

# GOLD STANDARD FOR THE GLOBAL GOALS

## PROGRAMME OF ACTIVITY REQUIREMENTS

Version ~~1.1~~ **2**

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## GOLD STANDARD FOUNDATION VISION & MISSION

**OUR VISION:** Climate security and sustainable development for all.

**OUR MISSION:** To catalyse more ambitious climate action to achieve the Global Goals through robust standards and verified impacts.

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## **1. SCOPE AND PROGRAMME OF ACTIVITY (PoA) ELIGIBILITY/APPLICABILITY**

1.1.1 The Programme of Activity (PoA) requirements provide the minimum requirements for designing and implementing a programme of activities (PoA) and seeking issuance of Gold Standard Certified Impact Statements or Products.

~~1.1.1.2~~ 1.1.1.2 Where a group of All Voluntary Project Activities (VPAs) or / Component Project Activities (CPAs) project activities is submitted for Gold Standard Design Certification within a PoA, each of these activities must be in compliance with relevant Gold Standard eligibility criteria (for example in the Gold Standard for the Global Goals Principles & Requirements and/or particular applicable Activity Requirements).

1.1.3 These Requirements are not applicable to the pProjects following applying the Gold Standard Land Use & Forests Activity Requirements or those applying any Gold Standard Contextual Requirements. ▽

~~1.21.1.4~~ 1.1.1.4 Unless otherwise specified in this document, Gold Standard PoAs follow the requirements listed in the -CDM Project Standard for Programmes of Activities.

## **2. PoA PoA-BOUNDARY**

~~2.12.1.1~~ 2.1.1.1 The The boundary of a PoA boundary is defined as the geographical area (e.g. municipality, region within a country, -country or several countries) within which all CPAs/VPAs included in the PoA will be implemented. All applicable regional and national policies and regulation shall be s are taken into consideration for each Host Country within a that chosen PoA boundary.

~~2.22.1.2~~ 2.1.2 The PoA boundary must be defined in its entirety at the time of Design Certification. The Gold Standard may permit an expansion of the PoA boundary pAost Design Certificationn expansion of the PoA boundary upon review of the documentation submitted can be requested in the context of a formal request for following the a design change approval procedure (refer to see Ssection - 17.0 Design Change Rules for details).

## **3. START DATE, DURATION AND CREDITING PERIOD PoA TIMEFRAME**

### **~~3.1~~ Definition of the PoA and VPA/CPA Certification Period**

3.1.1 The PoA start date for a Gold Standard voluntary PoA is the date when the PoA Design Consultation Report is submitted for Gold Standard Review. This event is the time of first submission of the PoA. The start date for a CDM Gold Standard PoA follows the definition of start date of a CDM PoA.

- 3.1.2 The PoA crediting period start date is the crediting period start date of the earliest VPA/CPA included in the PoA.
- 3.1.3 The PoA duration shall not exceed 20 years or the crediting period of first VPA/CPA plus 5 years, whichever is greater. The PoA that are design certified under an earlier version of Gold Standard shall maintain their maximum crediting periods as envisaged at time of registration. Refer to the Gold Standard for the Global Goals Transition Requirements for further details.
- ~~\_\_\_\_\_ PoA start date is the date when the PoA design consultation report is submitted for Gold Standard review. Start of crediting period of the PoA is the start date when of crediting period of the earliest VPA/CPA is in the PoA.~~
- ~~The duration of the PoA shall not exceed the longer of the Certification Period of the first VPA/CPA plus 5 years or 20 years, whichever is greater. PoA's that are design certified under an earlier version of GS shall also be limited to an overall crediting period of 20 years.~~
- 3.1.4 Unless otherwise stated in a specific Methodology or Product Requirements, the VPA/CPA crediting period start date is either the later of the VPA/CPA Start Date or two years prior to the date of Design Certification – whichever is later. ~~unless otherwise stated in a specific Methodology or Product Requirements. For the VPA/CPA Start date definition, refer to the Project Start Date as defined in the Gold Standard for the Gold Standard for the Global Goals Principles & Requirements.~~ Under no circumstances, the CPA/VPA/CPA crediting period start date can be earlier than the PoA crediting period start date.
- 3.1.5 The crediting period of a VPA/CPA shall not exceed the end of the duration of the PoA, regardless of the VPA/CPA inclusion date or start date.
- 3.1.6 The ~~duration~~ crediting period of a CPA/VPA/CPA shall be selected as per relevant Activity Requirements or in the absence of these, ~~from the the Gold Standard for the Global Goals Principles & Requirements.~~ It shall be defined by the ~~The~~ coordinating/managing entity (hereafter "CME") shall select and specify the crediting period -in the CPA/VPA/CPA Design document (VPA/CPA DD) at the time of inclusion to the PoA ~~of the CPA/VPA.~~
- 3.1.7 A CPA/VPA may be submitted for inclusion to the PoA at any time during the duration of the PoA by the CME.

~~3.1.1 Any CPA/VPA can be submitted for inclusion to the PoA at any time during the duration of the PoA by the coordinating/managing entity (CME):~~

~~The duration of the Crediting Period of any CPA/VPA shall be limited to the end date of the PoA regardless of when the CPA/VPA was included. However, the CPA/VPA stakeholder consultation report shall be submitted to Gold Standard within three months of the event (though this date may be after the VPA/VPA Start Date):~~

The time of time of first submission date for a Gold Standard PoA is defined as the date when the PoA Design Consultation Report is submitted for Gold Standard review.

3.1.8 However, ~~i~~In order for the PoA to be listed under Gold Standard, the PoA document including a Stakeholder Consultation Report shall ~~must~~ be submitted for preliminary review. The PoA can only be listed ~~after~~ once a ~~and~~ preliminary review of approved PoA has been complete ~~and~~ for each one of the ~~its~~ VPAs/CPAs has been submitted with PoA at the time of ~~with~~ the PoA Design Certification for preliminary preliminary review has been completed. In the event that ~~When~~ the Local Stakeholder Consultation is conducted at the Programme level only, the listing will be based on the submission of the Programme level Stakeholder Consultation Report.

~~3.23.1.9~~ Definition of a Regular ~~and~~ /Retroactive CPA/VPA/CPA PoA submission: ~~are defined as~~

- (a) Regular CPA/VPA/CPA ~~—CPA/VPA~~ is the activity for which the Stakeholder Consultation (1<sup>st</sup> round) for which a Stakeholder Consultation has been conducted as per Gold Standard requirements before the Start Date of the VPA/CPA (construction/implementation/real action earliest date of committing to expenditure related to the CPA/VPA) of the activity. The report of the Stakeholder consultation meeting shall be submitted to Gold Standard within three months of the event.
- (b) ~~Retroactive CPA/VPA/CPA~~ is the activity for which a Stakeholder Consultation (1<sup>st</sup> round) CPA/VPA whose start date (earliest date of committing to expenditure related to the CPA/VPA) construction/implementation/real action) has passed although no Stakeholder Consultation has ~~is~~ conducted after the Start Date of the VPA/CPA, taken place as per Gold Standard Stakeholder Consultation & Engagement Procedure, Requirements & Guidelines.
- (a)
- (c) ~~—~~.

### ~~3.3~~ **DESIGN CERTIFICATION AND RETROACTIVE PERFORMANCE CERTIFICATION FOR CDM POAS AND THEIR CPAS**

- i. ~~Retroactive Performance Certification:~~ Some CPAs may be operational before Design Certification of a CDM PoA under The Gold Standard, for example when their PoAs has been already registered for some time with the UNFCCC before being submitted to The Gold Standard. In such a case, CERs generated since the date of Design Certification with the UNFCCC or generated for a maximum a period of up to two years prior to Gold Standard Design Certification, whichever occurs later, can receive Gold Standard labels retroactively.

~~3.2.2 A CPA submitted for Gold Standard inclusion/Design Certification under the retroactive project cycle is potentially eligible to receive Gold Standard labels for CERs generated since the date of inclusion/Registration with the UNFCCC or generated for a maximum of two years prior to Gold Standard Design Certification, whichever occurs later.~~

~~(a) **Design Certification and Retroactive Certification for Voluntary PoAs and their respective VPAs**~~

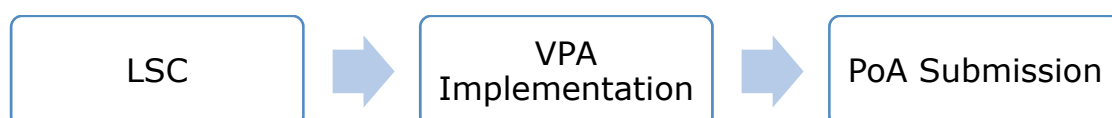
~~ii. **Design Certification**~~

~~**Case 1 — VPAs with start date prior to time of first submission of PoA to Gold Standard**~~

~~PRetroactive VPA(s) with a start date before the time of first submission of the PoA to Gold Standard must undergo a detailed Preliminary Review, a full validation and a Project Design review by Gold Standard in order to be included in the PoA.~~

~~Regular VPA(s) that started implementation before the time of first submission of the PoA to Gold Standard must undergo a full Validation and Design Certification review by The Gold Standard in order to be included in the PoA.~~

~~In both cases, sSpecific attention will be given to the additionality with respect to the early consideration of revenues from GSVERs or other Certified Impact Statements/Products.~~



~~**Case 2 — VPAs with start date after time of first submission of PoA to Gold Standard**~~

~~All subsequent VPAs a the can use the the Completeness Check pathway (Pathway 1) at Preliminary Review but need to ensure that they comply with all inclusion criteria both defined originally in the PoA and in the list of complementary criteria established by the Preliminary Review of the first retroactive VPA. Refer to section 3.4.4 of Gold Standard for the Global Goals Principles & Requirements for further details. The consolidated list of inclusion criteria shall be presented in a revised version of the PoA DD Documentation.~~





