



**Gold Standard**<sup>®</sup>  
for the Global Goals

**FORM**

## **FORM - DEVIATION REQUEST SUBMISSION**

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**PUBLICATION DATE: 12/11/2024**

**VERSION: 6.0**

**NEXT PLANNED UPDATE: 12/11/2026**

### **RELATED DOCUMENTS**

– [Deviations Approval Requirements and Procedures](#)

### **CONTACT DETAILS**

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## 1| General Guidelines

### 1.1 | Applicability

- 1.1.1 | This form is to be completed for projects (project activities/PoAs/VPAs) seeking deviation or is/are at a risk of deviating from any [applicable requirements](#), GS4GG-specific requirements listed in the applicable [Methodologies](#) or any other deviations occurring in any of the various aspects of the project.
- 1.1.2 | Refer to the latest version of [Deviation Request Requirements and Procedures](#) for detailed information on the procedures and requirements.
- 1.1.3 | This form can be used in the following instances i.e.,
- a. Deviation from GS4GG requirements and/or applicable methodologies prior to submission for certification with GS4GG.
  - b. Temporary changes to a certified project - which include changes from the registered monitoring plan, the applied methodologies or other standard documents - that are expected **not** to occur beyond a given monitoring period.
- 1.1.4 | For any permanent changes to a design certified project, the requirements set in [Design Change Approval Requirements and Procedures](#) shall be followed.

## 2| Submission of deviation form

- 2.1.1 | This form shall be submitted in Microsoft Word (.doc) format to Gold Standard at [deviations@goldstandard.org](mailto:deviations@goldstandard.org)
- 2.1.2 | Forms with incomplete/inaccurate information shall not be considered for review and shall be returned to the applicant.

## 3| Implementation of deviation decision

- 3.1.1 | The decision prescribed in this form shall be considered by the entity applying for deviation for further course of action.

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## 4| Decision summary

*To be completed by Gold Standard*

### 4.1 | General information

DEVIATION REFERENCE NUMBER	DEVREQ-341
Date of decision	30/03/2026
Decision	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Approved</b> [No precondition to apply the deviation decision] <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Conditionally approved</b> [Decision is subject to compliance with the precondition defined below] <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Not approved</b> [reason for rejection is provided in decision summary]

### 4.2 | Decision

#### 4.2.1 | Decision Summary

The deviation is approved. SDG impacts that were not monitored during the said monitoring period (2021-2023) cannot be claimed for this period.

Monitoring of SDG 6 should resume and be reported post this period, along with any corrective operational measures, as required, to ensure compliance with the certified monitoring plan.

#### 4.2.2 | Directions for the project developer/CME, if applicable

The Project Developer shall document the deviation request and GS' decision in the appropriate section of the monitoring report.

#### 4.2.3 | Directions for the Validation and Verification Body (VVB), if applicable

None

#### 4.2.4 | Directions for the Gold Standard, if applicable

NA

### 4.3 | Applicability to other activities

Is this decision applicable to other projects under similar circumstances? <sup>1</sup>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does this decision set a precedent for future projects with similar circumstances? <sup>2</sup>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

<sup>1</sup> If this is marked yes, this means that any other project (PoA/VPA/PA) in similar situation may apply the decision of this deviation to their project as well. The project developer/VVB may quote this deviation decision in the relevant certification documents. This is relevant to only the projects which have already entered the certification cycle with GS4GG.

<sup>2</sup> If this is marked yes, it means the decision is valid to all the future projects which will enter the certification cycle with the similar situation. This is relevant to all the projects which are not yet design certified with GS4GG or have not submitted their documents for preliminary review yet.

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Precedent details (if applicable to other activities)

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## 5| Deviation Request Details

*To be completed by the entity requesting deviation - (Project Developer/Coordinating and Managing Entity and/or VVB)*

### 5.1 | Submitted by

- Project developer  
 CME  
 VVB  
 Other (specify...)

### 5.2 | Details of the entity and its representative submitting the form

Item	Information
Name <sup>3</sup> : Jordan Petzer	Insert Text here
Email ID <sup>4</sup> : jordan@carbonneutral.com.au	Insert Text here
Organisation: <sup>5</sup> : Carbon Neutral Pty Ltd	Insert Text here
Are you an authorized project participant as per the cover letter submitted for this activity?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

### 5.3 | Background information

Type	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Project activity	<input type="checkbox"/> PoA GSXXXX	<input type="checkbox"/> VPA	
GS ID	GS3039			
Host country(ies)	Australia			
Project Title	Australian Yarra Yarra Biodiversity Project			
Registry link	<a href="https://registry.goldstandard.org/projects/details/524">https://registry.goldstandard.org/projects/details/524</a>			
Scale	<input type="checkbox"/> Microscale (GS) <input type="checkbox"/> Small scale <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Large scale <input type="checkbox"/> Other, if applicable please specify below <i>Insert text here</i>			
Certification Status and corresponding date of latest status	<input type="checkbox"/> Listed <hr/> <input type="checkbox"/> GS4GG	<input type="checkbox"/> Certified design <hr/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Certified project <hr/> 11/06/2015	<input type="checkbox"/> Other <i>If other, specify here</i> <hr/>

