

Gold Standard

Certification Procedures & Requirements for Validation/Verification Bodies (VVBs)

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Template Documents

[VVB Application Form](#)

PREFACE

This document (hereby referred to as the GS-VVB Requirements) is to be read alongside the Gold Standard for the Global Goals Principles & Requirements as well as earlier versions of Gold Standard and their associated documents. The GS-VVB Requirements define the following key matters:

1. The guiding principles that underpin the Gold Standard certification process
2. The Gold Standard certification decision making process
3. The criteria and procedure under which a VVB becomes approved (and maintains approval) as a GS-VVB
4. The GS-VVBs eligible for different certification pathways under Gold Standard for the Global Goals
5. The Conformity Criteria checklist for use by GS-VVBs when assessing projects against Gold Standard for the Global Goals

The Requirements in this document shall apply to all GS-VVBs in the carrying out of audits of Gold Standard activities, regardless of which version of Gold Standard is being applied.

Gold Standard's approach to certification decision making is overseen by an independent panel of experts within the Gold Standard Technical Advisory Committee. Changes to the approach laid out in these Requirements will be approved by that body.

SCOPE & APPLICABILITY

This document sets out the Principles and Requirements for certification under the Gold Standard for Global Goals and earlier versions of Gold Standard. These Requirements are part of a broader set of documents which work together to create a consistent and credible approach to standards and certification of Projects and SDG Impacts.

The document is applicable to all VVBs seeking to conduct Validations and Verifications for Gold Standard for the Global Goals and for all earlier versions of Gold Standard.

EFFECTIVE DATE & GRACE PERIOD

Effective Date:

The Requirements of this document shall be effective as of 14th August 2017. From 14th August 2017 only GS-VVBs, as defined in this document, shall be eligible to conduct Validation and Verification of Gold Standard projects, under any version of Gold Standard.

Grace Periods for existing Gold Standard VVBs:

VVBs eligible under earlier versions of Gold Standard must submit their application for approval under these Requirements no later than 01st November 2017 in order to take advantage of the Grace Period. Their proposed Team Leader and Validation/Verifier must also attend the mandatory Gold Standard for the Global Goals training planned during this period. The cut off date for approval as GS-VVB applying the grace period is 01st March 2018. VVBs may continue to enter legal agreements for the provision of Gold Standard Validation and Verification services as follows:

- Up to 1st November 2017 – No restriction
- From 1st November 2017 to the earlier of Gold Standard decision (in the event of rejection) or 1st March 2018 – if an application is submitted by 1st November 2017

Following approval of application the VVB is subject to these Requirements in full.

Any pre-existing Validation or Verification commitments (i.e., those with a fully executed legal agreement between VVB and Project Developer, signed on or before 14th August 2017 or between 14th August and 01st November 2017) may be completed as above.

Note that the above applies to existing eligible VVBs seeking to take advantage of the grace period. New VVBs can apply at any time after 14th August 2017 and will become eligible GS-VVBs from the date of approval. Likewise, any existing VVB not submitting an application by 1st November 2017 can submit a later application but will not benefit from the Grace Periods stated.

For Project Developers:

Up to 1st November 2017 any existing eligible VVBs may be contracted (i.e., legal agreement fully executed on or before this date) as per eligibility stated in Version 2.2 of the Gold Standard for Energy or 0.9 for A/R and Agriculture.

For appointments with legal agreements to be executed after the 1st November, Gold Standard shall publish a list of those VVBs that continue to be eligible to take on Validation and Verification services. The list shall then be updated on an ongoing basis as approvals are given or rejected.