~~There are no specific requirements for regular VPA(s) with a start date after the time of first submission of the PoA. Such VPA(s) are included in the registered PoA upon conformity check by a VVB and may be spot checked by Gold Standard~~

~~(a) **Retroactive Performance Certification**~~

~~A VPA submitted for Gold Standard inclusion/Design Certification under the regular/retroactive project cycle is potentially eligible to receive credits for P, old standard, emission reductions generated for a period of up to two years prior to Design Certification. prior to Gold Standard inclusion/Design Certification for a maximum period of two years.~~

## 4. ADDITIONALITY

~~4.1.1 The For PoAs seeking GS Certified Impact Statements or Products— Where a test of **additionality** is required, it ~~must~~**shall** be demonstrated at both the PoA and ~~CPA/VPA/CPA~~ level, **where required**, in line with the ~~Gold Standard for the Global Goals~~ **Principles & Requirements** or relevant Activity Requirements. **The CME may seek exception by providing convincing justifications validated by Gold Standard Validation/Verification Body GS(-VVB) and approved by Gold Standard as to why demonstration of programme level additionality demonstration only is appropriate for proposed PoA.**~~

~~4.1 The CME shall demonstrate additionality of proposed PoA by establishing that Programme level Additionality demonstration is required to ensure that the each VPA/CPA being implemented is credible, and to ensure more confidence in the expected SDG Impacts generated from the Programme.~~

~~4.1.2 A PoA is **Additional** if it can be demonstrated that in the absence of **Gold Standard** Certification related finance (i) the proposed **CPA/voluntary measure****VPA** would not be implemented, or (ii) the mandatory policy/regulation would systematically not be enforced and that non-compliance with those requirements is widespread in the country/region, or (iii) that the PoA will lead to a greater level of enforcement of the existing mandatory policy/regulation or to a greater level of adoption of an existing voluntary scheme.~~

~~4.1.3 VPA/CPA level additionality can be proven using one of the following options in line with the **Principles & Requirements**~~

~~(a) UNFCCC-approved or a Gold Standard-approved **a** **Additionality** tool to demonstrate project additionality, with the exception of specific Activity or Product Requirements as stated in the relevant documentation.~~

- (b) Where appropriate under specific Activity Requirements, small-scale Gold Standard Projects can use the latest version of CDM “Methodological Tool – Demonstration of additionality of small-scale project activities” to demonstrate additionality.

4.1.4 The latest version of the additionality tool available at the time of first submission of PoA shall be applied. This tool may be used by PoA until PoA completes Design Certification. The PoA shall include conditions that would systematically demonstrate additionality of VPAs/CPAs under the proposed PoA in the eligibility/inclusion criteria for inclusion of VPAs/CPAs in the PoA.

~~4.2~~ The latest version of the additionality tool available at the time of first submission to Gold Standard shall be applied. This tool may be used by the Project until the Project completes Design Certification.

## 5. USE OF THE GOLD STANDARD IMPACT REGISTRY

~~5.1~~ 5.1.1 To develop a PoA under Gold Standard, the CME of the PoA shall ~~must~~ have an account in ~~The the~~ Gold Standard Impact Registry. The PoA and its corresponding CPAs/VPAs/CPAs/ will be managed via this CME account as follows:

- (a) The CME of the PoA opens an account in their name in ~~The the~~ Gold Standard Impact Registry;
- (b) PoA entry is created under this account with a unique GS ID. All relevant PoA level documents required at the Design Certification ~~step will~~ shall be uploaded (PoA-DD and associated documentation) to this GS ID;
- (c) An entry per CPA/VPA/CPA is created each with its own unique GS ID, in the CME account or in the Project Developers’ accounts as per the signed -Cover Letter. –All documents relevant to a ~~CPA/VPA/CPA~~ (CPA/VPA/CPA DD, CPA/VPA/CPA Stakeholder Consultation Report) will be uploaded to its registry entry; and
- (d) Each CPA/VPA must be prefixed with the GS ID and title of the POA that it is linked to ~~The name of each CPA/VPA must have a prefix that links it to the relevant PoA.~~

Example: A cookstove PoA in Mongolia comprised of two ~~project~~ activities/VPAs will have the following three entries on ~~The the~~ Impact Registry/Gold Standard Impact Registry:

| GS ID | Project Name                        |
|-------|-------------------------------------|
| GSXXX | GSXXX ABC Cookstove PoA in Mongolia |

|              |   |
|--------------|---|
| <b>GSYYY</b> | GSXXX ABC Cookstove PoA – Choybalsan cookstoves in Mongolia |
| <b>GSZZZ</b> | GSXXX ABC Cookstove PoA – Dzuunmod cookstoves in Mongolia   |

## 6. STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION

~~6.1~~6.1.1 The CME shall conduct the local Stakeholder Consultation Stakeholder consultations must happen at both the PoA level and the CPA/VPA/VPA-CPA level. The CME may seek exception by providing convincing justifications validated by Validation/Verification Body (VVB) and approved by Gold Standard at the PoA Design Certification stage as to why demonstration of programme level stakeholder consultation is sufficient for proposed PoA. ~~(specific consultations)~~ unless convincing justification is provided in the project documentation as to why consultation at the activity level is not necessary, and approval is granted by Gold Standard at the Design Certification stage, following a favourable opinion by the VVB.

~~6.2~~6.1.2 The PoA level consultation i.e., The PoA design-Design Consultation Consultation is mandatory and is conducted to obtain feedback from governments, relevant national authorities, NGO communities, and other stakeholders on the design framework of the PoA. ~~The PoA design is~~ consultation does not necessarily require a live meeting. The CME shall make use of the design consultation template to document this process the PoA Design Consultation.

~~6.3~~6.1.3 In the case of multi-country PoA, the CME ~~needs to~~ shall demonstrate that all relevant stakeholders across the different countries have been invited to provide feedback on the design of the PoA.

6.1.4 Stakeholder consultations at the ~~activity~~ VPA/CPA level must shall comprise of a minimum two rounds of consultation including one mandatory physical meeting and one stakeholder feedback round lasting at least ~~minimum of two months~~ take place in a two-step process, i.e. the Stakeholder Consultation (SC) meeting and the Stakeholder Feedback Round (SFR). Refer to the Stakeholder Consultation and Engagement requirement for details.

~~6.4~~6.1.5 For regular activities VPA/CPA, at least one the live-physical meeting shall be conducted between the CME/PD and the with stakeholders shall be conducted during the first round of consultation ~~ing the SC.~~ ,F and, for retroactive activities VPA/CPA, a live-physical meeting may ~~shall be need to be held at~~ for the stakeholder feedback round SFR if no physical meeting has taken place earlier or depending on the outcome of the detailed preliminary review or a VVB's request in case of Completeness Check pathway (Pathway 1).

~~6.5~~ The SFR shall cover all issues raised in the SC meeting and report on how due account was taken of the stakeholders' comments in the finalisation of the project design and documentation. This information is reviewed at the time of Design Certification or inclusion, as applicable.

~~6.6~~ 6.1.6 A single ~~SC~~ **stakeholder physical** meeting can be organised for several ~~CPA(s)/VPA(s)/CPA(s)~~ as long as convincing justification is provided ~~in the project documentation~~ and approved by ~~The~~ Gold Standard, e.g. the activities are close enough to each other in location and time (start of construction/implementation within the same 2 years), similar socio-economic situations, identical activity or technology, etc. This approach ~~would be~~ **shall be** approved at the time of listing ~~of the activity VPA/CPA~~ i.e. submission of activity level ~~SC stakeholder consultation r~~ **Report**.

6.1.7 In cases where ~~only no activity level consultations are carried out~~ (~~Programme PoA level consultations only is~~ **are being conducted**), a ~~stakeholder physical~~ **SC meeting for stakeholders** is required at the ~~Programme PoA level~~ **in parallel to the design consultation**. The CME shall use the ~~PoA Design Consultation Report template for this process~~ and shall give at least one month notice to stakeholders invited to attend the ~~meetin~~ **The physical meeting shall be followed by g. a** ~~SS~~ **Stakeholder Feedback Round must then also be conducted** at ~~Programme PoA level~~. The CME shall use the ~~PoA Design Consultation Report template for this process~~ and shall give at least one month notice to stakeholders invited to attend the meeting.

~~6.7~~ 6.1.8 The stakeholder consultation report shall be submitted to Gold Standard within three months of the event (though this date may be after the VPA/VPA Start Date).

## 7. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT ~~ITY~~ ASSESSMENT

### (a) Contributions to SDGs

7.1.1 The CME shall conduct the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) impact ~~a~~ **Assessment** at the VPA/CPA equivalent level as per ~~Gold Standard for the Gold Standard for the Global Goals Principles & Requirements~~.

7.1.2 An exception can be granted, if convincing justifications validated by a VVB and approved by Gold Standard ~~are~~ **is** provided as to why the SDG impact assessment shall be conducted at PoA level only. In such a case, the CME shall include ~~SDG compliance~~ **inclusion** criteria in the PoA DD for inclusion of VPAs/CPAs in the PoA. The future VPAs/CPAs shall only be included in the PoA if they are in line with SDG compliance criteria.

### ~~7.1~~ (b) Safeguarding Principles & Requirements

7.1.3 The CME ~~submitting a PoA for Gold Standard Design Certification~~ shall conduct the Safeguarding Principles Assessment as per the ~~Gold~~

Standard Safeguarding Principles & Requirements at the CPA/VPA/VPA CPA equivalent level.

