



***VCS Program Normative Document:***  
**Double Approval Process**

**VCS Program Normative Document: Double Approval Process, v1.1****21 January 2010****Contents**

1.	Introduction.....	3
2.	Definitions.....	3
3.	Scope and Costs of the Double Approval Process .....	4
3.1	Scope of the Double Approval Process .....	4
3.2	Costs of the Double Approval Process .....	4
4.	Double Approval Process for Methodology Elements.....	4
4.1	Overview .....	4
4.2	Step 1: Methodology Element Developer Prepares Methodology Element Documentation .	5
4.3	Step 2: VCSA Conducts Global Stakeholder Consultation.....	6
4.4	Step 3: Methodology Element Developer Contracts First Validator to Conduct Assessment of Methodology Element.....	6
4.5	Step 4: VCSA Contracts Second Validator to Conduct Assessment of Methodology Element .....	7
4.6	Step 5: VCSA Reviews Methodology Element Documentation and Assessment Reports.....	7
4.7	Eligibility Criteria for Validators .....	8
5.	Further Requirements for Methodology Elements .....	10
5.1	New Methodologies and Methodology Revisions .....	10
5.2	Use of AFOLU Expert in the Assessment of AFOLU Methodology Elements.....	11
5.3	Tools/Modules.....	13
6.	Double Approval Process for AFOLU Project Elements .....	13
6.1	Overview .....	13
6.2	Step 1: Project Proponent Prepares AFOLU Project Element Document .....	14
6.3	Step 2: First Verifier Conducts Assessment of AFOLU Project Element.....	14
6.4	Step 3: Second Verifier Conducts Assessment of AFOLU Project Element.....	15
6.5	Step 4: VCS Registry Administrator Reviews First and Second Assessment Reports and Processes Project Accordingly .....	15
6.6	Eligibility Criteria for Verifiers .....	16
7.	Further Requirements for AFOLU Project Elements.....	16
	Schedule 1: Document History .....	17
	Schedule 2: Sectoral Scope Groups.....	18

## 1. Introduction

A number of elements under the VCS Program are subject to the double approval process, whereby two validators or verifiers make an independent assessment of the same element. The double approval process is outlined at a high level in the *VCS 2007.1* and the purpose of this document is to provide detailed requirements and practical guidance on the process. The document lays out the steps involved in the double approval process and then provides further requirements and guidance for specific elements that are subject to the process. The document is intended for use by methodology element developers, project proponents, validators and verifiers and any other parties who use the double approval process.

This document, as may be updated from time to time, provides the current requirements for the double approval process and is effective from 18 June 2009. Readers should ensure that they are using the most current version of the document. Methodology elements and AFOLU project elements where contracts with both validators or verifiers, as the case may be, were entered into before 18 June 2009 may use the double approval process requirements available in the *VCS 2007.1* document.

## 2. Definitions

Definitions set out in *ISO 14064-2:2006*, *ISO 14064-3:2006*, *ISO 14065:2007* and in the VCS Program documentation shall apply in addition to the definitions below.

### **AFOLU Expert**

A person with expertise and experience in AFOLU methodologies, tools, modules and/or projects and who is approved by the VCSA for methodology element assessments within a given AFOLU project category.

### **AFOLU Project Element**

An AFOLU market leakage assessment or non-permanence risk assessment that is subject to the double approval process.

### **Double Approval Process**

The process by which new methodologies, methodology revisions, additionality performance tests, tools/modules, AFOLU market leakage assessments and AFOLU non-permanence risk assessments are approved under the VCS Program.

### **First Validator**

The first validator that undertakes an assessment of a methodology element.

### **First Verifier**

The first verifier that undertakes an assessment of an AFOLU project element.

### **Methodology Element**

A new methodology, methodology revision, additionality performance test or tool/module that is subject to the double approval process.

### **Methodology Element Developer**

An entity that develops a methodology element.

### **Second Validator**

The second validator that undertakes an assessment of a methodology element.

### **Second Verifier**

The second verifier that undertakes an assessment of an AFOLU project element.

### 3. Scope and Costs of the Double Approval Process

#### 3.1 Scope of the Double Approval Process

Methodology elements are subject to the double approval process and shall be assessed independently by two validators. These are:

- a) New methodologies and methodology revisions; used for project development.
- b) New additionality performance tests; used for performance standard based additionality tests.
- c) New tools/modules; used to lower the cost and increase the quality and/or transparency of project design, methodology approval, monitoring and verification.

AFOLU project elements are subject to the double approval process and shall be assessed independently by two verifiers. These are:

- a) AFOLU market leakage assessments; used for assessing market leakage and applicable to improved forest management (IFM) and reduced emissions from deforestation and degradation (REDD) projects.

