA methodological documents can also provide additional specifications for grouped projects.

12 Participation in the voluntary market and in the regulated market

The GHG mitigation Initiatives that intend to register in the PROCLIMA registration system may jointly include activities eligible for the voluntary market and the regulated market, as long as they comply with all the provisions of PROCLIMA for each of these options.

13 Validation and verification

Voluntary Initiative holders shall ensure that their validation and verification processes are carried out by a body independent of the GHG certification program or carbon standard. They shall confirm that the VVB meets all accreditation requirements with the authorities defined in Section 14 of this document.

In cases in which the voluntary GHG mitigation Initiative holder intends to use the Verified Carbon Credits (VCC) in his name, that is, he develops mitigation actions to offset his own emissions, the Initiative holder can present a GHG Declaration that results from an internal audit process (first part), as long as it complies with all the provisions of the ISO 19011: 2018³¹ and the other aspects intended in this Standard for validation and verification that apply.

The start of the GHG mitigation Initiative validation process should take place in the moments established in Section 8.2 of this document. Verifications can be annual but shall be carried out every five years at most.

³¹. ISO 19011:2018 (en). Guidelines for auditing management systems. In: <https://www.iso.org/obp/ui#iso:std:iso:19011:ed-3:vi:en>

VVBs are responsible for conducting an objective assessment and issuing a validation or verification statement concerning the information submitted to them by the mitigation Initiative holder and other criteria defined by this Program.

The scope of validation, and when applicable, of verification, shall include the following:

- (a) the boundaries or scenarios of the GHG Project and its baseline scenarios;
- (b) physical infrastructure, activities, technologies, and processes of the GHG organization or Project;
- (c) GHG sources sink as also when applicable to reservoirs;
- (d) types of GHGs;
- (e) areas or instances of the Project if it is a grouped project;
- (f) periods;
- (g) evaluation of co-benefits;
- (h) indicators related to DSGs;
- (i) the monitoring plan.

The VVB should examine the data and information on GHGs, to develop evidence to evaluate the Project's GHG statement. This review should follow a sampling plan.

The VVB shall confirm whether the GHG voluntary mitigation Initiative meets the validation or verification criteria defined by this Program.

When assessing the material discrepancy, the VVB should (or who acts as the first party auditor)³² should consider the principles of the standards (ISO or those that apply) or the PROCLIMA Program.

Validation and verification of grouped projects shall include analysis of the Project's conformity with bundled projects' requirements under this Program.

13.1 Validation

Validation is a systematic, independent, and documented process. This process assesses a GHG mitigation Initiative and baseline against defined criteria to verify that it meets the

³² Hereafter, when reference is made to the VVB, if applicable and omitted, this also includes the first party auditor.

requirements specified current regulations, as stipulated by the PROCLIMA Program and this Standard.

When GHG mitigation Initiative holders request validation of the initiative, they shall submit a GHG declaration to the VVB. They shall provide all information required by the VVB to carry out the validation process.

The validation and verification body, contracted by the GHG mitigation Initiative holder, shall evaluate the documentation and information related to the design of the initiative and shall determine whether the Initiative holder complies with all the provisions of this Standard and the others that apply to it, examining, among other aspects, the following;

- (a) GHG mitigation goals and results;
- (b) the adequate use of an appropriate methodology;
- (c) the assessment of uncertainty and conservative approach;
- (d) the baseline scenario and reference levels;
- (e) compliance with the additionality criteria of the GHG initiative or Project;
- (f) ownership and rights over carbon;
- (g) assessment of environmental and social aspects;
- (h) criteria and indicators relating to co-benefits;
- (i) Project's contribution to sustainable development goals;
- (j) stakeholder's consultation;
- (k) compliance with national legislation;
- (l) Design a monitoring plan for quantification and monitoring of GHG emission reductions or removals under the selected methodology.

Similarly, the VVB shall do the validation process under guidelines established by the GHG mitigation mechanisms or the ISO 14064-3 standard.

Once it ends the information assessing and carried out all necessary procedures, the VVB shall inform the Initiative holders of its decision to validate the GHG mitigation Initiative or Project. The notification to the Initiative holders should include:

- (a) the confirmation of the validation and the date of submission of the validation report to the Certification Program, or
- (b) an explanation of the reasons for rejection if the mitigation Initiative, judging from the documentation, does not qualify for validation

If the VVB determines that the GHG mitigation Initiative meets all certification requirements, it shall submit a validation report's registration request. That report shall include the project document and project design documentation, either the quantification of GHG emission reductions or removals and, where appropriate, the conclusion on co-benefits and compliance with the indicators defined by the Initiative holders concerning the ODSs.

