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Climate, Community, & Biodiversity (CCB) Standards

Last updated: 8 March, 2016
Category [Social and Environmental Standards](#) [10]
Type:
Safeguards
Scale:
Project level
Scope:
Deforestation
Forest Degradation
Enhancement
Forest management
Conservation
Date created 2005
Geographical Eligibility:
Global

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The Climate, Community & Biodiversity Standards (CCB Standards) are developed by the Climate, Community & Biodiversity Alliance (CCBA). CCBA's mission is "to stimulate and promote land management activities that credibly mitigate global climate change, improve the wellbeing and reduce poverty of local communities, and conserve biodiversity."

Introduction

The CCBA is a partnership and initiative of five international non-governmental organisations: Conservation International, CARE, Rainforest Alliance, The Nature Conservancy and Wildlife Conservation Society. The CCB Standards created by CCBA have seventeen criteria designed to encourage effective and integrated project design and implementation and to evaluate the social and environmental impacts of a land management project. The CCB Standards also have three optional "Gold Level" criteria for projects that yield additional climate change adaptation, or exceptional community or biodiversity, benefits.

The CCB Standards are used to demonstrate net positive benefits for the climate, for local communities and for biodiversity. The CCB Standards' climate section is to be used to demonstrate a project's net positive climate benefits and its use does not result in issuance of quantified emission reduction certificates. The Third Edition of the Standards, adopted in December 2013, presents a simplification of requirements for projects wanting to show net positive climate benefits. Projects that intend to generate quantified carbon credits for use as offsets use CCB Standards in combination with a carbon accounting standard such as the Verified Carbon Standard (VCS). This combined use of standards is facilitated in the new edition of the Standards by allowing a waiver of the Climate section for projects using a Recognised Greenhouse Gas Programme (the procedures and criteria for a Greenhouse Gas Programme to be recognised by the CCBA are defined in the Rules for the Use of the Climate, Community and Biodiversity Standards). This waiver does not apply to projects using CCB Standards First and Second Editions.

Currently, the CCB Standards are the dominant co-benefit standard in the voluntary carbon market for all land-based project types. For instance, in 2012, projects validated against the CCB standards made up 78% of the co-benefit standard forest carbon market share (Ecosystem Marketplace, 2013, p.47). In December 2013, 78 projects had been validated under the CCB Standards and 15 had been verified in 34 countries. A total of 130 projects are using, or planning to use, the standard.

Design Features

[Scope](#) [11]

CCB Standards have been designed, and can be applied to, any land management project that delivers net positive benefits for climate change mitigation, for local communities and for biodiversity. This includes projects that reduce greenhouse gas emissions through avoided deforestation and forest degradation or from avoided degradation of other ecosystems (e.g. REDD), or those that remove carbon from the atmosphere (e.g. afforestation, reforestation, revegetation, forest restoration, agroforestry and sustainable agriculture) or other land management projects.

[Scale](#) [12]

CCB Standards are applicable at the project level. The Standards also enable the use of programmatic approaches that allow the expansion of project activities to new land areas subsequent to project validation. This is included to help reduce transaction costs, especially for smallholder-led projects which are likely to start small and grow over time.

[Reference Levels](#) [13]

Project proponents must develop a defensible and well-documented 'without-project' reference scenario that describes the most likely land-use scenario in the absence of the project and how it would affect the climate, communities, ecosystem services, and biodiversity. They must also provide a description of the original conditions in the project area, as well as baseline projections for all the categories of interest, i.e. climate, communities, and biodiversity.

[Additionality](#) [14]

Additionality is assessed as part of the baseline measurement and projection (see Reference Levels). Project proponents must "document the project benefits that would not have occurred in the absence of the project, explaining how existing laws, regulations and governance arrangements, or lack of laws and regulations and their enforcement, would likely affect land use and justifying that the benefits being claimed by the project are truly 'additional' and would not have occurred without the project". Any distinct climate, community and biodiversity benefits intended for use as offsets must be identified and additionality must be established for each of those benefits. Finally, project proponents must demonstrate that project activities would not have been implemented under business as usual due to significant financial, technological, institutional or capacity barriers.