<sup>3</sup> Name of the individual representing the entity requesting the deviation

<sup>4</sup> Email ID for further correspondence related to the deviation request

<sup>5</sup> The name of the entity requesting the deviation

Applied version of Standard	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Previous version of Gold Standard	Version no.			
		<input type="checkbox"/> 1.0	<input type="checkbox"/> 1.1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1.2	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2.2
Transition date, if applicable	From previous GS version to GS4GG		01/03/2018		
	From another standard to GS4GG				
	Name of another standard	<input type="checkbox"/> CDM <input type="checkbox"/> Other Name of the Standard – Insert text here			
Applicable activity requirement	<input type="checkbox"/> Renewable Energy Activity Requirements <input type="checkbox"/> Community Services Activity Requirements <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Land-use and Forests Activity Requirements <input type="checkbox"/> Other <i>Insert name here</i>				

## 5.4 | Project deviation history

Is there any deviation request(s) for the same project activity/PoA/VPA(s) that was submitted to GS previously? If yes, below information.		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Reference number	Unknown. Reason was "Late submission of Annual Report" submitted 07/02/2024 in relation to the 2022 Annual Report.	
Status of the deviation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Approved	<input type="checkbox"/> Rejected <input type="checkbox"/> Under review
Were there any findings (CL, CAR, FAR) raised during any certification step (preliminary review, design and/or performance review etc.) that are relevant to this deviation request?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	<b>Summary of the findings</b> <i>Summary of the CL, CAR, FAR not more than 200 words. Include reference to document, page number</i>

## 6 | Deviation detail

*To be completed by the entity requesting deviation (Project Developer/Coordinating and Managing Entity and/or VVB)*

### 6.1 | Standard document reference

Standard document reference	Title	Name of standard document relevant to deviation request e.g., Safeguarding Principles and Requirements
	Version	Version number e.g., V2.1
	Paragraph	Paragraph number if available e.g., para 4.2.1

### 6.2 | Description of the deviation

Title	SDG-6 Water not conducted during last monitoring period.	
Confirm the nature of changes related to deviation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Temporary (e.g. not expected to occur beyond one monitoring period)	<input type="checkbox"/> Permanent (e.g. deviation from requirements prior to submission for certification)

	<p>This deviation is temporary in nature and limited to a single monitoring period (2021-2023). It resulted from exceptional and time-bound circumstances, including COVID-19 access restrictions and unusually dry climatic conditions that prevented surface water flow during sampling windows.</p> <p>Monitoring activities have since resumed when rainfall conditions allowed (2024), and corrective operational measures have been implemented to ensure future compliance with the approved Monitoring Plan. The deviation is therefore not expected to recur in subsequent monitoring periods and does not represent a permanent change to project design or monitoring requirements.</p>	
<p>Relevant monitoring period, if applicable</p>	<p>Start date</p>	<p>01/01/2021</p>
	<p>End date</p>	<p>31/12/2023</p>
<p>Summarise the changes</p>	<p>During the 2021-2023 monitoring period, the project deviated from the approved Monitoring Plan by not collecting surface water salinity data (Electrical Conductivity - EC) for SDG 6 monitoring. The approved project design requires periodic comparison of surface water salinity from re-afforested land and adjacent agricultural land to demonstrate improvements in water-related ecosystem quality.</p> <p>Due to a combination of COVID-19 travel restrictions, extreme climatic conditions, and the ephemeral nature of surface water flows within the project area, sampling could not be undertaken during this period. Monitoring has since resumed, and operational procedures have been strengthened to prevent recurrence.</p>	
<p>Reason for deviation</p>	<p>The deviation occurred due to circumstances beyond the Project Developer’s control:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• COVID-19 restrictions (2021): Travel and movement limitations restricted access to remote project sites during optimal sampling windows.</li> <li>• Extreme climatic conditions (2022–2023): The project area experienced its driest years since project inception. There are no permanent streams; drainage lines flow only for short periods following intense rainfall events. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 2022 recorded below-average annual rainfall, aside from a single large storm event.</li> <li>○ 2023 recorded 135.6 mm annual rainfall, approximately 54% below the long-term mean.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Operational constraints: Due to the infrequency and short duration of surface water flow events, aligning site visits with viable sampling windows was operationally impractical given site remoteness.</li> </ul> <p>The Project Developer considers that the temporary absence of data does not compromise the environmental integrity of the project, as consistent trends are observable in data collected prior to and following the deviation period.</p>	