**Note** - Further AFOLU project categories may be added to the scope of VCS Program and a requirement for market leakage assessment under the double approval process may apply.

- b) AFOLU non-permanence risk assessments; used to determine the number of buffer credits to be withheld for AFOLU projects.

**Note** - Not all market leakage assessments and non-permanence risk assessments are subject to the double approval process. See Section 7 for further information.

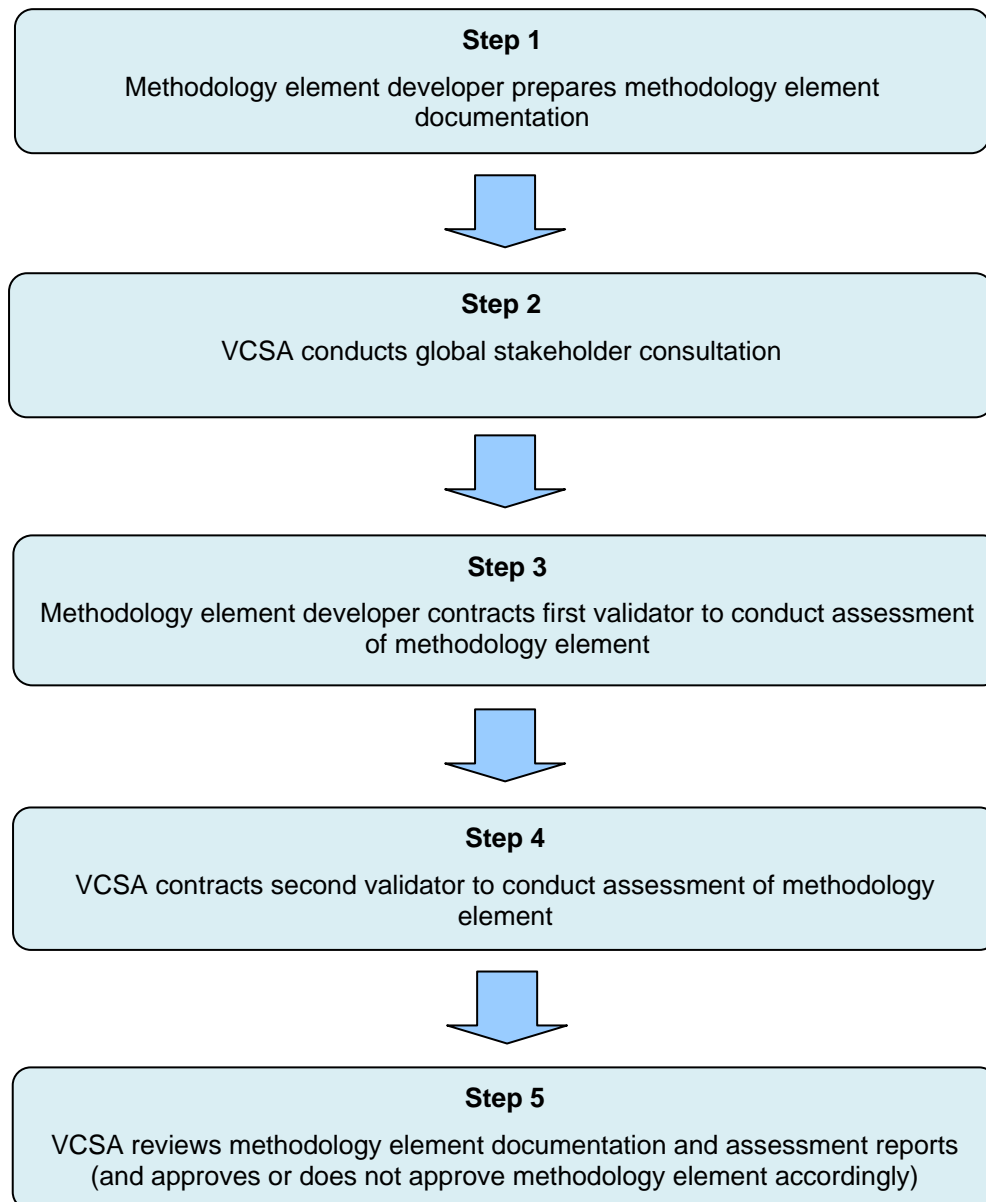
#### 3.2 Costs of the Double Approval Process

The costs of both assessments in the double approval process are borne by the methodology element developer or project proponent, as the case may be. For methodology elements, an administration fee is payable, as set out in Section 4.3.3. The time taken to complete the process is largely dependent upon the initial quality of the methodology element or AFOLU project element document and the length of time taken by each validator or verifier, as the case may be, to undertake its assessment.

## 4. Double Approval Process for Methodology Elements

### 4.1 Overview

Diagram 1 summarizes the double approval process as it applies to the methodology elements described in Section 3.1.

