

Guidance on ER-PD technical assessment process

Objectives of the assessment

According to the terms of reference (ToRs) the role of TAP members is to:

- To conduct an independent assessment of one or more Emission Reduction Program Documents (ER-PDs), focusing on the sections that deal with their recognized field of expertise, to determine whether the ER Program complies with the assessment criteria, i.e. Carbon Fund Methodological Framework and other criteria set by the Carbon Fund Participants (CFPs).
- To contribute to the improvement of the TAP assessment process by participating in knowledge exchanges and orientation workshops.

Criteria

Currently the only existing assessment criteria is the FCPF Carbon Fund Method Methodological Framework (CF MF). However, there are some of the indicators which are open to interpretation, in these cases the Methodological Expert of the Facility Management Team of the Carbon Fund (FMT) or the Global Practice (GP) will be available to provide any required guidance.

Non-binding good practice guidance on the application of the MF can be found in the lessons learned workshop report held in Rome in April 2017.

Method

The assessment approach shall be set following relevant guidance in **auditing practices** and it shall be based on a **risk-based approach**¹. The assessment should concentrate on the likely sources of material misstatements, with the materiality threshold defined as a misstatement that could account for at least 1 percent of total greenhouse gas emissions. The assessors must achieve a reasonable level of assurance in their assessment.

The assessors will assess the accuracy, conservativeness, relevance, completeness, consistency and transparency of the information provided by countries, as required by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and the MF (Criteria 5, 6, 8 of the MF).

It is expected that the assessment will include both the assessment of information/data and information/data system controls based on document review and interviews either through teleconferences or country visits.

¹ The risk-based approach consists of an auditing approach based on areas of highest perceived risk of material misstatement. Areas that display low complexity or have minimal bearing on the eligibility or quantification of program emission reductions should receive lower priority and attention relative to areas with high complexity and significant implications for program eligibility or emission reductions. More information on this approach may be found at <https://americancarbonregistry.org/carbon-accounting/verification/acr-vv-guideline-v1-1.pdf/view> or <http://www.climateactionreserve.org/how/verification/verification-program-manual/>

The assessment shall provide a description of the assessment for each indicator, providing information on the **objective evidence** and **process followed**, and containing adequate detail to understand the **rationale for the scoring**. It is expected that the TAP will use **professional judgement** to indicate whether any issues identified are **material** (non-conformities shall be identified as MAJOR or MINOR).

Knowledge sharing is inherent in technical exchanges between the TAP and the Country during the assessment process, however, the primary function of the TAP is **assessor**, rather than capacity builder.

A remote sensing specialist with knowledge in statistics is available to assist all TAPs (support will be provided remotely, and they specialist will not participate in the country visit)..

As part of the assessment, experts may contact other experts or institutions for technical information, data, or expertise, if warranted for a fair and informed review of an ER-PD and if communicated beforehand to the FMT.

Scope

The scope of the assessment includes the ER-PD, the annexes, spreadsheets and any documents or references mentioned or described in the ER-PD.

The scope will also include the information/data system controls (i.e. data processing equipment and resources, management systems, etc.).

Roles

The following are the general roles that participate in the Technical Assessment process:

- **Facility Management Team (FMT):** The CF FMT is based in the WB and will provide technical direction or ToR for specific activities, and manage the work, set the type of product and the delivery schedule, and provide for review of draft or final products, and for the dissemination and reporting to the CFPs or other entities on this work. Within the FMT the following roles are present:
 - The Fund Manager of the Carbon Fund with the overall responsibility of the Technical Assessment process from the FMT's side.
 - TAP Coordinator/administrator: FMT members responsible for TAP hiring and oversight.
 - TAP quality control: FMT members performing quality control/quality assurance functions.
 - **Methodology specialist:** Each ER program has a methodology specialist from the FMT (or the World Bank, see below) assigned in order to provide support in carbon accounting aspects. The methodology specialist provides support to the country and to the TAP in order to ensure an efficient exchange of information in terms of carbon accounting and will provide the necessary guidance;
- **Task Team (TT):** The task team managing the operation, and supervising its implementation, is based in the WB. It is made of technical specialists with environment, natural resource management, agriculture and climate change backgrounds. In addition to providing overall technical guidance and input on the design and implementation of the operation, the Task Team