13.2 Verification

Verification is the systematic, independent, and documented process for assessing the GHG Declaration against the verification criteria.

As per the provisions of ISO 14064-3, the VVB (or who acts as the first party auditor) should consider the following:

- (a) conformity with applicable verification criteria, including the principles and requirements of relevant GHG standards or programs in the scope of verification;
- (b) information and documentation on GHG project planning, including procedures and criteria for the Project, baseline, quality control and assurance, risk management, monitoring, and reporting;
- (c) any significant changes, since the last reporting period or its validation, in the methods or principles of the GHG Project;
- (d) emissions, removals, emission reductions, and removal enhancements reported in the baseline and the GHG Project;
- (e) any significant changes in GHG emissions removals, emission reductions, and removal improvements since the last reporting period or since the Project's validation.

13.3 Other considerations for validation and verification

In all cases, the VVB³³ shall consider the following criteria for the validation and verification of voluntary GHG mitigation Initiatives:

- (a) The level of assurance of the validation and verification of the voluntary GHG mitigation Initiative should not be less than 95%;
- (b) The material discrepancy in the data supporting the voluntary GHG mitigation Initiative baseline and the estimate of GHG emission reductions or removals may be up to $\pm 5\%$;
- (c) The voluntary GHG mitigation Initiative baseline shall be consistent with the methodology applied, as appropriate;
- (d) The quantification of mitigation results against the validated baseline shall follow the provisions of the used methodology, as appropriate;
- (e) It includes co-benefits and sustainable development objectives evaluation.

13.4 Validation or verification statement

Once validation or verification is complete, the VVB shall issue the corresponding declaration, which shall comply with the following:

- (a) addresses the intended users of the GHG declaration;
- (b) describes the level of assurance of the validation or verification statement;
- (c) describes the objectives, scope, and criteria for validation or verification;
- (d) explains whether the data and information supporting the GHG declaration are hypothetical, projected as also when applicable to historical;
- (e) is accompanied by the GHG statement made by the responsible party;
- (f) includes the VVB's conclusion on the GHG declaration, including any qualifications or limitations;
- (g) adds conclusions on criteria and indicators related to co-benefits, and;

³³ Or the first part auditor

- (h) includes a judgment on the Project's contribution to sustainable development objectives.

14 Validation and verification bodies

Mitigation Initiatives should be subject to validation and verification processes by an independent third party to ensure that they employ methodologies for quantifying GHG emissions reductions or removals that are verifiable within the framework of ISO 14064-3.

The GHG Validation and Verification Body (VVB) shall be accredited by:

- (a) an accreditation body that is a signatory member of the International Accreditation Forum (IAF) that has in its portfolio GHG Emissions Verification Body accreditation program under the requirements of ISO 14065; or,
- (b) the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) or whoever acts in its stead, under the requirements of the UNFCCC for Designated Operational Entity (DOE), as appropriate.

Validation and verification bodies shall demonstrate the following:

- (a) the scope of their certification includes the GHG mitigation activities subject to the validation and verification process;
- (b) it has enough professionals who demonstrate the necessary ethical conduct to perform all the functions required for validation and verification;
- (c) the designated auditors in charge of validations and verifications have experience in the sector and type of the Project;
- (d) has documented internal procedures for the performance of its function. Its function's methods include allocation of responsibilities within the organization;
- (e) has the appropriate competence to perform the tasks specified in the legislation in force and the provisions described in this Standard;
- (f) ensures the necessary expertise on environmental issues relevant to the verification of GHG mitigation Initiatives and quality assurance in a conformity assessment;
- (g) has knowledge of the technical aspects of GHG mitigation Initiatives and methodologies for quantification and monitoring of GHG emission reductions and

removals, including competence to assess baselines and national reference levels, as well as maximum mitigation potentials;

(h) has procedures for handling complaints, appeals, and disputes.

Furthermore, VVBs shall work in an independent, reliable, non-discriminatory, and transparent manner, respecting applicable national legislation and complying with the following requirements;

- (a) have a documented structure, which protects its integrity, with provisions to ensure the impartiality of its operations
- (b) have appropriate arrangements to safeguard the confidentiality of information obtained from GHG mitigation Initiative holders;
- (c) demonstrate that they have no actual or potential conflict of interest with the operators of the GHG mitigation Initiatives for whose validation or verification they carry out;
- (d) make available to ProClima, upon request, information obtained from GHG mitigation Initiative holders. Information classified as confidential shall not be disclosed without the written consent of the provider unless required by national legislation;
- (e) provides data used to determine additionality, as defined in this Program, to select baselines, reference levels, and maximum mitigation potentials, and its use shall not be considered confidential.

