

Application of the Oeko-Institut/WWF-US/ EDF methodology for assessing the quality of carbon credits

This document presents results from the application of version 3.0 of a methodology, developed by Oeko-Institut, World Wildlife Fund (WWF-US) and Environmental Defense Fund (EDF), for assessing the quality of carbon credits. The methodology is applied by Oeko-Institut with support by Carbon Limits, Greenhouse Gas Management Institute (GHGMI), INFRAS, Stockholm Environment Institute, and individual carbon market experts. This document evaluates one specific criterion or sub-criterion with respect to a specific carbon crediting program, project type, quantification methodology and/or host country, as specified in the below table. Please note that the CCQI website [Site terms and Privacy Policy](#) apply with respect to any use of the information provided in this document. Further information on the project and the methodology can be found here: www.carboncreditquality.org

Criterion:	6.1 Robustness of the carbon crediting program's environmental and social safeguards
Complementary Standard:	SDVISTa
Assessment based on complementary standard documents valid as of:	15 May 2022
Date of final assessment:	08 November 2022
Score:	2.57

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Assessment

Indicator 6.1.1

Relevant scoring methodology provisions

“The program requires the project owners to identify and mitigate potential negative environmental and social impacts, including to local and affected stakeholder wellbeing.”

Information sources considered

- 1 Sustainable Development Verified Impact Standard. Version 1.0. Document issued on 22 January 2019. Online available at: <https://verra.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Sustainable-Development-Verified-Impact-Standard-v1.0.pdf>

Relevant carbon crediting program provisions

Provision 1 Source 1, section 2.1.5, page 3: “One or more causal chains describing the effects of a project’s sustainable development activities shall be included in its project description, and these shall be updated as necessary as part of each monitoring report.

2.1.5.1 The causal chain shall include all direct positive and negative, intended and unintended consequences of project activities. It may include indirect consequences.”

Provision 2 Source 1, section 3.1, page 14-15: “Impacts on People and Their Prosperity. This section sets out criteria for the demonstration of a project’s sustainable development impacts on stakeholders’ well-being. [..]

Principle.

The project proponent demonstrates net positive well-being impacts for all stakeholders directly affected by their project’s activities.

Criteria.

3.1.1 The following shall be included in the project description for each of the stakeholder groups identified in Section 2.2.2 above:

- 1) Conditions at the project start date with respect to social, economic and cultural diversity within and between the stakeholder groups and the interactions between stakeholder groups.

- 2) Significant changes in these elements the past.

This information represents the project’s baseline scenario for People and their Prosperity.

3.1.2 Project proponents shall monitor impacts depicted in the causal chain of a project’s activities on all stakeholder groups. Benefits, costs and risks to all stakeholder groups shall be identified using a participatory and transparent process.

3.1.3 A monitoring plan shall be provided as part of a project description and such plan shall be followed to determine the project's impacts.

3.1.4 The project proponent shall estimate in the project description, and present data in each monitoring report, the type and magnitude of a project's impacts, including:

- 1) Changes in stakeholders' well-being due to project activities. This appraisal should include documentation of any activities intended to mitigate negative impacts to stakeholder groups.
- 2) Any SDG target(s) associated with people and their prosperity identified in Section 2.1.2 above and any stakeholders' well-being benefits that will be used as SD VISta claims or assets.

All estimates of project impact shall be based on clearly defined and defensible assumptions."

Provision 3 Source 1, section 3.1.5, page 15: "Net stakeholder well-being impacts of a project shall be positive for all stakeholder groups."

Provision 4 Source 1, section 3.2, page 15: "Impacts on the Planet. This section sets out criteria for the demonstration of a project's impacts on natural capital and ecosystem services. [..]"

Principle.

Project proponents demonstrate net positive impacts on natural capital and ecosystem services directly affected by their project's activities.

Criteria.

3.2.1 Conditions and possible threats to natural capital at the project start date shall be documented in the project description. This information represents the project's baseline scenario for Planet.

3.2.2 Project proponents shall monitor direct impacts depicted in a causal chain of a project's activities on natural capital and ecosystem services, including expected and actual, benefits, costs and threats. To the extent that there are stakeholders of the natural capital and/or ecosystem services affected by the project, these benefits, costs and risks should be identified with them using a participatory and transparent process.

3.2.3 A monitoring plan shall be provided as part of a project description and such plan shall be followed to determine the project's impacts.

3.2.4 The project proponent shall estimate in the project description, and present data in each monitoring report, the type and magnitude of a project's impacts, including:

- 1) Changes in natural capital and ecosystem services due to project activities. This appraisal should include documentation of any activities intended to mitigate negative impacts on natural capital and ecosystem services.
- 2) Any SDG target(s) associated with the planet identified in Section 2.1.2 above and any natural capital and ecosystem services benefits that will be used as SD VISta claims or assets.