**Diagram 1:** Steps in the Double Approval Process for Methodology Elements

#### 4.2 **Step 1: Methodology Element Developer Prepares Methodology Element Documentation**

- 4.2.1 The methodology element developer shall prepare the methodology element documentation that will be subject to an independent assessment by two validators. This means the methodology element developer shall prepare the new methodology, methodology revision, additionality performance test or tool/module, as the case may be. The methodology element documentation shall state clearly the date on which it was issued and its version number.

**Note** - The entity acting as methodology element developer may change during the course of taking a methodology element through the double approval process, provided the VCSA is notified and the new entity submits to the VCSA a signed double approval process submission form (see Section 4.3.1).

#### 4.3 **Step 2: VCSA Conducts Global Stakeholder Consultation**

- 4.3.1 The methodology element developer shall, no later than 15 calendar days after it has entered into a contract with the first validator, submit to the VCSA a signed double approval process submission form (available on the VCS website) and the methodology element documentation.
- 4.3.2 The VCSA shall post the methodology element documentation on the VCS website for a period of 30 days, for the purpose of inviting public comment. Any comments may be submitted to the VCSA at [secretariat@v-c-s.org](mailto:secretariat@v-c-s.org) and respondents shall provide their name, organization/institution, country and email address.
- 4.3.3 The VCSA shall invoice the methodology element developer for the double approval process administration fee when the methodology element has been posted for public consultation. The administration fee is EUR 1,500, as may be revised from time to time.
- 4.3.4 At the end of the public comment period, the VCSA shall provide all and any comments received to the methodology element developer, who shall demonstrate to each of the validators how it has taken due account of all and any such comments (see Section 4.4.3). All and any comments shall also be posted on the VCS website by the VCSA alongside the methodology element information.

#### 4.4 **Step 3: Methodology Element Developer Contracts First Validator to Conduct Assessment of Methodology Element**

- 4.4.1 The methodology element developer shall contract the first validator to undertake an assessment of the methodology element documentation prepared in Step 1 above. See Section 4.7 for eligibility requirements for validators.

**Note** - Such contracting of the first validator may occur before, after or during Step 2 above.

- 4.4.2 All and any of the first validator's findings shall be responded to. As a result of any such findings, the methodology element developer may need to amend the methodology element documentation.
- 4.4.3 The first validator shall produce an assessment report in line with the relevant VCS Program requirements (see Section 5 for further information) and best practice. In addition to adhering to such requirements and best practice, the assessment report shall also contain the following:
- a) A description of all and any of the first validator's findings and the methodology element developer's response to them.
  - b) An explanation of how the methodology element developer has taken due account of all comments received during the global stakeholder consultation (see Step 2 above).
  - c) An assessment statement which is issued in accordance with the requirements for validation statements set out in Section 7.3.4 of the *VCS 2007.1*. Such statement shall also state the version number of the methodology element documentation upon which the statement is based.

**Note** - In the requirements for validation statements set out in Section 7.3.4 of the VCS 2007.1, for the purposes of assessment statements, 'GHG assertion' should be read as 'methodology element documentation'.

- d) Where required, and as set out in Section 4.7, evidence of fulfilment of eligibility requirements for validators.

#### 4.5 **Step 4: VCSA Contracts Second Validator to Conduct Assessment of Methodology Element**

- 4.5.1 The methodology element developer shall provide the VCSA with one or more work proposals from potential second validators and shall indicate any preferred choice of validator where more than one work proposal is provided. See Section 4.7 for eligibility requirements for validators. The VCSA retains the right to choose another validator if it is not satisfied with the option(s) provided.

**Note** - The methodology element developer can provide such work proposals to the VCSA at any stage in the double approval process and providing them earlier in the process may help ensure minimal time delay in contracting the second validator.

- 4.5.2 The VCSA shall contract the second validator, using its standard agreement, to undertake a second assessment of the methodology element documentation prepared in Step 1 (as may have been amended during the course of the first assessment).

**Note** - The methodology element developer pays the second validator directly, as provided for in the contract between the VCSA and the second validator and the double approval process submission form.

- 4.5.3 The methodology element developer shall provide the VCSA with the most recent methodology element documentation and the assessment report produced by the first validator. The VCSA shall then provide such documentation and report to the second validator.

- 4.5.4 All and any of the second validator's findings shall be responded to. As a result of any such findings, the methodology element developer may need to amend the methodology element documentation. In such case, the methodology element developer shall engage both validators to ensure that each of their assessment statements is based upon the same final version of the methodology element documentation. Where the methodology element developer is not able to gain the consensus of both validators, it may request that the VCSA facilitates discussions between it and the two validators to attempt to resolve the situation.

