

Summary of Changes from ACR Standard v7.0 to 8.0

Below is a summary of significant changes to the *ACR Standard* from v7.0, published December 2020, to *ACR Standard* v8.0, posted for public comment November 1 – December 31, 2021 and May 1 – June 2, 2023, and published July 2023.

Topic	Revision	Section(s)
Acronyms	Updated list of acronyms for consistency with use in document.	Acronyms
ACR Governance	Updated ACR Governance to include the role of the ERT Board of Managers.	Introduction
Applicability	Confirmed with clarified language that Project eligibility is subject to the conditions of the ACR Standard version under which the project was listed and confirmed upon validation, and that all Projects, where applicable, are required to adhere to updates to ACR administrative policies as prescribed in the most recently published version of the Standard.	Applicability
Terminology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Replaced use of “offset credit” and “offsets” with “carbon credit(s)”. Replaced use of “Offset Project” with “GHG Project” Replaced use of “member” to ACR Registry “Account Holder” Clarified form name from “Offset Project Listing Form” to “GHG Project Listing Form” Updated tool name from “ACR’s Tool for Risk Analysis and Buffer Determination” to “ACR’s Tool for Reversal Risk Analysis and Buffer Pool Contribution Determination” Clarified template name from “Methodology Deviation” to “ACR Project Deviation Request” Replaced “regulated” with “compliance” markets Modifications for consistent use of “GHG emission reductions and removals” Replaced “project scenario” with “with-project scenario” Replaced “confidence deduction” with “uncertainty deduction” Removed outdated references to an ACR sector standard Modifications for consistent use of the “three-pronged” additionality test Replaced “assess” and “assessment” with “analyze” and “analysis” for consistency with the defined Reversal Risk Analysis term and tool name. Replaced “addendum” with “appendix”, where appropriate 	Throughout
ACR Objectives	Clarified language describing ACR’s overall objectives.	1.B
Scope – Included GHGs and Particulate Matter	Removed reference to black carbon in GHG and particulate matter scope. ACR does not have any methodologies that include quantification of black carbon.	1.D

Scope Exclusions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clarified language regarding existing scope exclusion of grid connected electricity generation for renewable energy project types. Codified ACR's existing scope exclusion for projects that displace one type of fossil fuel to another type of fossil fuel and projects that lock-in long-term GHG emissions. 	1.E.1
Policy Regarding Revisions to ACR Standard	Clarified that "the ACR Standard", as opposed to "all ACR Standards", will be posted for public comment for at least 60 days prior to adoption.	1.I
QA/QC Procedures	Clarified that QA/QC procedures shall include activities designed to assess, address, and minimize uncertainty.	2.B.6
Evaluation of Participation in Non-Carbon Asset Programs	Clarified that the simultaneous reporting of non-carbon attributes in another program is subject to evaluation during project validation.	2.B.7
Eligibility: Start Date	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clarified that validation deadlines stated in the Standard apply unless otherwise specified in the applicable methodology. Clarified an exception to project validation deadlines. This provision is intended for projects that have conducted a pilot project or long-term data collection on which the methodology was based and/or directly contributed to the creation of the methodology. Recognizing that the length of ACR's methodology development process may extend beyond the Standard's overarching validation deadline requirements, ACR's Start Date criterion includes this provision to allow the eligibility of projects that were initiated with the objective of supporting the development of a new ACR methodology. The period of eligibility for these projects was also reduced to 5 years from the Start Date to listing. 	Tables 2 and 4
Eligibility: Crediting Period	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consistent with methodologies, confirmed that the baseline scenario shall be re-evaluated <u>and remodeled (as appropriate)</u> in order to renew a Crediting Period. Clarified language in footnote regarding the application of changes to regulatory requirements during the Crediting Period. 	Table 2 and Table 4
Eligibility: Emission Removal Origin	Removed the Emission or Removal Origin criterion as it was determined to be redundant to requirements stipulated in the Offset Title criterion and the ACR Scope.	Table 2
Eligibility: Regulatory Compliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clarified the scope of assessment for laws, regulations, etc. directly related to project activities. Clarified language in footnote regarding ACR's policy for assessing regulatory compliance violations. 	Table 2
Eligibility: Permanent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clarified language that ACR's permanence policies can apply to both emission reductions <u>and removals</u> achieved by AFOLU project types. Clarified the appropriate version of ACR's Tool for Reversal Risk Analysis and Buffer Pool Contribution Determination if a new version is published during a verification. 	Tables 2 and 4 and throughout
Independently Validated/Verified	Clarified that Project Proponents must comply with all reasonable requests for documentation and data to enable required validation and verification activities.	Table 2