VVBs shall issue a verification statement, indicating that the GHG emission reductions or removals were generated following the guidelines defined in ISO 14064-2 and the results obtained in the verification carried out under ISO14064-3 or those that adjust and update them.

14.1 Certification and Registration of Verified Carbon Credits (VCC)

Once the VVB has completed the validation process, it shall submit de validation statement. This statement is a formal written statement issued by the program manager resulting from the Program's certification process.

Verification process completed, VVB shall submit the verification statement, ensuring that, during a specified period, the GHG Project has achieved the GHG performance. That means GHG emissions, GHG emission reductions, and GHG emissions removal increases, as declared by the Initiative holder.

Only carbon credits that a VVB has previously verified shall be certified. The credits shall advance the process of validation and subsequent verification or confirmatory verification, following the guidelines established for this purpose by the GHG mitigation mechanisms, the ISO 14064-3 Standard, or that which adjusts or updates them, as well as with the definitions PROCLIMA Program.

The registry includes the issuance of Verified Carbon Credits from a validated and verified project.

The VVB shall carry out the verification under the provisions of the PROCLIMA Validation and Verification Manual. The Verification Statement shall include a justification of the conformity of the GHG mitigation Initiative's validation, ensuring that it complies with PROCLIMA regulations.

15 Registration platform

PROCLIMA has a public registry that allows for the certification and assignment of a unique serial of verified GHG emission reductions or removals.

To carry out registration in the PROCLIMA system, the voluntary GHG mitigation Initiative holder shall provide the following documentation:

- (a) information about the Project and the holder of the initiative;
- (b) GHG Registration Authorization;
- (c) project Description Document;
- (d) report and validation declaration;
- (e) monitoring report;
- (f) report and verification declaration;
- (g) other documents, if required.

Only the Initiative holder, or whoever is authorized by the holder to carry out the procedures required for this purpose, can apply for registration of mitigation Initiatives.

Registration can be requested once the validation process has concluded. The Initiative holder can carry out the validation and the first verification of the Project simultaneously. In this case, the VVB shall issue a single validation and verification report; however, they shall issue their respective declarations separately, meaning validation and verification.

Projects applying for registration under the PROCLIMA Program cannot be in any other register system in Colombia.

Projects participating in other international GHG registration programs may apply for registration under the PROCLIMA Program, provided they meet the conditions established by this Standard.

16 Public information

The information in the registry system of PROCLIMA is public except for the one classified as reserved under Article 24 of the Code of Administrative Procedure and Administrative Litigation, or that which modifies or replaces it.

ANEXO A. GLOSSARY OF TERMS³⁴

Additionality

It is the characteristic that allows demonstrating that the reductions of GHG emissions or removals derived from implementing a GHG mitigation Initiative generate a net benefit to the atmosphere in terms of reduced or removed GHG emissions.

Agriculture, Forestry and Other Land Use (AFOLU)

The sector comprises either greenhouse gas emissions or removals attributable to project activities in the agriculture, forestry, and other land uses sectors.

Agroforestry culture

Areas occupied by arrangements or combinations of crops of different species, with others of herbaceous, shrub, or tree habits, where the main characteristic of the coverage is that the increase in detail does not imply the subdivision into pure units because these shares the same area, alternated by furrows or rows of trees with crops or trees with grasses.

Agricultural territories

Agricultural territories are those lands dedicated mainly to the production of food, fiber, and other industrial raw materials, whether they are useful or not for cultivation, grazing, rotation, rest, or as fallow. It includes areas devoted to permanent and temporary crops, pasture areas, and different agricultural zones, where livestock can also share it with agriculture.

Assurance level

It is the level of detail that the Validation and Verification Body (VVB) uses to determine whether there are errors, omissions, underestimate, overestimates, or misinterpretations in the validation or verification process.

Baseline

The scenario represents the GHG emissions that would occur in the absence of a GHG mitigation Initiative.

