

# GOLD STANDARD FOR THE GLOBAL GOALS

## MICROSCALE PROJECT REQUIREMENTS

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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 APPLICABILITY

- 1.1.1 Unless stated otherwise in this document, rules provided in ~~the Gold Standard for the Global Goals~~ [Principles & Requirements](#) apply to this scheme. In case of any discrepancy, the rules in this document shall prevail.
- 1.1.2 The Requirements included in this document are not applicable to Gold Standard Land Use & Forest Projects. [Eligible Land Use and Forest Projects](#) ~~applying the Gold Standard Land-use & Forest Activity Requirements~~ shall apply ~~the Annex B – Requirements for A/R Smallholder & Microscale Projects~~ [Project Requirements](#) contained in [Land Use & Forest Activity Requirements](#) ~~that document~~. The Requirements included in this document are not applicable to Gold Standard Land-use & Forest Projects.

## 2. GENERAL ~~1.0~~ ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

~~1.1.3~~ 2.1.1 The following General Eligibility Criteria applies to all microscale projects seeking Gold Standard Certification

- (a) ~~(b)~~ **Type of Project:** Eligible project types are as defined by the Gold Standard for the Global Goals [Principles & Requirements](#) ~~except (LU&F Projects)~~ and in the relevant Activity Requirements.
- (b) ~~(c)~~ **Location of Project:** Projects may be located in any part of the world.
- (c) ~~(a)~~ **Project Scale:** Projects are eligible under the microscale scheme;
- i. 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 project~~, the project 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
  - ii. project seeking Certified Impact other than emission reductions meets the criteria defined within respective Activity Requirements for the project scale.
- 
- (d) ~~(d)~~ **Project cycle:** Both regular and retroactive ~~cycle~~ projects are eligible to apply under this scheme.

## 3. ~~2.0~~ PROJECT CERTIFICATION PERIOD

- 3.1.1 ~~2.1~~ Projects shall ~~must~~ follow the certification & crediting period rules as defined in ~~the Gold Standard for the Global Goals~~ [Principles &](#)

Requirements, GHG Emissions Reductions & Sequestration Product Requirements or Activity Requirements.

## 4. ~~3.0~~ **STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION**

4.1.1 ~~3.1~~ A two-step The stakeholder consultation ~~must~~ shall be conducted as per the ~~Gold Standard~~ [Stakeholder Consultation & Engagement Procedure, Requirements & Guidelines](#).

4.1.2 ~~3.2~~ Project developers shall ~~also~~ implement the continuous input & /grievance mechanism to solicit feedback from stakeholders on unforeseen issues throughout the certification period of the project following [Stakeholder Consultation & Engagement Requirements](#).

## 5. ~~7.0~~ **ADDITIONALITY**

5.1.1 ~~7.1~~ The additionality criteria for microscale projects as defined in the applicable Activity Requirements shall apply. In the absence of specific Activity Requirements, the requirements outlined in the ~~Gold Standard~~ for the ~~Global Goals~~ [Principles & Requirements](#), ~~Section 3.5~~ shall apply.

## 6. ~~4.0~~ **BASELINE, PROJECT SCENARIO & MONITORING**

~~1.1.46.1.1~~ ~~4.1~~ Baselines, project scenario and monitoring shall be defined as per the ~~Gold Standard~~ Approved Impact Quantification Methodology (including [eligible CDM Methodologies](#)). The latest version of the methodology ~~applicable~~ available at the time of first submission<sup>1</sup> to The ~~Gold Standard~~ to The ~~Gold Standard~~ shall be used. Alternatively, a new methodology may be described and submitted as part of the project documentation for approval as per the ~~Gold Standard for the Global Goals~~ [Principles & Requirements](#).

~~1.1.56.1.2~~ ~~4.2~~ New simplified, conservative approaches (e.g. based on default factors) as well as the consideration of suppressed demand elements are encouraged in order to further streamline the evaluation of [Sustainable Development Goals](#) (SDGs), as long as convincing arguments are provided as to why the approach proposed is conservative enough.