Eligibility: Environmental and Social Impact Assessments	Updated criterion name and removed redundant restatement of process requirements, which are referenced and fully outlined in Chapter 8.	Table 2
Regulatory Surplus	Clarified the wording of the key question for the Regulatory Surplus test to include enforcement in addition to mandate.	Table 3
Additionality	Modified wording to clarify that the role of carbon market incentives as a significant factor in the development of a project is considered when assessing additionality.	4.A
Technological and Institutional Barriers Tests	Added language from ACR's Validation and Verification Standard regarding the documentation that the Project Proponent shall provide to demonstrate the applicable barrier.	4.A.3
Permanence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Added text in certain sections to incorporate geologic sequestration projects, as appropriate. Clarified ACR's requirement that projects with a risk of reversals shall assess and mitigate risk, and monitor, report, and compensate for reversals <u>over the Project Term</u>. Clarified that updates to a project's Reversal Risk Analysis, Buffer Pool Contribution Percentage, and calculated Buffer Pool Contribution amounts shall be reported in a project's Monitoring Report. 	5
Assessment of Risk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Removed "management failure" from list of risks as it is considered intentional. Clarified that Project Proponents shall conduct their risk assessment using the most recent version of the ACR Tool for Reversal Risk Analysis and Buffer Pool Contribution Determination at time of verification. Clarified that in the event of a reversal the risk category and Minimum Buffer Pool Contribution shall be reassessed and reverified according to provisions laid out the most recently published version of the ACR Buffer Pool Terms and Conditions. 	5.A
Reversal Mitigation, Reporting, and Compensation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Moved AFOLU-project specific language from 5.B to 5.B.1. Added language from the ACR Buffer Pool Terms and Conditions that clarifies the distinct mechanisms in place to compensate for Unintentional and Intentional Reversals. Added statement that if the Project Proponent is not the same entity as the Project Developer Account Holder, the Project Developer Account Holder shall facilitate the replacement of the Verified Lost Offset Amount and deliver credits to compensate for the Verified Lost Offset Amount. Added language from the CCS methodology to clarify how the 10% reserve account contribution for geologic sequestration projects is applied, how permanent CO₂ sequestration is demonstrated, and that ongoing reversal monitoring requirements are detailed in the relevant methodology(ies). Specified that an alternative risk mitigation measure must either provide a sufficient volume of ERTs <u>or adequate funds, as determined by ACR</u>, in the event of a Reversal. Clarified that the evaluation of a proposed alternative risk mitigation product is at the discretion of ACR. Confirmed ACR's policy that at the end of the Minimum Project Term <u>for AFOLU projects</u> if the Project Proponent does not 	5.B 5.B.1 5.B.2 5.B.3 5.C 5.D