[Leakage / displacements](#) [15]

Project proponents must assess and mitigate increased GHG emissions that occur beyond the project area and are caused by project activities. They must determine the types of leakage expected, estimate potential offsite increases in GHGs and, where relevant, define where such leakage is likely to take place. Mitigation measures must be documented and the impact of such measures must be calculated and subtracted from the climate benefits being claimed.

[Permanence / reversals](#) [16]

The proponent must identify likely natural and human-induced risks to the expected climate, community and biodiversity benefits during the project lifetime and outline measures needed and taken to mitigate these risks. It must also describe the measures needed and taken to maintain and enhance the climate, community and biodiversity benefits beyond the project lifetime. When combined with a carbon accounting Standard, the climate section of the CCB Standards is waived and provisions for permanence in the GHG accounting standard would apply. All GHG programmes recognised by the CCBA must employ methodologies that at least meet the permanence and other requirements of the CCB Standards.

[Social measures or requirements](#) [17]

CCB Standards require that projects generate net positive impacts on the environmental, social and economic well-being of all community groups ensuring that costs, benefits and risks are identified. High Conservation Values, such as areas important for livelihoods or cultural identity of the communities, must be maintained or enhanced in the project zone and the project must 'do no harm' to the well-being of offsite stakeholders.

Project proponents must identify unresolved issues related to land tenure, and in cases where disputes exist must demonstrate that no activity is undertaken by the project that can prejudice the outcome of an unresolved issue. If applicable, the project may describe how the project is helping to resolve the conflict.. Free, prior and informed consent (and adequate compensation, where appropriate) must be obtained in instances where rights will be affected or where resettlement will

occur. One of the principles of effective consultation is a "gender and inter-generationally inclusive" design.

The Third Edition of the Standards includes a stronger emphasis on gender as it is requires that women be identified as a "Community Group" that must benefit from the project "where they derive different income, livelihood and cultural values from the project area from other community members".

Gold Level certification requires that exceptional benefits be provided to communities, such as project approaches that are explicitly pro-poor, or which are led by smallholders or communities, with equitable benefit sharing. The Gold Level certification also requires that projects generate net positive impacts for the well-being of women.

[Environmental measures or requirements](#) [18]

CCB Standards require that the project must generate net positive impacts on biodiversity, and atmospheric concentrations of greenhouse gases over the project lifetime. The project must maintain or enhance any High Conservation Values present in the project zone, such as areas that provide critical ecosystem services or that contain threatened or endemic species, or threatened ecosystems. Potential negative impacts on biodiversity outside the project zone resulting from project activities must be evaluated and mitigated. There must also be an explanation of how double counting of such emissions reductions or removals and other tradable social and biodiversity benefits will be avoided. The use of fertilizers, chemical pesticides, biological control agents and other inputs must be justified and the project must have in place a process for identifying, classifying and managing all waste products resulting from project activities. Invasive species populations must not increase and the use of GMO's is prohibited.

Gold Level certification is offered to projects that provide significant support to assist communities and/or biodiversity in adapting to the impacts of climate change, or to projects that conserve biodiversity at sites of global significance for biodiversity conservation that meet the vulnerability and irreplaceability criteria of Key Biodiversity Areas (IUCN, 2007).

[Procedural measures or requirements](#) [19]

CCB Standards require that project proponents document all relevant local and national laws that are relevant to the project activities , provide assurances that the project will comply with these, and where relevant, demonstrate how compliance is achieved.

Related to transparency, CCBA publishes on line: project design documents, project implementation reports, public comments received, the audit report and validation/verification statements, the project's status with respect to CCB Standards (validated, verified etc.) and any validations or certifications achieved by the project against other relevant standards.