~~7.1.17.1.4~~ An exception can be granted, if convincing justifications, unless a convincing case, validated by a VVB and approved by Gold Standard at the time of Design Certification, are provided as to why the Safeguarding Assessment shall be this can be conducted at PoA level only. In such a case, the CME shall include Safeguarding Principles & Requirements conformity criteria in the PoA DD based on identified risks with respect to the relevant safeguarding principles. In this case, the PoA DD shall would contain Safeguarding Principles & Requirements Safeguarding Principles & Requirements criteria per type of activity, defined at Programme level. shall be identified at the Programme level and The future activities VPAs/CPAs can shall only be included in the Programme PoA if they are in line with the conformity criteria are in line with Safeguarding Principles & Requirements conformity criteria defined in the PoA DD. In this case, the PoA DD would contain Safeguarding Principles & Requirements criteria per type of activity, defined at Programme level.

## ~~7.2~~ **SDG Impacts**

~~7.2.1~~ CMEs submitting a PoA for Gold Standard Design Certification shall conduct the SDG assessment at the CPA/VPA equivalent level, unless convincing justification validated by a VVB and approved by Gold Standard at the time of Design Certification is provided as to why this could be conducted at PoA level only. In such a case, future activities are included in the Programme only if they are in line with sustainable development compliance criteria defined in the PoA DD.

## **8. SELECTION OF A BASELINE AND MONITORING METHODOLOGY**

8.1.1 The Gold Standard allows Voluntary PoAs to use more than one GS-Approved Methodology. In the case of CDM methodologies, the combinations of multiple technologies/measures and/or small-scale methodologies is allowed in line with the latest version of the CDM project standard for programmes of activities.

~~8.1~~ 8.1.2 All methodologies/combination of methodologies shall must be introduced in the PoA DD together with a justification for their application use. A real case CPA/VPA/CPA DDst be submitted for each/combination of methodologies at the time of validation of the Programme PoA.

~~8.2~~ 8.1.3 In the case of methodologies applicable for using several technologies/ measures (e.g. Gold Standard TPDDTEC methodology on Decentralized Thermal Energy Consumption), each/combination of the technologies/measures included in the Programme PoA shallould be discussed included in the PoA DD along with the justification of their eligibility and application use. A real case CPA/VPA/CPA/VPA DD must also

be submitted for each/combination of these technologies/s at the time of validation of the Programme PoA.

~~8.3~~8.1.4 In the event that an activity makes use of a technology/measure that was not ~~discussed~~ included in the PoA DD prior to Design Certification, design change rules at ~~the Programme PoA~~ level shall be followed to include new technology/measures apply. Subsequently, a complete validation (including VVB site-visit) and GS-Design Certification review of the ~~activity~~ VPA/CPA shall be required at the time of inclusion in the Programme PoA. A site visit is not automatically necessary, ~~provided if the~~ justification is provided and ~~provided to and~~ approved by Gold StandardS.

~~8.4~~8.1.5 A new methodology not already applied ~~mentioned~~ in the registered PoA DD may be introduced post-Design Certification ~~in the Programme~~, but in such a case, design change rules at the Programme level shall apply and the ~~activity~~ VPA/CPA applying the new methodology will ~~will~~ shall undergo a full Validation and Design Review.

~~8.5~~8.1.6 When the design change is carried out at the Programme level as a result of the introduction of new methodology(ies)/ technology(ies)/ measure(s) not already ~~discussed~~ included in the design certified PoA DD, the PoA DD ~~PoA DD~~ shall be modified accordingly.

## 9. APPLICABLE METHODOLOGY VERSIONS

### (a) PoA

9.1.1 The latest version of the methodology available at the time of first submission to Gold Standard shall be used. At the time of renewal of the PoA, the latest version of the methodology available at that time shall be adopted.

### (b) VPA/CPA

9.1.2 All VPAs/CPAs to be included in the PoA shall use the same version of the methodology that is defined in the most recent version of the PoA documentation. The use of an updated methodology version is also allowed following Validation and Design Review of the methodology changes.

9.1.3 At the time of renewal of a VPA/CPA, the methodology version defined in the most recent version of the PoA documentation shall be adopted. The use of an updated methodology version is also allowed following Validation and Design Review of the methodology changes.

Examples:

- A VPA/CPA included during the second year of the first certification period of the PoA shall use the methodology version defined in the PoA documentation at the time of Design Certification; this

methodology version is valid for the course of the CPA/VPA's first crediting period or longer if allowed in the relevant activity requirement.

- A VPA/CPA included during the second crediting period of the PoA shall use the methodology version defined in the PoA documentation that was revised during its Design Certification Renewal after the first certification cycle; this methodology version is valid for the course of the VPA/CPA's first crediting period or longer if allowed in the relevant activity requirement.

## ~~9.10.~~ **DE-BUNDLING PROVISIONS RULES**

- ~~9.10.1.1~~ De-bundling provisions included in CDM methodology Tool **Assessment of de-bundling-De-bundling for small-scale project activities** do not apply to Voluntary PoAs.

## ~~10.11.~~ **GOLD STANDARD KEY PROJECT INFORMATION AND PROJECT DOCUMENTS**

- ~~10.11.1.1~~ For a CDM PoA, the CME shall provide following documents [poA-DD, CDM-POA-DD, PoA-Key Programme information, a CPA-DD and a CPA- Key Project Information document (KPI)]. ~~are required for each CPA, in addition to the CDM-POA-DD and POA-KPI.~~

- ~~11.1.2~~ Similarly, for a Voluntary PoA, in addition to the **PoA DD**, a **VPA DD** are is required for each VPA.

## **12. PoA DESIGN CERTIFICATION**

### **(a) Preliminary review**

12.1.1 All VPAs with a start date after the first submission date of the PoA shall follow the Completeness Check pathway (Pathway 1) at Preliminary Review. The VPA(s) shall comply with inclusion criteria defined originally in the PoA and complementary criteria established by the Preliminary Review of the first regular or retroactive VPA, as applicable. Refer to Principles & Requirements for further details. The consolidated list of inclusion criteria shall be included in the revised version of the PoA DD Documentation.

12.1.2 Regular and retroactive VPA(s) with the start date before the first submission date of the PoA shall undergo a Detailed Preliminary Review (Pathway 2), full Validation and Design Certification review in order to be included in the PoA.

### ~~11.(b)~~ **VALIDATION AND CPA/VPA INCLUSION PoA Validation**

12.1.3 A PoA and all its VPAs shall achieve Design Certification and therefore each undergoes a Design Review.

12.1.4 ~~Any CPA/VPA can be submitted for inclusion to the PoA at any time during the duration of the PoA by the coordinating/managing entity (CME).~~ To include a VPA/CPA in a design certified PoA, the CME shall ensure that the proposed VPA/CPA complies with the latest version of the registered PoA-DD, including the inclusion criteria of VPAs/CPAs in the PoA, and relevant Gold Standard rules and requirements.

~~11.1~~ 12.1.5 The CMEs shall submit to a VVB the following documentation with the supporting documents to the selected VVB for validation for validation:

- (a) A completed PoA DD. Generic information on baseline and monitoring must be provided for each one of the different methodologies (or combination of methodologies) or technologies/measures (or combination of technologies/measures) in the case of a methodology allowing for multiple technologies to be considered.
- (b) A completed ~~VCPA/VPA-DD~~ CPA DD based on the application of the PoA to a real case ~~VPA/CPA activity~~, for each one of the different methodologies (or combination of methodologies) or each technology/measure (or combination of technologies/measures) considered. This must be completed prior to Design Review.
- (c) ~~A Gold Standard KPI~~ Key Programme information for the Programme and for each one of the CPAs or VPAs.

12.1.6 The VVB shall validate the appropriateness of the sampling approach (including approach proposed for site-visits) as part of the Validation Report, and Gold Standard shall assess and approve the approach at the time of PoA Design Certification review. The VVB shall take into account the following factors, amongst others, while approving proposed sampling approach for validation in the PoA DD:

- (a) Risks related to the type(s) of project activity/ technology/ geographic location
- (b) Risks related to non-identification of emission and leakage sources
- (c) Risks related to double counting, especially in the case of distributed technologies.
- (d) Uncertainty with respect to the data monitored etc.
- (e) Risks related to environmental, economic or social safeguards
- (f) Risks on account of previous VPA/CPA having been erroneously included or other VPA/CPA facing significant grievances from local stakeholders or ongoing legal cases for existing CPA/VPA etc.



12.1.7 Once a real case VPA/CPA has been fully validated, other CPA/VPAs applying the same technology/measure(s) may be included in the PoA following a simplified inclusion process.

~~(c)~~

**(c) VPA/CPA Inclusion**

12.1.8 Once a PoA has achieved Design Certification, ~~VCPA/VCPAs~~ may be included ~~added~~ to the PoA as per the process below.

1.1.1 The VVB shall validate the appropriateness of the sampling approach (including approach proposed for site-visits) as part of the Validation Report, and Gold Standard shall assess and approve the approach at the time of PoA Design Certification review. The VVB shall take into account the following factors, amongst others, while approving proposed sampling approach for validation in the PoA DD:

- (a) Risks related to the type(s) of project activity/technology/geographic location
- (a) Risks related to non-identification of emission and leakage sources
- (a) Risks related to double counting, especially in the case of distributed technologies.
- (a) Uncertainty with respect to the data monitored etc.
- (a) Risks related to environmental, economic or social safeguards
- (a) Risks on account of previous VPA/CPA having been erroneously included or other VPA/CPA facing significant grievances from local stakeholders or ongoing legal cases for existing CPA/VPA etc.