All estimates of project impact shall be based on clearly defined and defensible assumptions.”

Provision 5 Source 1, section 3.2.5, page 16: “Net impacts on natural capital and ecosystem services directly affected by the project shall be positive.”

Assessment outcome

Yes (2 Points).

Justification of assessment

The standard aims to have more positive than negative social and environmental impacts through its projects – called a “net [positive] impact” (Provision 3 and 5). Provision 1 states that positive as well as negative impacts of a project shall be identified and described in the project description. Provision 2 sets out the requirement for project owners to identify and mitigate negative social impacts, including stakeholder well-being. Provision 4 sets out the requirement for project owners to identify and mitigate negative environmental impacts.

Indicator 6.1.2

Relevant scoring methodology provisions

“The program clearly defines the types of environmental and social impacts that the project owners must identify and mitigate.”

Information sources considered

- 1 Sustainable Development Verified Impact Standard. Version 1.0. Document issued on 22 January 2019. Online available at: <https://verra.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Sustainable-Development-Verified-Impact-Standard-v1.0.pdf>
- 2 SDVISTA Project Description Template. Version 1.0. Document issued 22 January 2019. Online available at: <https://verra.org/project/sd-vista/rules-requirements/>
- 3 SDVISTA Monitoring Report Template. Version 1.0. Document issued 22 January 2019. Online available at: <https://verra.org/project/sd-vista/rules-requirements/>

Relevant carbon crediting program provisions

Provision 1 Source 1, section 3.1, page 14: “3.1.1 The following shall be included in the project description for each of the stakeholder groups identified in Section 2.2.2 above:

- 1) Conditions at the project start date with respect to social, economic and cultural diversity within and between the stakeholder groups and the interactions between stakeholder groups.
- 2) Significant changes in these elements the past.

This information represents the project’s baseline scenario for People and their Prosperity.

3.1.2 Project proponents shall monitor impacts depicted in the causal chain of a project's activities on all stakeholder groups. Benefits, costs and risks to all stakeholder groups shall be identified using a participatory and transparent process.
[..]

3.1.4 The project proponent shall estimate in the project description, and present data in each monitoring report, the type and magnitude of a project's impacts, including:

- 1) Changes in stakeholders' well-being due to project activities. This appraisal should include documentation of any activities intended to mitigate negative impacts to stakeholder groups.
- 2) Any SDG target(s) associated with people and their prosperity identified in Section 2.1.2 above and any stakeholders' well-being benefits that will be used as SD VISta claims or assets."

Provision 2 Source 1, section 3.2, page 15: "3.2.1 Conditions and possible threats to natural capital at the project start date shall be documented in the project description. This information represents the project's baseline scenario for Planet.

3.2.2 Project proponents shall monitor direct impacts depicted in a causal chain of a project's activities on natural capital and ecosystem services, including expected and actual, benefits, costs and threats. To the extent that there are stakeholders of the natural capital and/or ecosystem services affected by the project, these benefits, costs and risks should be identified with them using a participatory and transparent process.

[..]

3.2.4 The project proponent shall estimate in the project description, and present data in each monitoring report, the type and magnitude of a project's impacts, including:

- 1) Changes in natural capital and ecosystem services due to project activities. This appraisal should include documentation of any activities intended to mitigate negative impacts on natural capital and ecosystem services.
- 2) Any SDG target(s) associated with the planet identified in Section 2.1.2 above and any natural capital and ecosystem services benefits that will be used as SD VISta claims or assets.

Assessment outcome

No (0 Points).

Justification of assessment

The types of impacts to be identified and mitigated are not clearly listed. Instead, it is up to the project owner to define the impact categories in the project description or monitoring template (Source 2 and 3). The standard, however, prescribes that "impacts depicted in the causal chain of a project's activities on all stakeholder groups" and "on natural capital and ecosystem services" shall be identified and mitigated (Provision 1 and 2). Regarding social impacts, Provision 1 further refers to "benefits, costs and risks to all stakeholder groups" as well as any "changes in stakeholders' well-being due to project activities". Regarding environmental impacts, Provision 2 further refers to

“expected and actual, benefits, costs and threats”. These provisions do not represent a clear definition or listing of the impacts. The indicator is therefore not fulfilled.

Indicator 6.1.3

Relevant scoring methodology provisions

“The program requires the project owners to assign roles and responsibilities for managing environmental and social risks of the project.”