On stakeholder engagement, the Third Edition of the Standards includes a criterion dedicated to stakeholder engagement in its "General Section". Project proponents must play an active role in distributing key project documents to affected communities and other stakeholders and hold widely publicized information meetings in relevant local or regional languages.

Evidence must be provided that community members and other affected stakeholders have been effectively consulted in the project design and involved in project implementation. Furthermore, a plan must be developed to continue communication and consultation between project managers and all community groups about the project and its impacts to facilitate adaptive management

throughout the life of the project. In addition, the proponent must describe the measures taken, and communications methods used, to explain to communities and other stakeholders the process for validation and/or verification against the CCB Standards by an independent auditor, providing them with timely information about the auditor's site visit and facilitating direct and independent communication between them and the auditor.

On grievance mechanisms, the project must formalise clear feedback and grievance redress procedures for handling feedback, unresolved conflicts and grievances that arise during project planning and implementation. The feedback and grievance redress procedure must include a three tier system, where- there is first an attempt to resolve grievances through amicable negotiations, then unresolved grievances are referred to mediation by an independent third party, and when this is not successful the grievances are referred to a third level of the 'laws of the relevant jurisdiction' that may include an option for arbitration.

Monitoring and Reporting [20]

The project must have measurement and monitoring plans to quantify and document changes resulting from project activities in: (a) social and economic well-being (indicating which communities, community groups, and other stakeholders will be monitored), (b) project-related carbon pools, project emissions, and non-CO_2 GHG emissions if appropriate, (c) biodiversity, and (d) impacts on High Conservation Values identified in the project area. For all cases, the types of measurements, sampling methods and frequency of measurements must be identified.

The monitoring plan identifies the frequency of monitoring and reporting. The results of such monitoring systems must be made publicly available on the internet and communicated to the communities and other stakeholders.

Registry [21]

The CCB Standard does not have an official registry, but the results of all CCB verifications are listed on CCBA's website. In addition, a "CCB Label" may be added to carbon credits certified under another standard and recorded on the associated registry if the project is also verified to CCB Standards. The Label is a permanent marker in a carbon credit's unique registry identification code and is useful as a marker for investors and offset buyers to identify that those carbon credits have come from a project that has been verified as compliant with CCB Standards and therefore has generated community and biodiversity benefits in addition to quantified emissions reductions. The participating registries that can currently add a CCB Label to the carbon credits are Markit VCS Registry and APX VCS Registry.

Process [22]

All projects seeking approval under the CCB Standards must be validated to determine that the project design conforms with the Standards, and must subsequently be verified to determine that the project has been successfully implemented, and has generated net positive climate, social, and biodiversity benefits in accordance with its validated design.[1] Verification enables the addition of a "CCB Label" to verified emissions reductions delivered under a carbon accounting standard such as VCS or CDM.

Validation requires that the project design documentation (PDD), a detailed description of the project and the ways in which it meets the required and optional criteria of the CCB Standards, is prepared in a way that facilitates assessment by the public and the auditor. A qualified, approved auditor must undertake the validation. Verifications must be carried out at least every five years. If

the Climate Section was waived for CCB Validation because the project met the requirements of a Recognised GHG Programme, the project must be verified to the CCB Standards each time that it is verified to the Recognised GHG Programme.

The CCB Standard can be combined with any variety of REDD+ and other forest carbon standards, for example, CCBA and VCS have recently partnered to streamline dual registration with both the VCS AFOLU Requirements and CCB Standards Second Edition. Project proponents can now use the same templates for project descriptions, monitoring and implementation reports, validation reports and verification reports for VCS and CCB Standards Second Edition.[3] Templates for VCS and CCB Standards Third Edition are in development.