³⁴ Some terms and definitions not found in this glossary are contained in the Program's methodological documents

Carbon content

The carbon content refers to the carbon content's weight to the total weight of the fuel molecule. All fossil fuels are composed chemically of links between carbon and hydrogen molecules mainly. During combustion, these bonds are broken, therefore, generating CO₂ and water molecules principally. Hence, there is a direct relationship between the carbon content and the amount of CO₂ emitted by combustion, and the carbon fraction is the way to quantify it.

Carbon credits

Greenhouse gas reductions and removals. They can be traded to mitigate GHG emissions generated by anthropogenic activity. A carbon credit is equivalent to one metric ton of CO_{2e}, which has been verified by a VVB, based on the rules and procedures defined for it, and which has a unique serial code granted by PROCLIMA.

Carbon dioxide (CO₂)

It is gas produced naturally as a by-product of fossil fuel combustion, biomass, land-use changes, and other industrial processes. It is the principal anthropogenic greenhouse gas affecting the radiation balance of the planet. It is the reference gas against other measurable GHGs and therefore has a global warming potential of 1.

Carbon dioxide equivalent (CO_{2e})

It is the unit of measurement that compares the global warming potential of each GHG with carbon dioxide.

Carbon fraction

For the AFOLU sector projects, those are the tons of carbon per ton of dry biomass.

Carbon pools

These are the compartments where the carbon of the continental ecosystems and their products are stored. These are aerial and underground biomass, dead organic matter including detritus and dead wood, the organic carbon in the soil, and harvested products from the forest.

Clean Development Mechanism (CDM)

Article 12 of the Kyoto Protocol defines the clean development mechanism: *"The purpose of the clean development mechanism is to assist Parties¹ not included in Annex I in achieving sustainable development and in contributing to the ultimate objective of the Convention, and to assist Parties included in Annex I in achieving compliance with their quantified emission limitation and reduction commitments under Article 3"*.

Crops and planted trees

Those correspond to the coverage occupied by spatial arrangements where crops coexist with tree plantations for all types of production (wood, firewood, fruit trees, resins.); where the main characteristic of the coverage is that the increase in detail does not imply the subdivision into pure units, because these shares the area, alternated by furrows or rows of trees with crops.

Forestry plantation

They are covers constituted by plantations of arboreal vegetation, made by the man's direct intervention towards forest management. Forest stands usually start by planting seeds during the forestation or reforestation to produce wood (commercial plantations) or environmental goods and services (protective plantations).

GHG emission

Correspond to the total mass of a greenhouse gas released into the atmosphere in each period.

GHG emission or removal factor

It is a factor that relates the activity data with GHG emissions or removals.

GHG emissions reduction

It is the calculated decrease in GHG emissions. This decrease is calculated from the difference between a baseline or reference level scenario and net emissions within the Project boundary.

GHG inventory

Correspond to the GHG sources, sinks, emissions, and removals of an organization, Project, entity, or country.

GHG mitigation

According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, mitigation is a human-made intervention to reduce the sources or enhance the sinks of greenhouse gases defined as natural or human-made carbon reservoirs, reducing the amount of CO₂ in the atmosphere.

GHG mitigation results

These are quantifiable GHG emissions reductions and removals generated by the implementation of a GHG mitigation Initiative.

GHG removal

It is the mass of GHGs removed from the atmosphere.

GHG removal activities

These are GHG mitigation actions, in the AFOLU sector, based on agricultural and forestry activities such as silvopastoral systems (grasses and planted trees), agroforestry systems (agroforestry crops), commercial plantations (forest plantations), and other landscape management tools. Oil palm crops are a GHG mitigation action if palms grow and occupied areas other than natural forest or natural vegetation cover other than forest.³⁵

GHG removal forestry activities can also include actions leading to the restoration of degraded ecosystems, such as (a) ecological restoration, (b) environmental rehabilitation, and (c) environmental recovery.

GHG statement

The controlled document, issued by the person in charge of the mitigation Initiative to communicate the information related to the carbon credits, verified and certified.

Greenhouse Gases (GHG)

A gaseous component of the atmosphere, both natural and anthropogenic, absorbs and emits radiation at specific wavelengths within the spectrum of infrared radiation emitted by the Earth's surface, atmosphere, and clouds. Some of the GHGs are carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane (CH₄), nitrous oxide (N₂O), hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), perfluorocarbons (PFCs), and Sulphur hexafluoride (SF₆), as defined by the UNFCCC.

