GUIDELINES ON THE TIMELINES FOR GOLD STANDARD PROJECT REVIEWS

(Effective on all new project submissions from 7th October 2013)

In order to streamline The Gold Standard project cycle, The Gold Standard Foundation has put in place project cycle timelines and guidance for reviewing or submitting documentation for energy projects (i.e. renewable energy, end-use energy efficiency and waste handling and disposal projects).

It must be noted, that the proposed timelines – which include commitments from both The Gold Standard Secretariat and Project Proponents (PPs) – are indicative and are not legally binding in nature for both the PPs and/or Gold Standard. The Gold Standard will continually strive to meet the set time commitments and will expect the PPs to do the same. However, in certain cases, when unforeseen and unexpected delays occur, clear and timely information shall be provided by The Gold Standard and is expected from the PPs in order to maintain the efficacy of the time commitments.

A guide to the indicative timelines[1] is attached in the table below – the following outlines the initial steps that need to be followed by all parties to ensure the more efficient certification of Gold Standard projects.

I. Submission for review by The Gold Standard:

The review process will be initiated once a complete set of relevant documentation has been submitted to The Gold Standard Registry[2] and any applicable fees have been paid. The Project Proponent must ensure that the correct templates are used for preparing the documents and that all the sections of the documents are complete. For project reviews that require a payment of fees (e.g. registration, internal validation, internal verification, design change reviews, etc.), the Project Proponent needs to co-ordinate with the relevant/nearest Regional Manager/Point of Contact. Project Proponents can also contact 'qa@cdmgoldstandard.org' in urgent cases, wherein the Regional Manager/Point of Contact is out of the office.

A formal e-mail confirming that the documents have been submitted to The Gold Standard Registry must be sent to the relevant/nearest Regional Manager/Point of Contact. Either the Project Proponent and/or the DOE can make this formal request. When a Project Proponent sends this formal email confirmation, the DOE must be included in the request and in any further communications. This requirement also applies to any subsequent review rounds. Please refer to the attached Annex for more information about the relevant documents that will need to be submitted to successfully initiate the review.

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[1] Please note, the indicative timelines do not apply in cases where TAC approval and/or opinion is required. In such cases, The Gold Standard will keep the Project Proponents informed about the upcoming TAC meeting dates and the outcomes relevant to the project. These timelines also do not apply to special scenarios such as micro-PoAs that use more than one meth and/or one technology and/or one country. For these situations separate timelines will be communicated on a case-by-case basis. For inclusion of Voluntary Project Activities (VPAs) and internal verification, a maximum of 4 VPAs shall be submitted for review at one time, if more are submitted within the 4 weeks, alternative timelines shall be communicated separately.

[2] For registry related assistance, 'registry@cdmgoldstandard.org' should be contacted.

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Also, it must be noted that The Gold Standard will strive to respond to all technical queries related to a project/methodology/rules, etc. within 5-7 working days.

II. Processing of review requests:

The Gold Standard Foundation will confirm the receipt of any formal request within a day and will proceed to conduct a completeness check. This completeness check is to ensure that all of the relevant and requested documents have been submitted. This check will help to avoid additional feedback rounds relating to incomplete documents, thereby making the review process as time efficient as possible. The review period starts as soon as the completeness check has been finalised and payment of fees has been made (wherever applicable). In normal circumstances, The Gold Standard Foundation will finalise the completeness check and initiate review period within 3 working days of receipt of the formal e-mail confirming the submission of complete set of documents. If complete set of documents is not provided, the review period shall start from the date when the complete set of documents is submitted.

Historically, DOEs submit their feedback together with the validation or verification report. This can cause delays in the review process. To help reduce the response time DOEs can now make a formal response to corrective action requests and/or request for clarifications in the review/feedback form, submitted before the final validation or verification reports are required. Then, based on the approval of the responses in the review/feedback form, revised validation/verification reports can be submitted by the DOEs prior to the closure of the review.

III. Delays in the review process:

Sometimes, due to unforeseen circumstances, delays in the review process do occur. If a delay in providing feedback is anticipated by The Gold Standard Foundation, an advance notification will be sent to the Project Proponent with a reason and a new expected date of delivery. The Project Proponent will be expected to provide the responses for the subsequent review rounds within the indicated timelines.

If a Project Proponent anticipates a delay in the submission of responses of 1-2 weeks on the proposed timeline they shall notify The Gold Standard Secretariat at their earliest convenience. The Gold Standard will endeavour to provide feedback within the indicated timelines for the subsequent review round. However, in cases where there is a delay of more than 2 weeks, a revised date for the next review round will be established by The Gold Standard Foundation only once it has received all the relevant responses and documents. This revised date will be based upon the availability of the reviewers.

