

PLAN  VIVO

PV Climate

# Project Requirements

*Version 5.7*

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## INTRODUCTION

PV Climate projects involve the protection, restoration and sustainable management of land in defined *Project Areas*. A *Project* can include one or more *Project Areas*, that are managed under a common governance structure.

*Projects* must be in conformance with all PV Climate Project Requirements. The *Project Design Document (PDD)* should include sufficient information to demonstrate conformance with the PV Climate Project Requirements. The *PDD* must be kept up to date with any changes to the project, and *Annual Reports* must be submitted to Plan Vivo throughout the *Project Period*.

Under each set of Project Requirements, accompanying Guidance explains the procedures, expectations, and evidence needed to demonstrate conformance. Some Guidance points are prescriptive and must be followed to comply with the Requirement, while others provide recommended approaches to support consistent implementation. Together, the Requirements and their associated Guidance form the basis for how Plan Vivo, *Validators*, and *Verifiers*, interpret, assess, and verify compliance. Further details of the information that must be made available at the time of concept screening *Validation*, *Annual Reporting* and *Verification* are provided in the *Project Idea Note*, *Project Design Document* and *Annual Report* templates.

All terms in this document follow the PV Climate Glossary, with the addition of the following definitions:

### **Validation**

Details provided in the *PDD* will be checked for conformance with all PV Climate Project Requirements.

The *Validator* will assess the accuracy, completeness, quality, and veracity of information recorded in the *PDD*, and the knowledge and functionality of the *Project Coordinator* and *Project Participants*.

### **Annual Reporting**

If changes are made to the *PDD* during a *Reporting Period* a revised *PDD* must be submitted with the *Annual Report*, and a summary of changes must be included in the *Annual Report*. Any changes will be checked for conformance with the PV Climate Project Requirements.

### **Verification**

The *Verifier* will assess accuracy, completeness, quality, and veracity of information provided in *Annual Reports* and any revisions to the *PDD* made during the *Verification Period*.

The *Verifier* will assess conformance of the *Project* with the procedures and processes described in the *PDD* and re-assess the validity of key information in the *PDD* and the knowledge and functionality of the *Project Coordinator* and *Project Participants*.

## Tools

Plan Vivo recommends that *Project Coordinators* use the [Participatory Toolkit](#) throughout *Project* development and implementation. Specific tools related to requirements are linked throughout this document, and Plan Vivo additionally recommends the following tools:

For engaging with stakeholders:

- **Tool 12:** Community Meeting
- **Tool 13:** Focus Group Discussion
- **Tool 14:** Semi-structured Interview
- **Tool 15:** Public Hearing
- **Tool 17:** Engaging with Disadvantaged Groups

To aid with the design of the *Project Interventions*:

- **Tool 6:** Climate Vulnerability Assessment
- **Tool 7:** Historical Timeline
- **Tool 8:** Seasonal Calendar
- **Tool 9:** Participatory Resource Mapping
- **Tool 10:** Social Mapping

## Project Requirements

### 1 Eligible Interventions

#### 1.1 Project Interventions

##### **Requirements**

- 1.1.1 *Project Interventions* must protect, restore, or improve management of land or marine areas; provide long-term increases in carbon storage or reductions in greenhouse gas emissions; and have positive impacts on local livelihoods and ecosystems.
- 1.1.2 *Livelihood Benefits* cannot solely be from the sale of *Plan Vivo Certificates* or employment in *Project* activities, and the *Project Intervention* itself must provide long-term *Livelihood Benefits* to the *Project Participants*, and other *Local Stakeholders*.

##### **Guidance**

- Plan Vivo accepts *Project Interventions* in the following categories:
  - **Protection** – Reducing deforestation and/or degradation of forests, wetlands or other natural ecosystems.
  - **Restoration** – Tree planting, assisted natural regeneration, and management of forests, wetlands, or other natural ecosystems to restore ecological function.
  - **Improved Management** – Improving forest, agricultural land, grassland, livestock, wetland or marine management practices to increase carbon stocks and/or reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

## 1.2 Management Rights

### Requirements

- 1.2.1 *Project Interventions* must take place within defined *Project Area(s)* for which the *Project Participants* have statutory or customary rights that enable them to implement land management activities and benefit from the sale of *Plan Vivo Certificates*.
- 1.2.2 All *Project Areas* must be located within a defined *Project Region*, and the boundaries of all *Project Regions* and *Project Areas* must be mapped.
- 1.2.3 *Project Interventions* must not result in forced physical or economic displacement.

### Guidance

- A *Project Region* is the geographical area within which the *Project* will implement its *Project Interventions*. The boundary of the *Project Region* therefore needs to include all initial *Project Areas* and any areas that the *Project* may expand to in the future.
- *Projects* can have more than one *Project Region*, for example, if activities will take place in two geographically discrete regions.
- Land tenure, ownership, user rights and management rights that enable *Project Participants* to implement *Project Interventions* and benefit from the sale of *Plan Vivo Certificates* can be legally or customarily defined or described in a binding agreement with the landowner or official rights holder.
- If there is no mechanism to obtain or demonstrate legal rights to *Carbon Benefits*, these benefits may be inferred from other similar rights, e.g. to timber, or other ecosystem services, if this is approved by the relevant government body.
- *Projects* are recommended to use the [Participatory Toolkit Tool/9: Participatory Resource Mapping](#) to define the *Project Area*.

## 2 Stakeholder Engagement

### 2.1 Stakeholder Analysis

#### **Requirements**

- 2.1.1 All *Stakeholders* that could influence or be affected by the *Project* must be identified and categorised as either *Local Stakeholders* or *Secondary Stakeholders*.
- 2.1.2 All *Indigenous Peoples* and local communities with statutory or customary rights to land or resources in the *Project Area(s)* must be identified, and their governance structure and decision-making processes must be described with details of the involvement of women and marginalised or vulnerable groups.
- 2.1.3 Any past or ongoing disputes over land or resources in the *Project Area(s)* must be identified and described, with details of how they were or will be resolved.

#### **Guidance**

- *Local Stakeholders* in this case are the primary stakeholders and include individuals or groups with statutory or customary rights to land or resources within the *Project Area(s)*, and other groups or individuals that are resident in the *Project Region* and could be directly affected (positively or negatively) by the *Project*.
- *Secondary Stakeholders* include relevant local, regional, and national authorities, and other organisations involved in conservation, restoration, or sustainable development initiatives in the region.
- Identification of *Indigenous Peoples* and local communities with rights to land and resources in the *Project Area(s)* is necessary to ensure that they are included in the *FPIC* process (see Section 2.6).
- *Projects* are recommended to use the [Participatory Toolkit Tool 1: Stakeholder Analysis](#).

## 2.2 Project Coordination and Management

### Requirements

- 2.2.1 A legally established *Project Coordinator*, with the capacity for management and coordination of the *Project* throughout the *Project Period*, must take overall responsibility for the *Project*.
- 2.2.2 If *Project* management and coordination functions are carried out by parties other than the *Project Coordinator*, the governance structure of the *Project*, and division of responsibilities, must be clearly defined and formalised through written agreement(s) between the *Project Coordinator* and the other parties involved (see Section 5.1).

### Guidance

- *Project* management and coordination functions include:
  - *Stakeholder* engagement during project development and implementation.
  - Ensuring conformance with PV Climate and compliance with applicable policies, laws and regulations.
  - Developing *Technical Specifications*, *Land Management Plans* and *Project Agreements* with *Project Participants*.
  - Ensuring that the *PDD* is updated with any changes to the *Project*.
  - Registration and recording of *Land Management Plans*, *Project Agreements*, monitoring results, and sales agreements.
  - Managing project finances and dispersal of income to *Project Participants* as described by the *Benefit Sharing Mechanism*.
  - Managing *Plan Vivo Certificates* in the *PV Climate Registry*.
  - Preparing *Annual Reports* and coordinating *Validation* and *Verification* events.
  - Securing certificate sales and other means of funding the *Project*.
  - Assisting *Project Participants* to secure any legal or regulatory permissions required to carry out the *Project*.
  - Providing technical assistance and capacity building required for *Project Participants* to implement *Project Interventions*.
  - Monitoring *Progress Indicators*, *Livelihood Indicators* and *Ecosystem Indicators* and providing ongoing support to *Project Participants*.
  - Measurement, reporting and *Verification* of *Carbon Benefits*.

- There is no restriction on the type of organisation that can take the role of *Project Coordinator*. For example, the *Project Coordinator* can be a local or international Civil Society Organisation (CSO) or Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO), Government Agency, Academic Institution or Private Company.
- Capacity for management and coordination of the *Project* demonstrated by the *Project Coordinator* or other parties involved must include the necessary skills and experience to allow for appropriate engagement with any *Indigenous Peoples, Marginalised, Vulnerable and/or Disadvantaged Peoples* in the *Project Region*.