~~1.1.66.1.3~~ New simplified methodology is submitted as part of the [Project Design Document](#) submitted for validation. In the context of the proposed project activity, new methodologies ~~and~~ should include details on the applicability conditions, description of the ~~applicable~~ baseline and project scenario, ex-ante/default parameters (where applicable), impact quantification approach for the targeted SDGs, monitoring parameters including monitoring frequency, and the list of reference/literature used in proposing the simplified methodology.:-

<sup>1</sup>The time of first submission is the date of project document submission for Preliminary Review to Gold Standard.

- 6.1.4 ~~4.3~~—Once approved as part of a given project, new methodologies can be used by all project developers for future standalone ~~mMm~~ microscale projects.
- 6.1.5 ~~4.4~~—When ~~The Gold Standard Foundation~~ is not in a position to evaluate with sufficient confidence if the newly submitted methodology is appropriate and conservative enough, the proposed methodology will ~~be submitted for external review, as reviewed as per the Fast Track procedures for approval~~ **be submitted for external review, as reviewed as per the Fast Track process of new methodologies under The Gold Standard outlined in the Impact Quantification methodology approval procedure.** In such ~~a cases, and unless the applicant decides to withdraw the methodology,~~ the cost of external review ~~shall must~~ **shall** be covered by the applicant, ~~unless the applicant decides to withdraw the methodology.~~

## **7. ~~5.0~~—DE-BUNDLING RULES**

- 7.1.1 ~~5.1~~—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 ~~a cases,~~ projects already submitted **or registered** remain eligible for their entire crediting period.

## **8. ~~6.0~~—BUNDLING AND PoA**

- 8.1.1 ~~6.1~~—Projects can be submitted within a bundle<sup>2</sup>, however the upper threshold **of 10,000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>eq per year for one microscale project,** outlined under *Section – General Eligibility Criteria* above, applies to the bundle as a whole. Project Developers shall refer to the **rules in the Programme of Activity Requirements** for the submission of microscale projects under a programme.

## **9. ~~8.0~~—VALIDATION**

- 9.1.1 ~~8.1~~—Validation shall be conducted in one of the following ways:
- (a) ~~The contracting of an accredited Gold Standard Validation/Verification Body (eligible GS-VVB - hereafter VVB) (as per the Gold Standard Validation & Verification Body Requirements), as for any other project. The project shall make use of an existing methodology or submit a new methodology as part of project documentation, with opinion of VVB, to Gold Standard for approval at time of requesting design certification. The project must shall make use of an existing methodology or submit at the new methodology, with validation opinion of VVB, to~~

<sup>2</sup> Several project activities which form a single project activity or portfolio without the loss of distinctive characteristics of each component.

~~Gold Standard for approval at time of requesting design certification prior to Validation by the VVB.~~

- ~~(b) Applying for (b) The submission to tThe Gold Standard Internal Validation andby. This option implies the paying payment of a required flat fee to the Gold Standard Validation Fund, to initiate the validation of the project.~~
- ~~(c) If the project proposes a new methodology for the accounting and monitoring of methodology as part of the project documentsSDG outcomes, the the internal validation process includes the approval or rejection of the proposed new approach methodology shall be reviewed as by as per 4.0 Baseline, Project Scenario & Monitoring.~~
- ~~Gold Standard, unless, as discussed above, the new methodology is sent for external review.~~
- (b) If the project proposes a new methodology as part of the project documents, the proposed methodology shall be reviewed as per **Error! Reference source not found.** above.

9.1.2 ~~8.2~~ The following procedure applies for tThe Gold Standard Internal Validation option:

- ~~(a) (a) The Gold Standard shall be shall be notified of the use selection of the Internal Validation Validation Fund option.~~
- ~~(b)(a)~~
- ~~(d) (b) The completed PDD along with supporting evidence and documents with information on baseline and monitoring and the Validation Appraisal Report must be uploaded to the GS Registryshall be provided to Gold Standard to initiate the validation process.~~
- ~~(e)(b)~~
- ~~Gold Standard Secretariat will decide and notify~~
- (c) ~~(c) tThe Project Developer is notified on whether the project is will be selected for external validation by a VVB, or will be validated internally by Gold Standard. This decision is made through a 'target-random' selection among microscale projects opting to make use of the Validation Fund. In both cases, the Validation Fund covers the validation costs. At all times, any assistance from The Gold Standard Validation Fund is subject to the availability of funds.~~
- ~~(g) This decision is made through a 'target-random' selection among microscale projects opting to make use of the Validation Fund. In the case when a project is selected for external validation by atthe VVB,, Gold Standard Secretariat will ask the Project Developer shall to provide competitive quotes from three 3 VVBs. Based on the quotes, Gold Standard will contract and pay the VVB from the~~

Validation fund and ~~t~~The project will follow the steps of a regular validation.