1.0 CERTIFICATION GUIDING PRINCIPLES

1.1 Guiding Principles – The Gold Standard Guiding Principles for Certification are as follows:

- The climate security and sustainable development contributions and impacts delivered by a project shall be thoroughly and accurately measured as well as reviewed by an approved independent third party AND Gold Standard.
- All Gold Standard NGO Supporters and other stakeholders can support the stakeholder consultation process and may be invited to provide input for every project at defined points in the certification process.
- The project shall be transparent. The project's information shall be well documented to enable reproducibility and tracing of certified information. Approved Project documents shall be made public on the Gold Standard Registry unless pre-agreed as confidential (for example, in the case of commercially or privately sensitive information). The list of published documentation can be found in the Gold Standard for the Global Goals Principles & Requirements (and in some cases also specific Activity Requirements and Gold Standard Methodologies).
- The project's conformity and progress shall be monitored, reported and independently Verified throughout the entire certification period as per the cycle described in Gold Standard for the Global Goals or earlier versions of Gold Standard.
- The project shall have a Monitoring & Reporting Plan, based on the outcome of the Safeguarding Principles Assessment, SDG Impacts and Stakeholder Consultation impacts. The parameters in the Monitoring & Reporting Plan shall be regularly monitored, clearly reported on and independently validated/verified.
- Independent, accredited validation & verification bodies shall verify that the project meets all rules and that all claims and any calculations are accurate.
- The Gold Standard Secretariat shall review all documentation and may require corrections or enhancements where needed to ensure that a project meets Gold Standard requirements. These corrections or enhancements may take place after the third party Validation or Verification if that is deemed to be incomplete or incorrect.

1.2 ISEAL Alliance

1.2.1 Gold Standard aspires to become a full ISEAL Alliance Member and as such is evolving its certification approach to be in line with the ISEAL Assurance Code^[1]. Accordingly the Requirements will be reviewed and updated as part of the planned updates to the Standard and be brought further in line with the Codes. A notification of changes shall be issued to all affected parties, particularly Accreditation Bodies (where appropriate) and applicant or approved GS-VVBs and also published to the relevant section of the Gold Standard website.

1.2.2 The following provides a brief overview/comparison of the ISEAL Assurance Code principles and how they are broadly adhered to by these Requirements:

- Consistency – Gold Standard projects are first validated or verified by an accredited, third party GS-VVB. The Gold Standard then administers a Roster of Experts to conduct peer reviews of the recommendations /completed Validations and Verifications to enhance consistency and rigour. In addition, Gold Standard provides regular training and support to GS-VVBs, as well as tools, templates and guidelines to support a consistent and rigorous assessment process.
- Rigour – The level of rigour applied by Gold Standard is dependent on the Certification pathway proposed. For example the application of a Gold Standard Approved Methodology defines the level of rigour and confidence required in its assessment. For the core Principles & Requirements, a combination of the Conformity Checklist, support and approval of GS-VVBs and close peer review ensures the level of rigour is maintained.
- Competence – GS-VVBs must first demonstrate they have the required audit competence via a Gold Standard Recognised Accreditation. Further they must demonstrate this experience to Gold Standard to become approved as well to undertake regular training.

This training and assessment approach is also applied to the Gold Standard Roster of Experts, who conduct peer reviews of the GS-VVB recommendations.

- Impartiality – Gold Standard recognises third party Accreditations as part of the approvals process to become a GS-VVB. Gold Standard does not play any decision-making role in the assessment or accreditation decision making undertaken by the third party, thereby ensuring impartiality of first assessment. Gold Standard shall, however, share any performance feedback with the third party where appropriate and requested. With regards certification, a project may only enter the certification review process with a positive Validation or Verification opinion from a GS-VVB. It is not possible for Gold Standard to overturn a negative opinion, thereby ensuring impartiality of audit. Finally, the certification decision making process is supported by the Gold Standard independent Technical Advisory Committee and NGO Supporter community, who are able to review and raise concerns on any certification review.
- Transparency – All Gold Standard certification information is publicly available via the Gold Standard Registry. In certain cases, materials may be redacted, for example, in the case of commercially sensitive financial information.
- Accessibility – The process described in these Requirements is broadly similar to other standards operating similarly to Gold Standard. It is reflective of market expectation though Gold Standard commits to reviewing accessibility at each planned review.

2.0 GOLD STANDARD CERTIFICATION DECISION MAKING

2.1 The Gold Standard Secretariat is responsible for confirming certification decisions. There are a number of safeguards in place to ensure that this process maintains the principles of set out in Section 1.0, as described in this section.