~~11.2 CPA/VPA inclusion~~

~~Once a real case CPA/VPA has been fully validated, other CPA/VPAs applying the same technology/measure (s) may be included in the PoA following a simplified inclusion process.~~

12.1.9 The VVB shall conduct a ~~CPA/VPA inclusion shall be based on a~~ compliance check ~~prior to inclusion of any new CPA/VPA. The inclusion check completed by the VVB and~~ with respect to the inclusion criteria defined in the PoA-DD and PoA-KPI, where ~~SDG and Safeguarding Principles assessments are conducted at the PoA level only, and as defined in the PoA KPI in cases where SDG and Safeguarding Principles assessments are conducted at the PoA level only.~~ The VVB/CME/PD shall request formal inclusion by ~~contacting informing~~ ~~the Gold Standard by email.~~

~~11.2.1~~12.1.10 The VVB shall take into account the following ~~while for~~ preparing the ~~VPA/CPA~~ Inclusion Report:

~~11.2.2~~(a) Geographical boundary of the ~~activity~~VPAs/CPAs is ~~and whether it is within~~consistent with the ~~geographical boundary of the PoA~~boundary of the PoA set at the time of Design Certification;

~~(a)~~(b) Additionality criteria is being met as defined in the registered PoA DD;

~~(b)~~(c) ~~(b)~~The activity is in line with the baseline scenario(s) identified in the PoA DD;

~~(c)~~(d) Emission reduction calculations are in accordance with the procedures defined in the registered PoA DD;

~~(d)~~(e) The Monitoring Plan ~~for of~~the activity is designed as per the applied methodology and in accordance with the PoA DD; and

~~(e)~~(f) In the case of Safeguarding Principles and SDG ~~A~~assessments being done at the PoA level, ~~then check~~the SDG monitoring plan is checked against ~~is as per~~ the PoA-DD.

### ~~11.3~~(d) Site visit requirements during CPA/VPA inclusion

~~11.3.1~~12.1.11 The CME shall provide details of the approach chosen for site-visits in view of the inclusion of future ~~VPAs/CPAs~~activities in the PoA-DD. The CME shall take into consideration the fact that a site visit by the VVB may be required when a new technology/methodology is introduced into the PoA (if not completed at the time of registering the PoA).

~~11.3.2~~12.1.12 The Gold Standard can mandate site-visits ~~upon the reviews conducted on the activities in view of their listing or in the context of a Preliminary Review~~if a ~~specific~~risk is identified.

### ~~11.4~~(e) ~~Gold Standard spot checks/Design Certification/inclusion review~~Design review

12.1.13 The Gold Standard Design Certification requires both the PoA and all its VPAs to be registered with The Gold Standard.

~~11.4.1~~12.1.14 ~~Activities~~The VPAs/CPAs proposed by a VVB for inclusion ~~7 after the compliance check,~~ must undergo a two-week compliance check period and shall receive The Gold Standard approval by The Gold Standard before being formally included in the Programme. The two-week period starts the day the relevant documents (~~CPA/VPA/CPA DD,~~ ~~VCPA/VPA~~CPA-KPI, VVB Inclusion Report etc.) are ~~uploaded~~ ~~ont~~submitted to The Gold Standard Registry. ~~The~~ VPAs/CPAs formal

~~date retained for the inclusion~~ **date** is **the date** when the two-week compliance check period ends.

~~11.4.2~~**12.1.15** The Gold Standard may conduct spot-checks for any of **the** ~~the activities~~ proposed **VPA/CPAs** for inclusion by the VVB, based on a target-random approach. **The spot-check will entail Gold Standard carrying out a full review as opposed to a compliance check done normally.** This activity would undergo an additional one-week review period.

~~11.4.3~~**12.1.16** The ~~process is different for an activity~~**VPA/CPA** undergoing a complete validation ~~in view of an inclusion. In such a case, the activity must~~**shall** go through a four-week **Design review** ~~Review~~ period. **A where any clarification or corrective action requests for the CPA/VPA shall need to be closed for the CPA/VPA to be approved for inclusion and potential requests for clarification or corrective action must be closed for the inclusion to be approved. In such a case, The VPA/CPA formal inclusion date retained for the inclusion is the date when the four-week review period ends, even if actual inclusion takes longer due to potential requests for clarification or corrective action, even if actual inclusion takes longer due to requests for clarification or corrective action.**

~~11.4.4~~**12.1.17** During any of the periods mentioned above, ~~t~~**The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and NGO Supporters** ~~Gold Standard TAC and NGO Supporters~~ can raise any requests that ~~must~~**shall** be addressed in a satisfactory manner for ~~the inclusion~~**Design Certification** to be approved.

## ~~12.~~ **POA DESIGN CERTIFICATION**

### ~~12.1~~ **Voluntary PoAs**

~~12.1.1~~ **The Gold Standard Design Certification process takes place at the PoA level therefore both the Voluntary PoA and all its VPAs have to be registered with The Gold Standard.**

### **(f) 12.2 CDM PoAs**

~~12.1.18~~ All documentation submitted for CDM validation shall undergo Gold Standard **Validation and Design Certification** review, as applicable, ~~e~~ following ~~below~~ **the options below:**

~~(a)~~ **The Gold Standard Design Certification process takes place at the PoA level. In case of a full PoA certification upgrade** i.e. all ~~activities~~ **CPAs** of a CDM registered ~~Programme~~ **PoA** wanting to certify under Gold Standard, the CDM registered ~~Programme~~ **PoA** and ~~activity~~ **CPA** level documents along with the PoA ~~and~~ **CPA** ~~KPIs~~ **DD** shall be provided to ~~The~~ **Gold Standard.**

~~(a)~~ **In the case of a single CPA submitting for Design Certification under Gold Standard, the process followed is the same as that for**

~~a standalone project for either a regular or a retroactive project cycle~~  
~~standalone project~~, as applicable.

(b)

~~12.1.2~~

~~12.1.3 Documentation submitted to CDM validation will undergo GS validation and Design Certification review. Future activities that were included in the CDM PoA prior to GS Design Certification are reviewed as per Section 3.3.~~

(c) Under special circumstances for CDM PoA (such as when the CDM PoA CME is not willing to act as ~~The Gold Standard Coordinator~~ CME for Gold Standard), Design Certification at the CPA level can be allowed. This is evaluated on a ~~7~~ following an evaluation that will be performed on a case-by-case basis.

~~12.1.4~~

~~12.1.5~~ In the case of a single CPA submitting for Design Certification under Gold Standard, the process followed is the same as that for a standalone project for either a regular or a retroactive project cycle, as applicable.

~~12.1.6~~ (d) In the case of multiple CPAs submitting for Design Certification, ~~a Gold Standard~~ a Gold Standard PoA-DD is created for those CPAs seeking Design Certification and the following steps are followed ~~sub-PoA is created and the following steps are followed~~:

(f)i. ~~PoA/activity~~ CPA level stakeholder consultation is conducted

(g)ii. PoA validation and Design Certification. Documentation to be submitted to Gold Standard include ~~are~~ the registered CDM-PoA-DD as submitted to the CDM-EB and ~~the the~~ PoA KPI, which would contain additional information required for relevant for in ~~the The~~ Gold Standard ~~sub-PoA-DD that was~~ not included in the CDM-PoA-DD, (e.g. sampling verification for Gold Standard is which would be different from that for CDM), along with the specific CPA-DD and CPA KPI.

(h)iii. ~~Activity~~ CPA inclusion based on the CDM-CPA-DD, the CPA KPI and the VVB Validation/inclusion report

(i)iv. ~~Activity~~ CPA verification ~~7~~ based on submitted monitoring reports and verification reports for activities chosen for actual ~~v~~ verification by the VVB (in the case of sampling verification) and all verification reports (in the case of systematic verification)

12.1.19 ~~12.1.6~~ Labelling: The following conditions ~~must~~ shall also be satisfied for the labelling of CERs ~~Labelling~~:

- (a) The serial numbers associated with the CERs issued to the relevant CDM PoA by the UNFCCC must allow for a clear differentiation among the various CPAs;
- ~~(a) The CDM PoA-DD and the different CPA-DDs will have to be provided to GS for review;~~
- (b) A CDM PoA-DD and a GS PoA KPI must be submitted to Gold Standard for approval. These documents will contain all the information necessary to allow the VVB to perform a Gold Standard-compliance check for the subsequent CPAs. It will be submitted together with a first CPA-DD; and
- (c) Gold Standard CPA project documentation, i.e., the CPA-DD and the CPA-KPI must be delivered for each one of the Gold Standard applicant CPAs.

### 13. POA PERFORMANCE CERTIFICATION

~~13.1.1~~ 13.1.1 The CME shall submit monitoring reports for all the ~~activities-VPA/CPA~~ for which request of Performance Certification is intended. ~~The CME can submit a single monitoring report for VCPAs/VCPAs part of the same PoA as long as all VCPA/VCPA have the same monitoring period.~~

~~13.1~~ 13.1.2 The ~~P~~Performance Review starts the day the monitoring and verification report together with ~~and supporting relevant documents (MR/Verification Report etc.) are uploaded onto~~ provided to the ~~The~~ Gold Standard Impact Registry.

~~13.2~~ 13.1.3 In the case of sampling verification, the VVB shall select activities for verification as per the statistically sound sampling plan defined in the PoA DD, conduct site visits for all selected activities and deliver a verification report to Gold Standard.