(d)

(e) ~~(d) For an~~ internal validation, the Project Developer ~~will be~~ is notified on whether the project is selected for an appraisal of sustainable development aspects, including SDG 13, by an Objective Observer, or if these aspects will be validated internally by Gold Standard alone. 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~~is decision is made through a 'target-random' selection among microscale projects opting to make use of the Validation Fund (~~section 10.0 details the Sustainable Development Assessment Process~~).

## 10. ~~9.0~~ VERIFICATION

10.1.1 ~~9.1~~ Verification shall be conducted in either of the ~~two~~ following ways:

(a) ~~(a) The~~ contracting of ~~an accredited a~~ [GS-VVB](#) ~~as for any other project~~

(b) ~~Applying for (b) Submission to~~ ~~t~~The Gold Standard Internal Verification ~~by paying~~ required fee to ~~t~~The Gold Standard Verification Fund, ~~to initiate the verification of the project. the first fee being paid within nine months after registration.~~

10.1.2 ~~9.2~~ The following procedure applies for ~~t~~The Gold Standard Internal Verification option:

(a) ~~(a)~~ The Gold Standard shall be notified ~~of the selection of~~ ~~of the choice of~~ the Internal Verification option.

(b) ~~(b)~~ The [Monitoring Report](#) ~~along with supporting evidence and documents and Verification Appraisal Report must~~ shall be ~~provided to Gold Standard to initiate the verification process~~ uploaded into the registry with all necessary supporting documentation.

(c) ~~(c)~~ Gold Standard will decide and notify the Project Developer ~~The project developer is notified~~ on whether the project is selected for an external verification by a [VVB](#) or will be verified internally by Gold Standard. ~~This decision is made through a 'target-random' selection among microscale projects opting to make use of the Verification Fund.~~ In both cases, the Verification Fund covers the costs. ~~At all times, any assistance from The Gold Standard Verification Fund is subject to the availability of funds.~~

~~(a) This decision is made through a 'target-random' selection among microscale projects opting to make use of the Verification Fund. In the case when a project is selected for external verification by a VVB, Gold Standard Secretariat will ask the Project Developer shall to provide competitive quotes from three VVBs. Based on the quotes, Gold Standard will contract and pay the VVB from Verification fund and. The project will follow the steps of a regular verification. Project Developers requested to have a project externally verified must provide The Gold Standard with at least three competitive offers from VVBs contract the GS selected VVB, and follow the steps of a regular Verification.~~

(d)

(e) ~~(d)~~ For an internal verification, the Project Developer is notified on whether the project 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.

~~(b)~~

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.

(f)

**10.1.3** ~~If Project developer that 9.3 It is possible for fraud to occur when Project Developer has deliberately provide information that is incorrect, and use the flexibility provided under the microscale scheme to obtain Gold Standard status, or to inflate the SDG outcomes and impacts, from the project will be subject to an investigation by Gold Standard. If such wrongdoing fraud is were suspected suspected, it would be determined through the several rounds of requests for clarification and/or corrective action. If and the resulting Gold Standard investigation Verification shows that the project documentation is fraudulent and credible evidence shows the negative intent of the 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).~~

## **11. ~~10.0~~ SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT ASSESSMENT PROCESS**

~~1.1.7~~ ~~10.1~~ Under the microscale scheme a target-random approach is applied to the project appraisal, making use of an Objective Observer at the Validation and/or Verification stage.

~~1.1.8~~ **11.1.1** .



~~1.1.9~~ **11.1.2** A microscale project must be subjected to an Objective Observer appraisal and site visit at least once within two years of date of Design certification or the start of certification/crediting period, whichever is later.