- 4.5.5 The second validator shall produce and provide to the VCSA an assessment report in line with the relevant VCS Program requirements (see Section 5 for further information) and best practice. In addition to adhering to such requirements and best practice, the assessment report shall also contain the same information that is required of the first validator and its assessment report as set out in Section 4.4.3.

#### 4.6 **Step 5: VCSA Reviews Methodology Element Documentation and Assessment Reports**

- 4.6.1 Where the first and second assessment reports both approve the methodology element, the VCSA notifies the methodology element developer that the methodology element is approved.

**Note** - The VCSA's review of the assessment reports is to ensure that due process has been followed. The VCSA does not undertake a technical review of the methodology element documentation or the assessment reports, though it does reserve the right to undertake a technical review and withhold approval of the methodology element where it is not satisfied with the quality of the methodology element documentation, first assessment report or second assessment report.

4.6.2 Where one or other of the assessment reports does not approve the methodology element and attempts to resolve the situation in accordance with Section 4.5.4 have been unsuccessful, the methodology element will not be approved by the VCSA. The methodology element developer can appeal a validator's assessment statement on the methodology element via the appeal process as set out in the most recent version of the *VCS Program Guidelines*.

4.6.3 The VCSA shall assign the approved methodology element a number and post it and the two assessment reports on the VCS website. The methodology element can then be used by project proponents to develop VCS projects.

#### 4.7 Eligibility Criteria for Validators

4.7.1 The eligibility requirements for validators are set out in Table 1 below. Recognizing that approval of methodologies, methodology revisions, additionality performance tests and tools/modules has implications for more than a single project, the eligibility criteria ensure that the appropriate level of expertise and experience is applied in the double approval process. Table 1 also states (third column) for which of the applicable eligibility requirements the validator shall submit evidence of its fulfilment of same. The specific requirements regarding evidence of fulfilment of applicable eligibility requirements are outlined in Section 4.7.3.

**Note** - References to validator or verifier in this document refer to the validator verifier body, not the individual.

**Note** - The eligibility requirements for validators set out in Table 1 are in addition to the requirements for competence set out in Section 7.3.2 of the *VCS 2007.1*.

4.7.2 In the unlikely event of there being no validators that meet the eligibility requirements given in Table 1, the methodology element developer shall contact the VCSA, who shall work with the methodology element developer to choose an appropriately qualified validator.



**Table 1:** Methodology Elements – Eligibility Criteria for Validators

Methodology Element	Eligibility Criteria	Evidence Required?
Non-AFOLU methodology elements	<p>1) Both validators shall be eligible under the VCS Program to perform validation for the applicable sectoral scope(s). Where there is more than one sectoral scope applicable to the methodology element, validators shall be eligible for all relevant sectoral scopes for validation; AND</p> <p>2) At least one of the validators shall have completed at least ten project validations or methodology element assessments under the double approval process in the sectoral scope group applicable to the methodology element.<sup>1</sup> Project validations can be under the VCS Program or an approved GHG program and projects shall be registered under the applicable program. A validation of a single project under more than one program (e.g., VCS and CDM) counts as one project validation. Methodology element assessments shall be for methodology elements that have been approved by the VCSA.</p>	<p>X</p> <p>✓</p>
ARR AFOLU methodology elements	<p>1) Both validators shall be eligible under the VCS Program to perform validation for sectoral scope 14 (AFOLU); AND</p> <p>2) At least one of the validators shall:</p> <p>a) be accredited under an approved GHG program for sectoral scope 14<sup>2</sup> for validation<sup>3</sup>; OR</p> <p>b) have completed at least ten project validations in any sectoral scope and at least three project validations or methodology element assessments under the double approval process under sectoral scope 14. Project validations can be under the VCS Program or an approved GHG program and projects shall be registered under the applicable program. A validation of a single project under more than one program (e.g., VCS and CDM) counts as one project validation. Methodology element assessments shall be for methodology elements that have been approved by the VCSA.</p>	<p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>✓</p>
Non-ARR AFOLU methodology elements	<p>1) Both validators shall be eligible under the VCS Program to perform validation for sectoral scope 14 (AFOLU); AND</p> <p>2) At least one of the validators shall use an AFOLU expert (see Section 5.2) in the assessment; AND</p> <p>3) At least one of the validators shall have completed at least ten project validations in any sectoral scope. Project validations can be under the VCS Program or an approved GHG program, with the projects having been registered under the applicable program. A validation of a single project under more than one program (e.g., VCS and CDM) counts as one project validation. The validator that meets this eligibility requirement may be the same validator that uses an AFOLU expert.</p>	<p>X</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p>

<sup>1</sup> The sectoral scope groups are listed in Schedule 2. Where the methodology element has more than one applicable sectoral scope and such scopes fall under more than one sectoral scope group, the validator must have validated at least ten projects or methodology elements in each of the relevant sectoral scope groups.