~~13.3~~ 13.1.4 The approach chosen for the sampling verification shall be discussed in detail in the PoA DD. The CME shall take into account the following factors, amongst others, while defining the approach for verification in the PoA DD:

- (a) Risks related to the type(s) of project activity
- (b) Risks related to non-identification of emission and leakage sources
- (c) Risks related to double counting
- (d) Uncertainty with respect to the data monitored etc.
- (e) Different monitoring periods for activities requesting issuance that may lead to sampling verification not being compatible (any period for which SDG Impacts are claimed must be covered by verification). For instance, for a set of activities requesting

issuance but having different monitoring periods, it may not be possible to choose a sample and all activities may need to be systematically verified.

~~13.4~~ **13.1.5** For further guidance, refer to Section A.2.4 Validation or Verification approach of the ISO 14064-3 standard.

~~13.5~~ The VVB shall validate the appropriateness of the sampling approach (including approach proposed for site visits) as part of the Validation Report, and Gold Standard shall assess and approve the approach at the time of PoA Design Certification review. The VVB shall take into account the following factors, amongst others, while approving proposed sampling approach for validation in the PoA DD:

- ~~(a)~~ Risks related to the type(s) of project activity/technology/geographic location
- ~~(b)~~ Risks related to non-identification of emission and leakage sources
- ~~(c)~~ Risks related to double counting, especially in the case of distributed technologies.
- ~~(d)~~ Uncertainty with respect to the data monitored etc.
- ~~e)~~ Risks related to environmental, economic or social safeguards
- ~~(f)~~ Risks on account of previous VPA/CPA having been erroneously included or other VPA/CPA facing significant grievances from local stakeholders or ongoing legal cases for existing CPA/VPA etc.

**13.1.6** The Gold Standard initiates a three-week review period for all **activities VPA/CPAs submitted for performance certification**. The Gold Standard systematically reviews activities that have been selected for verification.

~~13.5~~ **13.1.7** -The Gold Standard **Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and NGO Supporters** TAC and NGO Supporters may also raise requests for clarification and corrective action ~~as well~~. All requests must be addressed in a satisfactory way for the verification to be approved and for issuance to proceed.

~~13.6~~ **13.1.8** For activities that are not verified by a VVB, spot-checks based on a target-random approach are conducted by Gold Standard. **For randomly selected VPAs/CPAs, GS would the spot check review is conducted in a three** 3-week review **period** ~~for selected activities~~.

~~13.7~~ **13.1.9** Multiple VVBs may be contracted within a same Programme **PoA** to verify different **activities CPAs/VPAs**. In case of the choice of a sampling verification, each one of the VVB involved in the verification shall comply with the sampling approach defined in the **PoA DD**.

## 14. RETROACTIVE PERFORMANCE CERTIFICATION

- 14.1.1 A CDM PoA and its CPAs registered with the UNFCCC may be operational before submission for Design Certification under Gold Standard. In such a case, CERs generated for a maximum period of two years prior to Gold Standard Design Certification of the CPAs can receive Gold Standard labels retroactively.
- 14.1.2 A Retroactive VPA with a project start date before or after the time of first submission of the PoA must submit the required documents for preliminary review within one year of its start date. Retroactive VPA submitted at a date later than one year from the VPA start date will not be eligible for Gold Standard Certification.
- 14.1.3 A regular or retroactive VPA can claim Certified Impact Statements or Products, for example Gold Standard VERs, for the emission reductions generated for a period of up to two years prior to Gold Standard Design Certification of the VPA.

## 15. RENEWAL OF PoA & VPAs/CPAs

- 15.1.1 All Gold Standard PoAs shall be renewed every 5 years. Exception is granted to PoAs that were registered under earlier versions of Gold Standard which shall be renewed after the first 7 years and thereafter follow the Gold Standard for the Global Goals certification cycle (i.e., 5 year renewals).
- 15.1.2 All VPAs/ CPAs shall be renewed every 5 years. Exception is granted to Gold Standard VPAs that are or will be part of PoA that was registered under earlier versions of Gold Standard. Any VPA submitted within the first crediting cycle of PoA (i.e., 7 years) shall be allowed to use the same 7 year, twice renewal model. All VPAs/CPAs submitted for inclusion after the first crediting cycle of such PoA and completion of transition to GS4GG shall follow the GS4GG Certification Cycle (i.e. 5 year renewals).
- 15.1.3 The documents to be submitted during Design Certification Renewal shall be in line with the list of documentation mentioned in the Principles & Requirements but with relevant documents to be submitted at both PoA and CPA/VPA levels.

## ~~14.16.~~ POAS AND LIABILITY

~~14.1~~ 16.1.1 For Gold Standard voluntary PoAs, the liability for erroneous inclusions lies with the CME.

~~14.2~~ An activity is said to be erroneously included when it violates the inclusion criteria set in the PoA DD/PoA KPI.

~~14.3~~ 16.1.2 ~~Erroneous Inclusion:~~ An Erroneous Inclusion occurs where a non-conformity is identified against an activity that is part of a wider group certification, for example a Programme of Activities (PoA). The

implication of the non-conformity is that the activity should not have been successfully included within the cCertification due to the non-conformity and that there may be systemic issues with other activities included. An Erroneous Inclusion may be identified by Gold Standard or the ~~Gold Standard~~-VVB, typically during Verification or Performance Review where a sSample-based approach is employed.

#### 16.1.3 When an Erroneous Inclusion is identified:

- (a) Activities that have been verified, including a site visit, can proceed to Performance Certification and issuance as appropriate.
- (b) Activities of the same type that have not been verified, including a site visit (for example, due to the application of a sSample-based approach) shall remain on hold subject to the closure of the non-conformity by Gold Standard, as per the Non-conformity Requirements, ~~section 6.0 of the Principles & Requirements~~Gold Standard for Global Goals Principles & Requirements.

16.1.4 Where the Erroneous Inclusion does not represent a systemic non-conformity<sup>1</sup> across the whole group of activities, then all other activities that have not actually been verified due to the choice of a sSample-based approach vVerification shall also proceed to Performance Certification and issuance as appropriate.

16.1.5 Where the Erroneous Inclusion represents a systemic non-conformity, indicating risks with other activities that have not actually been verified due to the choice of a sampling vVerification, then all such activities shall also be put on hold until the issue is resolved to the satisfaction of Gold Standard. The assessment by Gold Standard shall be as per the Non-conformity Requirements of ~~, section 6.0 of the Gold Standard for the Global Goals Principles & Requirements~~Principles & Requirements.

~~Whenever an erroneous inclusion is identified by the VVB or Gold Standard at the time of Verification, and in case of sampling Verification, activities that have actually been Verified, site visit included, can proceed to issuance while issuance remains on hold for the erroneous activity(ies). All activities that have not actually been verified due to the choice of a sampling Verification must also be put on hold until the issue is resolved.~~

~~14.4~~16.1.6 For Voluntary PoAs, whenever a VPA is found to be erroneously included in the Voluntary PoA and has already been issued Gold Standard Certified SDG Impact Statements or Products, the CME shall

<sup>1</sup> Systemic non-conformity: A non-conformity that has been identified as part of the Verification of activities under a PoA that may be reasonably assumed to arise in other included activities that have not been verified (for example due to a Sample-based approach).

Non-systemic Non-conformity: A non-systemic non-conformity is one that can be demonstrated to have occurred due to the particular circumstances of the activity that does not apply to other activities in the Sample.



within sixty (60) calendar days after receiving notification of non-conformity:

- (a) Compensate issued ~~Gold Standard~~ Certified Impact Statements or Products ~~with~~ **by retiring equivalent number of Gold Standard** ~~Certified Impact statements or products~~ from other projects of its portfolio; or
- (b) Compensate issued ~~Gold Standard~~ Certified Impact Statements or Products ~~with~~ **by retiring equivalent number of Gold Standard** Certified Impact Statements or Products bought from other Gold Standard projects.

~~14.5~~**16.1.7** For Voluntary PoAs, whenever a verified VPA is found not to be delivering in accordance with the registered Voluntary PoA (e.g. the VPA is no longer operating), but Gold Standard Certified Impact Statements or Products have already been issued to that PoA, the CME shall within sixty (60) calendar days after receiving notification of non-conformity:

- (a) Compensate issued Gold Standard Certified Impact Statements or Products **by retiring equivalent number of** ~~with~~ Gold Standard Certified Impact Statements or Products from other projects of its portfolio; or
- (b) Compensate issued Gold Standard Certified Impact Statements or Products **by retiring equivalent number of** ~~with~~ Gold Standard Certified Impact Statements or Products bought from other Gold Standard projects.

~~14.6~~**16.1.8** For CDM PoAs, whenever the CDM EB finds a project to be erroneously included and the carbon credits have been ~~delivered~~ **incorrectly issued. The CME shall proactively inform Gold Standard and**, the equivalent number of labels already issued under Gold Standard for the project must be compensated by the CME **within sixty (60) calendar days after receiving notification of a non-conformity** as per the above.

## ~~15.17.~~ **DESIGN CERTIFICATION, CERTIFICATION FEES AND SHARE OF PROCEEDS**

~~15.1~~ **FOR POAS APPLYING FOR DESIGN CERTIFICATION UNDER EITHER A REGULAR CYCLE OR RETROACTIVE CYCLE, THE DESIGN CERTIFICATION REVIEW FEE WILL BE IS CALCULATED BASED ON THE FIRST VCPA/VPA CPA AND FEES WILL BE APPLICABLE TO ALL CPAS/VPAS.**

### 17.1.1

17.1.2 Design review fees apply to each additional CPA/VPA and are calculated on an individual basis.

## ~~METHODOLOGY VERSIONS AND RENEWAL OF CERTIFICATION PERIOD FOR PoA AND CPA/VPA AND METHODOLOGY VERSIONS~~

~~All Gold Standard PoAs shall be renewed every 5 years. Exception is given to Gold Standard PoAs that were registered under Gold Standard v2.2 or earlier which shall be renewed after the first 7 years and thereafter follow the Gold Standard for the Global GoalsGS4GG certification cycle (i.e. 5 year renewals).~~

~~Any VPA submitted within the first crediting period (i.e. 7 years) of the PoA shall be allowed to use the same 7 year, twice renewal model. All VPAs/CPAs submitted after the first crediting period of PoA shall apply the Gold Standard for the Global Goals GS4GG Certification Cycle (i.e. 5 year renewals).~~

~~16.1 CDM/Voluntary PoA~~

~~15.2~~

~~15.3~~ The latest methodology version applicable at the time of first submission to Gold Standard shall be used. At the time of renewal of the PoA, the latest version of the methodology available at that time shall be adopted.