Leader (TTL) also manages the client relationships. The task team also provides technical input and is part of the TAP review process. Within the TT the following roles are present:

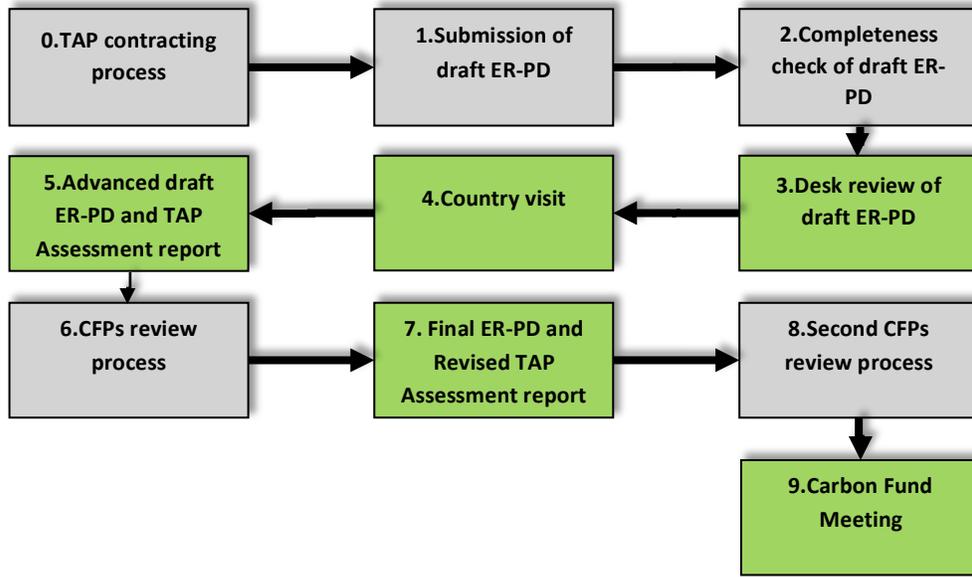
- **Focal Point:** The focal point is the person from the World Bank with the overall responsibility for the delivery of the ER-PD (may or may not be the TTL).
- **Safeguards specialist:** Each ER program has a safeguards specialist from the World Bank assigned in order to provide support in social and environmental safeguards aspects. She/ he will provide the necessary guidance to the TAP in terms of WB safeguards requirements;
- **Legal counsel:** Each ER program has a legal counsel assigned in order to provide the necessary support on legal aspects of the CF MF. He/she will provide the necessary guidance to the TAP in terms of title of use, etc.
- **Technical Advisory Panel (TAP):** The TAP is a team of experts responsible of the technical assessment. It is expected that this team is composed of the following role (an individual may have various roles):
 - **TAP lead**
 - **Country expert**
 - **Carbon accounting specialist**
 - **Safeguards specialist**
 - **Legal specialist**
 - **Remote sensing specialist/statistics expert (remote support)**
- **Carbon Fund Participants (CFPs):** CFPs are the donors to the Carbon Fund and who are entitled to decide on the ER Programs that will be accepted in the Carbon Fund portfolio.
- **Carbon Fund Observers (Observers):** These are representatives of the civil society who are responsible of observing the process.

Disagreement and dispute

In the case of disagreement between the TAP and the Country on a finding and this disagreement is related to the interpretation of the CF MF, the FMT will be available for providing guidance to both parties and if necessary facilitate the communication of this issue to CFPs in order to seek their guidance.

Technical assessment cycle

The Technical Assessment conducted by the TAP has nine distinct phases, five of which are relevant to the TAP members.