<sup>2</sup> Or the approved GHG program equivalent to VCS Program sectoral scope 14, if sectoral scopes under the approved GHG Program are not directly equivalent to the VCS Program numbering system for sectoral scopes.

<sup>3</sup> Note that, at the time of writing, the Climate Action Reserve (CAR) does not accredit validators (only verifiers); hence CAR accreditation is not sufficient to fulfil this requirement.

4.7.3 Each validator shall submit evidence of its fulfilment of eligibility requirements where indicated in the third column of Table 1. Such evidence shall be provided in the validator's assessment report of the methodology element and shall be as follows:

- a) Where the validator is required to have undertaken a certain number of project validations or methodology element assessments, a summary of such work shall include:
  - i) For project validations, the name of the project, the date that the validation report was issued, the date that the project was registered and the name of the GHG program under which the project was registered.
  - ii) For methodology element assessments, the name of the methodology element and the date that the assessment report was issued.
- b) Where the validator is required to use an AFOLU expert, the assessment report shall state the name of the AFOLU expert and their role in the assessment.

## 5. Further Requirements for Methodology Elements

### 5.1 New Methodologies and Methodology Revisions

#### 5.1.1 Requirements for Developing New Methodologies

Methodology element developers shall prepare new methodologies in line with VCS Program requirements, including Section 5 (Project level requirements) and Section 6 (Methodologies) of the *VCS 2007.1*.

Methodology element developers can prepare methodologies using the VCS methodology template, which will be forthcoming and available on the VCS website, or any other suitable template (e.g., CDM) that allows the methodology to demonstrate compliance with the VCS Program requirements.

#### 5.1.2 Scope of Assessment of New Methodologies

The first and second assessments of the new methodology shall evaluate whether or not the methodology has been prepared in line with VCS Program requirements, including Section 5 and Section 6 of the *VCS 2007.1*. The scope of each assessment report shall include, at a minimum, the following:

- i. Eligibility criteria: Assessment of whether the methodology's eligibility criteria are appropriate and adequate.
- ii. Baseline approach: Assessment of whether the approach for determining the project baseline is appropriate and adequate.
- iii. Additionality: Assessment of whether the approach/tools for determining whether the project is additional are appropriate and adequate.
- iv. Project boundary: Assessment of whether an appropriate and adequate approach is provided for the definition of the project's physical boundary and sources and types of gases included.

- v. Emissions: Assessment of whether an appropriate and adequate approach is provided for calculating baseline emissions, project emissions and emission reductions.
- vi. Leakage: Assessment of whether the approach for calculating leakage is appropriate and adequate.
- vii. Monitoring: Assessment of whether the monitoring approach is appropriate and adequate.
- viii. Data and parameters: Assessment of whether monitored and not monitored data and parameters used in emissions calculations are appropriate and adequate.
- ix. Adherence to the project-level principles of the VCS Program: Assessment of whether the methodology adheres to the project-level principles of the VCS Program (see Section 5.1.1).

### 5.1.3 Methodology Revisions

In the case of methodology revisions, the methodology element developer shall document the methodology revision using a suitable methodology template as set out in Section 5.1.1 and have the methodology revision approved under the double approval process. The methodology revision documentation does not need to be a complete re-write of the existing methodology. Instead, the new documentation can reference the existing methodology and state the revisions. Reference to the existing methodology shall include its full title, publishing organization, date of issue and version number.

The scope of assessment for methodology revisions shall be the same as for new methodologies and shall follow the requirements set out in Section 5.1.2. Where any of the requirements are not applicable (e.g., the specification for project boundary has not changed and therefore does not require re-assessment), the validator shall state this in its assessment report.

**Note** - Methodology deviations, as defined under the VCS Program, shall not require the project proponent to prepare new methodology element documentation and shall not be managed via the double approval process. Instead, the validator shall validate the methodology deviation as part of the project validation or verification process.

### 5.1.4 Proposals for Methodologies in Scopes Currently Excluded by the VCS Program

The scope of the VCS Program is extended from time to time, such as with the inclusion of AFOLU into the program in November 2008. As part of the process of extending the scope of the VCS Program, it is useful for the VCSA to have view of possible methodologies and projects that might be eligible under such any extension. Where methodology element developers would like to prepare methodologies that currently fall outside of the scope of the VCS Program and have them assessed by a validator, they are encouraged to contact the VCSA and to follow the requirements in this document if continuing with such methodology development and assessment.