Information sources considered

- 1 Sustainable Development Verified Impact Standard. Version 1.0. Document issued on 22 January 2019. Online available at: <https://verra.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Sustainable-Development-Verified-Impact-Standard-v1.0.pdf>

Relevant carbon crediting program provisions

- Provision 1 Source 1, section 2.3, page 9: “Principle. Project proponents shall ensure that sufficient human, financial and organizational resources are available for effective sustainable development benefit delivery per a project’s design.
Criteria.
2.3.1 Project proponents shall document in the project description, and update in monitoring reports as may be appropriate, distinct roles and responsibilities of all the entities involved in project design and implementation.”

Assessment outcome

No (0 Points).

Justification of assessment

The standard requires that project owners document in the project descriptions and the monitoring reports roles and responsibilities of project design and implementation (Provision 1). Although the latter theoretically include the identification and mitigation of environmental and social safeguards (Indicator 6.1.1), the provision to assign roles and responsibilities could be strengthened and elaborated to make it clear that project owners need to explicitly assign roles/responsibilities for the management of environmental and social impacts. The indicator is thus considered to be not fulfilled.

Indicator 6.1.4

Relevant scoring methodology provisions

“The program assesses the institutional arrangements and capacities of the project owners to identify and manage the environmental and social risks associated with the project.”

Information sources considered

- 1 Sustainable Development Verified Impact Standard. Version 1.0. Document issued on 22 January 2019. Online available at: <https://verra.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Sustainable-Development-Verified-Impact-Standard-v1.0.pdf>

Relevant carbon crediting program provisions

- Provision 1 Source 1, section 2.3, page 9: “Principle. Project proponents shall ensure that sufficient human, financial and organizational resources are available for effective sustainable development benefit delivery per a project’s design.”

Assessment outcome

No (0 Points).

Justification of assessment

This indicator assesses whether the carbon crediting program assesses the institutional capacities of the project owner to identify and manage the environmental and social risks associated with the project. Managing environmental and social risks is often a complex process that requires expert knowledge and the ability to proactively engage with a wide set of stakeholders with sometimes competing interests. Project owners who have institutionalized environmental and social risk management processes and can rely on established in-house capacities (or established and dependable networks with external expertise) are likely better positioned to ensure that safeguards are adhered to during project implementation. While the standard requires project owners to have sufficient “resources” to deliver the sustainable development benefits (Provision 1), no requirements matching the indicator were identified during the assessment of relevant SDVISTa provisions.

Indicator 6.1.5

Relevant scoring methodology provisions

“The program requires the project owners to identify and adhere to any national or local legal requirements which may be relevant to the project.”

Information sources considered

- 1 Sustainable Development Verified Impact Standard. Version 1.0. Document issued on 22 January 2019. Online available at: <https://verra.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Sustainable-Development-Verified-Impact-Standard-v1.0.pdf>

Relevant carbon crediting program provisions

- Provision 1 Source 1, section 2.4, page 9: “Legal Status and Rights to Operate Project. Principle.
All stakeholders’ customary and statutory rights to resources and tenure shall be respected in the course of project design and implementation. Project proponents

shall have the necessary approvals from appropriate authorities to claim ownership of the project's benefits as represented in SD VISta project documentation.”

Provision 2 Source 1, section 2.4.9, page 11: “ Legal status. In the project description, project proponents shall identify and demonstrate compliance of the project with all and any relevant local, regional and national laws, statutes and regulatory frameworks. Updates to compliance obligations shall be captured in the monitoring report.”

Assessment outcome

Yes (1 Point).

Justification of assessment

The standard requires project owners to “any relevant local, regional and national laws, statutes and regulatory frameworks” (Provision 2) as well as to “all stakeholders’ customary and statutory rights to resources and tenure” (Provision 1). The indicator is there fulfilled.

Indicator 6.1.6

Relevant scoring methodology provisions

“The program requires the disclosure of all relevant information from the project owner’s evaluation of environmental or social impacts. If an Environmental Impact Assessment is relevant or required to be carried out in the project’s local legal context, the assessment is fully disclosed (except for any confidential information that is not relevant to the conclusions of the assessment).”

Information sources considered

1 SDVISta Program Guide. Version 1.0. Document issued on 22 January 2019. Online available at: <https://verra.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/SD-VISta-Program-Guide-v1.0.pdf>

Relevant carbon crediting program provisions

Provision 1 Source 1, section 3.1, page 9: “Final versions of all project documents shall be posted to the project database to ensure transparency.”

Provision 2 Source 1, section 2.54, page 7: “Verra Project Database and Registry. [...] The Verra project database provides full transparency on SD VISta project documentation and information about the project proponent.”

Assessment outcome

Yes (1 Point).

Justification of assessment

The standard requires project owners to document their evaluation of environmental impacts in the project documentation (Indicator 6.1.1) and that all project documents are publicly disclosed (Provision 1 and 2). The indicator is therefore fulfilled.