~~16.2 CPA/VPA~~

~~15.4~~ 2.1 All CPAs/VPAs to be included in the PoA shall use the same version of the methodology that is defined in the most recent version of the PoA documentation. The use of an updated methodology version is also allowed for, after a validation by a VVB, and followed by a Design Certification review by Gold Standard with respect to the methodology changes.

~~15.5~~ At the time of renewal of a CPA/VPA, the methodology version defined in the most recent version of the PoA documentation shall be adopted. The use of an updated version is also allowed for, after a validation by a VVB, and followed by a Design Certification review by Gold Standard with respect to the methodology changes.

Examples:

- A CPA/VPA included during the second year of the first the PoA shall use the methodology version defined in the PoA documentation at the time of Design Certification; this methodology version is valid for the course of the CPA/VPA's first first crediting period or longer if allowed in the relevant activity requirement.

— A VPA included during the 2<sup>nd</sup> second crediting period of the PoA shall use the methodology version defined in the PoA documentation that was revised during its Design Certification

~~Renewal after the first first crediting cycle; this methodology version is valid for the course of the VPA's first crediting period or longer if allowed in the relevant activity requirement.~~

~~The documents to be submitted during Design Certification Renewal shall be in line with the list of documentation mentioned in the Gold Standard for the Global Goals Principles & Requirements but with relevant documents to be submitted at both PoA and CPA/VPA levels.~~

## ~~16.18.~~ DESIGN CHANGES RULES

~~18.1.1~~ In the case of a design change, the CME shall assess the changes based on ~~the The Gold Standard rules on d~~ Design change rules for standalone project activities, but do so for both the Programme and the affected activities ~~VPAs/CPAsy and Programme level~~. E.g. If a new country (not already mentioned in the geographical boundary of the Programme in the PoA-DD) is added to the Programme, it should be ensured that the stakeholders from this new country accept the design of the Programme and also that this does not impact the additionality demonstrated at the Programme level etc.

~~The documents to be submitted during PoA or CPA/VPA design change shall be in line with the list of documentation mentioned in Annex A of the Gold Standard for the Global Goals Principles & Requirements Principles & Requirements but with relevant documents to be submitted at both PoA and CPA/VPA levels.~~

~~18.1.2~~

## ~~17.~~ PRE-CDM VER

~~The CPAs in a registered Programme are eligible to claim up to two years of pre-CDM VERs provided the CME/Project Developer enters into an agreement with Gold Standard whereby they commit to surrender to Gold Standard, for immediate retirement, CERs that will be issued in respect of GHG reductions generated by the activity (or other activities from that PoA) during the CDM crediting period in an amount equal to the Pre-CDM VERs. The agreement shall make use of The 'Gold Standard CDM Emission Reduction Acquisition Agreement' template, and no delivery is required for a grace period of the first two years of issuance following CDM Design Certification.~~

## ~~18.19.~~ REGISTRATION OF PROCEDURE FOR THE REGISTRATION OF MULTI-COUNTRY PoAs

~~18.1~~ ~~M~~In principle, multi-country GS ~~v~~ Voluntary PoAs shall provide a VPA-DD for each country considered at the time of PoA ~~registration~~ registration. Exceptions may be granted on a case-by-case basis and after review by the GS-TAC. ~~The~~ ~~7~~, provided the CME shall submit ~~makes~~ a formal request to Gold Standard in writing and can deliver ~~with~~ convincing justification to support their case.

## 19.1.1

~~18.2~~ GS Voluntary PoAs that are granted with this exception would be allowed to submit a VPA DD for only one of the countries in the PoA boundary. In this case, the CME shall conduct a Sustainable Development Goals Assessment and Safeguarding Principles Assessment at the VPA equivalent level.

~~18.3~~ 19.1.2 Any request for exception shall be supported by documentation addressing the following elements in the PoA DD and VPA DD, (where submitted):

- (a) Additionality – Where applicable PoA level additionality shall be demonstrated taking into account all countries in the PoA boundary. Additionality at PoA level can be demonstrated using approved CDM<sup>2</sup>[2] or Gold Standard additionality tools.
- (b) Baseline scenario – the baseline situation (as defined by the applied baseline methodology/methodologies-) for all countries in the PoA boundary shall be similar and this shall be justified.
- (c) Emission reductions or other SDG Impact calculation (where applicable) – a typical emission reduction calculation approach as per the applied methodology should be demonstrated in the PoA/VPA DD and the same approach shall be applied for VPAs from all countries in the PoA boundary.
- (d) Legislation – the legislation applicable to the applied technology shall be provided for all countries in the PoA boundary.

19.1.3 If the information given in the PoA DD and VPA DD should provides sufficient evidence to show demonstrate with confidence that all targeted communities considered within the PoA boundary are homogeneous with respect to the above four points.<sup>7</sup>

~~18.4~~ 19.1.4 Gold Standard Voluntary PoAs that are granted with this exception Project Developers can submit one VPA DD (from one of the countries included in the PoA boundary) at the time of PoA registration Design Certification and subsequent VPA(s) for the other countries can be included in the PoA at a later stage. In this case, the CME shall conduct a Sustainable Development Goals Assessment and Safeguarding Principles Assessment at the VPA equivalent level.

~~18.5~~ 19.1.5 Gold Standard GS Voluntary PoAs that not are granted with this exception PoAs not granted with an exception can add new countries to the PoA boundary after PoA registration via a formal design change request and in line with Principles & Requirements Gold Standard for the Global Goals Principles & Requirements (Annex A) and payment of the design change fee<sup>7</sup>. This process requires submission of a VPA DD for activities developed in each of the countries.

<sup>2</sup> Demonstration of additionality, development of eligibility criteria and application of multiple methodologies for Programme of Activities

~~18.6~~ Post-Design-Certification design change requests to expand the PoA boundary to other countries are also possible without requiring a VPA DD. However, these design changes are governed by the point's outlines in paragraph IVpara 19.3 above. In this case, a fee per country, plus any additional assessment charge required would be charged to review its approval in the registered PoA. The remaining fee shall be charged based on the annual average emission reduction or other applicable SDG Impact estimated in the VPA DD and will be payable on submission of the VPA DD.

### **Endnotes**

[1] This template is the same as the CDM CPA DD.

[2] Demonstration of additionality, development of eligibility criteria and application of multiple methodologies for Programme of Activities

## ANNEX A – MICROSCALE PROGRAMME OF ACTIVITIES REQUIREMENTS

### 1. SCOPE AND APPLICABILITY

- 1.1.1 Unless stated otherwise in this Annex, rules mentioned above for PoAs shall apply to -Microscale Programme of Activities (mPoA) scheme. In case of any discrepancy, the rules in this Annex shall prevail.

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### 2. GENERAL ~~1~~ ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

#### ~~(a) Scale of the project:~~

- 2.1.1 VPAs within mPoA are eligible under thise scheme;

- (a) If the annual emission reductions achieved are limited to a maximum of 10,000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>eq in each and every year of the crediting period. Whenever actual emission reductions, as per the verification report, exceed the upper threshold for a given registered VPA, the VPA can still request for issuance, but the claimable emission reductions are capped at 10,000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>eq per annum. OR

- (b) VPA seeking Certified Impact other than emission reductions meets the criteria defined within respective Activity Requirements for the project scale if the annual emission reductions achieved per project are limited to a maximum as defined within respective Activity Requirements.

~~Whenever actual impacts, such as emission reductions as per the verification report exceed the upper threshold for a given registered project, the project can still request for issuance, but the claimable emission reductions are capped at the maximum per year.~~

~~(b) Type of project:~~ Eligible project types are as defined by Gold Standard for the Global Goals Principles & Requirements and any eligibility requirements listed in the Activity Requirements. A/R and AGR activities are not eligible for this scheme.

~~(c) Host country:~~ mPoAs can be located in any Host Country.

~~(d) Project cycle:~~ Both regular and retroactive cycle projects are eligible to apply under this scheme.

~~(e) Date of first submission:~~ The first submission date for a Gold Standard mPoA is defined as the date when the mPoA Design Consultation Report is submitted for Gold Standard review.

### 3. ADDITIONALITY

- 3.1.1 The additionality criteria as defined in Activity Requirements for project level assessment shall apply. In the absence of specific Activity Requirements, the requirements outlined in Principles & Requirements shall apply.