## 5.2 Use of AFOLU Expert in the Assessment of AFOLU Methodology Elements

Recognizing that there is currently limited experience and expertise within the validator community regarding the assessment of non-ARR AFOLU methodology elements (with particular relevance to new methodologies), and the important precedent that will be set by the first new non-ARR AFOLU methodology elements approved under the VCS Program, an AFOLU expert shall be used in the assessment of all non-ARR AFOLU methodology elements (see Table 1). The process for designation and use of AFOLU experts shall operate as set out in Sections 5.2.1 and 5.2.2.

The requirement and necessity for validators to use an AFOLU expert shall be revisited by the VCSA as and when it has been demonstrated that the validator community has developed sufficient experience and expertise in assessing non-ARR AFOLU methodology elements.

### 5.2.1 Application Process for AFOLU Experts and List of AFOLU Experts

- a) The VCSA shall pro-actively solicit applicants to ensure sufficient AFOLU experts are available on the list of AFOLU experts.
- b) The applicant shall complete the AFOLU expert application form, available on the VCS website, and submit this together with two references, at least one of which shall be a professional non-academic reference, to the VCSA at [secretariat@v-c-s.org](mailto:secretariat@v-c-s.org).
- c) The VCSA shall assess the applicant based on the following criteria:
  - i) AFOLU expertise and experience: The applicant shall possess significant expertise in assessing carbon baselines, modeling, leakage, and measurement and monitoring frameworks, as they relate to AFOLU methodology elements. The applicant shall also be well versed in current scientific thinking and best practices associated with AFOLU project design and implementation, and carbon accounting and reporting.
  - ii) AFOLU project category and regional scope: The applicant shall possess experience in the specific AFOLU project category(ies) (ALM, IFM, REDD) for which they are applying. Where relevant to the project category, the applicant shall possess appropriate regional experience. Specifically, REDD applicants shall possess relevant developing country and tropical forest experience. This is required because it is expected that most REDD methodology elements will be applied within such contexts and because of the unique characteristics that must be considered when establishing robust deforestation and degradation baselines in these regions.
 

**Note** - In addition to the three AFOLU project categories listed here (ALM, IFM, REDD), further categories may be included under the VCS Program in the future.
  - iii) Organizational affiliation and independence: The applicant shall demonstrate independence and freedom from conflict of interest in relation to the AFOLU methodology element assessment process.
- d) The VCSA shall assess the application and notify the applicant of the outcome. Where approved, the applicant shall be added to the list of AFOLU experts. The list shall state the name of the AFOLU expert, the AFOLU project category(ies) for which they are approved and their contact details. The list of AFOLU experts is available on the VCS website.
- e) An AFOLU expert can request it be removed from the list of AFOLU experts by contacting the VCSA and requesting same. The VCSA also reserves the right to remove an AFOLU expert from the list where it determines that the AFOLU expert no longer meets the required criteria or performance quality for AFOLU experts.

### 5.2.2 Use of AFOLU Expert

- a) As set out in Section 4.7, a validator conducting an assessment of an AFOLU methodology element may need to use an AFOLU expert in the assessment. Any such AFOLU expert must be approved for the AFOLU project category relevant to the methodology element.
- b) The AFOLU expert can be part of the validation team or act as technical expert to the validation team. Where the AFOLU expert is acting as technical expert to the validation team, they shall meet all the requirements of technical experts set out in *ISO 14065:2007* and shall not carry out the assessment alone.
- c) As set out in Section 4.7.3, the methodology element assessment report shall state the name of the AFOLU expert and its role in the assessment.

### 5.3 Tools/Modules

The VCS Program accepts tools and modules approved under approved GHG programs. In addition, the VCS Program supports innovation by approving, via the double approval process, tools and modules that lower the cost and/or increase the quality and/or transparency of project design, methodology approval and monitoring.