Indicator 6.1.7

Relevant scoring methodology provisions

“The program requires, at least for any potential negative impacts, that a validation and verification entity validates the evaluation of social and environmental impacts by the project owner prior to registration.”

Information sources considered

- 1 SDVISTA Validation Report Template. Version 1.0. Document issued on 25 September 2019. Online available at: <https://verra.org/project/sd-vista/rules-requirements/>
- 2 SDVISTA Program Guide. Version 1.0. Document issued on 22 January 2019. Online available at: <https://verra.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/SD-VISta-Program-Guide-v1.0.pdf>

Relevant carbon crediting program provisions

- Provision 1 Source 1, section 3.1.3, page 10: “Mitigation of Negative Impacts on Stakeholders. Describe the steps taken to assess the measures needed and designed to mitigate any negative impacts on stakeholder groups. Include information with respect to how such measures are consistent with the precautionary principle. Provide and justify an overall conclusion as to whether the project will mitigate negative impacts on stakeholders.”
- Provision 2 Source 1, section 4.1.3, page 12: ” Mitigation of Negative Impacts on Natural Capital and Ecosystem Services. Describe the steps taken to assess the measures needed and designed to mitigate any negative impacts on natural capital and ecosystem services. Include information with respect to how such measures are consistent with the precautionary principle. Provide and justify an overall conclusion as to whether the project will mitigate negative impacts on natural capital and ecosystem services.”
- Provision 3 Source 2, section 3.6.1, page 17: “A project may register with the SD VISTA Program once it has been validated according to the SD VISTA rules. Submission of an SD VISTA validation report initiates the registration process.”

Assessment outcome

Yes (1 Point).

Justification of assessment

Negative social and environmental impacts have to be validated (Provision 1 and 2) before a project is registered (Provision 3). The indicator is fulfilled.

Indicator 6.1.8

Relevant scoring methodology provisions

“The program requires a follow-up on any potential negative impacts identified in the evaluation of social and environmental impacts prior to registration, e.g., by including measures to mitigate any negative impacts in monitoring plans.”

Information sources considered

- 1 Sustainable Development Verified Impact Standard. Version 1.0. Document issued on 22 January 2019. Online available at: <https://verra.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Sustainable-Development-Verified-Impact-Standard-v1.0.pdf>
- 2 SDVISTA Monitoring Report Template. Version 1.0. Document issued on 22 January 2019. Online available at: <https://verra.org/project/sd-vista/rules-requirements/>

Relevant carbon crediting program provisions

- Provision 1 Source 1, section 3.1, page 14-15: “3.1.4 The project proponent shall estimate in the project description, and present data in each monitoring report, the type and magnitude of a project’s impacts, including:
- 1) Changes in stakeholders’ well-being due to project activities. This appraisal should include documentation of any activities intended to mitigate negative impacts to stakeholder groups.
 - 2) Any SDG target(s) associated with people and their prosperity identified in Section 2.1.2 above and any stakeholders’ well-being benefits that will be used as SD VISTA claims or assets.”
- Provision 2 Source 1, section 3.2, page 15: “3.2.4 The project proponent shall estimate in the project description, and present data in each monitoring report, the type and magnitude of a project’s impacts, including:
- 1) Changes in natural capital and ecosystem services due to project activities. This appraisal should include documentation of any activities intended to mitigate negative impacts on natural capital and ecosystem services.
 - 2) Any SDG target(s) associated with the planet identified in Section 2.1.2 above and any natural capital and ecosystem services benefits that will be used as SD VISTA claims or assets.”

Assessment outcome

Yes (1 Point).

Justification of assessment

Negative social (Provision 1) and environmental (Provision 2) impacts as well as mitigation measures shall be monitored and documented. This is also reflected in the monitoring report template (Source 2). The indicator is therefore fulfilled.

Indicator 6.1.9

Relevant scoring methodology provisions

“The program requires, at least for any potential negative impacts, that social and economic impacts be monitored throughout the crediting periods of the project.”

Information sources considered

- 1 Sustainable Development Verified Impact Standard. Version 1.0. Document issued on 22 January 2019. Online available at: <https://verra.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Sustainable-Development-Verified-Impact-Standard-v1.0.pdf>