## ~~A.2 STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION~~

- ~~Stakeholder consultations must happen at both the mPoA level and the its VPA level (specific consultations) unless convincing justification is provided in the documentation as to why consultation at the project level is not necessary, and approval is granted by Gold Standard at the Design Certification stage.~~
- ~~Stakeholder consultations at the project level must take place in a two-step process, i.e. the Stakeholder Consultation (SC) meeting and the Stakeholder Feedback Round (SFR) as per the Gold Standard for the Global Goals Stakeholder Consultation & Engagement Requirements and Guidelines. Reporting of the stakeholder consultation shall be done using the Stakeholder Consultation Report~~
- ~~The requirements of stakeholder consultations as given in section 6, above also apply to mPoAs.~~

## ~~A.3 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT ASSESSMENT PROCESS~~

- ~~The sustainable development assessment shall takes place at the VPA level unless a convincing case is presented by CME and approved by Gold Standard at the time of Design Certification, as to why this can be conducted at mPoA level only. In such a case, future projects are included in the mPoA only if they are in line with sustainable development compliance criteria defined in the PoA KPI.~~

~~In view of the inclusion of a project to a micro programme or of a verification of a project a target random approach is applied to the project appraisal making use of an Objective Observer, at the inclusion and/or verification stage.~~

- ~~1.1 The CMEs shall carry out a self-assessment of the risks associated with the projects within mPoA with respect to The Gold Standard for the Global Goals Safeguarding Principles & Requirements (human rights abuse, environmental degradation, non-adherence to labour laws, corruption, etc.) and shall identify positive contribution to at least three SDGs, with mandatory contribution to SDG 13 Climate Action. The self-assessment shall be submitted for review by the Gold Standard, which may also require the opinion of an Objective Observer. The Objective Observer shall carry out a site visit as part of appraisal process.~~

## **4. BASELINE, PROJECT SCENARIO & MONITORING**

- 4.1.1 Baselines, project scenario and monitoring shall be defined as per the Gold Standard Approved Impact Quantification Methodology (including eligible CDM Methodologies). Refer to PoA requirements for further details.
- 4.1.2 The CME can describe and submit a new methodology as part of the mPOA DD documentation for approval by ~~The~~ Gold Standard. Refer to Microscale Project Requirements for further details.

## 5. DE-BUNDLING RULES

- 5.1.1 No de-bundling rules apply to this scheme. The Gold Standard Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) can decide to discontinue the scheme at any time in the case it's shown as being abused. ~~However, the scheme can be discontinued anytime upon decision of The Gold Standard Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) in case it is shown as being abused.~~ In such cases, activities under mPoA already submitted or registered remain eligible for their entire crediting period.

VALIDATION of the programme mPOA Validation

## ~~2. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT APPRAISAL PROCESS~~ 6.

- 6.1.1 Validation shall be conducted in one of the following ways:
- (a) Contracting an accredited Gold Standard Validation/Verification Body (~~eligible~~ GS-VVB). The PoA and its VPAs shall make use of an existing methodology or submit a new methodology to Gold Standard for approval, with opinion of VVB, at the time of requesting design certification.
  - (b) Applying for *the* Gold Standard Internal Validation by paying required fee to the Gold Standard Validation Fund. If the PoA proposes a new methodology as part of the PoA documents, the proposed methodology shall be reviewed following the process outlined in the Microscale Project Requirements.
- 6.1.2 The following procedure apply to the Gold Standard Validation Fund option:
- (a) The Gold Standard shall be notified of the selection of the Internal Validation process option.
  - (b) The completed PoA DD, VPA DD along with supporting evidence and documents shall be provided to Gold Standard to initiate the validation process.
  - (c) Gold Standard will decide and notify the CME on whether the mPoA is selected for an external validation by a VVB, or will be validated internally by Gold Standard. In both cases, the Validation Fund covers the validation costs.



- (d) In the case when a mPoA is selected for external validation by a VVB, the CME shall provide competitive quotes from three VVBs. Based on the quotes, Gold Standard will contract and pay the VVB from the validation fund and the mVPA will follow the steps of a regular validation.
- (e) For an internal validation, the CME will be notified on whether the project is selected for an appraisal of sustainable development aspects, including SDG 13, by an Objective Observer. The Validation Fund will cover these costs.
- (f) At all times, any assistance from the Gold Standard Validation Fund is subject to the availability of funds. The decision is made through a 'target-random' selection among microscale projects opting to make use of the Validation Fund.

## **7. VPA VALIDATION AND INCLUSION**

- 7.1.1 CMEs can request for the inclusion of VPAs at any time during the duration of the PoA.
- 7.1.2 For any VPA to be included, the completed VPA-DD (along with the Stakeholder Feedback Round Reporting) and the Validation Appraisal Report must be submitted to initiate the validation process:
  - (a) If an Objective Observer is appointed for appraisal of the project upon listing then the selected VPA undergoes a compliance check by the Objective Observer for sustainability aspects including SDG 13. The compliance check ends with positive conclusion of Objective observer assessment.
  - (b) If no Objective Observer is appointed, the Gold Standard conducts a compliance check based on a desk review of sustainable development aspects, including SDG 13. The compliance check ends with positive conclusion of Gold Standard assessment.
- 7.1.3 After successful completion of compliance check by Objective Observer and Gold Standard, activities must undergo a two-week review period during which the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and NGO Supporters can request for clarification or corrective actions.
- 7.1.4 Upon successful completion the review period, the proposed VPA is formally included in the Programme.
- 7.1.5 The two-week period starts the day relevant documents (VPA-DD, Validation Appraisal Report and VPA Inclusion Report) are submitted to Gold Standard. The formal date retained for the inclusion is when the two-week review period ends, even if actual inclusion takes longer due to potential requests for clarification or corrective action.

- 7.1.6 The process is different for a VPA undergoing a complete validation in view of an inclusion. In such a case, the VPA must go through a four-week review period and potential requests for clarification or corrective action must be closed for the inclusion to be approved. The formal date retained for the inclusion is when the four -week review period ends, even if actual inclusion takes longer due to potential requests for clarification or corrective action.

## 8. VERIFICATION

- 8.1.1 Verification shall be conducted in either of the following ways:

- (a) Contracting of an accredited ~~a~~-GS-VVB
- (b) Applying for the Gold Standard Internal Verification by paying an required fee to the Gold Standard Verification Fund.

- 8.1.2 The following procedure applies to the Gold Standard Internal Verification Fund option:

- (a) The Gold Standard shall be notified of the selection of the Internal Verification option.
- (b) The Monitoring Report together with supporting evidence and documents shall be provided to Gold Standard to initiate the verification process.
- (c) Gold Standard will decide and notify the CME on whether the VPA(s) is selected for an external verification by VVB or will be verified internally by Gold Standard. In both cases, the Verification Fund covers the costs.
- (d) In the case when VPA(s) is selected for external verification by a VVB, the CME shall provide competitive quotes from three VVBs. Based on the quotes, Gold Standard will contract and pay the VVB from verification fund and the VPA(s) will follow the steps of a regular verification.
- (e) For an internal verification, the CME is notified on whether the VPA(s) is selected for an appraisal of sustainable development aspects, including SDG 13, by an Objective Observer, or if these will be verified internally by Gold Standard alone. The Verification Fund will cover these costs.
- (f) At all times, any assistance from the Gold Standard Verification Fund is subject to the availability of funds. This decision is made through a 'target-random' selection among microscale projects opting to make use of the Verification Fund.

- 8.1.3 ~~If CME that 9.3 It is possible for fraud to occur when Project Developer has deliberately provide information that is incorrect, or and use the flexibility provided under the microscale schemed to obtain Gold~~

Standard status, or to inflate the SDG outcomes and impacts, from the PoA will be subject to an investigation by Gold Standard. If such wrongdoing is suspected, it would be determined through the several rounds of requests for clarification and/or corrective action. If the resulting Gold Standard investigation shows that the PoA or its VPAs documentation is fraudulent and credible evidence shows the negative intent of the CME and or Project Developer, and if Gold Standard has credible evidence that shows the negative intent of the Project Developer, the party submitting the project is permanently disqualified and this is publicly announced (see Gold Standard Terms & Conditions for more details).

## 9. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT ASSESSMENT PROCESS

### 3.

~~3.1~~ 9.1.1 In view of the inclusion and verification of a VPAs to a mPoA, or for a verification of a VPA, a target-random approach is applied to the VPAs appraisal, making use of an Objective Observer, at the inclusion and/or verification stage.

### 3.2

9.1.2 A microscale VPA must be subjected to an Objective Observer appraisal and site visit at least once within three years of date of VPA inclusion or start of crediting period, whichever is later.

9.1.3 The inclusion of a project VPA of a with different technology, measure or methodology type than any of those submitted with, or already part of the mPoA Certified Design (different technology, measure or methodology) requires an appraisal by an Objective Observer(s) in all cases.

**3.3** An Objective Observer(s) shall be appointed in time for validation of the mPoA for to make an appraisal of the risks associated with the mPoA, check completeness of stakeholder consultations as well as to assess contribution to three SDGs including SDG 13.

~~3.4~~ 9.1.4 Upon request from Gold Standard request and in time for validation, inclusion or verification, Project Developers CME shall identify and provide the names and contact details of at least three independent experts (e.g. academics from local universities, staff from local NGOs or local consultancies, etc.) who shall appraise VPAs with respect to sustainable development aspects, including SDG 13. The Gold Standard appoints one or more Objective Observers amongst the people suggested and/or other experts preferably chosen from the Gold Standard NGO Supporters NGO Supporters, Roster of Experts, or representatives of development organisations with host country experience such that environmental and socio-economic impacts can be credibly assessed. Experts are selected based on an assessment of the relevance of their expertise and knowledge of the local conditions.