2.2 Overview – Gold Standard certification decision making is undertaken as a five step process, with specific timings and details dependent on the certification pathway sought by the project. The steps are briefly described as follows:

STEP 1 – The Project Developer appoints a GS-VVB who is eligible for the specific certification pathway sought. The process for GS-VVB approval and eligibility is described in this document. The appointment and contracting is between the Project Developer and the GS-VVB but shall include a scope of work that is comprehensive and suitable for the certification pathway sought.

STEP 2 – The GS-VVB conducts a Validation or Verification (as appropriate to Project status) of the Project. This involves team appointment, audit planning, site visit, assessment of conformity to the Gold Standard Principles & Requirements, or earlier versions of Gold Standard and associated documents and ultimately the provision of a Validation or Verification Report to Gold Standard.

STEP 3 – If the Validation or Verification Report is positive, then a review is initiated by Gold Standard. This involves peer review by at least one expert (in some cases a second reviewer is also appointed at Gold Standard's discretion, for example, very large or first-of-kind projects). The documentation is also posted for review and comment by the Gold Standard Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and NGO Supporter community. During this step, NCs, CARs, OBs and FARs may be raised, beyond those that may have already been raised by the GS-VVB. Certification can only proceed if these are resolved.

STEP 4 – Certification is provided if:

- The GS-VVB provided a positive Validation or Verification Report (and has not subsequently removed or changed this position during the Gold Standard review).
- The Gold Standard Secretariat peer review is satisfied that all CARs and NCs are fully resolved (including any associated with TAC, NGO Supporter or stakeholder inputs as

below).

- There are no outstanding TAC or NGO Supporter comments unresolved (see 2.3).

STEP 5 – The certification decision along with any certificates are published to the Gold Standard Registry as confirmation.

2.3 NGO Supporters and other actors (as defined by Gold Standard in certain Activity Requirements) are stakeholders to the certification process, as opposed to decision makers. Their comments shall be discussed with the Gold Standard TAC if they cannot be resolved directly between the Secretariat and Supporter. The decision on how/if to address stakeholder comments therefore lies with the Gold Standard TAC.

3.0 GS-VVB ELIGIBILITY & APPROVAL REQUIREMENTS

3.1 This section describes the procedure and requirements for a VVB to become eligible and to maintain eligibility to conduct Validation and Verification assessments in support of Gold Standard Certification. An approved VVB is known as a GS-VVB and they are eligible for a number of different certification pathways under Gold Standard for the Global Goals, dependent on their accreditation and competency backgrounds.

3.2 The approval of VVBs/individual experts by the Gold Standard is provided on an ongoing basis. The approval may be reassessed and/or revoked at any time at the sole discretion of the Gold Standard, overseen by the Gold Standard TAC.

3.3 To apply for GS-VVB status, a VVB shall provide evidence that the following Requirements have been met.

Provide an application to the Gold Standard that:

(a) Confirms adherence to the Gold Standard Principles (as per this document and the Gold Standard for the Global Goals Principles and Requirements), AND

(b) Confirms that the applicant has no financial interest in and no conflict of interest with Gold Standard or any Gold Standard Project (save for the provision of Validation/Verification services), AND

(c) Confirms which certification pathway options the VVB applies for (see Annex A), AND

(d) Includes/appends evidence confirming items below:

- Evidence of current accreditation under a Gold Standard approved Accreditation, defined in 3.8 below
- Demonstration of team structure and key individuals competence (via CVs) relevant to the scope of the certification pathway(s) for which approval is sought. At least one Team Leader and one Validator/Verifier shall be named in the application; further can be included or named at a later date, subject to the payment of additional fee for further individuals. Structure and Competence are defined in 3.10.
- Demonstration that the team structure put forward has the necessary capacity and resilience to maintain its ability to audit Gold Standard projects. For example, proof that the team is resilient to changes in staffing and has the necessary resource and backing to see through proposed workload.

3.4 GS-VVB status is granted for a period of 36 months from the date of approval to the documentation required under 3.3, above. Prior to expiration, the GS-VVB shall re-submit the full set of information, updated as required in 3.3 for re-approval. An application for re-approval shall be submitted no later than 6 weeks prior to the end of the 36 month period.