Relevant carbon crediting program provisions

- Provision 1 Source 1, section 3.1, page 14-15: “3.1.3 A monitoring plan shall be provided as part of a project description and such plan shall be followed to determine the project’s impacts.
- 3.1.4 The project proponent shall estimate in the project description, and present data in each monitoring report, the type and magnitude of a project’s impacts, including:
- 1) Changes in stakeholders’ well-being due to project activities. This appraisal should include documentation of any activities intended to mitigate negative impacts to stakeholder groups.
 - 2) Any SDG target(s) associated with people and their prosperity identified in Section 2.1.2 above and any stakeholders’ well-being benefits that will be used as SD VISta claims or assets.”
- Provision 2 Source 1, section 3.2, page 15: “3.2.3 A monitoring plan shall be provided as part of a project description and such plan shall be followed to determine the project’s impacts.
- 3.2.4 The project proponent shall estimate in the project description, and present data in each monitoring report, the type and magnitude of a project’s impacts, including:
- 1) 1) Changes in natural capital and ecosystem services due to project activities. This appraisal should include documentation of any activities intended to mitigate negative impacts on natural capital and ecosystem services.
 - 2) 2) Any SDG target(s) associated with the planet identified in Section 2.1.2 above and any natural capital and ecosystem services benefits that will be used as SD VISta claims or assets.”
- Provision 3 Source 1, section 2.5, page 11-12: “Project Monitoring. Principle. A project shall be monitored contiguously and shall match its monitoring periods with VCS or Climate, Community & Biodiversity (CCB) Standards Programs as appropriate.
- Criteria.

2.5.1 A monitoring period shall be a distinct time period that does not overlap with previous time periods that have already been assessed. In addition, monitoring periods shall be contiguous with no time gaps between them.

2.5.2 Projects that use the VCS Program and/or CCB Standards Program concurrently with SD VSta shall have the same monitoring period(s) for any and all programs.”

Assessment outcome

Yes (1 Point).

Justification of assessment

Provision 1 and 2 state that social and economic impacts shall be monitored. Monitoring shall occur continuously and monitoring periods shall be in alignment with the other applied program (e.g., VCS) (Provision 3). Any carbon credits that wish to additionally adhere to the SDVSta would need to ensure ongoing monitoring for the time of the issued carbon credits. If monitoring of social and environmental impacts stops, then there can be no claim of SDVSta benefits. The indicator is thus fulfilled.

Indicator 6.1.10

Relevant scoring methodology provisions

“The program requires the project owners to establish an environmental and social management plan, at least for projects that the program classifies as having high environmental and social risks.”

Information sources considered

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Relevant carbon crediting program provisions

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Assessment outcome

No (0 Points).

Justification of assessment

While the standard requires the inclusion of safeguards in the monitoring plan etc. (Indicator 6.1.9), there are no provisions that require a dedicated environmental and social management plan for projects that have high environmental and social risks.

Indicator 6.1.11

Relevant scoring methodology provisions

“The program has a grievance mechanism in place that allows local stakeholders to submit grievances throughout the lifetime of the project without any barriers (e.g. liability for expenses associated with the investigation). Such grievances must be duly considered by the carbon crediting program.”

Information sources considered

- 1 Verra Complaints and Appeals Policy- Version 1.0. Online available at: <https://verra.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Verra-Complaints-and-Appeals-Policy-v1.0.pdf>
- 2 SD VISta Program Guide, version 1.0, 22 January 2019. Online available at: <https://verra.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/SD-VISta-Program-Guide-v1.0.pdf>

Relevant carbon crediting program provisions

Provision 1 Source 2, section 5 “Complaints and Appeals”, page 38: “Project proponents, assessors, methodology element developers and other stakeholders (including interested stakeholders) may submit enquiries to Verra at any time. In addition, the SD VISta Program provides a complaints and appeals procedure as set out in the Verra Appeals, Complaints and Conduct Policy available on the Verra website.”

Provision 2 Source 1, section 1 “Complaints”, page 2: “Complaints by stakeholders about a project proponent or its partners shall be pursued with the respective entity. Similarly, complaints about entities (by the clients of such entities) that provide services under the relevant Verra program, such as assessors, shall be pursued via the respective entity. In either of the cases above, where the complaint is not resolved to the satisfaction of the complainant and the complaint is in relation to the respective entity’s interpretation of the relevant program rules, the complainant may submit a complaint to Verra. Note that other stakeholders may also choose to submit complaints to entities providing services under the relevant program where such entities have complaints procedures for third parties (i.e., non-clients).”

Provision 3 Source 1, section 1 “Complaints”, page 1: “A complaint is an objection to a decision taken by Verra or an aspect of how it operates a program(s) managed by Verra, or a claim that relevant program rules have had an unfair, inadvertent or unintentional adverse effect. Stakeholders are provided with the following complaints procedure:

- 1) The complaint shall include the following information:
 - a) Name of the complainant.
 - b) Name of organization, where relevant.
 - c) Contact information for the complainant.
 - d) Details of the complaint.
 - e) Declaration of any conflict of interest in submitting the complaint.

2) The complaint shall be addressed to the appropriate program manager listed on the Verra website and emailed to secretariat@verra.org with the word complaint in the subject line. An email response is provided to the complainant from Verra acknowledging receipt of the complaint.