(a) **VPA Validation/ Inclusion stage**

9.1.5 Objective Observers visit the site at validation/inclusion or verification stage to provide an independent assessment of the following:

- ~~3.5~~
- (a) ~~to The Gold Standard Safeguarding Principles & Requirements (human rights abuse, environmental degradation, non-adherence to labour laws, corruption, etc.). risks associated with the project with respect to tThe Gold Standard safeguarding principles (human rights abuse, environmental degradation, non-adherence to labour laws, corruption, etc.). Refer the relevant Activity Requirements for guidelines for this assessment,~~
- (a)
- (b) contributions to three SDGs with mandatory contribution to SDG-13
- ~~(b)~~
- (c) completeness of stakeholder consultations

9.1.6 During mPOA validation, when risks with regards to the safeguarding principles are identified, the CME is required to prepare and submit an appropriate mitigation plan. This will be evaluated by ~~the Gold Standard~~ or the Objective Observer who will evaluate the appropriateness of the mitigation measures and they will be reported in the ~~Validation Appraisal Report~~ **Validation Appraisal Report**. -Inputs from stakeholders during the design consultation, Stakeholder Consultation (1<sup>st</sup> round) and Stakeholder Feedback Round (SFR) ~~LSC and SFR~~ shall be taken into account for this assessment. SDGs **Impact contribution** indicators shall also be included in the monitoring plan and discussed with Stakeholders.

9.1.7 The Validation Appraisal Report completed by Objective Observers will be made available to the Gold Standard Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and NGO Supporters at the time of review and will form part of the mPoA design certification process. The appraisal will be made publicly available following project design certification.

~~3.6~~ ~~The Validation Appraisal Report completed by Objective Observers will be made available to tThe Gold Standard TAC and Secretariat and to the Gold Standard NGO Supporters at the time of review and will form part of the mPoA design certification process. The appraisal will be made publicly available following project design certification.~~

~~3.7~~

**(a) VPA Validation/ Inclusion-stage**

~~(b)~~ ~~In view of the inclusion of a project to a mPoA, a target-random approach is applied to the sustainability appraisal by an Objective Observer(s) who shall conduct a site visit and report the findings.~~ The inclusion of a project of a different type than any of those submitted with, or already part of the mPoA Certified Design (different technology, measure or methodology) requires an appraisal by an Objective Observer(s) in all cases.

~~(e)~~

~~(d)~~ **9.18** For any project **VPA** not selected for an appraisal by an Objective Observer at stage of inclusion, the CME/PP shall conduct a self-assessment of the risks associated with respect to the safeguarding principles (human rights abuse, environmental degradation, non-adherence to labour laws, corruption, etc.), check completeness of stakeholder consultations as well as assess contribution to three SDGs.

~~The CME and shall shall make use of the Validation Appraisal Report Validation Appraisal Report provided to deliver the assessment.~~

~~(e)~~  
~~(a)~~(b) **VPA Verification stage**

During verification, if an Objective Observer is selected for an appraisal then he/she shall visit the site to:

~~3.8~~

- (a) Confirm the status of ~~project~~ VPA(s) operation,
- (b) Assess the SDG contribution by the ~~project~~ VPA(s)
- (c) Assess if the mitigation plan is effectively implemented and negative impacts and risks are being effectively mitigated,
- (d) Check that other negative impacts have not resulted due to implementation and operation of the ~~project~~ VPAs.

~~3.9.2~~ The Objective Observer may also report a new issue observed during the verification.

~~3.10.3~~ The ~~Verification Appraisal Report~~ Verification Appraisal Report will be made available to ~~t~~The Gold Standard ~~Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and NGO Supporters TAC and Secretariat and to the GS Gold Standard NGO Supporters~~ at the time of review and will form part of the issuance ~~approval~~ review. The Verification Appraisal Report will be made publicly available after the issuance approval.

~~3.11~~ ~~Whenever a~~ For VPA(s) is not selected for an appraisal by an Objective Observer(s) at verification stage, and in view of any request for issuance, the CME shall ~~relevant information in the monitoring report including, confirm the status of the project VPA operation, assess if the mitigation plan is effectively implemented and negative impacts and risks have been mitigated, and check that other negative impacts have not resulted due to implementation and operation of the VPA.~~

~~3.12~~ ~~The CME shall make use of the Verification Appraisal Report for self appraisal.~~

~~4.~~

~~4.1~~

~~**VALIDATION OF THE MPOA**~~

~~the d the~~The validation shall be conducted in one of the following ways:

- ~~1.~~ The contracting of a VVB by CME, as for any other PoA. The VVB has to meet all the requirements stated for non-micro-scale project validation in core requirements. The project must make use of an existing methodology or submit the new methodology to The Gold Standard for approval prior to validation by the VVB.

2. The submission to The Gold Standard Internal Validation process. This option implies the payment of a flat fee to The Gold Standard Validation Fund, to initiate the validation of the project. Please refer the fee schedule for details.

— If the project proposes a new methodology for the accounting and monitoring of SDG outcomes, the internal validation process includes the approval or rejection of the proposed new approach by Gold Standard, unless, as discussed above, the new methodology is sent for external review.

— For The Gold Standard Validation Fund option, the following procedures apply:

1. The Gold Standard Secretariat shall be notified of the use of the Validation Fund option.

2. The completed PDD with information on baseline and monitoring and Validation Appraisal Report must be uploaded into the GS Registry.

3. The CME is notified on whether the project is selected for an appraisal of sustainable development aspects including SDG 13 Climate Action by an Objective Observer. The Validation Fund will cover the costs of Objective Observer. At all times, any assistance from The Gold Standard Validation Fund is subject to the availability of funds. This decision is made through a 'target-random' selection among mPoA opting to make use of the Validation Fund.

4. The CME is notified on whether the project will be selected for an external validation by a VVB. In this case too, the Validation Fund covers the costs. At all times, any assistance from The Gold Standard Validation Fund is subject to the availability of funds. This decision is made through a 'target-random' selection among mPoAs opting to make use of the Validation Fund. In case mPoA is selected for external validation by VVB, The Gold Standard will contract and pay the VVB from validation fund. Project will follow the steps of a regular validation.

#### A.8 VPA INCLUSION

4.2 CMEs can request for the inclusion of VPAs any time during the entirety of the crediting period of the approved programme.

4.3 In view of the inclusion of a VPAs to a mPoA, a target-random approach is applied to the appraisal by an Objective Observer(s) who shall conduct a site-visit and report the findings. The scope of appraisal shall cover the information mentioned under 7.3 above.

4.4 The inclusion of a VPA of a different type than any of those submitted with, or already part of the mPoA Certified Design (different technology, measure or methodology) requires an appraisal by an Objective Observer(s) in all cases.

4.5 For any VPA not selected for an appraisal by an Objective Observer at stage of inclusion, the CME/PP shall conduct a self-assessment of the

risks associated with respect to the safeguarding principles (human rights abuse, environmental degradation, non-adherence to labour laws, corruption, etc.), check completeness of stakeholder consultations as well as assess contribution to three SDGs and shall make use of the Validation Appraisal Report provided to deliver the assessment.

#### 4.6

For any project to be included, the completed VPA-DD (along with the SFR Reporting) and the Validation Appraisal Report must be submitted to initiate the process:

- (a) If no Objective Observer is appointed, The the Gold Standard conducts a compliance check based on a desk review for the carbon and sustainability aspects. Activities proposed for inclusion after the compliance check must undergo a two-week review period during which the GS Gold Standard TAC and NGO Supporters can request for clarification or corrective actions. The Gold Standard will then formally include it in the Programme.

- 1. If an Objective Observer is appointed for appraisal of the project upon listing then the selected project undergoes a compliance check by the Objective Observer for sustainability aspects including SDG 13, followed by a two-week review period during which requests for clarification or corrective actions may be raised by tThe Gold Standard TAC and NGO Supporters.

The two-week period starts the day relevant documents (VPA-DD, Validation Appraisal Report and VPA Inclusion Report) are uploaded onto the The Gold Standard Impact Registry. The formal date retained for the inclusion is when the two-week review period ends, even if actual inclusion takes longer due to potential requests for clarification or corrective action.

The process is different for a project undergoing a complete validation in view of an inclusion. In such a case, the project must go through an four-week review period and potential requests for clarification or corrective action must be closed for the inclusion to be approved. The formal date retained for the inclusion is when the four-week review period ends, even if actual inclusion takes longer due to potential requests for clarification or corrective action.

#### A.9 VERIFICATION

- 1. Verification shall be conducted in either of the following ways:

- i. Contracting of an accredited GS-VVB

- ii. Applying for the *Gold Standard Internal Verification process* by paying an applicable fee to the Gold Standard Verification Fund.
- Verification of shall be conducted in either of the two following ways:

- 1. The contracting of a VVB by CME, as for any other project.

~~2. Submission to The Gold Standard Internal Verification process. Internal verification is initiated when fees is paid to The Gold Standard Verification Fund, the first fee being paid within nine months after Design Certification.~~

~~The following procedure applies tofor tThe Gold Standard Verification Fund option:~~

~~1. The Monitoring Report and Verification Appraisal Report must be uploaded into the registry with necessary supporting documentation, if any.~~

~~2. CME is notified on whether a VPA or VPAs are selected for an appraisal of sustainable development aspects including SDG 13 by an Objective Observer, or if these will be verified internally by The Gold Standard alone. The Verification Fund will cover these costs. At all times, any assistance from The Gold Standard Verification Fund is subject to the availability of funds. This decision is made through a 'target-random' selection among VPAs opting to make use of the Verification Fund (see section 10). VPAs shall be subjected to OO's appraisal and site visit atleast once within 3 years of the date of Design Certification with Gold Standard.~~

~~If Projects deliberately provide information that is incorrect to obtain Gold Standard status, or to inflate the SDG outcomes and impacts, the project will be subject to an investigation by Gold Standard. If such wrongdoing is suspected, and the resulting investigation shows that the project documentation is fraudulent and credible evidence shows the negative intent of the Project Developer, the party submitting the project is permanently disqualified and this is publicly announced (see Gold Standard Terms & Conditions for more details).~~

9.4