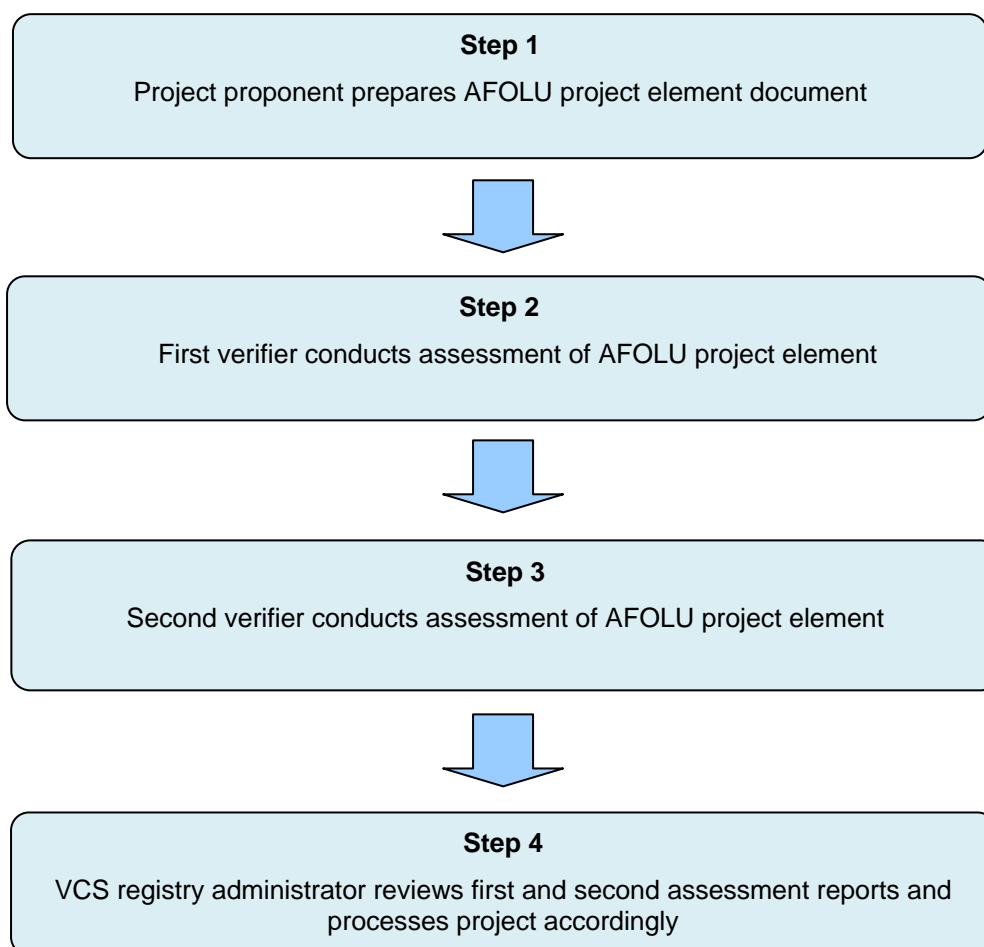
New tools and modules submitted under the double approval process should satisfy three main criteria. They should:

- a) Be as simple as possible, in order to facilitate their low-cost application.
- b) Use conservative and transparent approaches.
- c) Be as broadly applicable as possible (i.e., not single-project specific).

## 6. Double Approval Process for AFOLU Project Elements

### 6.1 Overview

Diagram 2 summarizes the double approval process as it applies to the AFOLU project elements described in Section 3.1.

**Diagram 2:** Steps in the Double Approval Process for AFOLU Project Elements

## 6.2 Step 1: Project Proponent Prepares AFOLU Project Element Document

6.2.1 The project proponent shall prepare the AFOLU project element document that will be subject to an independent assessment by two verifiers. This means the project proponent or other relevant party shall prepare the AFOLU market leakage assessment or AFOLU non-permanence risk assessment, as the case may be. The AFOLU project element document shall be a stand-alone document separate from any other project documentation such as the monitoring report.

## 6.3 Step 2: First Verifier Conducts Assessment of AFOLU Project Element

6.3.1 The project proponent shall contract the first verifier to undertake an assessment of the AFOLU project element document prepared in Step 1 above. Such assessment can be done by the same verifier that is undertaking verification of the project's GHG emission reductions or removals (and at the same time). See Section 6.6 for eligibility requirements for verifiers.

6.3.2 All and any of the first verifier's findings shall be responded to. As a result of any such findings, the project proponent may need to amend the AFOLU project element documentation.

6.3.3 The first verifier shall produce an assessment report in line with the relevant VCS Program requirements (see Section 7 for further information) and best practice. In addition to adhering to such requirements and best practice, the assessment report shall also contain the following:

- a) A description of all and any of the first verifier's findings and the project proponent's response to them.
- b) An assessment statement which is issued in accordance with the requirements for validation statements set out in Section 7.3.4 of the *VCS 2007.1*. Such statement shall also state the version number of the AFOLU project element documentation upon which the statement is based.

**Note** - In the requirements for validation statements set out in Section 7.3.4 of the *VCS 2007.1*, for the purposes of assessment statements, 'GHG assertion' should be read as 'AFOLU project element documentation'.

- c) The adjustment that shall be made for the AFOLU market leakage assessment or the percentage of credits the project must set aside to account for AFOLU non-permanence risk, as the case may be.

#### 6.4 **Step 3: Second Verifier Conducts Assessment of AFOLU Project Element**

6.4.1 The project proponent shall contract the second verifier to undertake a second assessment of the AFOLU project element document prepared in Step 1 above. See Section 6.6 for eligibility requirements for verifiers.

6.4.2 The second assessment may be conducted at any time following the completion of the AFOLU project element document prepared in Step 1 above. In other words, the second assessment may be done after the completion of the first assessment, with the second verifier having access to the first assessment report, or at the same time as the first assessment, with each verifier working in parallel.