3.5 Gold Standard shall take into account any performance concerns during the 36 month period when considering the re-approval.

3.6 Approval and re-approval is conducted via a 4- and 3-week review period, respectively, decided upon by Gold Standard and overseen by the Gold Standard TAC. Where an application is rejected, Gold Standard shall provide feedback indicating the rationale for rejection. Re-application by the VVB may be submitted not sooner than 6 months after the date of communication of rejection by Gold Standard and shall include details of how the areas of feedback provided have been addressed, improved upon and resolved.

3.7 During the 36 month period from the date of approval the GS-VVB (any named GS Team Leader or GS Validator/Verifier as defined in 3.3 and 3.10) shall attend all trainings and complete all exams as specified in 3.13 below.

3.8 The GS-VVB shall employ or have access to, sufficient personnel/resources to cover its operations related to the applicable certification pathways. The individual expert/audit team including auditors, technical experts, technical reviewers, etc. shall be competent for the functions they perform, including making required technical judgements. The requirements are described in 3.10, below.

3.9 Accreditation

3.9.1 To be eligible to become a GS-VVB, a VVB must hold a current accreditation that is recognised by Gold Standard. The list of recognised accreditation programmes is included in Annex A and is updated under approval by Gold Standard TAC.

3.9.2 VVBs shall notify Gold Standard of any inconsistency between the requirements set down by any Recognised Accreditation and those of the Gold Standard. Gold Standard shall advise the VVB on the course of action.

3.9.3 In the event that a GS-VVB loses or does not renew its Accreditation during the 36 month period from the date of approval, it shall immediately notify Gold Standard and provide details of all Projects for which it has contracts that require conclusion. Gold Standard shall direct the GS-VVB on any additional course of action to conclude outstanding Validations/Verifications.

3.10 Structure & Competence

The following structure and competency guidelines are provided to GS-VVBs. Failure by a GS-VVB to adhere to these guidelines shall be taken into account during any re-approvals process.

3.10.1 Structure and Competence of audit teams

For each Validation or Verification conducted by the GS-VVB, the team shall be defined in the Validation or Verification Report. Each team shall at minimum include a Gold Standard Team Leader and a Gold Standard Lead Validator/Verifier. These shall be those named in the initial application as defined in 3.3 or further nominated (fees apply) during the 36 month eligibility period. If the VVB maintains a roster of other experts/auditors for accommodating cases of staff changes, this too shall be reported as a part of the initial application. Gold Standard does not approve the teams appointed to individual Validations or Verifications but reserves the right to comment on the appropriateness and experience of the GS-VVB team.

3.10.2 An audit team employed by a GS-VVB shall collectively have the necessary competence, including:

(a) The GS-VVB shall ensure that the team has the necessary knowledge and experience to evaluate against Gold Standard for Global Goals or earlier versions of Gold Standard Requirements and other related documents including the following, as related to the pathways for which they are eligible to conduct Validation and Verification:

- Host country (or regional) experience: This includes knowledge about the economy, geography, climate, culture, social conditions, and local language of a given country or region.
- Environmental matters.
- Socio-economic matters.
- Language: Language skills as relevant and required in the country or region (note that English is the language required to be used in reporting to and communicating with Gold

Standard).

(b) The Gold Standard Team Leader competency requirements are defined as:

- Meet the requirements for Gold Standard Validator/Verifier, below;
- Have the following knowledge and skills and the ability to apply them to perform validation or verification/certification activities:
 - Knowledge and understanding of applicable Gold Standard Requirements, processes and procedures as required for the Project type and Certification Pathway(s) under Validation or Verification;
 - Planning and making effective use of human resources and managing validation or verification teams;
 - Planning and organising work effectively and performing it within the agreed time schedule, to prioritise and focus on matters of significance;
 - Representing the validation or verification/certification team in communications with the VVB's clients;
 - Understanding the validation or verification/certification process, leading the team to reach conclusions on all aspects of the validation or verification/certification and complete the validation or verification/certification opinion and report;
 - Preventing and resolving conflicts.