3) Verra appoints an appropriate person to handle the complaint, who will organize an analysis (involving external experts, as required) and determine any appropriate action required.

4) Verra prepares a written response and provides this to the complainant. The response to the complaint is brought to the attention of and approved by the Verra Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

5) All information submitted by the complainant with respect to the complaint is kept confidential by Verra.”

Provision 4 Source 1 (continued): “All expenses, internal and external, incurred by Verra in handling complaints and appeals shall be paid by the entity filing the complaint or appeal. Prior to initiation of the handling process, Verra will inform the entity filing the complaint or appeal of its estimated handling cost. Where the outcome of a complaint or appeal is to overturn an earlier decision made by Verra, the entity filing the complaint or appeal will not be liable for covering such expenses.”

Provision 5 Source 2, section 3.2, page 10: “Projects shall undergo at least one 30-day public comment period per assessment (i.e., per validation, verification and independent expert evaluation). While a project is open for comment, stakeholders (including interested stakeholders) are invited to provide feedback on the design or implementation of a project, either from personal knowledge or as the design or implementation is represented in the project description or monitoring report.”

Assessment outcome

No (0 points).

Justification of assessment

Comments or complaints can be submitted at any time (Provision 1).

The standard uses the complaints and appeals policy provided by Verra (Provision 1) which sets out the procedure and rules for submitting complaints to the program. These stipulate that complaints about a project must be pursued first with the project owner. Only when the complaint cannot be resolved to the satisfaction of the complainant it may be submitted to Verra (Provision 2). Upon receipt, the program appoints an appropriate person to handle the complaint, and afterwards prepares a written response and provides this to the complainant. The response to the complaint is brought to the attention of and approved by the Verra CEO (Provision 3). Complainants must however bear the cost of the complaint if it does not result in overturning an earlier decision made by Verra (Provision 4). The latter is considered a considerable barrier for accessing the grievance mechanism as for example the capacity of vulnerable local people bearing the cost of such a complaint procedure is low. The indicator is therefore not fulfilled.

Indicator 6.1.12

Relevant scoring methodology provisions

“The program requires that project owners have a culturally appropriate grievance mechanism in place for local stakeholders to submit grievances to them throughout the lifetime of the project. Such grievances must be duly considered by the project owner.”

Information sources considered

- 1 Sustainable Development Verified Impact Standard. Version 1.0. Document issued on 22 January 2019. Online available at: <https://verra.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Sustainable-Development-Verified-Impact-Standard-v1.0.pdf>

Relevant carbon crediting program provisions

Provision 1 Source 1, section 2.2, page 8: “Grievance Redress Procedure.

2.2.14 Projects shall establish a clear feedback and grievance redress procedure to address disputes with stakeholders that may arise during project planning and implementation. The feedback and grievance redress procedure shall take into account traditional methods that stakeholders use to resolve conflicts.

2.2.15 The feedback and grievance redress procedure shall be set out in the project description as well as publicized and accessible to all project stakeholders, including any interested stakeholders. Grievances and project responses, including any redress, shall be documented in the next project description or monitoring report.”

Assessment outcome

Yes (1 Point).

Justification of assessment

The standard requires project owners to establish a grievance mechanism which takes “into account traditional methods that stakeholders use to resolve conflicts” (Provision 1). Any grievances and responses by the project owners to the grievances need to be documented. This implies that the grievances must be duly considered. The indicator is therefore fulfilled.

Indicator 6.1.13

Relevant scoring methodology provisions

“The program requires that the grievance mechanism to be established by the project owners provide the possibility of providing anonymous grievances.”

Information sources considered

- 1 Sustainable Development Verified Impact Standard. Version 1.0. Document issued on 22 January 2019. Online available at: <https://verra.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Sustainable-Development-Verified-Impact-Standard-v1.0.pdf>

Relevant carbon crediting program provisions

Provision 1 Source 1, section 2.2, page 8: “Grievance Redress Procedure.

2.2.14 Projects shall establish a clear feedback and grievance redress procedure to address disputes with stakeholders that may arise during project planning and implementation. The feedback and grievance redress procedure shall take into account traditional methods that stakeholders use to resolve conflicts.

2.2.15 The feedback and grievance redress procedure shall be set out in the project description as well as publicized and accessible to all project stakeholders, including any interested stakeholders. Grievances and project responses, including any redress, shall be documented in the next project description or monitoring report.”

Assessment outcome

No (0 Points).

Justification of assessment

The standard does not require the option to provide anonymous feedback or grievances to project owners (Provision 1). The indicator is therefore not fulfilled.

Indicator 6.1.14

Relevant scoring methodology provisions

“The program requires that grievances received by the carbon crediting program and/or the project owners must be responded to within a specific response time.”