<p>Proposed resolution</p>	<p>The proposed resolution is to accept the absence of surface water salinity data for the 2021–2023 monitoring period and rely on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Historical monitoring data collected prior to 2021; and</li> <li>• Monitoring results resumed in 2024 and continued in 2025, when rainfall conditions permitted sampling.</li> </ul> <p>To ensure accuracy, completeness and conservativeness:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitoring was resumed in winter 2024, with results confirming that reforested catchments continue to exhibit substantially lower salinity levels than agricultural catchments.</li> <li>• No assumptions or interpolations have been applied to estimate missing data for the deviation period.</li> <li>• SDG 6 performance claims have not been overstated during the data gap.</li> </ul> <p>To prevent recurrence, the Project Developer has implemented the following corrective measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employment of a full-time farm manager residing locally to enable rapid sampling following rainfall events.</li> <li>• Training of local staff in water sampling techniques, reducing reliance on third-party contractors.</li> <li>• Implementation of stricter internal protocols to prioritise water quality sampling immediately after rainfall events.</li> </ul>				
<p>Is there any potential temporary or permanent impact of deviation on other aspects of the project?</p>	<p>Select the relevant area:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Project design</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Local stakeholder consultation</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Safeguarding principles</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SDG assessment</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Regulatory compliance</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Additionality</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Applicability of methodology</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Annual emission reduction volume <i>(if yes, fill the table below)</i></li> </ul> <table border="1" data-bbox="472 1420 1441 1579"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="472 1420 951 1536">Annual emission reduction/removal before applying deviation</th> <th data-bbox="951 1420 1441 1536">Annual emission reduction/removal after applying deviation</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="472 1536 951 1579">XYZ tCO<sub>2e</sub></td> <td data-bbox="951 1536 1441 1579">XYZ tCO<sub>2e</sub></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p><input type="checkbox"/> any other matrix, please specify...</p>	Annual emission reduction/removal before applying deviation	Annual emission reduction/removal after applying deviation	XYZ tCO <sub>2e</sub>	XYZ tCO <sub>2e</sub>
Annual emission reduction/removal before applying deviation	Annual emission reduction/removal after applying deviation				
XYZ tCO <sub>2e</sub>	XYZ tCO <sub>2e</sub>				
<p>Summary of the impact</p>	<p>The deviation has a temporary and limited impact on SDG 6 monitoring only.</p> <p><b>SDG 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation):</b>          While a temporal data gap exists for 2021–2023, monitoring resumed in 2024 and 2025, confirming the continuation of long-term trends. Reforested catchments exhibited significantly lower salinity values (largely &lt;1 mS/cm) compared to agricultural catchments (&gt;5 mS/cm). These results support the project’s long-term objective of maintaining surface water salinity below 2 mS/cm.</p>				

	<p><b>Other SDGs:</b> SDG 13 (Climate Action) and SDG 15 (Life on Land) are unaffected, as biomass inventories, land-cover analysis, and carbon accounting were conducted as planned.</p> <p><b>GHG Emission Reductions:</b> There is no impact on emission reduction calculations or VER issuance, as carbon sequestration is derived from independent biomass measurements that were not affected by the deviation.</p> <p><b>Environmental and Safeguarding Risk:</b> No additional risks to community health or environmental integrity have arisen. The 2024 monitoring results verify that the project continues to deliver its intended ecosystem service of improving water quality.</p> <p>Overall, the deviation does not undermine the credibility, conservativeness, or long-term performance of the project.</p>
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Insert text here

### 6.3 | VVB information

<p>Is a VVB opinion on the deviation request required? <i>VVB opinion shall be included, where required by the requirements under <a href="#">Deviations Request Requirements and Procedures</a> or request is submitted by the VVB.</i></p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>If answer is yes, fill the information in section 6.4 below.</i></p>
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### 6.4 | VVB’s assessment

The below information is to be completed by VVB, if applicable.

VVB’s assessment of deviation request	Please confirm the nature of deviation.	
VVB’s assessment of impact of deviation request		
VVB recommendation		
VVB details	VVB name:	
	Auditor name(s):	
	Email (s):	

### 6.5 | Documents:

6.5.1 | List of documents provided (*note that once a decision has been made by Gold Standard, this deviation form will be made public on the Gold Standard*)

*website. Kindly refrain from including any confidential information in the form.)*

Documents provided:

- Monitoring-GS3039-2024 Certification-FINAL-v4.3.docx
- Project-Design-Document-GS3039-2024 Certification - FINAL v2.docx
- Water Monitoring updated 2025.pdf
- Rainfall data Canna.xlsx

**DOCUMENT HISTORY**

VERSION NUMBER	RELEASE DATE	DESCRIPTION
6.0	12.11.2024	Editorial and structural changes to the template
5.0	11.04.2022	Additional information added: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- date of listing, design certification, transition</li> <li>- standard version</li> <li>- specific reference to a requirement deviated from</li> <li>- any previous deviations/design changes approved</li> <li>- Guidance on VVB opinion</li> </ul>
4.0	14.01.2021	Editorial changes
3.0	16.07.2020	Editorial changes
2.0	03.05.2018	Editorial changes
1.0	01.07.2017	Initial adoption