(c) Gold Standard Validator/Verifiers competence, knowledge and skills including:

- Knowledge and understanding of applicable Gold Standard Requirements, processes and procedures as required for the Project type and Certification Pathway(s) under Validation or Verification
- Data, information and system auditing techniques and methodologies;
- Risk assessment techniques and methodologies;
- Data and information sampling techniques and methodologies;
- Application of the concepts of materiality and level of assurance;
- Collection of information through effective interviewing, listening, observing and reviewing documents, records and data;
- Verification of the accuracy of collected information, evaluation of the sufficiency and appropriateness of gathered evidence to support validation or verification/certification findings and conclusions;
- Preparation of validation or verification/certification opinions and reports.

(d) Competence for technical experts

A technical expert shall have specific knowledge and/or expertise in technical, methodological and sectoral aspects. A technical expert shall be familiar with an VVB's procedures for audit functions and shall have access to an up-to-date set of documented procedures giving relevant instructions and information on the Gold Standard activities.

(e) Competence for technical reviewers

The personnel conducting a technical review shall collectively have the necessary competence, which includes knowledge relevant to the technical area(s) of the Gold Standard activity/product/impact statement being certified.

3.10.3 External Individuals & Subcontracting

(a) GS-VVBs may appoint external individuals (technical experts) to supplement their internal resources. In such cases, the GS-VVB shall establish, document, implement and maintain a procedure for engaging external individuals. This shall require having a written agreement from the external individual to comply with the VVB's applicable policies and procedures. The agreement shall address confidentiality and independence from commercial and other interests. The agreement shall also require the external individual to notify the assurance provider of any existing or prior association with any of the client's activities they may be assigned to audit as well as actual or potential involvement in identification, development or financing of activities. The requirements with respect to competence as defined above, shall also apply to external individuals.

(b) In cases where external individuals are contracted by VVBs for activities other than GHG or activities including certification of new products or Certified SDG Impact statements in addition to GHG, the CV(s) shall be shared by the VVB with the Gold Standard. The VVB shall also obtain and verify a declaration from the individual that there is no Conflict of Interest arising from the individuals appointment and make available to Gold Standard on request.

(c) A VVB may subcontract other legal entities (subcontractors) to provide specific technical expertise to supplement its internal resources. Such technical expertise shall be limited to technical issues related to the activity to be audited. In such cases, the VVB shall establish, document, implement and maintain a procedure for subcontracting. If a contract is made between the VVB and a company/legal entity, even if a one-person company, the technical expertise to be provided to the VVB shall be treated as subcontracting, and the requirements applicable to subcontracting shall apply. The VVB shall evaluate the subcontractor and its personnel to ensure they meet the relevant requirements contained in this document and the VVB's systems. The VVB shall remain responsible for the outcomes of the work carried out by the subcontractor to comply with the requirements specified in the Standard document.

The VVB shall also obtain and verify a declaration from the sub-contractor that there is no Conflict of Interest arising from the appointment and make available to Gold Standard on request.

(d) In cases where external individuals are contracted for activities other than GHG or activities including certification of new products or Certified SDG Impact statements in addition to GHG, details on subcontracting shall be shared with Gold Standard.

(e) Individual Experts

For certain certification pathways, individual expert(s) may be sub-contracted by a Project Developer. Such instances are defined in Appendix A. In such cases, the individual shall submit application to Gold Standard for approval (including approval by Gold Standard TAC) prior to entering into any contract to conduct Validation or Verification. The application should include the following:

- CV demonstrating the competency requirements as stated under Section 3.9, AND
- Letter of motivation and that the individual has no financial interest or any other conflict of interest concerning the Project.

The review of the application by Gold Standard will take 4 weeks and is subject to approval by Gold Standard TAC. After this period, the applicant will be informed whether the application has been accepted or not. When feedback is received, the applicant can submit a new application again showing improvement in the application for re-evaluation. Typically, this would include the following scenarios:

- A request for further information or substantiation of the information submitted.
- Assessment findings that the application does not meet the necessary requirements for approval. In this case any subsequent re-application shall demonstrate how any gaps have been improved and resolved.

In some cases, Gold Standard may also recommend experts from its Roster of Experts carrying

the relevant competence and knowledge.