The Gold Standard Project Timelines

Review	Timeline*	Document Checklist for Review**	Remarks & Notes
Local Stakeholder Consultation Report(LSC) Review	**I ROUND FEEDBACK** GS: 3 weeks from date of LSC report submission → **II ROUND FEEDBACK** PP/DOE: Within 2 weeks from date of receipt of GS feedback → **II ROUND FEEDBACK** GS: 2 weeks from date of receipt of response from the PP	• LSC Report (latest template) • VPA-DD with Section A and D (for micro-scale projects) • Invitation letters/e-mails and attendance sheets • Evaluation forms • References for SD indicators • EIA/ESIA report • Any other supporting documentation	The LSC report should be submitted for review within 3 months of the Local Stakeholder Consultation meeting date. If the comments are not addressed satisfactorily - even after two rounds of feedback - the PP and GS will discuss the issues to complete the review. Dates for discussion to be mutually agreed based on availability.
Pre-Feasibility Assessment (PFA)	**I ROUND FEEDBACK** GS: 4 weeks from date of Pre-feasibility assessment submission	• PDD • CDM Validation Report (wherever applicable) • GS Passport • Emission reduction calculation excel sheet • Information on stakeholder consultation (if available) • Other supporting documents like WCD report, kitchen tests, surveys, baseline studies, etc.	The timelines will start once the relevant documents have been submitted for assessment and the PFA fees have been paid. Please refer to the section on required documents for more details. II and III round feedback is not applicable.
Fast-track PFA	**I ROUND FEEDBACK** 2 weeks to confirm eligibility of DOE/ Auditor as per Annex P and share project...	• Refer to Annex P of GS V2.2 for more details on information and documentation required for fast-tracking a PFA	Timeline is inclusive of time required for confirmation of eligibility of DOE/ Auditor as per Annex P and sharing of project based MoU.
PoA Design Consultation Report (DCR) Review	**I ROUND FEEDBACK** GS: 3 weeks from the date of DCR report submission → **II ROUND FEEDBACK** PP/DOE: Within 2 weeks from date of receipt of GS feedback → **II ROUND FEEDBACK** GS: 2 weeks from date of receipt of responses from CME	• Design Consultation Report (latest template) • Invitation letters and e-mails etc.GS Passport	The DCR should be submitted for review within 3 months of the end of the public consultation date. LSC report(s) for any accompanying CPAs/VPAs should also be submitted for review. If the comments are not addressed satisfactorily - even after two rounds of feedback - the PP and GS will discuss the issues to complete the review. Dates for discussion to be mutually agreed based on availability.
6/8-Week Registration Review	**I ROUND FEEDBACK** GS: 6 weeks for GS V1.0 → **II ROUND FEEDBACK** PP/DOE: Within 3 Weeks from the date of receipt of GS feedback → **II ROUND FEEDBACK** GS: 3 weeks from the date of receipt of responses from the PP/DOE → **III ROUND FEEDBACK** PP/DOE: Within 2 weeks from date of receipt of GS feedback → **III ROUND FEEDBACK** GS: 2 weeks from date of receipt of responses from the PP/DOE **I ROUND FEEDBACK** GS: 8 weeks from date for GS V2.0 onwards → **II ROUND FEEDBACK** PP/DOE: Within 3 Weeks from the date of receipt of GS feedback → **II ROUND FEEDBACK** GS: 3 Weeks from date of receipt of responses from the PP/DOE → **III ROUND FEEDBACK** PP/DOE: Within 2 weeks from date of receipt of GS feedback → **III ROUND FEEDBACK** GS: 2 Weeks from date of receipt of responses from the PP/DOE	• PDD • Validation Report • GS Passport • Emission reduction calculation excel sheet • Grid emission factor calculation excel sheet (wherever applicable) • Expert reports for hydro power projects (if available) • WCD report (wherever applicable) • Baseline surveys in excel format, • Kitchen tests and surveys in excel format • Project feasibility reports, etc.	The registration review period will only begin once a complete set of documents have been made available on the registry and the registration fee (where applicable) has been paid. Please refer to the section on required documents for more details. The start of the review period is also subject to a completeness check of the documents by the Regional Manager.
2/3-Week Issuance Review	**I ROUND FEEDBACK** GS: 2 weeks for GS V1.0 → **II ROUND FEEDBACK** PP/DOE: Within 2 Weeks from date of receipt of GS feedback → **II ROUND FEEDBACK** GS: 2 Weeks from the date of receipt of responses from the PP/DOE → **III ROUND FEEDBACK** PP/DOE: 1 week from date of GS feedback → **III ROUND FEEDBACK** GS: 1 Week from date of PP/DOE responses **I ROUND FEEDBACK** GS: 3 weeks from date for GS V2.0 onwards → **II ROUND FEEDBACK** PP/DOE: Within 2 Weeks from the date of receipt of GS feedback → **II ROUND FEEDBACK** GS: 2 Weeks from the date of receipt of responses from the PP/DOE → **III ROUND FEEDBACK** PP/DOE: 1 week from date of GS feedback → **III ROUND FEEDBACK** GS: 1 Week from date of PP/DOE responses	• Monitoring report • Verification report • Emission reduction calculation excel sheet • Expert report for hydro power projects (if applicable) • Baseline surveys in excel format • Kitchen tests and surveys in excel format • Any other supporting documentation	The verification review period will only begin once a complete set of documents have been made available on the registry. Please refer to the section on required documents for more details. The start of the review period is also subject to a completeness check of the documents by the Regional Manager
