

The BIOCARBON WATER STANDARD (BWS) was created in response to the urgent need to conserve and sustainably manage one of the planet's most threatened resources: water. In light of growing pressure on watersheds, aquifers, and aquatic ecosystems, BioCarbon has designed an innovative program that transforms water-related actions into verifiable and quantifiable environmental assets, contributing to water security and long-term environmental and social resilience.

This program establishes a robust, technically sound, and financially viable framework for certifying projects that enhance water quality, availability, and efficient use. Through this approach, BioCarbon promotes a conservation model with measurable impact, social benefits, and financing mechanisms based on Verified Water Credits (VWCs), aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals and global agendas related to the sustainable management of water resources.

The BioCarbon Water Standard was released for public consultation on March 24, 2025, with the objective of ensuring transparency, fostering stakeholder participation, and strengthening the technical and environmental integrity of the program. The consultation process was open to a broad range of stakeholders, including technical experts, project developers, public institutions, Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities, Conformity Assessment Bodies, and environmental organizations.

This document presents a synthesis of the feedback received during the consultation period, as well as the main adjustments and improvements made to the Water Standard in response to the comments. The contributions received have been instrumental in enhancing the clarity, applicability, and robustness of the standard, ensuring its alignment with international best practices and its relevance for projects in diverse geographical and institutional contexts.

We extend our sincere thanks to Mr. Phetpasak for the time dedicated to reviewing the BIOCARBON WATER STANDARD, and for his interest in our programs. His thoughtful suggestions and thorough evaluation were highly valuable to this process and have contributed meaningfully to the continuous improvement of our standard.

As a result of the public consultation process, Version 1.0 of the document is now presented. Annex A (below) includes the comments, observations, and suggestions received, along with the corresponding clarifications or adjustments made as part of this process.

ANNX A. BWS Public Consultation

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Date File received by email on April 22, 2025

Nº	Reference (Section and page in the document)	Comment, Observation, or Suggestion	Clarification / Adjustment
1	Section 9: Eligible activities, page 11-17	The eligible activities emphasize the sustainable management and conservation of water resources, primarily targeting water quality and quantity as key outcomes. However, I suggest broadening the scope to inclusively address aquatic biodiversity, for example, fish species conservation and the sustainable management of sand and other minerals, which are integral components of water resources. Additionally, highlighting the interconnection between sustainable water resource management and nature-positive agricultural practices as income-generating activities could significantly enhance the long-term sustainability of water resources. Therefore, I propose incorporating these activities into Section 9.	<p>The BWS acknowledges the close interdependence between water resources, aquatic biodiversity, and productive landscapes.</p> <p>While the eligible activities defined in Section 9 primarily focus on improving water quality and quantity, the conservation of aquatic biodiversity is embedded as a key co-benefit of the standard.</p> <p>Specifically, Subsection 9.2.1 (Conservation and Restoration of Aquatic Ecosystems) includes activities such as the restoration of degraded wetlands and watersheds, the protection of water sources, and the recovery of riparian vegetation, all of which directly enhance habitats for aquatic species, including fish. These interventions strengthen ecological</p>

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			<p>integrity and support the sustainability of hydrological systems.</p> <p>Additionally, the standard already promotes the integration of sustainable water resource management with nature-positive productive systems. Section 9.1 includes practices such as regenerative grazing, agroforestry, and conservation agriculture, which optimize water use, enhance ecosystem functionality, and create economic opportunities for local communities.</p> <p>The new version of the document contains an adjusted introductory text of Section 9 to more explicitly reflect these synergies between water conservation, biodiversity, and sustainable livelihoods.</p>
2	Section 9.2.2 Conservation and restoration of vegetative cover	This section links to NbS. I suggest adding other activities such as riverbank restoration, Fish Conservation Zones/Areas, wetland conservation and restoration	<p>Section 9.2.2 of the BWS indeed emphasizes the role of nature-based solutions (NbS) in conserving and restoring vegetative cover as a means to improve water regulation, prevent erosion, and enhance ecosystem services.</p> <p>We agree that activities such as riverbank restoration, Fish Conservation Zones (FCZs), and wetland conservation and restoration are highly relevant and complementary to the existing list. However, it is important to clarify that riverbank restoration and wetland conservation are already covered under</p>

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			<p>Section 9.2.1 (Conservation and Restoration of Aquatic Ecosystems), including interventions aimed at rehabilitating riparian buffers, protecting aquatic habitats, and restoring hydrological functions.</p> <p>Regarding Fish Conservation Zones or Areas, while the BWS does not currently use this terminology, the ecological objectives behind FCZs (such as the protection of fish habitats, spawning grounds, and ecosystem connectivity) are addressed indirectly through the restoration and protection measures included in both Sections 9.2.1 and 9.2.2.</p> <p>That said, we will ensure that these linkages are made more explicit in the revised text to acknowledge their importance in integrated water and biodiversity conservation strategies.</p>
3	Section 12 Certification process and Section 13 Certification bodies, page 31-33	<p>Although the certification process and criteria established for certification bodies are well-defined, there remains ambiguity regarding the availability of standardized tools for certification assessment and the responsibility for bearing the associated costs. These aspects should be clearly outlined.</p> <p>Take, for instance, the Hydropower Sustainable Assessment Protocol. While its primary objective is to provide guidance on assessing sustainable practices in hydropower</p>	<p>The BWS establishes a rigorous yet accessible certification process through independent Certification Bodies (CBs).</p> <p>To address your suggestion, BioCarbon is developing a set of standardized tools to support assessments, reduce subjectivity, and help control the process. These will include templates, methodologies, checklists, and technical guidance, available free of charge to program users.</p>

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		construction and operation, its design necessitates highly technical and accredited assessors. This requirement inadvertently undermines its purpose, as the cost of hiring such assessment teams is prohibitively high. Consequently, hydropower investors and developers often bypass this process.	While certification costs are the responsibility of the project holder, BioCarbon does not charge for the use of its tools or methodologies and requires CBs to maintain transparent fee structures.