## 2.3 Project Participants

### Requirements

- 2.3.1 *Project Interventions* must be implemented by *Project Participants* who are resident within the *Project Region*; and who manage and use land or natural resources within the *Project Region* for subsistence or small-scale production.
- 2.3.2 *Project Participants* must not be structurally dependent on year-round hired labour for their land or natural resource management activities.
- 2.3.3 *Project Participants* that do not meet requirements 2.3.1 and/or 2.3.2 can be included if the *Project Area* they own or manage: i) Collectively make up less than 30% of the total *Project Area* at all times; ii) Were not acquired from smallholder or community groups for the purpose of inclusion in the *Project*; and iii) Have clear benefits to the *Project*, for example, by increasing connectivity or benefits to local communities.
- 2.3.4 There must be no discrimination based on gender, age, ethnicity, religion or social status when selecting *Project Participants*; and if necessary, the *Project Coordinator* should take measures to reduce the potential for tensions or disputes within or between communities.
- 2.3.5 If the *Project* expands over time by recruiting *Project Participants*, procedures must be defined for determining which of the potential *Project Participants* to recruit following requirement 2.3.4. There must be no discrimination based on gender, age, ethnicity, religion or social status; if necessary, measures should be

taken to reduce the potential for tensions or disputes within or between communities.

**Guidance**

- *Project Participants* who manage land or use natural resources for subsistence or small-scale production include farmers, fishers, pastoralists and forest-dependent communities.
- *Project Participants* can include individuals or groups that are not permanently resident in the *Project Region(s)*, e.g. itinerant herders, or city dwellers if they are normally resident in the region for part of the year and they have clear rights that enable them to implement land management activities and benefit from the sale of *Plan Vivo Certificates* (see Section 1.2).
- *Project Participants* can be added to the *Project* if they meet the requirements in Section 2.3 and any eligibility criteria in the *Technical Specification(s)* for the *Project Intervention(s)* they will implement.
- *Project Participants* are not considered structurally dependent on hired labour if they are able to carry out their land or natural resource management activities without the use of hired labour throughout the year. This is likely to be the case for most smallholder and subsistence farmers, fishers, pastoralists, and forest-dependent communities; and does not exclude *Project Participants* that make use of seasonal hired labour.
- The Plan Vivo system is designed to benefit *Marginalised People* living in rural areas. The requirements limit the area of land within a project that is managed by commercial land managers and companies to 30% of the total *Project Area*.
- Thresholds for determining small-scale production vary by production system and location, and *Projects* should provide justification for why production by *Project Participants* can be considered small-scale, for example, by describing how they relate to national average land holdings and economic revenues for the products harvested.

2.4 Participatory Design

**Requirements**

- 2.4.1 *Project Coordinators* must work directly with representatives of all *Local Stakeholders* in the development of *Project Interventions* and in defining the *Project Logic* (particularly those that may normally be excluded or

*Marginalised* because of gender, age, ethnicity, religion, or social status) based on the principles of inclusion and non-discrimination to ensure that their concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.

2.4.2 *Project Interventions* must be developed in collaboration with potential *Project Participants*, who must work in partnership with the *Project Coordinator* to explore alternatives and identify preferred options (see Section 3.5).

### **Guidance**

- *Projects* can use the Participatory Toolkit *Tools* to support the participatory design process. Feedback on the design of *Project Interventions* should be actively sought from all potential *Project Participants* during the *Project* design phase (prior to *PDD* submission) to explore alternatives and identify preferred options
- *Projects* should describe within their *PDD* how they will proactively receive feedback on the ongoing implementation of *Project Interventions* from all *Project Participants* throughout the *Project Period*. This description should detail how this feedback will be considered and acted upon.

## 2.5 Stakeholder Consultation

### **Requirements**

- 2.5.1 *Projects* must have a *Stakeholder* engagement plan that is commensurate with the scale and risk of the *Project* and that uses differentiated measures, where necessary, to engage *Marginalised, Vulnerable and/or Disadvantaged People*.
- 2.5.2 The *Project Coordinator* must inform all *Stakeholders* of the *Project* during the *Project* design phase and consult with all *Local Stakeholders* throughout the *Project Period*.
- 2.5.3 All *Stakeholders*, including men, women, youth, and other important social axes of differentiation, must have the opportunity to provide feedback on the *Project Interventions* and *Project Logic* prior to finalisation of the project design.

- 2.5.4 All *Local Stakeholders* must be provided with updates on the *Project* at least once per year during the *Project Period*.
- 2.5.5 Consultation approaches must be appropriate to the capacity of the *Stakeholders*, for example, written material should be provided in the preferred language of the *Stakeholders* and workshops or meetings should be used when required to fully explain the *Project* and its impacts.
- 2.5.6 All *Stakeholders* must have the opportunity to provide feedback and raise issues or concerns about potential negative impacts of the *Project* throughout the *Project Period* (see Section 2.6), through a transparent and accessible *Grievance Mechanism* (See Section 3.17).

**Guidance**

- Approaches for identifying and managing environmental and social risks associated with the *Project* are described in Section 3.9.
- The *Project* design phase occurs prior to *PDD* submission.
- *Free, Prior and Informed Consent* is required from all *Indigenous Peoples* or local communities with statutory or customary rights to use land or resources within the *Project Area(s)* (see Section 2.6).

## 2.6 Free, Prior and Informed Consent

**Requirements**

- 2.6.1 *Projects* must follow an *FPIC* process that enables *Indigenous Peoples* and local communities with statutory or customary rights to land or resources in the project area(s) to negotiate the conditions under which the project is designed, implemented, monitored and evaluated.
- 2.6.2 The *FPIC* process must meet or exceed the requirements of national legislation and legal obligations under international standards safeguarding *Indigenous Peoples'* rights.
- 2.6.3 The *FPIC* process must follow a decision-making process and timeline defined by the rights holders, who must be able to participate through their own freely

chosen representatives, while ensuring the involvement of women and *Marginalised, Vulnerable and/or Disadvantaged People*.

- 2.6.4 The *FPIC* process must enable a collective decision by the rights holders to grant or withhold consent at key stages of project development and implementation that include, as a minimum whether to: i) Consider the proposed *Project*; ii) Engage in the *Project* design process; and iii) Implement the *Project*.
- 2.6.5 Consent must be sought before the *Project* or activity takes place and be re-confirmed periodically.
- 2.6.6 Consent must be independently decided upon based on accurate, timely and sufficient information provided in a culturally appropriate way, including full details of risks, responsibilities, and potential negative impacts of the *Project*.
- 2.6.7 All rights holders must be able to raise issues relating to consent at any time throughout the *Project Period* through the *Grievance Mechanism* (see Section 3.17).

**Guidance**

- The *FPIC* process involves requesting and seeking the free, prior, and informed consent of *Indigenous Peoples* and local communities with statutory or customary rights to land or resources in the *Project Area(s)*. It should not be assumed that consent will automatically be granted.
- In PV Climate *Projects*, *FPIC* principles apply to *Indigenous Peoples* and local communities with statutory or customary rights to land or resources in the project area(s). The specific rights of *Indigenous Peoples* recognised in national legislation, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and International Labour Organization Convention 169 must also be upheld.
- *Indigenous Peoples* or local communities who have been historically displaced from the *Project Area(s)* must be included in the *FPIC* process if they have a legitimate, existing claim to land or resources in the *Project Area(s)*.
- *Indigenous Peoples* and local communities with statutory or customary rights to land or resources in the *Project Area(s)* should take part in the assessment of potential social and environmental risks (see Section 3.9), and these risks must be fully explained prior to seeking consent to implement the *Project*. All *Projects* must have a transparent, structured consent-seeking process that incorporates the seeking and granting (or withholding) of consent at multiple key stages of *Project* development and implementation. This includes the expansion and onboarding of new *Project Participants* throughout the duration of the *Project Period*.
- Stakeholder Analysis (see Section 2.1), Participatory Design (see Section 2.4), *Project Agreements* (see Section 3.18) and the *Grievance Mechanism* (see Section 3.17) are key components of the *FPIC* process that contribute to ensuring *Project Participants* are appropriately informed and that the process for seeking, granting, and recording consent is robust and continuous. The *FPIC* process and Participatory Design (see Section 2.4) should be viewed as interconnected and mutually reinforcing processes.

## 3 Project Design

### Baselines

#### 3.1 Baseline Scenario

##### Requirements

- 3.1.1 A *Baseline Scenario* describing the most likely land use and land or marine management in the absence of *Project Intervention(s)* must be specified for each *Project Area* following procedures described in an approved *Methodology*.
- 3.1.2 The *Baseline Scenario* must be reassessed whenever a *Crediting Period* is renewed, and at least every 10-years throughout the *Project Period*.

##### Guidance

- For *Projects* with more than one *Project Area*, a separate *Baseline Scenario* can be defined for each *Project Area*, or *Baseline Scenario(s)* that are representative of *Project Areas* with specified conditions can be identified.
- *Projects* that have more than one *Baseline Scenario* must clearly specify the *Baseline Scenario* for each *Project Area*.