	renew for another Crediting Period, ACR conservatively assumes that the activities have ceased and cancels the remaining Project-related Buffer Pool contributions.	
Transnational Projects	Clarified that Projects Proponents implementing project activities that result in GHG emission reductions or removals being generated within the geographic boundary of more than one country must independently quantify GHG emission reductions and/or removals achieved within each country and register them as separate projects.	6
Project Development Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clarified that ACR requires the use of its most recently published templates for the GHG Project Plan, Monitoring Report, Validation Opinion, Verification Opinion, and optional Supplemental Project Description and that, in the event that an update to Monitoring Report template is released between the end of the Reporting Period and submission, Project Proponents shall use the version available at the end of the Reporting Period being verified. Clarified that the GHG Project Listing Form must include a non-technical summary of the project. Clarified that fees for validation and verification services are agreed between the Project Proponent and the VVB. Added requirement for Project Proponents to upload a GHG Project Plan to the ACR Registry prior to validation commencement. Added that ACR will make public on the ACR Registry the Listing Form and will publish on its website the Project name, ACR ID, project type, and location for a thirty (30) day public comment period for local and global stakeholders impacted by the project. Update that project Monitoring Reports will be made public on the Registry. Added clarifying reference to the Reserve Account for geologic sequestration projects. 	6.A
GHG Project Plan	<p>Added requirement for including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A non-technical executive summary with key information; For AFOLU projects, a map delineating the project area boundary within a regional context (i.e., governing jurisdictions, towns, roads, major rivers and bodies of water, and other notable features); For AFOLU projects, description of the inventory methodology and subsequent calculation steps used to measure and estimate carbon stocks; An outline of QA/QC procedures; and Attestation by the Project Proponent and Project Developer Account Holder, if not the same entity, regarding the content contained within the GHG Project Plan and all appendices. 	6.B
Project Monitoring Reports	Clarified and expanded the context of the attestations required in Monitoring Reports.	6.E
Aggregation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Removed content from the General Aggregation Requirements that was determined to be redundant with requirements applicable to all projects. Addition of Site-level requirements for aggregation section, consistent with PDA Site-level requirements. 	6.F.1 6.F.1.1 6.F.1.2

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarified that if the Aggregated Project includes multiple landowners/facility owners, the Project Proponent is also the ACR Project Developer Account Holder and, for AFOLU projects, shall enter into a legally binding Reversal Risk Mitigation Agreement with ACR. • Added description of the Multi-Site Design Document, which is a required addendum to the GHG Project Plan and must be presented and approved at first initial validation and shall include a Site information Table, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A unique identification number for each site; ○ For AFOLU projects, the geographic size of each Site; ○ For AFOLU projects, a clearly defined geographic boundary uniquely identifying each Site, including any maps and spatial files as required by the chosen methodology; ○ Short narrative description of project activities carried out at each Site, including confirmation of eligibility and additionality; ○ Name and contact details of the landowner and/or associated operator of each Site; ○ The Site-specific Implementation Date; and ○ Description of the evidence confirming each Site's relevant Implementation Date, as applicable. 	
<p>Programmatic Design Approach</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarified that if the PDA project includes multiple landowners/facility owners, the Project Proponent is also the ACR Project Developer Account Holder and, for AFOLU projects, shall enter into a legally binding Reversal Risk Mitigation Agreement with ACR. • Addition of language specifying that only a single version of any ACR methodology may be used among sites enrolled in a PDA project. • Clarified that the enrollment period for PDA projects is 5 years after the project Start Date unless otherwise specified in the relevant methodology. • Moved requirement from the Site-Level to General Requirements for PDA “If defined by the chosen methodology, meet the required inventory statistical precision ($\pm 10\%$ at 90% confidence interval) for the CO₂e estimate reported in the Monitoring Report.” • Clarified that an individual Site may begin credit generation at its Site-specific Implementation Date. • Confirmed that PDA requirements shall be described in a Project Design Document, which shall be considered an addendum to the GHG Project Plan and presented at first validation and updated coincident with subsequent Cohort validations. • Clarified that each Site in a PDA Project must be enrolled with an Implementation Date no later than 5 years after the Project Start Date, unless otherwise specified. • Clarified that each Site in a PDA Project must be presented in a Site Information Table within the Project Design Document. • Revised list of required details within the Site Information Table to include: 	<p>6.F.2.1 and 6.F.2.2</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A unique identification number for each site; ○ For AFOLU projects, the geographic size of each Site; ○ For AFOLU projects, a clearly defined geographic boundary uniquely identifying each Site, including any maps and spatial files as required by the chosen methodology; ○ And removed: the calculations of baseline emissions and ex ante emissions. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Removed content from the Site Level Requirements for PDA that was determined to be redundant with requirements applicable to all projects. ● Additional text edits for clarity. 	
Design Considerations for Aggregation and PDA	Moved AFOLU relevant examples up to section 6.F.3 so that design considerations for aggregated and PDA projects are more clearly presented together. Additional text edits for clarity.	6.F.3
Commercially Sensitive Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Clarified that Commercially Sensitive Information is subject to confidentiality, privacy, and data protection restrictions. ● Added statement confirming that synthesized project data may be aggregated and posted on the ACR registry to fulfill program reporting requirements. 	6.G
Project Documentation	<p>Clarified requirement to submit to ACR:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● a GIS shapefile or other spatial datafile delineating the project area boundary, to be submitted and approved (yet privately maintained) on the project's registry, if applicable. 	6.H
Renewed Crediting Period	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Clarified what is included in the reassessment of a project's baseline at the time of Crediting Period renewal. ● Introduced a Renewed Crediting Period Listing Form. 	6.I
Methodology approval	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Introduced a New Methodology Intake Form. ● Clarified that the Concept Note named in #2 must be submitted by invitation using a template provided by ACR. ● Clarified that ACR conducts the internal review described in #2 at currently published fees. 	7.B
ACR Technical Committees	Removed section describing ACR Technical Committees. This terminology is no longer relevant as ACR engages selected peer review experts for methodology development and modification processes. Removed reference to ACR Technical Committee in the definition of Methodology Deviations and Revisions.	Former 7.D and Definitions
Environmental and Social Impacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Clarified specific risk areas for evaluation and the requirement of the use of the ACR Environmental and Social Impact Assessment Report template for all projects. ● Clarified that Project Proponents shall provide confirmations and/or updates to the original environmental and community impact assessments in their ongoing Monitoring Reports. ● For the qualitative assessment of Sustainable Development contributions, requires the use of the ACR SDG Contributions Report template based on standardized ACR tools and methods or other tools as approved by ACR. 	Chapter 8
Validation and Verification Definitions	Added content from the Definitions section to Section 9.A.	9.A