Where an application is rejected by Gold Standard, the Expert shall be provided with feedback/rationale for the rejection. The Expert may re-apply not sooner than six months from the date of rejection and shall demonstrate that the areas of feedback from Gold Standard have been addressed, improved and resolved.

3.11 GS-VVB and individual performance

3.11.1 Gold Standard follows a Performance Management approach, designed to accelerate the development of VVB capabilities and to improve the quality and efficiency of certification services under the Gold Standard for Global Goals. This is made up of the following elements:

- Review of all VVB/individual expert reports submitted to the Secretariat during certification.
- Detailed monitoring of the first 3 to 5 engagements for newly approved VVBs/individual experts, including review of work plans, verification teams, risk assessments, reports and findings.
- Provision of immediate feedback on performance as audit engagements are planned, conducted and concluded.
- Annual review of VVB/individual expert competence and performance based on information gathered across the year, with training and assessment to remedy any performance problems.

3.11.2 Persistent and/or serious problems with the performance of a GS-VVB/individual expert may result in the Gold Standard revoking the VVB's/individual expert's approval or refusing their re-approval.

3.12 Training

3.12.1 All GS-VVBs/individual experts shall participate in all mandatory training and any examination programs provided by Gold Standard. Successful application includes for named GS Team Leaders and GS Validators/Verifiers to attend training and examinations during the 36 month period. In the case of individual experts, only those applicants that have received approval of the application process can undertake training.

3.12.2 Regular trainings

The training will be offered online, every three months. Access to the training material will also be provided as a part of this online training program via electronic link. The electronic link is for individual use only and is non-transferable. The auditors/individual experts shall take at least two trainings per year and also take additional training sessions when new versions of the Standard are released or when relevant updates are made to The Gold Standard rules. In this case, the auditors/individual experts will be notified whenever such trainings are available.

3.12.3 Trainings required to maintain GS approval

In order to maintain the GS approval status, the individual expert/VVB shall ensure that at least one GS Team Leader and one GS Validator/Verifier shall have completed all mandatory training/exams during the approved period. In order to obtain the GS Training Certificate, the GS Team Leader and GS Validator/Verifier/ shall:

- Attend at least two training programs offered in a year.
- Where an evaluation (test) is required upon completion of any training program, the individual shall achieve at least a score of 75% or higher in each of the two evaluations (tests).

3.12.4 GS Team Leaders, GS Validator/Verifiers and individual experts who score less than 75% shall take the training again and the subsequent test. If after two tries the threshold competency is not met (75% or higher) then an improvement plan shall be agreed with GS, including a plan to re-take the examination. Failure to complete the agreed plan/examination

shall result in GS status for the Team Leader or Validator/Verifier being removed. Training and examination completion will be monitored per 12 month period.

3.12.5 All training fees are non-refundable.

3.13 Gold Standard Registry

3.13.1 All VVBs seeking to audit Gold Standard activities must establish an account in the Gold Standard Registry before conducting any audits. Likewise, all Project Developers seeking to apply for Gold Standard registration must open an account in the Gold Standard Registry.

3.13.2 All users of the Gold Standard Registry must sign the Terms of Use of the Gold Standard Registry and pay the relevant fee (see Gold Standard fee schedule).

3.14 Grievances, allegations & complaints concerning GS-VVBs/Individuals:

3.14.1 Gold Standard is committed to the open, transparent and fair resolution of all allegations and complaints received against the projects we certify, or against the organisation itself. A stakeholder who has evidence of wrongdoing by a project is strongly encouraged to file a grievance against the project. Stakeholders who believe Gold Standard has not acted in accordance with its core principles of transparency, conservativeness, and local community engagement are also strongly encouraged to file a grievance. Please follow the [procedures](#) given on the Gold Standard website.