#### 3.2 Carbon Baseline

##### Requirements

- 3.2.1 Net-greenhouse gas emissions under the *Baseline Scenario* must be estimated for each year of the *Project Period* using an approved *Methodology*.
- 3.2.2 Estimates of net-greenhouse gas emissions under all *Baseline Scenarios* that a *Project Intervention* could be applied to within the *Project* must be included in the *Technical Specification* for the intervention (see Section 3.8).
- 3.2.3 The *Carbon Baseline* must be updated/re-assessed whenever a *Crediting Period* is renewed, and at least every 10-years throughout the *Project Period*.

**Guidance**

- Approved *Methodologies* are listed on the Plan Vivo webpage<sup>1</sup>.
- New *Methodologies* must be approved prior to submission of the *PDD* (see PV Climate [Methodology Requirements](#)).

### 3.3 Livelihood Baseline

**Requirements**

- 3.3.1 The livelihood status of potential *Project Participants* and other *Local Stakeholders* immediately prior to the start of the *Project*, and how these are expected to change under the *Baseline Scenario*, must be described for each *Project Region*.
- 3.3.2 A separate description of livelihood status, disaggregated by gender where appropriate, must be provided for the main population groups present in the *Project Region* – including all cultural, ethnic, religious, and socioeconomic groups.
- 3.3.3 Description of livelihood status must include details of access to and main uses of land and natural resources, including reasonable measures to identify, record and respect legitimate tenure right holders and their rights; typical assets, income levels and sources, and livelihood activities.
- 3.3.4 The *Livelihood Baseline* must be updated/re-assessed whenever a *Crediting Period* is renewed, and at least every 10-years throughout the *Project Period*.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.planvivo.org/pv-climate-documentation>

**Guidance**

- Understanding livelihood status and how this is expected to change in the absence of *Project Interventions* is important for describing the positive impacts expected and achieved by the *Project*.
- Additional information incorporated into the *Livelihood Baseline* and *Livelihood Indicators* could include factors relating to wellbeing, community cohesion, climate resilience, or other factors important in the context of the *Project Region*.
- Initial values for *Livelihood Indicators* (see Section 4.3) must be included in the *Project's* first *Annual Report*.
- *Projects* are recommended to use the [Participatory Toolkit Tool 5: Well-being Assessment](#) to establish Livelihood Baseline.

### 3.4 Ecosystem Baseline

**Requirements**

- 3.4.1 Ecological conditions, and how these are expected to change under the *Baseline Scenario*, must be described for each *Project Region*.
- 3.4.2 The description of ecological conditions must include details of the main ecosystems and habitat types present; and any *Species of Conservation Concern* known or thought to be present (see Section 4.4).
- 3.4.3 The *Ecosystem Baseline* must be updated/re-assessed whenever a *Crediting Period* is renewed, and at least every 10-years throughout the *Project Period*.

**Guidance**

- Understanding ecological conditions and how these are expected to change in the absence of *Project Interventions* is important for describing the positive impacts expected and achieved by the *Project*.
- Initial values for the *Ecosystem Indicators* (see Section 4.4) must be included in the first *Annual Report*.

## Theory of Change

### 3.5 Project Logic

#### **Requirements**

- 3.5.1 *Projects* must have a robust *Project Logic* that describes how the *Project Intervention(s)* will generate *Carbon, Livelihood and Ecosystem Benefits* relative to the *Baseline Scenario*.
- 3.5.2 The *Project Logic* must describe the causal links between *Project* activities and expected outcomes and identify key assumptions.
- 3.5.3 *Project Interventions* that include harvesting of trees within 50-years of the *Start Date* must have a *Project Logic* that supports replanting or allowing for regeneration after harvest, and long-term maintenance of the system.
- 3.5.4 The *Project Logic* must include risk mitigation measures for *Reversals, Leakage*, and negative environmental and social impacts (see Sections 3.9 to 3.12).
- 3.5.5 The *Project Logic* must be updated/re-assessed whenever a *Crediting Period* is renewed, and at least every 10-years throughout the *Project Period*.

#### **Guidance**

- The *Project Logic* is used to demonstrate that the *Project Interventions* are likely to achieve their expected *Carbon, Livelihood and Ecosystem* benefits, and effectively mitigate any risks.
- *Projects* are recommended to use the [Participatory Toolkit](#) *Tool 2: Problem Analysis* and *Tool 3: Visioning* to develop the *Project Logic*.

## Technical Specification

### 3.6 Project Activities

#### Requirements

- 3.6.1 All activities and inputs required to implement a Project Intervention must be described in a *Technical Specification*.
- 3.6.2 A separate *Technical Specification* must be provided for each *Project Intervention*.

#### Guidance

- A single *Technical Specification* may include potential for some variation in land or marine management, e.g. to include a range of species or planting densities, but substantially different management interventions should be presented in separate *Technical Specifications*.

### 3.7 Additionality

#### Requirements

- 3.7.1 *Project Interventions* must not be feasible for *Project Participants* to implement in the absence of the *Project*.
- 3.7.2 There must be clear barriers preventing *Project Participants* from implementing the *Project Interventions*, that the *Project* will enable them to overcome.
- 3.7.3 *Regulatory Surplus* must be demonstrated for each *Project Intervention* by identifying any relevant laws, statutes, or other regulatory frameworks and either explaining why the *Project Intervention* falls outside their scope, or demonstrating that they are not effectively enforced.
- 3.7.4 *Additionality* must be demonstrated for each *Project Intervention* by following the procedures in an approved *Methodology*.
- 3.7.5 Barriers preventing new *Project Participants* from implementing the *Project Interventions*, and *Regulatory Surplus* of each *Project Intervention* must be re-assessed whenever a *Crediting Period* is renewed, and at least every 5-years throughout the *Project Period*.

**Guidance**

- Assessment of *Carbon Benefits* relative to the *Carbon Baseline* helps to ensure the *Additionality* of *Carbon Benefits*. *Additionality* assessment provides further justification for the assumption that *Project Participants* would not implement the *Project Intervention* in the absence of the *Project*.

## 3.8 Carbon Benefits

### Requirements

- 3.8.1 Expected *Carbon Benefits*, and indicators for monitoring *Carbon Benefits*, of each *Project Intervention* must be described in a *Technical Specification*.
- 3.8.2 Expected *Carbon Benefits* must be estimated relative to the *Carbon Baseline* (see Section 3.2) using an approved *Methodology* and after deductions for *Leakage* and *Risk Buffer* (see Sections 3.10 and 3.12).
- 3.8.3 Any significant GHG emissions from activities carried out to prepare the *Project Area* for the *Project Intervention* must be deducted from the *Carbon Benefits* claimed.
- 3.8.4 *Technical Specifications* must specify the *Baseline Scenario(s)*, geographical area(s), and any other conditions under which the expected *Carbon Benefits* and monitoring approaches are valid.
- 3.8.5 *Technical Specifications* must clearly state all assumptions and sources of data used to estimate expected *Carbon Benefits* and demonstrate that these meet the requirements of the approved *Methodology*.
- 3.8.6 *Technical Specifications* must state the *Carbon Indicators* (see Section 4.2) that will be used to monitor *Carbon Benefits*.
- 3.8.7 *Technical Specifications* must be updated/re-assessed whenever a *Crediting Period* is renewed, and at least every 10-years throughout the *Project Period*.

**Guidance**

- *Technical Specifications* provide details of the activities that will be carried out to implement a *Project Intervention*, and the *Carbon Benefits* expected to be achieved. They are used to develop *Land Management Plans* with *Project Participants* (see Section 3.14).
- If a *Technical Specification* will be applied in more than one *Project Area*, expected *Carbon Benefits* should be estimated per unit area e.g. t CO<sub>2</sub>e per hectare that the *Project Intervention* applied to.
- If carbon stocks in a *Project Area* are significantly reduced, or significant GHG emissions are generated to prepare a *Project Area* for a *Project Intervention*, the emissions from these activities must be estimated using an approved *Methodology* and deducted from the *Carbon Benefit* claimed.
- Carbon pools and emission sources from which emissions are generated in preparation of a *Project Area* for a *Project Intervention* can be excluded if the total emissions for all excluded carbon pools and emission sources does not exceed 5% of the total expected *Carbon Benefits* of the *Project*.
- For restoration and/or regeneration *Projects*, evidence must be provided in the *PDD* that either: i) There has been no deforestation, clearance of woody vegetation, or significant soil disturbance within the 10 years prior to the initiation of the *Project Intervention* (unless suitable data is not available in which case the period for assessment can be extended up to a maximum of 15 years); or ii) Any such occurrences were the result of natural processes or activities unrelated to the *Project*. For examples of natural processes and activities that could be considered unrelated to the *Project*, and the types of evidence that can be provided for these, email [projects@planvivofoundation.org](mailto:projects@planvivofoundation.org) for more details.
- If an existing *Methodology* for estimation, measurement and verification of *Carbon Benefits*, that is applicable to the *Project Area(s)*, and *Project Intervention* is not available; new *Methodologies* that meet the PV Climate [Methodology Requirements](#) can be submitted to Plan Vivo for approval.
- New *Methodologies* must be approved prior to submission of the *PDD* (see PV Climate [Methodology Requirements](#)).

