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GUIDELINES FOR EXIGENT SITUATIONS: Carbon Registry- India

(DRAFT) VERSION 1.0

NETWORK FOR CERTIFICATION AND CONSERVATION OF FORESTS





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ABBREVIATIONS

- CPA: Component Project Activity
- CR-I: Carbon Registry-India
- CS: Carbon Standard
- DE: Delegate Entity
- DPD: Detailed Project Report
- GC: Governing Council
- GHG: Greenhouse Gas
- II: Independent Investigator.
- IPP: Independent Project Proponent
- MR: Monitoring Report
- NCCF: Network for Certification and Conservation of Forests
- NGO: Non-Governmental Organisation
- PDC: Permanent Design Changes
- RCP: Renewal of Crediting Period
- RIP: Registration and Issuance Procedure
- SCR: Stakeholder Consultation Report
- VaR: Validation Report
- VeR: Verification Report
- VVB: Validation and Verification Body
- VVS: Validation and Verification Standard

1. Introduction

Network for Certification and Conservation of Forests (NCCF) acknowledges that in situations such as war, civil unrest, health hazards, *etc.*, it may not be possible to conduct stakeholder consultations and validation of the project seeking registration, or verification of the project registered, as applicable under Carbon Registry-India (CR-I), hereinafter referred to as the ‘the Registry’.

CR-I Guidelines for Exigent Situations (hereinafter referred to as the guidelines) provide rules, requirements and procedures to ensure credibility and integrity of both the Registry and the project in the situations of exigency while keeping working principles and GHG accounting principles unequivocal.

2. Scope and Applicability

2.1 Scope

- 2.1.1 The guidelines establish rules, requirements and procedures for deviations accepted by the Registry for projects seeking registration under the Registry and/or project registered under the Registry in exigent situations as established by the guidelines.
- 2.1.2 The guidelines establish rules, requirements and procedure for deviations in the project for the following processes:
- (i) Stakeholder Consultation
 - (ii) Validation of Project, Validation of Permanent Design Changes (PDC), Validation of Renewal of Crediting Period (RCP), Inclusion of CPA
 - (iii) Verification of Project
- 2.1.3 The scope of guidelines does not include Verification of a GHG Reversal Event.

2.2 Applicability

- 2.2.1 The guidelines shall be applicable to the Exigent Situations, *i.e.*, scenarios which may pose a hazard to life and/or health of an individual. For the purpose of the Registry, exigent situations are classified under the following three categories
- (i) Health: Includes local, regional, global health hazards such as COVID – 19, or as also notified by corresponding government agencies. Also includes infestations and biological attacks such as those by locusts, *etc.*

- (ii) Social, Civil and Political: Includes non-violent unrests (and protests) due to conflicts between two or more social and/or religious groups, non-violent demonstrations against local, regional, or national governments, *etc.*
- (iii) War and Other armed conflicts: Includes situations of war, terrorist activities, violent conflicts between two or more social and/or religious group, *etc.*

2.2.2 The above classification and corresponding examples provide a representative list rather than an exhaustive one of exigent situations.

2.2.3 NCCF, as appropriate, may also come out with additional guidelines on the subject establishing rules, requirements and procedures for specific situations and/or specific project types.

3. Approval of Project for Deviation

3.1 NCCF shall allow deviations as established in the guidelines in respect of a project seeking registration or registered under the Registry as reviewed and approved on case to case basis.

3.2 DE on behalf of IPP(s) shall send a request for review for exigent deviation pertaining to specific provision as mentioned in Subsection 2.1.2 *via* email on cri.project@nccf.in and carbon.registry@nccf.in to NCCF along with the required information and/or documentation, providing justification for requesting exigency deviation. The information and/or documentation submitted to NCCF as a justification, as appropriate, shall provide evidence of the following:

- (i) Exigent situation in and around the location of the project
- (ii) Inability of the IPP(s) and/or implementing partners in implementation and/or monitoring of the project
- (iii) Unwillingness of VVB to conduct validation or verification of the project

3.3 NCCF shall review the information and/or documentation provided and shall inform the IPP(s) of the decision whether an exigent situation is justified or not, within 21 working days. This shall not include the time taken for IPP(s) to procure additional and/or updated information and/or documentation as required.

4. Stakeholder Consultation Deviation for Exigent Situations

- 4.1** In a scenario where conducting physical stakeholder consultation meeting is not feasible by the time project is submitted for the listing, IPP(s) shall at minimum complete the following:
- (i) Conduct interviews and/or consultations through appropriate means¹ with, local communities, local/regional/national authorities, policy makers and/or their representatives seeking their comments and suggestions on the proposed project.
 - (ii) Conduct interviews and/or consultations through appropriate means with local Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) working on subjects related to the proposed project seeking their comments and suggestions on the proposed project.
- 4.2** IPP(s) shall prefer to conduct at least one physical stakeholder meeting before submitting project for validation to the VVB. If physical stakeholder consultation is not feasible before the validation, IPP(s) shall conduct stakeholder consultation before the first verification.
- 4.3** IPP(s) shall make appropriate changes to the Detailed Project Document (DPD) and Stakeholder Consultation Report (SCR) and if necessary changes to the design of the project. IPP(s) shall propose these changes during the first verification and shall be validated by the VVB at the time of verification.

5. Validation of Project and/or Verification of Project

In situation(s) of exigency, IPP(s) and/or VVB may propose conducting validation or verification in either one of the three possible alternatives as described in Section 5 of the guidelines.