3. Desk review of draft ER-PD

The first phase of the technical assessment starts with the submission of the **Draft ER PD** to the TAP members. This will be provided by the FMT once it is deemed complete by the completeness check. This phase has the following sub phases:

- **Kick-off meeting:** The actual process will start with the kick-off meeting organized by the focal point and participated by the country, the carbon accounting specialist and the TAP. The scope of the meeting will be to:
 - Presentation of all parties (FMT);
 - Provision of guidance to TAP on preparation of assessment report and application of methodological framework (FMT);
 - Short introduction to the ER-PD (COUNTRY);
 - Explanation of structure and file structure of supporting documentation (COUNTRY);
 - Answer to questions on the process.
- **Calibration call(s):** The FMT will arrange a call/s to inform the TAP of the assessment process and expectations, methodological requirements and best practices, as well as any new guidance. All sections of the Methodological Framework should be discussed, however additional or separate calls (for example on carbon accounting, legal aspects or safeguards) may be appropriate. Can occur before, after or in parallel to kick off call with the country.
- **Desk review of draft ER-PD and first list of items to clarify:** The TAP will conduct a Desk Review and will provide a list of items to clarify to the focal point and the country. The Technical Assessment Report may be used for this purpose.
- **Scoping meeting – Phone call:** The focal point will organize a phone call amongst all parties and to facilitate discussions and clarifications. The basis for the discussions will be the list of items provided by the TAP.
- **List of findings of draft ER-PD and country visit Agenda:** The TAP will submit a list of findings including all preliminary issues that they would like to discuss during the country visit. The Technical Assessment Report may be used for this purpose. They will also include a tentative agenda including the stakeholders the TAP would like to meet with, the documentation that

would like to check in the country, etc. This will be done with enough time in advance to allow the country to prepare the country visit

4. Country visit

The TAP will execute the country visit following the agreed agenda. It is expected that the safeguard specialist, the carbon accounting expert and the lead will be present.

The TAP will share a revised list of findings so as to inform to the country of the already identified issues and provide the country with the opportunity to revise the ER-PD prior to preparing the Technical Assessment Report.

5. Advanced draft ER-PD and TAP Assessment report

Shortly after the country visit the country will have the opportunity to revise the ER-PD (Advanced Draft ER-PD) based on the first comments and recommendations made by the TAP. This **Advanced Draft ER-PD** will be submitted to the FMT who will convey it to the TAP.

Then the TAP will prepare the Assessment Report based on the Advanced Draft ER-PD provided by the country. The assessment report must provide an explanation of the changes made between the draft ER-PD and the advanced draft ER-PD, explaining the reasons of these changes and assessing their consequences. This is important in order to allow the reader understand the changes made between one version to the other and the findings that triggered these changes.

Prior to posting, the FMT will review the Assessment Report (for consistency, quality control and quality assurance). If substantial issues are identified the TAP Assessment Report will need to be revised. The draft ER-PD, the Advanced Draft ER-PD and the Assessment Report will then be posted in the FCPF website so as to make it available to CFPs and Carbon Fund Observers.

6. CFPs review process

CFPs and Observers will have the opportunity to review the Draft ER-PD, Advanced Draft ER-PD, Assessment Report and any additional documentation during a 4 week period. The comments will be posted in the FCPF website, and although not expected, CFPs and Observers might request to have a phone call with the TAP in order to seek clarification in some aspects.

7. Final ER-PD and TAP Assessment report

The country will have the opportunity to revise the Advanced Draft ER-PD (Final ER-PD) in order to take into account the findings from the TAP and comments from the CFPs and Observers. This **Final ER-PD** will be submitted to the TAP in order to allow the TAP to assess if the identified non-conformities have been addressed. The TAP assessment report will be updated, meaning that the TAP is expected to use the previous report as a basis and update it in order to reflect those changes made to the advanced

draft ER-PD. The text of the previous assessment must be replaced by a new assessment if the assessment needs to be updated based on the new changes made to the ER-PD.

It is expected that the Assessment Report will also provide some indication on whether the comments from the CFPs were taken into account by the country.

The Final ER-PD and the updated Assessment Report will be provided to the FMT. The FMT will review the Assessment Report (for consistency, quality control and quality assurance). If substantial issues are identified the TAP Assessment Report will need to be revised.