## Risk Management

### 3.9 Environmental and Social Safeguards

#### **Requirements**

- 3.9.1 *Projects* must respect and observe universal human rights and freedoms for all as defined by the International Bill of Human Rights.
- 3.9.2 *Projects* cannot include any activities on the Plan Vivo Exclusion List.
- 3.9.3 *Project Interventions* and activities in the *Project Area(s)* and the surrounding landscape must be screened for potential negative environmental and social risks and impacts. Risks of adverse impacts must be assessed, and mitigation and monitoring measures put in place where necessary, as part of the project design (see Section 3.5) and throughout the *Project Period*.
- 3.9.4 Direct, indirect and cumulative social risk factors to be considered include potential negative risks and impacts on: human rights, livelihoods, incomes, cultural heritage, resource access, property rights, gender equality, vulnerable groups, conflict, population growth, child labour, forced labour and working conditions (including occupational health and safety), climate vulnerability, and any other relevant risk factors.
- 3.9.5 Direct, indirect and cumulative environmental risk factors to be considered include potential negative impacts on ecosystems within and outside the *Project Area(s)* from: invasive species, habitat loss, degradation and fragmentation, overexploitation, disturbance of water and energy supply, unsustainable resource use, biocides/pesticides, chemical fertilisers, waste production (both hazardous and non-hazardous), release of hazardous materials soil degradation, air pollution, water pollution, noise and vibration, land contamination, consequential development, climate vulnerability, and any other relevant risk factors.
- 3.9.6 Risk mitigation measures must be implemented by *Projects* to eliminate or reduce any risks or impacts identified to a level that is acceptable to the people that are negatively affected including *Marginalised, Vulnerable and/or Disadvantaged People*.

- 3.9.7 If *Local Stakeholders* are negatively affected by *Project Interventions* and negative impacts cannot be fully mitigated, for example, by introducing alternative livelihood activities, adequate compensation measures, developed with the involvement of those negatively affected, must be provided to replace lost assets or lost access to assets. All losses must be considered legitimate for compensation, including those based on customary and non-legal tenure and resource-use regimes.
- 3.9.8 Potential negative impacts on the livelihoods of *Local Stakeholders* considered in the risk assessment must include direct costs e.g. from reduced access to wood or other forest products relative to the *Baseline Scenario*, and *Opportunity Costs* of foregone income from land management, labour, and use of natural resources in the *Baseline Scenario*.
- 3.9.9 If monitoring and patrolling is supported by the government, *Projects* must provide a Memorandum of Understanding between the *Project Coordinator* and the government agency responsible for law enforcement that includes reference to the Plan Vivo environmental and social safeguards and/or other international safeguards standards.
- 3.9.10 Any trees planted or other plants or animals introduced to *Project Areas* for a *Project Intervention* must be native to the *Project Region* unless they provide clear *Livelihood or Ecosystem Benefits* and the *Project Intervention* would not be feasible with an alternative *Native Species*.
- 3.9.11 If non-*Native Species* are planted or introduced, the *Project* must provide justification for their selection over alternative *Native Species* and provide an assessment and evidence that they pose no environmental risk or threat. Justification of any *Non-native Species* must be aligned with the *Project's* theory of change (see Section 3.5).
- 3.9.12 *Projects* are required to disclose any negative environmental and social impacts to Plan Vivo as soon as they become known.
- 3.9.13 *Natural Ecosystems* must not be converted to generate *Carbon Benefits*.

**Guidance**

- The International Bill of Human Rights can be accessed at: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/what-are-human-rights/international-bill-human-rights>
- *Projects* must provide safe and healthy working conditions aligned with national labour laws or the International Labor Organization’s (ILO) Declaration on the Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work.
- Projects must align with the UNFCCC Cancun REDD+ Safeguards (Decision 1/CP. 16, Appendix I, Paragraph 2): <https://redd.unfccc.int/fact-sheets/safeguards.html>
- The Plan Vivo Exclusion List is included in the PIN and PDD Templates.
- Environmental and social risk mitigation measures should follow a mitigation hierarchy with avoidance of the highest negative risks and impacts being prioritised where possible; and an adaptive approach that is responsive to changing conditions illustrated by monitoring results.
- The use of *Native Species* is encouraged wherever this is practical as they are likely to have greater *Ecosystem Benefits* and present fewer environmental risks than non-*Native Species*.
- The use of non-*Native Species* may be justified if these provide climate adaptation benefits.
- *Project Interventions* must not involve the conversion or degradation of *Natural Ecosystems*.
- Evidence must be provided in the *PDD* that either: i) *Project Areas* have not been converted from *Natural Ecosystems* within the 10 years prior to the initiation of the *Project Intervention* (*unless suitable data is not available in which case the period for assessment can be extended up to a maximum of 15 years*); or ii) Any such occurrences were the result of natural processes or activities unrelated to the *Project*. For examples of natural processes and activities that could be considered unrelated to the *Project*, and the types of evidence that can be provided for these, email [projects@planvivofoundation.org](mailto:projects@planvivofoundation.org) for more details.
- Conversion of natural ecosystems could include, for example: clearance of natural forest, planting trees on native grasslands, and drainage of natural wetlands.
- Temporary conversions, for example, harvesting of timber prior to restocking may not be considered conversion if the *Natural Ecosystem* is restored after the temporary conversion.
- *Project Interventions* involving tree planting should, as a general principle, prioritise diverse, multi-species systems. However, for *Project Participants* who

manage and use land or natural resources within the *Project Region* for subsistence or small-scale production, the use of single-species plantings (which may include *Naturalised Species*) can provide clear *Livelihood Benefits* or *Ecosystem Benefits*. At such scales, these plantings can enhance efficiency and productivity, contributing positively to local livelihoods and ecosystems, while presenting limited environmental risk when appropriately managed.

- Where single-species plantings exceed 1 hectare, they are prohibited, unless evidence is provided in the PDD that: 1) The single-species planting is composed of *Native Species* or *Naturalised Species*; 2) It is a necessary step in the ecological restoration of *Degraded Ecosystems*, and diverse plantings are not initially viable; 3) It provides clear *Ecosystem Benefits* or *Livelihood Benefits* that actively reduce pressure on *Natural Ecosystems*; and 4) The *Project Logic* includes a time-bound plan for transitioning to a diverse, multi-species system
- *Projects* are recommended to use the [Participatory Toolkit Tool 6: Climate Vulnerability Assessment](#) to assess this risk.

### 3.10 Achievement of Carbon Benefits

#### **Requirements**

- 3.10.1 *fPVCs* will be issued for a maximum of 90% of the *Carbon Benefit* expected in the *Crediting Period* (before *Future Risk Buffer* deductions).
- 3.10.2 *rPVCs* will be issued for a maximum of 90% of the *Carbon Benefit* expected to have been achieved in the *Reporting Period* (before *Future Risk Buffer* deductions).

**Guidance**

- *fPVCs* and *rPVCs* have some risk that expected *Carbon Benefits* will not be achieved. To mitigate this risk *Plan Vivo Certificates* are issued for a maximum of 90% of the expected *Carbon Benefits* (before *Future Risk Buffer* deductions). The unissued credits will be held in an *Achievement Reserve* can be cancelled if the *Project* fails to convert *fPVCs* or *rPVCs* to *vPVCs*. If a *Project* fails to convert more *fPVCs* or *rPVCs* of a particular *Vintage*, these then are available as unissued credits. Issued *fPVCs* or *rPVCs* may be cancelled (see PV Climate [Procedures Manual](#) for further details).

3.11 Reversal of Carbon Benefits

**Requirements**

- 3.11.1 Risks to the maintenance of the *Carbon Benefits* for a period of at least 50-years must be identified and significant risks must be mitigated.
- 3.11.2 Risks to maintenance of *Carbon Benefits* must not exceed an acceptable level.
- 3.11.3 20% of all *vPVCs* issued to a *Project* must be transferred to the *Risk Buffer*.
- 3.11.4 20% of all *fPVCs* and *rPVCs* issued to a *Project*, or held in the *Achievement Reserve* (see Section 3.10), must be transferred to the *Future Risk Buffer*.
- 3.11.5 If the *Carbon Benefits* reported by a *Project* in any *Verification Period* are negative, the cause of the *Reversals* must be identified, and *Risk Buffer* certificates to compensate for any *Reversals* will be cancelled.
- 3.11.6 Risks to the maintenance of *Carbon Benefits* must be updated/re-assessed whenever a *Crediting Period* is renewed, and at least every 10-years throughout the *Project Period*.