Validation	Clarified that a listing review by ACR that results in an approved project listing shall not inform the process or determination of the subsequent validation by the selected VVB.	9.A
Materiality Threshold	Clarified that for terrestrial or geologic sequestration projects utilizing the Buffer Pool or Reserve Account to mitigate for reversals Equation 1 must be performed on Total Emission Reductions and Removals prior to deduction of the Buffer Pool or Reserve Account contribution.	9.B
Verification Interval	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clarified that the initial Reporting Period full verification requirement interval begins on the project Start Date and is a maximum of five years in duration. The maximum interval between subsequent full verifications is five years, calculated from the start date of the last Reporting Period receiving full verification to the end date of any subsequent Reporting Period receiving desk-based verification. Provided an example for clarity. Added deadline for submittal of verification reports: no later than 2 years from the end of the Reporting Period being verified for non-AFOLU projects and no later than three (3) years from the end of the Reporting Period for AFOLU projects. 	9.C and A.7.3
ISO References	Clarified that validation and verification are carried out in conformance with the ISO 14064-3 and ISO 14065 version as considered current and as represented on the ACR website.	9.D
Validation Report and Opinion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Added new section outlining the requirement for a Validation Report and Opinion to be submitted for any project. Added requirement to use the ACR-provided template for the Validation Opinion. To limit redundancy, withdrew the bulleted list of required contents for the Validation Report, the relevant details for which are provided in the ACR VVB Standard. 	9.E
Verification Report and Opinion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Added requirement to use the ACR-provided template for the Verification Opinion. To limit redundancy, withdrew the bulleted list of required contents for the Verification Report, the relevant details for which are provided in the ACR VVB Standard. 	9.F
Validation Acceptance by ACR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clarified that ACR acceptance process applies to validation as well as verification. Clarified that ACR will review project documents during its review of validation and/or verification documents 	9.G
Rotation of VVBs	Consistent with previously published methodology-specific Errata and Clarifications, confirmed that for project types with only one Reporting Period and therefore only one verification per project VVBs may conduct no more than five out of nine sequential verifications of projects developed at the same facility.	9.H
Validation and Verification Body Oversight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Added language from the VVB Attestation document to clarify ACR's existing policy to allow ACR to suspend or revoke its approval of a VVB. Added details regarding ACR's selection of priority projects for verification audit, including those that are implementing a newly published methodology, those conducting the validation and verification activities with a newly approved VVB, and for which a VVB's newly approved scope expansion is relevant. 	9.I