3.14.2 To handle complaints about specific activity with respect to the audit conducted by the VVB, the VVB shall also establish, document, implement and maintain a procedure for receiving, managing, evaluating, and investigating complaints, making decisions on them, and taking appropriate corrections and corrective actions. This procedure shall be publicly available and shall, at minimum, include:

- The contact details of personnel responsible for handling of complaints
- The process for receiving the complaint, gathering and verifying all necessary information for evaluating the validity of the complaint, investigating the complaint and for deciding what actions are to be taken in response to it
- Safeguarding the confidentiality of the complainant and subject of the complaint
- Ensuring that the persons engaged in the complaint handling process are different from those who carried out the audit on the activity
- Keeping the complainant informed of the progress and informing the complainant of the outcome of the investigation and the final notice of the end of the complaints handling process

3.14.3 Within 10 working days of receiving a complaint the VVB shall provide an initial response to the complainant, including an outline of the proposed course of action to follow up on the complaint.

3.14.4 The VVB shall investigate the allegations and specify all proposed actions in response to the complainant within 3 months of receiving the complaint. In cases where the complainant is not satisfied with the decision, the VVB shall inform the complainant that it has the option of making a complaint to Gold Standard.

3.14.5 It shall be ensured by the VVB that appropriate corrections and corrective actions are taken following investigation of the complaint.

ANNEX A – GS-APPROVED ACCREDITATION

The following accreditations are recognised by Gold Standard as part of the eligibility criteria required to become a GS-VVB. Note that certain accreditation provides access to specific certification pathways, as defined in Annex A:

- ISO 14065 for Greenhouse Gas activities accreditation offered under the ANSI-GS

- UNFCCC-CDM Accreditation (AIE or DOE status)
- ASI – FSC Certification Body status

The following table provides an overview of which GS-VVB pathways are eligible for each Gold Standard Certification pathway. Note that one application may cover several pathways under the same fee, except in the case of LU&F – see the [Gold Standard Fee Schedule](#).

Gold Standard Project Type/Certification Pathway	UNFCCC DOE	ANSI 14065 VVB	ASI FSC Certification Body	Gold Standard Objective Observer
CER Labelling (all project types)	Yes	No	No	No
Renewable Energy Labelling (scope requirements below apply)	Yes	Yes	No	No
Gold Standard Micro-scale (all Project types)*	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Gold Standard Micro-scale & Small Holder (LU&F)*	No	No	No	Yes
Gold Standard for Sustainable Urban Development	Yes	Yes	No	No
Community Services Activity Requirements:				
Technology distribution (cookstove, CFL etc)	Yes – Scope* 3	Yes – Scope** 3	No	–
Biodigesters	Yes – Scope 13/15/1	Yes – Scope 6	No	–
Renewable Energy	Yes – Scope 1	Yes – Scope 1	No	–
WASH	Yes – Scope 3	Yes – Scope 3	No	–
Other Project Types:				
Renewable Energy (RE Activity Requirements)	Yes – Scope 1	Yes – Scope 1	No	–
Waste to Energy	Yes – Scope 13/1 (municipal) or 15/1 (animal	Yes – Scope 1/6 (municipal) Scope 5	No	–

	manure management)	(animal manure management)		
Shipping	Yes – Scope 7	Yes – Scope 1	No	–
Others – as stated in GS-approved methodologies	As per methodology	On application	No	–
Land-use & Forest Activity Requirements				
A/R	Yes – Scope 14	Yes – Scope 3	Yes	–
Agriculture	Yes – Scope 15	Yes – Scope 5 (livestock projects only)	On application	–

* <https://cdm.unfccc.int/DOE/scopelst.pdf>

** <https://www.ansi.org/Accreditation/environmental/greenhouse-gas-validation-verification/DocumentDetail?DRId=666>

In addition to the above the following methodologies/Products require specific training to be undertaken prior to conducting Validation/Verification:

- All ADALYs (SDG3) methodologies
- Projects involving the issuance of Gender Impact (SDG 5) Statements

[1] <https://www.isealalliance.org/our-work/defining-credibility/codes-of-good-practice/assurance-code>

[2] Other accreditation programmes may be added to this list in due course (for example further ISO 14064/65 providers). Project Developers and/or VVBs may request Gold Standard to investigate and decide whether to approve further such accreditation routes for a fee (see Gold Standard fee schedule). The decision is taken by the GS-TAC with a review period of 8 weeks.