**Guidance**

- *Plan Vivo Certificates* in the *Risk Buffer* cannot be transferred or sold. They can only be cancelled by Plan Vivo.
- In *Projects* with more than one *Project Area*, a reversal only occurs if the net *Carbon Benefits* across all *Project Areas* are negative within a *Verification Period*.
- If *Reversals* are caused by *Avoidable Losses*, the *Project* will not be issued with any further *PVCs* until all of the cancelled certificates have been paid back to the *Risk Buffer*.
- If *Reversals* are caused by *Unavoidable Losses*, the *Project* must make additional *Risk Buffer* contributions for any cancellations that exceed the *Project's* balance of *Risk Buffer* contributions. For example, if a *Project* has contributed 1000 *PVCs* to the *Risk Buffer* and has cancelled 50 for a previous *Reversal* event their balance of contributions will be 950 *PVCs*. If they then had *Reversals* of 1500 *PVCs*, for example, because the *Project* was affected by wildfire that was beyond the control of the *Project*; they would need to pay back 550 *PVCs* to the *Risk Buffer* before they could be issued with any further *vPVCs*.
- If *Unavoidable Losses* affect part of the total *Project Area* but do not result in *Reversals* at the *Project* level, the *Project* may report *Loss Events* in their *Annual Reports* to request *Risk Buffer* cancellations so that *Unavoidable Losses* are not deducted when calculating net-*Carbon Benefit*. *Annual Reports* will be reviewed by Plan Vivo to determine whether *Risk Buffer* cancellations are applied.
- At the end of the *Project*, the remaining balance of *Plan Vivo Certificates* that the *Project* has contributed to the *Risk Buffer* will be cancelled.

3.12 Leakage

**Requirements**

- 3.12.1 An approved *Methodology* must be used to account for *Leakage* in the estimation of *Carbon Benefits*.
- 3.12.2 Where possible, *Leakage* risk mitigation measures must be implemented to reduce the potential for *Leakage*.

3.12.3 Potential *Leakage* must be deducted from the expected *Carbon Benefits* (see Section 3.8).

**Guidance**

- *Leakage* risk is highly dependent on the *Project Intervention* type and must therefore be managed using an approved *Methodology* that is specific to the intervention.
- Potential approaches to account for *Leakage* include identifying areas where *Leakage* could occur and monitoring these for any signs of *Leakage* so that *Leakage* emissions can be deducted from the *Carbon Benefit*; and/or adopting a *Leakage Discount* that is proportional to potential emissions from *Leakage*.

### 3.13 Double Counting

**Requirements**

- 3.13.1 To avoid the risk of *Double Counting Carbon Benefits* for which *Plan Vivo Certificates* are issued, there must be no overlap of *Project Areas* with other greenhouse gas emission reduction projects or initiatives generating transferable emission reduction or removal credits from the same carbon pools or emission sources at the time of registration and throughout the *Project Period*.
- 3.13.2 If *Plan Vivo Certificates* represent emission reductions or removals that are also reported under a government-led landscape program or project (national, jurisdictional, or sub-national), this must be clearly stated in the *PDD* prior to becoming *Registered Projects* must provide evidence that they will not be used in any programme that includes greenhouse gas emission trading.
- 3.13.3 If *Plan Vivo Certificates* are to be traded under the Carbon Offsetting and Reduction Scheme for International Aviation (CORSIA) or Article 6.2 of the Paris Agreement, then *Projects* must obtain and submit to Plan Vivo an attestation of authorisation of *Corresponding Adjustments* from the host country's national point of contact for greenhouse gas accounting under Article 6 of the Paris Agreement that covers all relevant *Plan Vivo Certificates*. For trading under CORSIA, this must be approved by Plan Vivo prior to trading taking place.

- 3.13.4 *Double Counting* must be reassessed whenever a *Crediting Period* is renewed, or at least every 5-years throughout the *Project Period*, whichever is sooner.
- 3.13.5 *Projects* are ineligible for registration under PV Climate if they are actively registered under another carbon crediting program.

**Guidance**

- More information on *Corresponding Adjustments* and the process for obtaining them can be found in the PV Climate [Procedures Manual](#).
- The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) provides guidance on host country responsibility related to Article 6.2 trading: [https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/cma3\\_auv\\_12a\\_PA\\_6.2.pdf](https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/cma3_auv_12a_PA_6.2.pdf)

## Agreements

### 3.14 Land Management Plans

**Requirements**

- 3.14.1 *Project Participants* must decide on the *Project Intervention*(s) they wish to implement on the land or marine areas they manage, and the details must be recorded in a *Land Management Plan*.
- 3.14.2 Each *Project Participant* must develop a *Land Management Plan* with the support of the *Project Coordinator*.
- 3.14.3 *Land Management Plans* must identify the location and extent of each *Project Area*, and include all details needed to estimate *Carbon Benefits* using the appropriate *Technical Specification*(s).
- 3.14.4 *Project Participants* must fully understand all details in their *Land Management Plans*.
- 3.14.5 *Land Management Plans* must have the potential to enhance the livelihood of the *Project Participant* and must not risk undermining their food and/or income security.
- 3.14.6 *Land Management Plans* must be included in the *Project Agreement*.

**Guidance**

- A *Land Management Plan* may include more than one *Project Area* that is managed by a *Project Participant*.
- Use of maps and diagrams and other visual tools in *Land Management Plans* is strongly encouraged.
- Additional information provided in *Land Management Plans* may include details of the *Baseline Scenario* and size of the *Project Area*, and details related to the activities in the *Technical Specification*. For example, species selection or planting density for afforestation interventions.
- It is recommended that *Land Management Plans* are reviewed and updated/re-assessed whenever a *Crediting Period* is renewed, and at least every 10-years throughout the *Project Period*.
- *Land Management Plans* are referred to as '*plan vivos*' in some *Projects*.
- *Projects* are recommended to use the *Participatory Toolkit Tool/9: Participatory Resource Mapping* when developing *Land Management Plan*. For tree-planting projects, *Tool 11a: Assessment and Utilisation of forest and tree products* is also recommended, and for blue carbon projects, *Tool 11b: Assessment and Utilisation of blue carbon ecosystem products and areas* is also recommended.

3.15 Crediting Period

**Requirements**

- 3.15.1 *Project Coordinators* must support *Project Participants* to implement and monitor *Project Interventions* for a *Crediting Period* of 10 to 50-years.
- 3.15.2 *Crediting Periods* of less than 50 years can be renewed to cover a total period of up to 50-years.
- 3.15.3 During the *Crediting Period* the *Project Coordinator* must monitor *Progress Indicators* and *Carbon Indicators* and support the *Project Participant* to implement corrective actions if necessary.
- 3.15.4 The *Crediting Period* and *Start Date* must be stated in each *Project Agreement*.
- 3.15.5 *Projects* can be issued with *fPVCs* for *Carbon Benefits* that are expected to be achieved within the *Crediting Period*.

**Guidance**

- *fPVCs* can be converted to *rPVCs* when progress monitoring demonstrates that the *Carbon Benefit* for which they were issued has been achieved. *fPVCs* and *rPVCs* are converted to *vPVCs* when the *Climate Benefits* for which they were issued have been *Verified*. See the PV Climate [Procedures Manual](#) for details.

3.16 Benefit Sharing Mechanism

**Requirements**

- 3.16.1 All income from the sale of *Plan Vivo Certificates* must be distributed according to an agreed *Benefit Sharing Mechanism*, developed iteratively in partnership with *Project Participants*. Draft and final versions must be shared with *Project Participants* and other *Local Stakeholders* in an accessible form, with documented evidence showing how feedback was addressed in the final design.
- 3.16.2 At least 60% of income from the sale of *Plan Vivo Certificates*, after payment of any charges, taxes or similar fees levied by the host country, must directly benefit the *Project Participant(s)* and other *Local Stakeholders*.
- 3.16.3 The *Benefit Sharing Mechanism* must specify the proportion of income from *Plan Vivo Certificate* sales that will be allocated to the *Project Participants*, *Project Coordinator* and other parties such as government or technical support partners.
- 3.16.4 The *Benefit Sharing Mechanism* must specify how and when benefits to *Project Participants* and other *Local Stakeholders* will be received with details of amounts allocated to cash transfers, training, and in-kind support.
- 3.16.5 The *Benefit Sharing Mechanism* must describe the mechanism and any dependencies for dispersal of funds and/or other benefits to *Project Participants* including monitoring responsibilities, targets and corrective actions for *Progress Indicators* (see Sections 4.1 and 4.6).
- 3.16.6 A summary of the *Benefit Sharing Mechanism* with details of the minimum amount the *Project Participant* is eligible to receive if monitoring targets and other dependencies are met, and consequences if targets are not met, must be included in each *Project Agreement*.