Grouped Project

Grouped projects are those projects in which the addition of new areas (in the case of projects in the AFOLU sector) and instances (in the other industries) is allowed mitigation Initiative after the GHG mitigation Initiative's validation. That is, projects that can expand without the need for a new validation of the project description. These projects shall comply with the grouping conditions defined by PROCLIMA.

Voluntary GHG mitigation Initiative holder

It is the natural or legal person, public or private, responsible for the formulation, implementation, monitoring, and registration of a voluntary GHG mitigation Initiative.

³⁵ The names in parentheses correspond to the definitions contained in CORINE Land Cover adapted for Colombia

Intended user

Individual or organization that relies on that information to make decisions. They are identified by those reporting GHG-related information.

Landscape management tools (LMT)

Landscape management tools are landscape elements that constitute or enhance habitat, increase functional connectivity, or simultaneously fulfill these functions for native biodiversity. Landscape management tools may include biological and conservation corridors and living fences.

Corridors (biological and conservation) are landscape management tools that encourage movement and genetic exchange between local populations spatially isolated because of habitat fragmentation and loss. They can be established from natural routes of dispersion and migration, such as watersheds, or formed through restoration strategies over open areas. Biological corridors can be remnant when the connection between preserved or restored forest patches when they are re-established.

Live fences are crucial for increasing structural connectivity, resource provisioning, and reducing fence maintenance costs. Living fences seek to generate the most extensive and most efficient possible connections of forest fragments, such as in strongly limited areas, without altering existing productive activities on a large scale. Living fences reduce pressure on forests by decreasing the demand for fancy figured woods.

Leakages

Those are the potential emissions that would occur outside the project boundaries due to the GHG mitigation Initiative's activities. Leakage means the net change in anthropogenic emissions by sources of greenhouse gases (GHGs) outside the project boundary and is measurable and attributable to the project activity.

Material Discrepancy

These are individual errors or groups of errors, omissions, or distortions in the quantification of GHGs in the framework of mitigation Initiatives.

Natural Forest

The land occupied mainly by trees that may contain shrubs, palms, guadua, herbs, and lianas, in which tree cover predominates with a minimum canopy density of 30%, a minimum canopy height (in situ) of 5 m at the time of identification, and a minimum area of 1.0 ha. Tree cover of commercial forest plantations, oil palm crops, and trees planted for agricultural production is not under the Natural Forest category.

Oil palm crop

According to the definition of CORINE Land Cover, adapted for Colombia, the palm crop is the cover composed of oil palm (*Elaeis guineensis* Jacq.), a perennial plant with a solitary trunk and pinnate leaves belonging to the Arecaceae family, which can reach heights of up to 12 m. This category includes other species of oil palms used in Colombia.

Planted trees and grasses

It is the coverage occupied by spatial arrangements where pastures, destined for livestock, grow together with tree plantations destined for all types of production (wood, firewood, fruit trees, resins, and others.). It is the so-called silvopastoral system. This coverage's main characteristic is that the increase in detail does not imply the subdivision into pure units because these shares the same area alternating by furrows or rows of trees with pastures.

Permanence

It is the longevity of a carbon deposit and its stability, considering the handling and altering the environment where it occurs.

Quantification periods

The quantification period for reductions attributable to GHG mitigation Initiatives is when the initiative operator quantifies the GHG emission reductions or removals measured against the baseline or reference scenario to apply to the certification program to issue Verified Carbon Credits (VCC).

The date selected by the Initiative holders as the start of the quantification period shall be later than or equal to when the initiative generates the first GHG emission reductions or removals. Quantification periods shall not exceed the operational period of the Project.

REDD+

It is an international mitigation mechanism framed in the decisions of the CMNUCC, whose objective is to reduce emissions and remove GHGs through the implementation of activities to reduce emissions from deforestation, forest degradation, and other forestry activities.

REDD+ Activities

These are GHG mitigation actions that lead to the removal or reduction of GHG emissions from deforestation and degradation of natural forests, namely:

- (a) Reducing emissions from deforestation;

- (b) Reducing emissions from forest degradation;
- (c) Conservation of forest carbon stocks;
- (d) Sustainable management of forest; and
- (e) Enhancement of forest carbon stocks

Reference scenario for GHG emissions

It is a type of baseline representing GHG emissions measured in tons of CO_{2e} that would occur in the absence of policies, plans, strategies, or initiatives for GHG mitigation in the time frame in which climate change goals or commitments are made. A baseline shall be considered to reasonably represent the anthropogenic emissions by sources that would occur in the absence of the proposed project activity when established using the baseline methodology approved by the Standard.