Information sources considered

- 1 Sustainable Development Verified Impact Standard. Version 1.0. Document issued on 22 January 2019. Online available at: <https://verra.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Sustainable-Development-Verified-Impact-Standard-v1.0.pdf>
- 2 Verra Complaints and Appeals Policy- Version 1.0. Online available at: <https://verra.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Verra-Complaints-and-Appeals-Policy-v1.0.pdf>

Relevant carbon crediting program provisions

Provision 1 Source 1, section 2.2.15, page 8: “Grievance Redress Procedure. [..]

The feedback and grievance redress procedure shall be set out in the project description as well as publicized and accessible to all project stakeholders, including any interested stakeholders. Grievances and project responses, including any redress, shall be documented in the next project description or monitoring report.”

Provision 2 Source 2, section 1 “Complaints”, page 1: “A complaint is an objection to a decision taken by Verra or an aspect of how it operates a program(s) managed by Verra, or a claim that relevant program rules have had an unfair, inadvertent or unintentional adverse effect. Stakeholders are provided with the following complaints procedure:

1) The complaint shall include the following information:

- a) Name of the complainant.
- b) Name of organization, where relevant.
- c) Contact information for the complainant.
- d) Details of the complaint.
- e) Declaration of any conflict of interest in submitting the complaint.

2) The complaint shall be addressed to the appropriate program manager listed on the Verra website and emailed to secretariat@verra.org with the word complaint in the subject line. An email response is provided to the complainant from Verra acknowledging receipt of the complaint.

3) Verra appoints an appropriate person to handle the complaint, who will organize an analysis (involving external experts, as required) and determine any appropriate action required.

4) Verra prepares a written response and provides this to the complainant. The response to the complaint is brought to the attention of and approved by the Verra Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

Assessment outcome

No (0 Points).

Justification of assessment

Grievances received by the project owner need to be document in the next project description or monitoring report (Provision 1). However, the phrasing in Provision 1 is unclear whether project owners are required to respond to all grievances. There is also no specific response time given for grievances submitted to the program (Verra) (Provision 2). The indicator is therefore not fulfilled.

Indicator 6.1.15

Relevant scoring methodology provisions

“The program requires the project owners to conduct an assessment of which local stakeholders will be impacted by the project.”

Information sources considered

- 1 Sustainable Development Verified Impact Standard. Version 1.0. Document issued on 22 January 2019. Online available at: <https://verra.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Sustainable-Development-Verified-Impact-Standard-v1.0.pdf>

Relevant carbon crediting program provisions

Provision 1 Source 1, section 2.2, page 6: “Stakeholder Identification.

2.2.1 Project proponents shall use locally appropriate methods to identify all stakeholders who could potentially be affected by a project.

2.2.2 Stakeholder groups shall be identified in the project description and updated as necessary in the monitoring report. All stakeholders shall be part of at least one stakeholder group (see Box 2 below.)”

Provision 2 Source 1, section 2, page 6: “Box 2: Stakeholders and Stakeholder Groups.

A stakeholder is any person who can potentially be affected by the project. In identification of stakeholders, it is permitted to consider significance of user populations and how deeply affected they may be by the project such that distant or intermittent user groups who will be affected in very limited ways by the project need not be defined as stakeholders.

A stakeholder group is composed of individual stakeholders who derive similar income, livelihood, well-being and/or cultural values from the project and whose values are different from those of other groups. Examples include Indigenous Peoples, women, youth or other social, cultural and economic groups. Every individual stakeholder must belong to at least one stakeholder group, but may belong to more than one (e.g., a woman community leader should be considered as a woman and as a community leader). Stakeholder groups will often be segments of the population, not officially designated assemblages.”

Assessment outcome

Yes (1 Point).

Justification of assessment

Project owners are required to identify any stakeholders affected by the project (Provision 1). Examples of stakeholder groups are given in Provision 2 and implicitly include local stakeholders. The indicator is therefore fulfilled.

Indicator 6.1.16

Relevant scoring methodology provisions

“In assessing which local stakeholders will be impacted by the project, the program explicitly requires, at least for projects affecting land use, that the project owners identify local stakeholders that hold any legal or customary tenure or access rights to the land.”

Information sources considered

- 1 Sustainable Development Verified Impact Standard. Version 1.0. Document issued on 22 January 2019. Online available at: <https://verra.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Sustainable-Development-Verified-Impact-Standard-v1.0.pdf>

Relevant carbon crediting program provisions

Provision 1 Source 1, section 2.2, page 6: “Stakeholders who have rights to resources or land that may be affected by project activities shall be clearly identified in the project description and updated as necessary in the monitoring report.”

Provision 2 Source 1, section 2.4, page 9: “Principle. All stakeholders’ customary and statutory rights to resources and tenure shall be respected in the course of project design and implementation.