**Guidance**

- *Project Coordinators* are strongly encouraged to identify, jointly with *Project Participants*, mechanisms for suitable benefit sharing, including alternatives to cash transfers that result in more equitable benefit distribution.
- The *Benefit Sharing Mechanism* must be developed iteratively, ensuring that feedback on the draft version is documented and addressed before the final version is shared. Both draft and final versions must be communicated to *Project Participants* and other *Local Stakeholders* in an accessible form (appropriate to local languages, literacy levels, and cultural contexts). Documentation of this iterative process, including how participant feedback influenced the final design, must be provided in the *PDD*.
- The *Benefit Sharing Mechanism* must be designed and implemented in a manner consistent with applicable national laws, regulations, and relevant safeguards frameworks (see Section 5.3). Evidence demonstrating how the *Benefit Sharing Mechanism* has been designed and will be implemented in a manner that is appropriate to the local context must be documented in the *PDD*.
- If the project coordination and management, and monitoring, reporting and verification costs exceed 40% of the income received from the sale of *Plan Vivo Certificates*, the *Project Coordinator* will need to identify and access alternative sources of funding.
- Less than 60% of income from the sale of *Plan Vivo Certificates*, may directly benefit the *Project Participant(s)* and other *Local Stakeholders* for some issuances as long as the total over the *Crediting Period* is 60% or higher.

### 3.17 Grievance Mechanism

**Requirements**

- 3.17.1 *Projects* must have an accessible and culturally appropriate *Grievance Mechanism* for reporting and remediating social, environmental and cultural incidents that result (directly or indirectly) from *Project* activities; and that can address situations where there is non-conformance with the conditions of the *Project* as stated in the *Project Agreement*.
- 3.17.2 All issues raised through the *Grievance Mechanism* must be documented and resolved in a transparent, fair, and timely manner.

- 3.17.3 Where possible, grievances should be reconciled by the affected parties; in case this is not possible, however, the *Grievance Mechanism* must identify an independent arbitrator that will be responsible for mediating resolution of any grievances that cannot otherwise be resolved.
- 3.17.4 The *Grievance Mechanism* must be described in each *Project Agreement*.

**Guidance**

- A *Grievance Mechanism* helps to ensure that the *Project* is made aware of, and can respond to, any unintended negative impacts and other concerns (e.g. related to the distribution of benefits).

3.18 Project Agreements

**Requirements**

- 3.18.1 *Project Participants* must enter into a *Project Agreement* with the *Project Coordinator* according to the principles of *Free, Prior and Informed Consent* (FPIC) (see Section 2.6).
- 3.18.2 *Project Agreements* must include estimates of the expected annual *Carbon Benefit* (in t CO<sub>2</sub>e) from the *Project Area* (after deduction of the *Risk Buffer*) for each year of the *Crediting Period*.
- 3.18.3 Information must be provided early enough to provide sufficient time for *Project Participants* to consider prior entering into the *Project Agreement*.
- 3.18.4 *Project Agreements* must be prepared in the preferred language(s) of the *Project Participants*.
- 3.18.5 *Project Agreements* must give the *Project Coordinator* the right to sell *Plan Vivo Certificates* on behalf of the *Project Participants* and prevent the *Project Participants* from generating any other type of carbon credit from the same *Project Interventions* but must not otherwise remove, diminish or threaten *Project Participants* rights to land and/or resources.
- 3.18.6 *Project Participants* must be provided with a copy of their *Project Agreement*.

- 3.18.7 The period covered by a *Project Agreement* must not exceed the period over which *Project Participants* can make a meaningful commitment to implementing and monitoring the *Project Interventions* with support from the *Project Coordinator*. If this is shorter than the *Crediting Period*, the *Project Agreement* must allow for an extension up to the full *Crediting Period*.
- 3.18.8 *Project Agreements* must include details of how *Project Participants* can access the *Grievance Mechanism* (see Section 3.17).

## 4 Monitoring and Reporting

### Indicators

#### 4.1 Progress Indicators

##### Requirements

- 4.1.1 *Progress Indicators* must be used to assess whether *Project Intervention(s)* and risk mitigation measures are carried out as planned.
- 4.1.2 *Progress Indicators* must capture key aspects of progress towards expected *Carbon, Livelihood and Ecosystem Benefits* (see Section 3.5), and risk mitigation measures (see Section 3.9).
- 4.1.3 Targets that describe the level of progress needed to achieve expected *Carbon, Livelihood and Ecosystem Benefits* (see Section 3.5) and corrective actions to be implemented if targets are not met must be set for each *Progress Indicator*.

## **Guidance**

- *Progress Indicators* are used to demonstrate whether a *Project* is on track to achieve its expected *Carbon, Livelihood and Ecosystem Benefits* and whether risks are being effectively mitigated. For example, tracking the number of trees planted and surviving could be a *Progress Indicator* for afforestation and reforestation; and the number of patrols conducted could be a *Progress Indicator* for forest protection.
- *Progress Indicators* should be directly related to the actions carried out by the *Project Participants* and the *Project Coordinator* and should be simple and cost-effective to monitor.
- *Progress Indicators* should be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound (SMART).

## 4.2 Carbon Indicators

### **Requirements**

- 4.2.1 *Technical Specifications* must identify the indicators that will be used to monitor *Carbon Benefits*.
- 4.2.2 The *Carbon Indicators* that must be used are specified in the *Methodology* adopted (see PV Climate [Methodology Requirements](#)).

## 4.3 Livelihood Indicators

### **Requirements**

- 4.3.1 *Livelihood Indicators* must be used to monitor the livelihood status of *Project Participants* and other *Local Stakeholders* relative to the *Baseline Scenario*.
- 4.3.2 *Livelihood Indicators*, disaggregated by gender where appropriate, must reflect the livelihood status of *Project Participants* and other *Local Stakeholders* (see Section 3.3), and risks of negative social impacts (see Section 3.9), relate to the

United Nations Sustainable Development Goals<sup>2</sup> and, where relevant and feasible, the host country's Sustainable Development Goal objectives.

**Guidance**

- *Livelihood Indicators* should be simple and cost-effective to assess at least every 5-years and can make use of participatory approaches as well as direct measurements.
- *Projects* are recommended to use the [Participatory Toolkit Tool 5: Well-being Assessment](#) to develop Livelihood Indicators.

## 4.4 Ecosystem Indicators

**Requirements**

- 4.4.1 *Ecosystem Indicators* must be used to monitor ecological conditions and threats in the *Project Region* relative to the *Baseline Scenario*.
- 4.4.2 *Ecosystem Indicators* must reflect the status of and threats to ecosystems, habitats, and species (see Section 3.4), and any risks of negative environmental impacts (see Section 3.9), relate to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals<sup>3</sup> and, where relevant and feasible, the host country's Sustainable Development Goal objectives.

**Guidance**

- *Ecosystem Indicators* should be simple and cost-effective to assess at least every 5-years and can make use of participatory approaches as well as direct measurements.
- *Projects* are encouraged to adopt *Ecosystem Indicators* related to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals<sup>2</sup>.

## Monitoring

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<sup>2</sup> <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>

<sup>3</sup> <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>

## 4.5 Monitoring Plan

### Requirements

- 4.5.1 *Projects* must have a plan for monitoring *Progress, Carbon, Livelihood and Ecosystem Indicators*.
- 4.5.2 The monitoring plan must include the following details for each indicator: sampling approach (if applicable); methods, duration and frequency of assessment; groups or individuals responsible for monitoring; and resource and capacity requirements.
- 4.5.3 *Progress Indicators* (see Section 4.1) and *Carbon Indicators* (see Section 4.2) must be monitored for each *Project Area*; or in a representative sample of *Project Areas* with similar start date, *Baseline Scenario*, and *Project Intervention(s)*.
- 4.5.4 *Progress Indicators* for risk mitigation measures outside *Project Areas* must be monitored at each location, or in a representative sample of locations with similar risk mitigation measures and start date.
- 4.5.5 Monitoring of *Carbon Indicators* (see Section 4.2) must follow the requirements of an approved *Methodology*.
- 4.5.6 *Livelihood Indicators* must be monitored for all *Project Participants*, or a representative sample of individuals from similar population groups (see Section 4.3) and with similar *Project Interventions*; and a representative sample of other *Local Stakeholders*.
- 4.5.7 *Ecosystem Indicators* (see Section 4.4) must be monitored across all areas of the *Project Region* with potential to be directly or indirectly affected by *Project Interventions*.

### Guidance

- It is recommended that monitoring plans are reviewed and updated at least every 10-years throughout the *Project Period*.
- Adequate capacity, institutional arrangements, resources and personnel should be in place to carry out monitoring of all indicators (see Section 2.2).

## 4.6 Progress Monitoring

### Requirements

- 4.6.1 All *Progress Indicators* (see Section 4.1) must be monitored throughout the *Crediting Period*, and corrective actions must be implemented if targets are not met.
- 4.6.2 A summary of *Progress Indicator* monitoring results must be included in each *Annual Report* (see Section 4.9) and shared with other *Stakeholders* (see Section 2.5).
- 4.6.3 *Progress Indicators* for risk mitigation measures outside *Project Areas* must be monitored until the completion of the activity, or the end of the *Project Period* (whichever occurs first).

### Guidance

- For projects that claim *rPVC* s all *Progress Indicator* targets must be met to receive an issuance for the full *Carbon Benefits* expected in the *Reporting Period*.
- Where possible, *Project Participants* should be involved in monitoring of *Progress Indicators*.