6.4.3 All and any of the second verifier's findings shall be responded to. As a result of any such findings, the project proponent may need to amend the AFOLU project element document. In such case, the project proponent shall engage both verifiers to ensure that each of their assessment statements is based upon the same final version of the AFOLU project element document.

6.4.4 The second verifier produces an assessment report in line with the relevant VCS Program requirements (see Section 7 for further information) and best practice. In addition to adhering to such requirements and best practice, the assessment report shall also contain the same information that is required of the first verifier and its assessment report as set out in Section 6.3.3.

#### 6.5 **Step 4: VCS Registry Administrator Reviews First and Second Assessment Reports and Processes Project Accordingly**

6.5.1 The project proponent shall submit the AFOLU project element document, first assessment report and second assessment report to the VCS registry administrator.

6.5.2 Where the first assessment and second assessment reports both state the same adjustment that must be made for AFOLU market leakage assessment or the percentage of credits the project must set aside to account for AFOLU non-permanence risk, as the case may be, this

shall be the adjustment that is made by the VCS registry administrator when VCUs are issued.

- 6.5.3 Where the first assessment and second assessment reports each state differing adjustments that must be made for AFOLU market leakage assessment or the percentage of credits the project must set aside to account for AFOLU non-permanence risk, as the case may be, the project proponent can opt to use the more conservative assessment. The project proponent shall indicate this to the VCS registry administrator, who shall use the more conservative assessment when VCUs are issued.
- 6.5.4 The VCS registry administrator shall upload the AFOLU project element document, first assessment report and second assessment report to the project record on the VCS project database.

## 6.6 Eligibility Criteria for Verifiers

- 6.6.1 The project proponent shall select and contract both verifiers and each shall be eligible to perform verification under the VCS Program for sectoral scope 14. There are no further stipulations.

## 7. Further Requirements for AFOLU Project Elements

Further information on the double approval process for AFOLU market leakage assessments and AFOLU non-permanence risk assessments is available in the *VCS Guidance for Agriculture, Forestry and Other Land Use Projects*, *Tool for AFOLU Methodological Issues*, and *Tool for AFOLU Non-Permanence Risk Analysis and Buffer Determination*.



**Schedule 1: Document History**

Version	Date	Comment
v1.0	18 Jun 2009	Initial Version
v1.1	21 Jan 2010	Main updates: <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1) Amended the description of the process by which second validator is paid, in line with current practice.</li><li>2) Clarified that comments received during the global stakeholder consultation shall be posted on the VCS website.</li><li>3) Changed the point in the process at which the methodology element developer is invoiced for the double approval process administration fee.</li></ol>

## **Schedule 2: Sectoral Scope Groups**

The Joint Implementation Supervisory Committee at its 13<sup>th</sup> meeting adopted the following sectoral scope groups:

- Group I: Sectoral scopes 1, 2, 3
- Group II: Sectoral scopes 4, 6, 8, 9, 10
- Group III: Sectoral scopes 5, 11, 12, 13
- Group IV: Sectoral scope 7
- Group V: Sectoral scope 14
- Group VI: Sectoral scope 15

These groups link sectoral scopes which have common characteristics. Annex 2 of the 13<sup>th</sup> meeting of the JISC, with outlines the sectoral scope groups, is available at:

[http://ji.unfccc.int/Sup\\_Committee/Meetings/013/Reports/Annex2.pdf](http://ji.unfccc.int/Sup_Committee/Meetings/013/Reports/Annex2.pdf)

### **Intellectual Property Rights, Copyright and Disclaimer**

This document contains materials the copyright and other intellectual property rights in which are vested in the VCS Association or which appear with the consent of the copyright owner. These materials are made available for you to review and to copy for the use (the "Authorised Use") of your establishment or operation in a project under the VCS Program ("the Authorised Use").

Except for the Authorised Use, all commercial use of this document is prohibited. You are not permitted to view, download, modify, copy, distribute, transmit, store, reproduce or otherwise use, publish, licence, transfer, sell or create derivative works (in whatever format) from this document or any information obtained from this document otherwise than for the Authorised Use or for personal, academic or other non-commercial purposes.

All copyright and other proprietary notices contained in this document must be retained on any copy that you make. All other rights of the copyright owner not expressly dealt with above are reserved.

No representation, warranty or guarantee express or implied is made in this document. No representation, warranty or guarantee express or implied is made that the information provided is accurate, current or complete. Whilst care is taken in the collection and provision of this information, the VCS Association and its officers, employees, agents, advisers and sponsors will not be liable for any errors, omissions, misstatements or mistakes in any information or damages resulting from the use of this information or any decision made or action taken in reliance on this information.