

## REDD Methodology Modules for the Voluntary Carbon Standard

### REDD Methodology Modules Project - Summary

Avoided Deforestation Partners is sponsoring the first coordinated effort to develop a set of “methodology modules” to estimate emission reductions from projects that Reduce Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD projects). The modules are being developed under the Voluntary Carbon Standard (VCS). They will be the most comprehensive REDD methodology under the VCS and support the development of a wide range of REDD project activities.

The REDD Methodology Modules project is an effort to streamline methodology development for investors and project developers. Rather than developing unique and expensive methodologies on a project-by-project basis, under the modular approach each aspect of the project from baseline setting to measurement, and monitoring to leakage estimates is treated in a discrete and independent module. Individual modules that are applicable to a specific project’s circumstances can then be selected and applied under a framework module to generate a project specific methodology. This clears a major barrier for the development of REDD projects and promises to:

- *Ensure environmental integrity and robustness of VCS REDD projects*
- *Prevent certification of poorly designed REDD demonstration activities*
- *Avoid a repetition of the fragmented development of project specific methodologies without general applicability as under the CDM Afforestation/Reforestation process.*
- *Accelerate the reduction of emissions from deforestation while international and domestic REDD frameworks continue to be developed*

### Why are the modules needed?

Tropical deforestation and forest degradation produces between 20% - 25% of global greenhouse gas emissions. This makes efforts in REDD essential to mitigating climate change.

The momentum behind REDD in international climate negotiations has been growing: the UNFCCC Conference of Parties (COP 13) in Bali adopted a decision in late 2008 that encouraged the development and testing of various mechanisms, approaches, methodologies and tools for REDD. Yet while the Bali Action Plan contains rough guidance for demonstration activities, detailed methodological rules for REDD under an international regime are not expected until several years after UN climate talks in Copenhagen (COP 15) have concluded in 2009.

It is essential that credible REDD methodologies are available for the voluntary market to ensure effective and credible projects take place, and to inform the emerging international REDD policies. The private sector is already beginning to invest in projects in Southeast Asia, Latin America and Africa, with more REDD activities and programs planned globally. However, experience with forest carbon projects in CDM and the voluntary carbon market have demonstrated that great financial and technical hurdles deter project proponents and developers

from investing in projects. Designing widely-applicable, credible REDD methodologies will help reduce some of the technical hurdles of developing REDD projects, promote environmental integrity in project-level REDD accounting, reduce transaction costs, and provide implementation experience that will help inform the ongoing UNFCCC process.

### **What do the modules cover?**

The Project was initially conceived in May 2008 and drafting began in September 2008. The drafting team consists of experts from Winrock International (Sandra Brown and Tim Pearson), Carbon Decisions (Lucio Pedroni), Silvestrum (Iginio Emmer), and TerraCarbon (David Shoch). Climate Focus serves as secretariat and facilitator of the Project. The first drafts of the modules were officially launched at the second Forest Day organized by CIFOR in Poznan, Poland during the 14<sup>th</sup> session of the UNFCCC Conference of the Parties (COP 14).

The modules developed under this initiative cover a wide range of project scenarios. However, the modules are not exhaustive and do not cover all conceivable REDD projects. They should not be considered a finite or definitive list. The modules will public documents and additional modules can be developed and added to the system by anyone interested in doing so. As such, the modular approach will constitute a living set of tools that will continue to evolve and expand over time. As new modules are developed and approved by the VCS they will be able to be added to the set of available modules project developers can access and use for their own specific project.

The set of modules are tied together by a framework module that sets out how the individual modules work together and will produce a project specific methodology when applied. The framework module therefore incorporates all the modules developed to date and other relevant tools needed to estimate emission reductions. The current set of modules consists of the following:

#### Carbon Pool Modules:

- CP-A** “Estimation of carbon stocks and changes in carbon stocks in the above-ground biomass carbon pool”
- CP-B** “Estimation of carbon stocks and changes in carbon stocks in the below-ground biomass carbon pool”
- CP-D** “Estimation of carbon stocks and changes in carbon stocks in the dead-wood carbon pool”
- CP-L** “Estimation of carbon stocks in the litter carbon pool”
- CP-S** “Estimation of carbon stocks in the soil organic carbon pool”
- CP-W** “Estimation of carbon stocks and changes in carbon stocks in the wood products carbon pool”

#### Baseline Modules:

- BL-PL** “Estimation of baseline carbon stock changes and greenhouse gas emissions from planned deforestation”

- BL-UP** “Estimation of baseline carbon stock changes and greenhouse gas emissions from unplanned deforestation”
- BL-UR** “Estimation of the baseline rate of unplanned deforestation”
- BL-UL** “Location and quantification of the threat of unplanned baseline deforestation” - Version 1.0
- BL-DFW** “Estimation of baseline emissions from forest degradation caused by extraction of wood for fuel”

Leakage Modules:

- LK-ASP** “Estimation of emissions from activity shifting for avoided planned deforestation” – Version 1.0.
- LK-ASU** “Estimation of emissions from activity shifting for avoided unplanned deforestation”
- LK-ME** “Estimation of emissions from market-effects leakage”
- LK-DFW** “Estimation of emissions from displacement of fuel wood extraction”

Emissions Modules (applicable to baseline, project scenario and leakage):

- E-BB** “Estimation of non-CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from biomass burning”
- E-FFC** “Estimation of emissions from fossil fuel combustion”
- E-NA** “Estimation of direct N<sub>2</sub>O emissions from nitrogen application” – latest CDM-EB approved version

Monitoring Module:

- M-FCC** “Methods for monitoring forest cover changes in REDD project activities”

Miscellaneous Modules:

- X-STR** “Methods for stratifying the project area of REDD project activities”
- X-SIG** “Determination of the significance of emissions sources and changes in carbon stocks in REDD project activities”
- X-UNC** “Estimation of uncertainty for REDD project activities”

Tools:

- T-AMI** VCS “Tool for AFOLU Methodological Issues”
- T-ADD** “Tool for the Demonstration and Assessment of Additionality in Afforestation Reforestation (A/R) CDM Project Activities” – latest CDM-EB approved version.
- T-BAR** “Tool for AFOLU non-permanence risk analysis and buffer determination” – latest VCS approved version

While the modules are undergoing a 30 day public commenting period as part of the validation process drafts will be available on the TÜV SÜD website for public comment: [http://www.netinform.de/KE/Wegweiser/Ebene1\\_Projekte.aspx?Ebene1\\_ID=49&mode=4](http://www.netinform.de/KE/Wegweiser/Ebene1_Projekte.aspx?Ebene1_ID=49&mode=4)

Once the projects have been validated and approved by the VCS board they will be available for download on the websites of Avoided Deforestation Partners [www.adpartners.org](http://www.adpartners.org) and Climate Focus [www.climatefocus.com](http://www.climatefocus.com), the party coordinating and managing the module development project.<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> For more information or questions regarding the modules please contact Robert O'Sullivan of Climate Focus at R.O'Sullivan [at] climatefocus.com.