## 4.7 Carbon Monitoring

### Requirements

- 4.7.1 *vPVCs* can only be issued after a *Verification*, which must take place at least every 5-years throughout the *Project Period*.
- 4.7.2 *Carbon Indicators* listed in the *Technical Specification(s)* applied to the *Project Area(s)* must be monitored throughout the *Crediting Period*, in conformance with the requirements of the approved *Methodology*.
- 4.7.3 A summary of *Carbon Indicator* monitoring results and *Carbon Benefits* achieved must be submitted with the *Annual Report* prior to *Verification* (see Section 4.9).

**Guidance**

- *Verification* confirms the *Carbon Benefit* achieved by the *Project*. If the *Carbon Benefit* achieved is lower than the *Carbon Benefit* for which *fPVCs* or *rPVCs* have been issued, *fPVCs* and *rPVCs* must be cancelled from the *Project's Achievement Reserve*, or (once the *Project's Achievement Reserve* is exhausted) from issued *fPVCs* or *rPVCs*. See PV Climate [Procedures Manual](#) for further details.
- All *fPVCs* and *rPVCs* must be converted to *vPVCs* (or cancelled) before additional *vPVCs* can be issued. See PV Climate [Procedures Manual](#) for further details.

## 4.8 Livelihood and Ecosystem Monitoring

**Requirements**

- 4.8.1 Monitoring of *Livelihood and Ecosystem Indicators* must be carried out at least every 5-years throughout the *Project Period*, and *Project* activities must be adjusted to address any failure to achieve expected benefits.
- 4.8.2 Changes in *Livelihood Indicator* values (see Section 4.3) for the main population groups in the *Project Region* (see Section 3.3), and *Ecosystem Indicator* values (see Section 4.4) for the *Project Region* must be reported to all *Stakeholders* (see Section 2.5).
- 4.8.3 Feedback must be obtained from all *Stakeholders* on the likely causes of any trends in *Livelihood and Ecosystem Indicators* identified and their relationship to *Project* activities and outcomes.
- 4.8.4 A summary of *Livelihood and Ecosystem Indicator* monitoring and *Stakeholder* feedback must be included in the *Annual Report* submitted to Plan Vivo prior to *Verification* (see Section 4.9) and shared with other *Stakeholders* (see Section 2.5).
- 4.8.5 If expected *Livelihood or Ecosystem Benefits* (see Section 3.5) are not achieved, or if negative trends occur and are attributable to the *Project*, action must be taken to address any issues identified.

## Reporting

### 4.9 Annual Report

#### Requirements

- 4.9.1 An *Annual Report* must be submitted to Plan Vivo for each 12-month period throughout the *Project Period*.
- 4.9.2 *Annual Reports* must be compiled using the [Annual Report Template](#) and submitted within 12-months of the end of the *Reporting Period*.
- 4.9.3 *Annual Reports* must include details of *Project Areas* added during the *Reporting Period* (see Sections 1.2 and 2.3), a summary of monitoring carried out and any corrective actions implemented during the *Reporting Period* (see Section 4.1), disclosure of any known potential *Reversals* of *vPVCs* or *Underachievement* of *fPVCs* or *rPVCs* in the *Reporting Period*, disclosure of any social and/or environmental safeguards issues arising and a summary of any feedback received or grievances raised and actions taken in response during the *Reporting Period* (see Section 3.17).
- 4.9.4 *Annual Reports* must include a summary of *Carbon Benefits* achieved and *Plan Vivo Certificates* claimed for the *Reporting Period*, details of income from the sale of *Plan Vivo Certificates* and *Project* expenditure and transfers made by the *Project Coordinator* during the *Reporting Period* (see Section 5.4), and an explanation for any deviation from the *Benefit Sharing Mechanism* (see Section 3.17).
- 4.9.5 Any changes made to the *Project* design during the *Reporting Period* must be summarised in the *Annual Report* and integrated into a revised version of the *PDD*.

#### Guidance

- *Plan Vivo Certificates* are issued for *Carbon Benefits* that have been achieved but not verified (*rPVC*), that have been achieved and verified (*vPVC*) or that are expected to be achieved within the *Crediting Period* (*fPVC*).
- Future *Plan Vivo Certificates* (*fPVCs*) can only be issued for interventions that remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere e.g. tree planting, and not for

interventions that reduce greenhouse gas emissions e.g. reducing emissions from deforestation. The potential to receive *Plan Vivo Certificates* in advance of *Verification* is an important feature of PV Climate, that allows *Projects* to secure upfront finance when it is most needed. This helps *Projects* where most of the costs for implementing the activities come at the start of the intervention, before significant *Carbon Benefits* have been achieved or where *Verification* costs are high.

- *Annual Reports* will be published on the Plan Vivo website. Financial details will not be made publicly available.
- Any incident or accident relating to the *Project* which has, or is likely to have, a significant adverse effect on the environment, *Local Stakeholders*, the public or workers must be included in the next *Annual Report*.
- *Projects* are recommended to use the [Participatory Toolkit](#) Tool/15: Public Hearing and Tool 16: Public Audit when preparing the annual report.

## 4.10 Record Keeping

### Requirements

- 4.10.1 Records must be kept of *Project Agreements*, *Land Management Plans*, geographic locations of *Project Areas*, and monitoring results and *Plan Vivo Certificates* issued for all *Project Areas*.
- 4.10.2 Records for each *Project Area* must be securely stored in a database that can be accessed by *Verifiers* for the duration of the *Project Period*.

### Guidance

- All *Plan Vivo Certificates* issued to a *Project* are recorded and tracked using the *PV Climate Registry* (see PV Climate [Procedures Manual](#)).
- Copies of all digital files should be stored online to prevent data loss.

## 5 Governance and Administration

## 5.1 Governance Structure

### Requirements

- 5.1.1 *Projects* must have a clear governance structure and decision-making process that incorporates input from *Project Participants* and other *Local Stakeholders* on key decisions affecting the development of the *Project*.
- 5.1.2 Selection of *Project Participants* and other *Local Stakeholder* representatives must follow a fair and transparent process that includes women and *Marginalised, Vulnerable and/or Disadvantaged Peoples*.

### Guidance

- Mechanisms that enable representatives of *Project Participants'* and *Local Stakeholders'* interests to be incorporated into decision-making can include representation on a *Project* advisory board or steering committee, or some other equivalent role with clearly defined mechanisms that enable meaningful contribution to key decisions relating to the *Project*.
- The *Project Coordinator* should establish, maintain, and strengthen as necessary an organisational structure that defines roles, responsibilities, and authority to manage, implement and monitor project activities and performance; and provide capacity development and training to support effective implementation, where necessary (see Section 2.2).
- *Projects* are encouraged to provide an organigram to help described their governance structure
- *Projects* are recommended to use the [Participatory Toolkit Tool 4: Local Institution Mapping](#) to determine roles of the *Participants* and *Project Coordinator*, and to assist in designing an appropriate project governance structure.
- *Projects* are recommended to use [Participatory Toolkit Tool 16: Public audit](#) annually, preferably before the annual project reports are compiled, to improve transparency of project's financial management.

## 5.2 Equal Opportunities

### **Requirements**

- 5.2.1 *Project Coordinators* must adopt procedures for recruiting *Project Employees* that avoid unfair discrimination and minimise potential for elite capture of project benefits.
- 5.2.2 *Project Coordinators* must adopt employment policies for *Project Employees* that give priority to local people with the necessary skills, or who can be cost effectively trained, and that do not discriminate on the basis of gender, age, ethnicity, religion or social status, and that are committed to the principles of equal pay.

## 5.3 Legal and Regulatory Compliance

### **Requirements**

- 5.3.1 *Projects* must operate in compliance with all applicable national and international policies, laws and regulations, and with approval from the relevant authorities.
- 5.3.2 *Projects* must demonstrate, with substantiated evidence, that the relevant authorities with jurisdiction over land or marine management and greenhouse gas emissions assessment within the *Project Region* have been informed of the *Project Interventions* and expected *Carbon Benefits*, and that approval has been secured from the relevant authorities where this is a legal or regulatory requirement.

### **Guidance**

- *Project Coordinators* must be aware of all policies, legislation and regulations that affect the *Project* and ensure that they operate in full compliance with these.
- If there is evidence that a *Project* is not compliant with all relevant policies, legislation and regulations, including relevant international conventions and agreements, their registration may be withdrawn or suspended until full compliance is demonstrated.

- Any changes to policies, laws, regulations or the enabling environment that affect the *Project* must be incorporated in a revision to the *PDD*.
- *Projects* must demonstrate that the relevant authorities are informed through documented consultations, official meetings, or other verifiable means. This evidence shall clearly demonstrate that no significant objections have been raised.

## 5.4 Financial Plan

### Requirements

- 5.4.1 *Projects* must have a financial plan that includes a realistic estimate of the full costs of implementing all *Project Interventions* and risk mitigation measures.
- 5.4.2 The financial plan must include plans for securing the finance required to fund all *Project* operating and management costs, and obligations to *Project Participants*.
- 5.4.3 The financial plan must be consistent with the *Benefit Sharing Mechanism* (see Section 3.16) and the *Project Logic* (see Section 3.5).