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Added that ACR will report significant, non-remediated and/or recurring VVB performance concerns to the relevant accreditation body. 	
Double Counting	Updated to align with UNFCCC decisions and CORSIA requirements.	Chapter 10
Projects registered on ACR and other Programs	Clarified that ACR AFOLU projects that have a risk of reversal are not eligible for simultaneous registration on ACR and another GHG crediting program.	10.A.1
ACR Complaints and Appeals Process	Enhanced ACR's Complaints Procedure to provide detailed information on the scope of complaints, the stepwise process for evaluation, investigation and resolution including timelines, and the requirements and process for appeals.	Chapter 11
Definitions	<p>Added definitions for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Account Holder Complaint Early Project Termination Invasive Species Issue / Issuance Reserve Account Title Validation Opinion Vintage <p>Clarified definitions for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Buffer Pool Community De Minimis Grassland and Shrubland Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Monitoring Native vs. Non-native species Naturalized Species Net GHG Emission Reductions and Removals Project Proponent Registration Total GHG Emission Reductions and Removals Validation Verification <p>Updated terminology for defined terms</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Replaced "Buffer Contribution" with "Buffer Pool Contribution" Replaced "Carbon Offset Credit" with "Carbon Credit" Replaced "Minimum Buffer Pool Contribution" with "Buffer Pool Contribution" Replaced "Permanence Risk Analysis" with "Reversal Risk Analysis" 	Definitions
Avoided Conversion of Forest	Clarified the eligible activities for this project type	A.1.1
Start Date	Clarified the application of each of the Start Date definitions to PDA projects.	Table 4
Natural Management Requirements	Further strengthened ACR's existing policy on invasive species. Consistent with approved methodologies, confirmed that for IFM and AC-F projects, forests that were converted from native species to	Table 4

	non-native species within 10 years of the project Start Date are ineligible.	
Start Date	Modified list of activities denoting eligible Start Date for IFM projects. Clarified that the Start Date definition for Avoided Conversion of Non-Forest is the Same as that for Avoided Conversion of Forest. Removed reference to Agricultural Land based projects.	Table 4
Conservation Easement duration	Clarified in footnote 41 that all land conservation agreements must be employed with a specified duration <u>at least as long</u> as a project's Minimum Project Term.	Table 4
Baselines: IFM	Clarified that Best Management Practices refers to State published Best Management Practices.	A.4.2
Leakage	Clarified that market effects leakage must be accounted <u>or mitigated</u> and how the methodology must address it.	A.4.7
Aggregation and PDA Design Requirements for AFOLU Projects	Consolidated this section with section 6.F.3 so previous section A.5.1 is no longer needed and was deleted.	former A.5.1
Verification schedule	Updated policy for AR and wetlands projects to allow timing of first verification up to 12 years after project Start Date.	A.7.3
Avoiding double counting in CORSIA	Updated language for alignment with Article 6 and ICAO requirements for labelling CORSIA Eligible units.	Appendix B
Reference Documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updated ISO 14064 and 14065 references throughout to 14064:2019 and 14065:2020 versions. Updated associated terminology: validation/verification "assertions" to validation/verification "statements" and validation/verification "statements" to validation/verification "opinions". Updated website addresses as needed 	Throughout