Internal Validation*	**I ROUND FEEDBACK** GS: 6 weeks from receipt of all documents and fees → **II ROUND FEEDBACK** PP: Within 3 weeks from date of receipt of GS feedback → **II ROUND FEEDBACK** GS: 3 weeks from date of receipt of responses from PP → **III ROUND FEEDBACK** PP: Within 2 weeks from date of receipt of GS feedback → **III ROUND FEEDBACK** GS: 2 weeks from date of receipt of responses from the PP	• PDD • Emission reduction calculation excel sheet • Grid emission factor calculation excel sheet (wherever applicable) • Expert reports for hydro power projects (if available) • WCD report (wherever applicable) • Baseline surveys in excel format • Kitchen tests and surveys in excel format • Project feasibility reports, etc.	The internal validation will only be initiated after the complete set of documents are made available on the registry and payment of the fee, whichever is later. Please refer to the section on required documents for more details. The start of the review is also subjected to a completeness check of the documents by the Regional Manager.
Internal Verification*	**I ROUND FEEDBACK** GS: 4 weeks from receipt of all documents and fees → **II ROUND FEEDBACK** PP: Within 2 weeks from date of receipt of GS feedback → **II ROUND FEEDBACK** GS: 2 weeks from date of receipt of responses from PP → **III ROUND FEEDBACK** PP: Within 2 weeks from date of receipt of GS feedback → **III ROUND FEEDBACK** GS: 2 weeks from date of receipt of responses from the PP	• Monitoring report, • Emission reduction calculation excel sheet • Expert report for hydro power projects (if available) • Baseline surveys in excel format • Kitchen tests and surveys in excel format • Any other supporting documentation.	The internal verification will only begin once a complete set of documents have been made available on the registry and the internal verification fee has been paid. Please refer to the section on required documents for more details. The start of the review is also subject to a completeness check of the documents by the Regional Manager.
Compliance check for inclusion of micro-VPAs to micro-PoAs ^	**I ROUND FEEDBACK** GS: 4 weeks from the receipt of all documents and fees → **II ROUND FEEDBACK** PP: Within 3 weeks from date of receipt of GS feedback → **II ROUND FEEDBACK** GS: 2 weeks from date of receipt of responses from CME	• VPA-DD(s) with complete discussion on compliance with eligibility criteria of the micro-PoA.	The inclusion of activities for a micro-PoA will include a compliance check of the documents. Please refer to the section on required documents for more details.
Design Change Review	**I ROUND FEEDBACK** GS: 4 weeks from the receipt of all documents and fees → **II ROUND FEEDBACK** PP/DOE: Within 3 weeks from date of receipt of GS feedback → **II ROUND FEEDBACK** GS: 3 weeks from the date of receipt of responses from the PP/DOE → **III ROUND FEEDBACK** PP/DOE: Within 2 weeks from date of receipt of GS feedback → **III ROUND FEEDBACK** GS: 2 Weeks from date of receipt of responses from the PP/DOE	• Please refer to Annex AA of GS v2.2 for more details on the documentation required.	The request for a design change shall be submitted for approval prior to making the changes, or, at the very latest, prior to request for issuance. The timelines will start once the relevant documents have been submitted for assessment and the Design Change fees have been paid. Please refer to the section on required documents for more details.
Renewal of Crediting Period	**I ROUND FEEDBACK** GS: 4 weeks → **II ROUND FEEDBACK** PP/DOE: Within 3 weeks from date of receipt of GS feedback → **II ROUND FEEDBACK** GS: 3 weeks from the date of receipt of responses from the PP → **III ROUND FEEDBACK** PP/DOE: Within 2 weeks from date of receipt of GS feedback → **III ROUND FEEDBACK** GS: 2 Weeks from date of receipt of responses from the PP/DOE	• Please refer to Annex Z of GS v2.2 for more details on the documentation required.	An application to renew the crediting period will be submitted prior to the end of the current crediting period or within a year from the crediting period ending. Any application after this date will not be eligible for renewal. The timelines will start once all the relevant documents have been submitted for assessment. Please refer to the section on required documents for more details.

*The timelines presented are indicative and are not legally binding in nature for PPs and/or Gold Standard. These timelines also apply for Micro-Scale Scheme projects wherever necessary. These timelines should be viewed in entirety with the Guidelines Document.

The timelines recommended are only for three rounds of feedback (except for LSC and DCR Reviews).

If the comments are not addressed satisfactorily even after the suggested number of feedback rounds, the PP and GS shall discuss the issues and complete the review.

Dates for discussion to be mutually agreed based on the availability.

** Please note, the documents suggested does not provide an exhaustive list and may require additional documents with respect to project type/technology.

***These timelines are subject to a single technology and/or single country and/or single methodology micro-PoA. In the case of micro-PoAs using more than one country, technology or methodology, timelines will be applied and communicated on a case-by-case basis.

^ A maximum of 4 Voluntary Project Activities (VPAs) can apply for review at one time. The next batch of VPAs can be submitted for review 4 weeks after the previous batch has been submitted 4 weeks.