### Guidance

- The purpose of a financial plan is to demonstrate that the *Project Coordinator* has considered all likely costs for long-term implementation of the *Project* and the source(s) of finance that the *Project* expects to access.
- Financial details of the project will not be made publicly available.

## 5.5 Financial Management

### Requirements

- 5.5.1 *Projects* must have transparent financial procedures for managing income and expenditure of finance generated from the sale of *Plan Vivo Certificates*.
- 5.5.2 An annual audit of *Project* finances must be conducted by an independent financial auditor certified by a nationally recognised regulatory body within 12-months of the end of each financial year.

## ***Guidance***

- It is recommended that all income received from the sale of *Plan Vivo Certificates* is paid into a dedicated bank account that is separate from the *Project Coordinator's* account(s) used for other projects, or operational finances. This enables all transfers made to *Project Participants* and other parties to be easily traced to demonstrate conformance with the agreed *Benefit Sharing Mechanism*.

## Annex 1 – Version Control

Version Number	Date of release (DD/MM/YYYY)	Changes and additions since previous version
V5.0	28/06/2022	n/a
V5.1	01/11/2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rebranded from the “Plan Vivo Standard” to the “Plan Vivo Carbon Standard (PV Climate)”</li> </ul>
V5.2	24/09/2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New Requirement 3.8.3 added regarding the need to deduct any significant GHG emissions due to site preparation from <i>Carbon Benefits</i> claimed.</li> <li>Added Section 3.8 Guidance points 3 and 4</li> <li>New Requirement 3.9.13 added to prevent natural ecosystems from being converted to generated <i>Carbon Benefits</i>.</li> <li>Added Guidance to Requirements 3.9 to help interpret when ecosystem degradation or conversion has occurred, when it is due to <i>Project Interventions</i>, and when it can be considered temporary.</li> <li>Definition of Tools added.</li> <li>Added links to the Plan Vivo <u>Participatory Toolkit</u> in Sections 1.2, 2.1, 3.3, 3.5, 3.14, 4.3, 3.9, 5.1</li> <li>Changed <i>Plan Vivo Registry</i> to <i>PV Climate Registry</i> in Guidance of Requirements 2.2.</li> <li>Clarification added that <i>Carbon baseline</i> (Requirement 3.2.3), <i>Livelihood Baseline</i> (Requirement 3.3.4), <i>Ecosystem Baseline</i> (Requirement 3.4.3), <i>Project Logic</i> (Requirement 3.5.5), <i>Technical Specifications</i> (Requirement 3.8.7), risks to maintenance of <i>Carbon Benefits</i> (3.11.6), must also be updated whenever a <i>Crediting Period</i> is renewed in addition to at least every 10 years.</li> <li>Clarification added that it is recommended that <i>Land Management Plans</i> are also updated whenever a <i>Crediting Period</i> is renewed in addition to at least every 10 years.</li> <li>Clarification added that <i>Additionality</i> must be reassessed whenever a <i>Crediting Period</i> is renewed and at least every 5 years.</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New Requirement 3.7.3 added concerning the need for <i>Regulatory Surplus</i> to be demonstrated for each <i>Project Intervention</i>.</li> </ul>
V5.3	07/07/2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Under Section 1.1 Guidance point 1, The description of "Restoration" has been updated to explicitly include "forests" alongside tree planting, assisted natural regeneration, and the management of wetlands or other natural ecosystems for ecological function.</li> <li>• Added Section 2.4 Guidance points 2 and 3 on how Project design should be influenced by Project Participants prior to PDD submission and during implementation.</li> <li>• Added Section 2.6 Guidance points 1 and 5 providing greater clarity on what FPIC is and how to implement it during Project development and expansion.</li> <li>• Updated Section 2.6 Guidance point 6 to expand on the interconnectedness of FPIC and participatory design.</li> <li>• Clarification added that the Benefit Sharing Mechanism (Requirement 3.16.4) must detail how and when benefits will be received by both Project Participants <i>and other Local Stakeholders</i>.</li> <li>• Added Requirement 4.3.3, requiring the establishment of targets defining desired changes for each Livelihood Indicator relative to its baseline</li> <li>• Added Requirement 4.4.3, requiring the establishment of targets defining desired states or changes for each Ecosystem Indicator relative to its baseline</li> <li>• Updated Requirement 4.9.3 now includes the disclosure in Annual Reports of any known potential Reversals of vPVCs or Underachievement of fPVCs or rPVCs during the Reporting Period.</li> <li>• Section 5.3 has been reorganised: Former Requirement 5.3.2 is now Guidance point 1, and former Requirement 5.3.3 is now Requirement 5.3.2.</li> <li>• Former Requirement 5.3.3 (now 5.3.2) updated to require Projects to provide evidence of informed government</li> </ul>

		<p>awareness and non-objection, rather than a formal government approval letter.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Added Section 5.3 Guidance point 4 providing guidance on the types of verifiable evidence that Projects can collect to demonstrate that no significant objections to the Project have been raised by relevant authorities.</li> </ul>
V5.4	01/09/2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Added Requirement 1.2.3 specifying that Project Interventions must not cause forced physical or economic displacement.</li> <li>Added Section 3.9 Guidance point 2 detailing how Projects must ensure safe and healthy working conditions, consistent with national labour laws or the International Labor Organization's (ILO) Declaration on the Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work.</li> <li>Updated Requirement 5.2.2 to include an additional clause mandating that Project Coordinators are committed to the principle of equal pay.</li> </ul>
V5.5	05/01/2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Updated Requirement 3.9.1 and Section 3.9 Guidance point 1 to expand the scope of human rights compliance, replacing the Universal Declaration of Human Rights with the more comprehensive International Bill of Human Rights.</li> <li>Added Section 3.9 Guidance point 11 establishing a preference for diverse, multi-species tree planting, while allowing single-species systems for small-scale subsistence or smallholder production where clear livelihood benefits are demonstrated.</li> <li>Added Section 3.9 Guidance point 12 prohibiting single-species plantings over 1 hectare unless specific criteria are met, including the use of native species, necessity for ecological restoration, and a time-bound transition plan to biodiversity.</li> </ul>
V5.6	23/03/2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Added Section 3.9 Guidance point 3, specifying that Projects must align with the UNFCCC Cancun REDD+ Safeguards.</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Updated Requirement 3.16.1 to formalise the iterative development process by requiring the disclosure of both draft and final <i>Benefit Sharing Mechanisms</i> to stakeholders.</li> <li>• Added Section 3.16 Guidance point 2, specifying the evidence required to demonstrate how stakeholder feedback influenced the final <i>Benefit Sharing Mechanism</i> design.</li> <li>• Updated Requirement 3.13.1 and 3.13.2 to clarify <i>Double Counting</i> checks as a prerequisite for <i>Registration</i> and for the duration of the <i>Project Period</i>.</li> <li>• Added Requirement 3.13.3 clarifying that <i>Projects</i> must obtain host-country authorisation of <i>Corresponding Adjustments</i> for trading under CORSIA or Article 6.2, with Plan Vivo approval required before any CORSIA transactions</li> <li>• Added Requirement 3.13.4 requiring <i>Double Counting</i> reassessment every 5-years or at <i>Crediting Period</i> renewal to ensure that no other greenhouse gas emission reduction initiatives are claiming the same <i>Carbon Benefits</i>.</li> <li>• Updated Section 3.13 Guidance point 1 to clarify that <i>Projects</i> cannot be <i>Registered</i> under PV Climate if they are simultaneously <i>Registered</i> with any other carbon-crediting program.</li> <li>• Updated Section 3.13 Guidance points 2 and 3 to include references to the Procedures Manual for information on <i>Corresponding Adjustments</i> and to UNFCCC guidance on host-country responsibilities under Article 6.2.</li> <li>• Requirements 4.3.2 and 4.4.2 now require <i>Livelihood Indicators</i> and <i>Ecosystem Indicators</i> to link to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and, where relevant and feasible, the host country's Sustainable Development Goal objectives.</li> <li>• Removed Requirement 4.3.3, which required the establishment of targets defining desired changes for each Livelihood Indicator relative to its baseline</li> </ul>
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Removed Requirement 4.4.3, requiring the establishment of targets defining desired states or changes for each Ecosystem Indicator relative to its baseline</li> </ul>
V5.7	30/04/2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Relocated Guidance point 1 from Section 3.13 to Requirement 3.15.5, clarifying that Projects cannot be Registered under PV Climate if they are simultaneously Registered with another carbon-crediting programme.</li> <li>Added Section 3.16 Guidance point 3 to explicitly clarify that <i>Benefit Sharing Mechanisms</i> must be designed and implemented in a manner consistent with applicable national laws, regulations, and safeguards frameworks, with corresponding documentation required in the PDD (cross-referenced to Section 5.3).</li> </ul>