8. Second CFPs review process

The Final ER-PD and updated Assessment Report will be posted for a second review process at least 3 weeks prior to the Carbon Fund Meeting:

9. Carbon Fund Meeting

During the Carbon Fund Meeting, the country will present the Final ER-PD and the CFPs will have the opportunity to request clarifications and provide additional comments.

One or more TAP expert will also be requested to present an assessment of an ER-PD to the REDD Country or authorized entity that prepared an ER-PD and at a Carbon Fund meeting.

Timeline (example)

The following table provides an example of an assessment timeline which provides an indication of the duration of each activity. Each focal point will provide a specific timeline for each assessment following this same model.

Activity	Start date	End Date	Calendar days required
Submission of draft ER-PD to the FMT		May 09, 2016, Monday	
Completeness check of ER-PD	May 09, 2016, Monday	May 22, 2016, Sunday	13
Desk review of draft ER-PD	May 23, 2016, Monday	June 12, 2016, Sunday	21
<i>Kick-off meeting</i>	May 23, 2016, Monday	May 22, 2016, Sunday	0
<i>Desk review of draft ER-PD and list of items to clarify</i>	May 23, 2016, Monday	June 05, 2016, Sunday	14
<i>Scoping meeting</i>	June 06, 2016, Monday	June 05, 2016, Sunday	0
<i>List of issues to clarify on draft ER-PD and country visit Agenda</i>	June 06, 2016, Monday	June 12, 2016, Sunday	7
Country visit	June 13, 2016, Monday	July 03, 2016, Sunday	21

Activity	Start date	End Date	Calendar days required
<i>Preparation of country visit</i>	June 13, 2016, Monday	June 26, 2016, Sunday	14
<i>Country visit</i>	June 27, 2016, Monday	July 03, 2016, Sunday	7
TAP Assessment report	July 04, 2016, Monday	August 14, 2016, Sunday	29
<i>Preparation of advanced draft ER-PD and submission to FMT</i>	July 04, 2016, Monday	July 17, 2016, Sunday	14
<i>Communication to CFPs of coming availability of advanced draft ER-PD</i>	July 18, 2016, Monday	July 17, 2016, Sunday	0
<i>TAP Assessment report of advanced draft ER-PD</i>	July 18, 2016, Monday	July 31, 2016, Sunday	14
<i>Translation of advanced draft ER-PD</i>	July 17, 2016, Sunday	August 6, 2016, Saturday	21
<i>FMT QC/QA of TAP Assessment Report</i>	August 7, 2016, Sunday	August 13, 2016, Saturday	7 days
<i>Posting of advanced draft ER-PD and Assessment Report</i>	August 14, 2016, Sunday	August 14, 2016, Sunday	1
First CFPs review process	August 15, 2016, Monday	September 14, 2016, Wednesday	32
<i>Review of advanced draft ER-PD and the TAP Assessment Report</i>	August 15, 2016, Monday	September 11, 2016, Sunday	28
<i>Clarification phone call</i>	September 12, 2016, Monday	September 14, 2016, Wednesday	3
<i>Comments to the REDD+ Country</i>	September 15, 2016, Thursday	September 14, 2016, Wednesday	0
<i>Posting of CFP and Obs comments</i>	September 15, 2016, Thursday	September 15, 2016, Thursday	1
Updated TAP Assessment report	September 15, 2016, Thursday	November 10, 2016, Thursday	56
<i>Preparation of final ER-PD and submission to FMT</i>	September 15, 2016, Thursday	October 25, 2016, Tuesday	40
<i>Preparation of updated Assessment report of final ER-PD</i>	October 26, 2016, Wednesday	November 08, 2016, Tuesday	14
<i>Translation of final ER-PD</i>	October 25, 2016, Tuesday	November 08, 2016, Tuesday	14
<i>FMT QC/QA of updated TAP Assessment Report</i>	November 09, 2016, Wednesday	November 15, 2016, Tuesday	7
<i>Posting of final ER-PD and updated Assessment Report</i>	November 16, 2016, Wednesday	November 17, 2016, Thursday	2
Second CFPs review process	November 18, 2016, Friday	December 08, 2016, Thursday	21
Carbon Fund Meeting		December 08, 2016, Thursday	