~~1.1.10~~ **11.1.3** Upon request from Gold Standard and in time for validation or verification, Project Developers 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 can appraise the project with respect to sustainable development aspects. The Gold Standard appoints one, or more, Objective Observer(s) among the people suggested and/or other experts chosen from the Gold Standard [NGO Supporters](#), the Gold Standard 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.

~~10.2~~

~~10.3~~ The Objective Observers shall visit the site at validation or verification stage to provide an independent assessment of the following

(a) **VALIDATION Stage**  
**VALIDATION STAGE**

**11.1.4** At the validation stage, ~~t~~The Objective Observers visits the site ~~at validation or verification stage~~ and use the [Validation Appraisal Report](#) to provide an independent assessment of the following:

- (a) risks associated with the project with respect to ~~The Gold Standard~~ (human rights abuse, environmental degradation, non-adherence to labour laws, corruption, etc.).
- (b) contributions to three SDGs with a mandatory contribution to SDG 13
- (c) completeness of stakeholder consultations

~~During validation, 10.4~~ Project Developers shall carry out a self-assessment of the risks associated with the project with respect to ~~The Gold Standard 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. In case of project appraisal by an Objective Observer, the self-assessment shall be submitted for review by the Observer. The Objective Observer shall carry out a site visit as part of the appraisal process.

**11.1.5** ~~10.5~~ if risks with regards to ~~the above points~~ the Safeguarding Principles are identified as per the Objective Observer's appraisal, the Project Developer ~~is required~~ shall to prepare and submit an appropriate mitigation plan ~~an appropriate mitigation plan and submit it to~~ Gold Standard as part of the design certification process. When ~~the~~ an to the Objective Observer. ~~The Objective Observer is selected, the mitigation plan shall be provided to the Objective Observer, who will~~ shall evaluate the appropriateness of the mitigation measures and they will be reported ~~these~~ in the [Validation Appraisal Report](#). Inputs received from stakeholders during the Stakeholder Consultation (1<sup>st</sup> round) and Stakeholder Feedback Round (SFR), shall be taken into account for this assessment ~~including the feedback on~~ -SDG Impact indicators, shall also be included in the monitoring plan and discussed with Stakeholders ~~shall be taken into account for this assessment.~~

**11.1.6** ~~10.7~~ The [Validation Appraisal Report](#) completed by the Objective Observer will be made available to Gold Standard [Technical Advisory Committee \(TAC\)](#) and [NGO Supporters](#) at the time of review and will form part of the project design certification process. The ~~appraisal~~ [Appraisal Report](#) ~~will~~ shall be made publicly available following project Design Certification.

## **(b) Verification Stage** **STAGE**

**11.1.7** ~~10.8~~ During verification, ~~the~~ if the Objective Observer is selected for appraisal then he/she shall visit the site and use the [Verification Appraisal Report](#) to:

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

**11.1.8** ~~10.10~~ The Objective Observer may also report ~~any~~ new issue observed during the verification.

**11.1.9** ~~10.11~~ The [Verification Appraisal Report](#) will be made available to ~~t~~The Gold Standard [Technical Advisory Committee \(TAC\)](#) and [NGO Supporters](#) at the time of review and will form part of the issuance review. The Appraisal Report ~~shall~~ will be made publicly available after the ~~performance~~ issuance review.

**11.1.10** For projects ~~10.12~~ not selected for an appraisal by an Objective Observer ~~(s)~~ at verification stage and in view of any request for issuance, Project Developers shall ~~confirm~~ provide relevant information

in the [monitoring report](#) including, the status of the project operation, ~~assess if the mitigation plan is effectively~~ [mitigation plans](#) and ~~to~~ [address](#) negative impacts and [the identification of any risks](#), and ~~an~~ [assessment of any new](#) ~~check that other~~ negative impacts ~~that have~~ [not have occurred](#) due to [the](#) implementation and operation of the project.

## **12. ~~11.0~~ DESIGN CHANGE RULES**

~~11.11~~12.1.1 ~~11.1~~The project developer shall refer to [Principles & Requirements](#) for rules and requirements ~~for rules concerning~~ applicable to project design changes and how design change approval shall be requested. ~~s~~ and how to request them. The project developer shall refer to the most recent version of The Gold Standard rules for design chan