5.1 Alternative 1 – Reasonably Postponing Validation or Verification Audit

- 5.1.1 Postponing the scheduled audit by a reasonable amount of time shall be the first preference for NCCF. NCCF shall allow extension of time for validation or

¹ Appropriate means may include – audio/video calls, inviting comments and suggestions through written means such as emails, letters, survey questionnaire, among others.



verification and subsequent submission of corresponding reports as decided on case to case basis.

5.2 Alternative 2 – Site Visit by Independent Investigator

5.2.1 Site visit by an Independent Investigator (II) shall be the second preference of NCCF, where Independent Investigator shall be defined as the individual working and/or stationed reasonably near the project site and is otherwise not under any contractual obligation(s) with any of the IPP(s), project implementation partners/agencies, VVB and NCCF.

Selection of Independent Investigator

5.2.2 IPP(s) may propose site visit to be conducted by an II for the purpose of validation or verification when VVBs contacted by the IPP(s) are unwilling to conduct site visit for the project. In such a scenario, IPP(s) shall submit written statements from at least 2 VVBs empanelled under the Registry, expressing their unwillingness to undertake a site visit with reasonable justification.

5.2.3 In such a scenario, IPP(s) shall submit details of at least 2 potential IIs. Details of the IIs at minimum shall include:

- (i) Contact information
- (ii) Education and work experience (Resume may be complemented by credentials, details of research and/or project work, other accolades)
- (iii) Experience, if any, of working in similar exigent situation(s)
- (iv) Sectoral competency, if any, in the sectoral scope(s) of the project

5.2.4 NCCF shall select the II from the list of potential IIs provided by the IPP(s). In a scenario where NCCF is not satisfied with the list of potential IIs, IPP(s) shall submit details of more potential IIs until a suitable candidate is being agreed upon. NCCF may also select II outside the list of candidates proposed by the IPP(s).

5.2.5 IPP(s), VVB and II shall sign a contract defining scope of work of II, timelines to complete the scope of work and payment terms. II may be paid completely by the IPP(s) or VVB or split between IPP(s) and VVB, as agreeable to the parties.

Capacity Building of Independent Investigator

5.2.6 Selected II shall undergo capacity building by both IPP(s) and VVB to ensure credible reporting of project for the purpose of validation or verification.

5.2.7 The IPP(s) shall conduct at least one single-day capacity building workshop for II (physical or online, as appropriate) where IPP(s) shall at minimum:

- (i) Apprise II of the project design, including the technology and/or measures employed for GHG emissions reduction and/or removals enhancement
- (ii) Apprise II of the implementation of the project
- (iii) Apprise II of potential negative impacts of the project and safeguard mechanism
- (iv) Apprise II of the contribution of project towards sustainable development, including its monitoring and assessment procedure
- (v) Provide information and/or documents in appropriate format (physical, electronic and/or magnetic)

5.2.8 VVB shall conduct at least one single-day capacity building workshop for II (physical or online) where VVB shall at minimum:

- (i) Apprise II of auditing procedure
- (ii) Apprise II of evidence(s) to be collected and procedure for collecting evidence(s)
- (iii) Provide II with a site visit plan
- (iv) Provide II with checklist of the task to be performed and possible outcome(s) of the task(s).
- (v) Apprise II of documenting the information and evidence collected
- (vi) Apprise II of procedure of submitting information and evidences to VVB

5.2.9 Both IPP(s) and VVB shall submit evidence, for the capacity building workshop(s) organised for II, during the submission of VaR or VeR to NCCF.

Site Visit and Evidence collection

5.2.10 For the purpose of validation, II shall collect information and evidence(s) pertaining to:

- (i) Design and current stage of development of project
- (ii) Stakeholder consultation
- (iii) Potential negative impacts of the project
- (iv) Potential Contribution of project towards sustainable development
- (v) If applicable, GHG reversal risk(s)

5.2.11 For the purpose of verification, II shall collect information and evidence(s) pertaining to:

- (i) Current status of implementation of the project
- (ii) Monitoring and actual net GHG emissions reduction or net removals enhancement
- (iii) Negative impacts of the project and mitigation using safeguard mechanism
- (iv) Actual contribution of project towards sustainable development
- (v) If applicable, monitoring of GHG reversal risk(s)

5.2.12 VVB shall employ methods such as making video calls, gathering photographic evidences, conducting interviews and other methods as appropriate to complete the process of validation or verification and maintain the credibility of the audit.

5.3 Alternative 3 – Conducting Desk Audits

5.3.1 Conducting remote audits shall be the least preferred option for NCCF. It shall be allowed if a logical justification is provided by both IPP(s) and VVB for not conducting the onsite audit.

5.3.2 In a scenario where remote audit is the only possible option for verification, following shall be valid for the monitoring period of the project

- (i) Monitoring period of Non-AFOLU project shall not be longer than 2 years
- (ii) Monitoring period of AFOLU project shall not be longer than 5 years
- (iii) In a scenario where monitoring period proposed in the registered DPD is longer than threshold limit set in 5.3.2 (i) and 5.3.2(ii), IPP(s) shall submit Monitoring Report following the threshold period since the start of crediting period or end of previous monitoring period, as applicable.

5.3.3 VVB shall complete validation or verification, collection of information and/or evidences, using methods such as telecommunication, video calls/conferencing, conducting online interviews, photographic evidences, video recording, remote data collection (example, use of GIS and/or drones), online surveys, among others.



DOCUMENT HISTORY

Version	Date	Description
DRAFT 1.0	21.12.2020	CR-I Guidelines for Exigency Situations establishes rules, requirements and procedures for IPP regarding conducting stakeholder consultations and for VVB regarding conducting validation or verification of the project

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