

SUMMARY OF CHANGES FROM ACR FOREST CARBON PROJECT STANDARD v2.0 TO v2.1

Effective with the release of this announcement, the American Carbon Registry publishes the *ACR Forest Carbon Project Standard v2.1*, superseding v2.0.

Version 2.1 makes certain updates and clarifications for consistency with other ACR standards and methodologies. All essential requirements remain unchanged.

Project Proponents with project registration in process under v2.0 may continue to use that version provided projects are registered by January 31, 2011; or may elect to use v2.1.

The updates and clarifications in v2.1 are:

- Categories of eligible methodologies are updated for consistency with the *ACR Standard v2.1*. (Chapter 1)
- Conditions under which particular GHG sources, sinks and pools may be excluded from accounting are clarified (*a priori* optional, demonstrated to be insignificant, or conservative to exclude). (Chapter 2)
- The Crediting Period for afforestation/reforestation (AR) project activities is extended to 40 years. The Crediting Periods for Improved Forest Management (IFM) and Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation (REDD) project activities remain unchanged. Crediting Period is the finite length of time for which a GHG Project Plan is valid, and during which a project can generate offsets against its baseline scenario; Crediting Periods are renewable. (Chapter 3)
- The requirement for independent validation of GHG Project Plans, in addition to independent verification of GHG assertions, is noted consistent with the *ACR Standard v2.1*. Validation and verification may occur simultaneously, and be conducted by the same ACR-approved verifier. (Chapters 3 and 8)
- While the *FCPS* only mandates documentation of GHG mitigation as an original project objective in the case of projects with a Start Date before November 1, 1997, some approved methodologies have a more stringent requirement (e.g. requiring documentation if the Start Date is more than one year before submission of the GHG Project Plan). In such cases the methodology requirement shall be followed. (Chapter 4)
- The ACR and CDM additionality tools referenced in some methodologies do not conflict with, but rather amplify and assist the Project Proponent in making a credible demonstration against, the three-prong test. The performance standard additionality option is retained. (Chapter 4)

- Further clarification is provided that the common practice component of the three-prong test only requires Project Proponents to evaluate the forestry practices of similar landowners, similar land ownership type, and similar forest types in the project's geographic region. (Chapter 4)
- All unintentional reversals are now treated equally in terms of ACR buffer pool management. This requires retirement of an adequate number of ERTs to fully compensate the reversal, and requires the Project Proponent, in the case of reversals that exceed the Proponent's buffer contributions to date net of refunds, to pay a "deductible" of 10% of the reversal, deposited to the ACR buffer pool. This is unchanged from the *FCPS v2.0* requirement for the first unintentional reversal. The *FCPS v2.0* proposed a different treatment of subsequent (second, third etc.) unintentional reversals. ACR accepts the arguments of several stakeholders that this requirement was unnecessarily punitive; the "subsequent unintentional reversals" section has been removed and all unintentional reversals are now treated equally. Repeated reversals may, however, cause a project to be assessed a high risk and accordingly high buffer contribution. Requirements for intentional reversals are unchanged. (Chapter 5)
- The periodic refund of earlier buffer contributions, in the case of no reversals, has been increased to 10%. (Chapter 5)
- Clarification is provided that verification is only required prior to issuance of ERTs. If the Project Proponent (e.g. of an AR project) does not seek ERT issuance for longer than five years after the Start Date, the Proponent is not required to verify until the first request for ERT issuance. (Chapter 8)