

Summary of Changes from ACR Standard v4.0 to v5.0

The following is a summary of major changes from v4.0 to v5.0 of the *ACR Standard*.

Topic	Revision	Section
Governance	Added language to clarify that ACR is governed by the senior management team, executive team and Board of Directors of its parent organization, Winrock International.	Introduction
Effective date of ACR Standard 5.0 and application of changes	The ACR Standard v5.0 supersedes the ACR Standard v4.0, published in January 2015. Any project listed or registered subsequent to July 1, 2017 must follow all requirements of the ACR Standard v5.0. Projects that are registered prior to July 1, 2017, may be validated and verified according to ACR Standard v4.0 through the end of the Crediting Period. This gives projects in development under v5.0 a grace period to list under v4.0 if they prefer (though projects may list under v5.0 immediately on publication of v5.0).	Introduction
Ex-ante Crediting	Maintains and clarifies ACR's existing policy to not credit GHG emissions reductions or removals when an emission mitigation activity has not occurred or is not yet verified.	1.I
Revisions to the ACR Standard	Clarifies a three-year minimum timeframe for ACR to review and revise its Standards. Further clarifies that ACR may require all projects, including those validated under a previous version of the ACR Standard, to immediately implement a policy or process revision, such as an administrative or reporting requirement, detailed in a subsequent version of the ACR Standard.	1.J
Conflict of Interest	Maintains and clarifies the existing Winrock Conflict of Interest Policy as well as Conflict of Interest provisions in place with registry service provider(s) and verification bodies.	1.L
Project Eligibility Requirements - Start Date	Updates project start date requirements to differentiate between AFOLU and non-AFOLU projects as well as projects using an approved versus a newly approved methodology.	3 – Table 2
Project Eligibility Requirements - Real	Maintains and clarifies ACR's existing policy that credits will not be issued for GHG emissions reductions or removals when an emission mitigation activity has not occurred or is not yet verified (ie: no ex-ante crediting).	3 – Table 2

Project Eligibility Requirements – Land Title	Removes the overarching requirement for land title, as this is not applicable to all offset project types.	3 – Table 2
Project Eligibility – Regulatory Compliance	Updates and clarifies the requirement for material regulatory compliance and violations related to administrative processes. Provides that projects deemed to be out of compliance with regulatory requirements are not eligible to earn credits during the period of non-compliance.	3 – Table 2
Project Eligibility - Permanent	Maintains and clarifies ACR’s existing requirements for projects with a risk of reversal of GHG removal enhancements to assess and mitigate risk, and monitor, report and compensate for reversals as detailed in the legally-binding Reversal Risk Mitigation Agreement.	3 – Table 2
Project Eligibility - Environmental and Community Safeguards	Maintains ACR’s policy on assessment, monitoring and reporting on project environmental and community impacts and updates the policy to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clarify that projects can follow internationally recognized and/or industry-standard environmental and community safeguards approaches including the World Bank Safeguard Policies, the Climate Community and Biodiversity Alliance (CCBA) Standard or the Social Carbon Standard; and - Highlight that projects may disclose positive environmental and social impacts as aligned with applicable sustainable development goals; 	3 – Table 2
Permanence	Defines “reversal” and maintains and clarifies ACR’s existing requirements for all projects with a risk of reversal of GHG removal enhancements to assess and mitigate risk, and monitor, report and compensate for reversals as detailed in the applicable ACR methodology and the legally-binding Reversal Risk Mitigation Agreement.	5
Project Development Process	Removed references to the processes for methodology modifications and approval of new methodologies, which was duplicative of information included in Chapter 7: Methodologies and Tools.	6.B and 6.C
Aggregation and Programmatic Development Approach	Clarifies requirements for Aggregated Projects and added information on requirements for projects registering under a Programmatic Development Approach (PDA).	6.E

Crediting Period Renewal	Clarifies that upon seeking a renewal of a crediting period, projects are required to meet the requirements of the most recent version of the ACR Standard.	6.H
Modifications to ACR approved methodologies	Provided clarifications to ACR's existing policy for the process of review and approval of modifications to ACR approved methodologies.	7.A.2
Methodologies from other GHG Programs	Removed the language on the use of methodologies from other GHG Programs since methodologies from other programs, unless CDM as detailed in 7.A.1, would be considered new methodologies, for which the process is detailed in 7.A.3 (previously 7.A.4).	7.A.3
Timing for Updates to ACR approved methodologies	For ACR methodologies that employ a performance standard for additionality assessment, clarifies the timeline for reviewing the validity of assumptions on which the performance standard is based.	7.C
Methodologies and Tools for Social and Environmental Impact Assessment	Deletes this section, and incorporates ACR requirements for environmental and community impact assessments, net positive community and environmental impacts of projects, and regular disclosure of negative impacts and mitigation measures, into a new Chapter 8.	7.E
Environmental and Community Safeguards	<p>Incorporates requirements previously in 7.E into a new Chapter 8: Environmental and Community Safeguards, which maintains ACR's policy on assessment, monitoring and reporting on project environmental and community impacts and updates the policy to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Specify ACR requirements for project environmental and community impact assessments; - Clarify that ACR does not require that a particular process or tool be used for the impact assessment as long as basic requirements defined by ACR in Section 8 are addressed. Note that per existing policy, projects can follow internationally recognized and/or industry-standard environmental and community safeguards approaches including the World Bank Safeguard Policies, the Climate Community and Biodiversity Alliance (CCBA) Standard or the Social Carbon Standard; and - Highlight that projects may disclose positive environmental and social impacts as aligned with applicable sustainable development goals. 	8

Validation and Verification Oversight	Adds a new section H to clarify ACR's existing verification oversight policies and updates the current policy to include provisions for audits of verifications of ACR projects.	9.H
Policies to Prevent Double Issuance, Double Use and Double Selling of Offsets	Maintains and clarifies ACR's existing policies to prevent double issuance, double use and double selling of offsets from projects registered simultaneously on ACR and other voluntary or compliance GHG Programs or Registries as well as for projects transferred to ACR, which were previously registered on other voluntary or compliance GHG programs or registries.	10.A
Double Counting of Offsets	Removes references to requirements to avoid double counting from offset projects in Annex I countries and non-Annex I countries. This bifurcation no longer exists in practice since the ratification of the Paris Agreement under which all countries agree to Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) to reduce emissions.	10.B
Double Claiming of Offsets	Replaces the former section 10B with an updated ACR policy with regard to requirements to prevent double claiming of emissions reductions for use towards a national or sector-wide emissions reduction target.	10.B
Complaints and Appeals Procedure	Outlines the ACR policies and procedures for presenting a complaint about and/or appealing a decision made by ACR.	Appendix C