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All standards in

Social and Environmental Standards ▼

Apply

Climate, Community, & Biodiversity (CCB) Standards [24]
SocialCarbon [25]
REDD+ Social and Environmental Standards (REDD+ SES) [26]

Initiatives on the REDD Desk linked to this standard

Zambia (1)

- Lower Zambezi REDD+ project [27]

Tanzania (1)

- Reforestation in Grassland of Uchindile, Kilombero, Tanzania & Mapanda, Mufindi, Tanzania [28]

Kenya (5)

- Forest Again Kenya [29]
- Sustainable Agriculture in a Changing Climate [30]
- The International Small Group and Tree Planting Program (Kenya) [31]
- Kasigau Corridor REDD Project Phase I - Rukinga Sanctuary [32]
- The Kasigau Corridor REDD Project Phase II-The Community Ranches [33]

Ethiopia (3)

- The Humbo Community-based Natural Regeneration Project [34]
- Sodo Community Managed Reforestation (Forest Regeneration) Project [35]
- Abote Community-Managed Reforestation Project [36]

Sierra Leone (1)

- [Gola Rainforest National Park REDD project](#) [37]

Indonesia (1)

- [Rimba Raya Biodiversity Reserve Project](#) [38]

Cambodia (1)

- [Oddar Meanchey Community Forestry REDD+ Project](#) [39]

Papua New Guinea (1)

- [April Salumei Sustainable Forest Management Project, East Sepik](#) [40]

Fiji (1)

- [Nakauvadra Community Based Reforestation Project](#) [41]

Brazil (3)

- [The Juma Reserve REDD Project](#) [42]
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Mexico (1)

- [Carbon Sequestration in Communities of Extreme Poverty in the Sierra Gorda, Mexico](#) [45]

Colombia (2)

- [Chocó-Darien Conservation Corridor](#) [46]
- [EPM REDD+ project](#) [47]

Peru (6)

- [REDD in Tambopata National Reserve and Bahuaja-Sonene National Park](#) [48]
- [Reforestation of pastures in Campo Verde with native species, Pucallpa, Peru](#) [49]
- [Madre de Dios Amazon REDD Project](#) [50]
- [Biocorridor Martin Sagrado REDD+ Project](#) [51]
- [Cordillera Azul National Park REDD Project](#) [52]
- [Alto Mayo Conservation Initiative](#) [53]

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- [April Salumei Sustainable Forest Management Project, East Sepik](#) [40]

Non-REDD Desk Initiatives

The REDD Desk may not list all project activities that are covered by the CCB Standards. We list projects that are included in our "REDD Countries" section. Find more information on the full range of projects by looking at the CCBA website.

Related news

- [New CCBA Project Documents Open For Public Comment](#) [54]
- [Feedback Requested by 18th March: Draft CCB Standards Guidance Document](#) [55]
- [Webinar: Guidance on using the CCB Standards Third Edition, including for Smallholder- and Community-led projects](#) [56]
- [Althelia Climate Fund, Wildlife Works to Invest $10m in Project Using the CCB Standards, Aiming for Both Community and Biodiversity Gold Levels.](#) [57]
- [New Project Documents Open for Public Comment](#) [58]
- [Carbon Credits Ready for Sale in Oddar Meanchey Forest](#) [59]

Further reading

[Measurement, Reporting and Verification (MRV) Manual for Improved Forest Management in Central Suau REDD+ area, Papua New Guinea](#) [60]
[The Role of Voluntary Agricultural Certification Standards in Quantifying and Reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions: Exploring the Cocoa, Coffee, Palm Oil and Shrimp Aquaculture Sectors](#) [61]
[Options for REDD+ voluntary certification to ensure net GHG benefits, poverty alleviation, sustainable management of forests and biodiversity conservation](#) [62]

External Links

[Climate, Community & Biodiversity Alliance website](#) [63]
[Climate, Community & Biodiversity Standards (Third Edition)](#) [64]
[Climate, Community & Biodiversity Project Design Standards (Second Edition)](#) [65]
[Rules for the use of the Climate, Community & Biodiversity Standards (December 2013)](#) [66]

Related encyclopaedia articles

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