Registration

Registration is the official acceptance by the head of the Certification and Registration Program of a validated initiative. Registration is a prerequisite for certification and issuance of CCV.

Relative importance (or materiality)

A concept that individual errors or a transaction of errors, omissions, and distortions could affect GHG declarations and influence the intended user's decisions.

Responsible party

Person or persons are responsible for providing the GHG declaration and supporting GHG information.

Note: The responsible party may be individuals or representatives of an organization or Project and maybe the party that hires the validator or verifier. The validator or verifier may be contracted by the client or other parties, such as the GHG program manager.

Restoration

According to the National Plan for Ecological Restoration (MADS, 2015)⁴⁷, restoration is an interdisciplinary strategy, which articulates scientific knowledge to respond to management processes and ecosystem management to the needs of restoring degraded ecosystems and prevent future damage.

The restoration includes interventions such as (a) ecological restoration, (b) environmental rehabilitation, and (c) environmental recovery.

Ecological restoration consists of restoring the degraded ecosystem to a condition like the pre-disturbance ecosystem concerning its composition, structure, and functioning. Besides, the resulting ecosystem must be a self-sustaining system and guarantee species conservation, the ecosystem in general, and most of its goods and services.

Ecological rehabilitation aims to bring the degraded system to a system similar or not to the pre-disturbance system, which shall be self-sustaining, preserve some species, and provide some ecosystemic services.

Ecological recovery aims to recover some ecosystemic services of social interest. Generally, the resulting ecosystems are not self-sustaining and do not resemble the pre-disturbance system.

Source, sink, or reservoir of related GHG

It is a source, sink, or reservoir of GHGs with energy or material flows into, out of, or within the Project boundary.

Stakeholders

Stakeholders mean the group of persons, groups, or communities affected, or potentially affected, by the project activity or by the actions before implementing that activity.

Start date

The start date for GHG mitigation Initiatives is when activities that result in actual reductions/removals of GHG emissions begin. That is when the implementation, construction, or real action of a GHG initiative begins.

For GHG removals activities, this starting date corresponds to the time on which site preparation, the establishment of planting/cultivation, the commencement of restoration activities, or other actions related to the start of mitigation Initiative activities begin.

For REDD+ projects, the start date is when the activities proposed by the Project to demonstrate reduced emissions from deforestation and forest degradation begin. It may be, for example, the start of forest management strategies as also when applicable to forest resource conservation plans. In other words, concrete actions to reduce deforestation.

Voluntary GHG Initiative holders may only certify and register, within the PROCLIMA Program, initiatives whose starting date is after December 31, 2010.

Transparent and prudent

Establishing a baseline transparently and prudently means that assumptions are explicit, and decisions are informed. In the case of uncertainties about the values of variables and

parameters, establishing a baseline is prudent if the resulting baseline projection does not lead to an overestimation of the emission reductions attributable to a GHG mitigation Initiative. In case of doubt, use the values that generate a lower baseline projection.

Uncertainty

It is the parameter associated with the quantification that characterizes the dispersion of values reasonably attributed to the quantified quantity. Uncertainty information generally specifies quantitative estimates of the likely distribution of values and a qualitative description of the dispersion's probable causes.

Validation

It is a systematic, independent, and documented process for evaluating a greenhouse gas assertion in a GHG project plan against agreed validation criteria.

Process for evaluating the reasonableness of the assumptions, limitations, and methods that support a statement about the outcome of future activities (ISO14064-2:2019(en)).

Validation and verification body (VVB)

They are independent entities that carry out validation and verification processes of the GHG mitigation Initiatives. The VVB is responsible for conducting an objective assessment and issuing a validation or verification statement concerning the information that the mitigation Initiative holder submits to it. The VVB shall assess criteria defined by the GHG Certification Programs or carbon standards and the National Government.

Validation and verification criteria

Policy, procedure, or requirement used as a comparison reference against the evidence.

Validation or verification statement

A formal written declaration addressed to the intended user, which assures the statements made in the responsible party's GHG manifesto.

Verification

It is the systematic, independent, and documented process for evaluating a GHG declaration against agreed verification criteria.

Process for evaluating a statement of historical data and information to determine if the statement is materially correct and conforms to criteria.

Voluntary GHG mitigation Initiative

These are actions or activities whose purpose is to reduce or avoid GHG emissions. The voluntary Projects include the AFOLU (GHG removals and REDD+ activities) and the energy, transportation, and waste sectors.

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