Criteria. Respect for Rights to Lands, Territories and Resources and Free, Prior and Informed Consent.

Statutory and customary tenure/use/access/management rights to lands, territories and resources directly affected by project activities (including individual and collective rights and overlapping or conflicting rights), if any, shall be described and mapped in the project description.”

Assessment outcome

Yes (1 Point).

Justification of assessment

The above documentation specifies that the indicator is fulfilled.

Indicator 6.1.17

Relevant scoring methodology provisions

“The program requires the project owners to conduct a local stakeholder consultation in a way that is inclusive and culturally appropriate for local communities (taking into account, e.g., literacy, culture and language).”

Information sources considered

- 1 Sustainable Development Verified Impact Standard. Version 1.0. Document issued on 22 January 2019. Online available at: <https://verra.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Sustainable-Development-Verified-Impact-Standard-v1.0.pdf>

Relevant carbon crediting program provisions

Provision 1 Source 1, section 2.2, page 6-7: “Stakeholder Consultation and Participation.

2.2.5 Effective consultation (see Box 3 below) shall be used to enable project stakeholders, including all stakeholder groups, to influence project design and implementation. The consultation shall be carried out with respect for local customs, values and institutions. It shall provide an ongoing opportunity for self-identification of stakeholder groups that are vulnerable (i.e., lacking ability to anticipate, cope with, resist and recover from stresses or shocks due to physical, social, economic and environmental factors or processes) and/or marginalized (i.e., unable to participate fully in economic, social, political and cultural life). Where those groups are identified, project proponents shall emphasize optimizing benefits to them.

Box 3: Guidance on Effective Consultation.

Effective consultation requires project proponents to inform and engage broadly with stakeholders using socially and culturally appropriate methods to enable meaningful influence on the subject of consultation. [..]"

Provision 2 Source 1, section 2.2, page 7: "2.2.6 [...] Different stakeholder groups may require different communication and consultation methods; communication and consultation shall be implemented in a culturally appropriate and gender sensitive manner."

Assessment outcome

Yes (1 Point).

Justification of assessment

The standard provides a dedicated section (see extract from Box 3 in Provision 1) on effective consultation. The provisions highlight in various sections of the text that a culturally appropriate consultation shall be carried out (Provision 1 and 2). The indicator is therefore fulfilled.

Indicator 6.1.18

Relevant scoring methodology provisions

"The program requires that the local stakeholder consultation be conducted before the decision of the project owners to proceed with the project and before the validation of the project."

Information sources considered

- 1 Sustainable Development Verified Impact Standard. Version 1.0. Document issued on 22 January 2019. Online available at: <https://verra.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Sustainable-Development-Verified-Impact-Standard-v1.0.pdf>

Relevant carbon crediting program provisions

Provision 1 Source 1, section 2.2, page 7: "Box 3: Guidance on Effective Consultation. [...] Stakeholder groups should have an opportunity to evaluate impacts and raise concerns about potential negative impacts, express desired outcomes and provide input on the project design, both before the project design is finalized and during implementation."

Provision 2 Source 2, section 2.3.3, page 5: “Stakeholder Consultation.

Describe the steps taken to assess the project’s process for conducting effective consultation. Provide an assessment as to whether:

- The project’s process was appropriate for each stakeholder group;
- Information about potential costs, risks and benefits was appropriately shared with each group;
- Each group had an opportunity to influence project design; and
- The project dedicated particular attention to optimizing benefits for any marginalized and vulnerable groups.

Provide and justify an overall conclusion regarding the project’s process for conducting effective stakeholder consultations.”

Assessment outcome

No (0 Points).

Justification of assessment

The standard requires that consultations are conducted before the project design is finalized and during implementation in order to provide input on the project design (Provision 1). This includes, for example, that the project owner would have to consult stakeholders if any further changes to the project design occur after the initial posting for validation public comment. As part of the validation process, the stakeholder consultations are reviewed and thus have to be conducted before validation (Provision 2). Project developers can however make an internal decision to proceed (i.e. invest) in a project before finalising the project design. The provision therefore does not meet the requirement of the indicator to conduct stakeholder consultation before this decision. The indicator is therefore not fulfilled.

Indicator 6.1.19

Relevant scoring methodology provisions

“The program requires the project owners to take due account of any input received in the local stakeholder consultation and to publicly document how inputs received are addressed.”

Information sources considered

- 1 Sustainable Development Verified Impact Standard. Version 1.0. Document issued on 22 January 2019. Online available at: <https://verra.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Sustainable-Development-Verified-Impact-Standard-v1.0.pdf>
- 2 SDVISTA Program Guide. Version 1.0. Document issued on 22 January 2019. Online available at: <https://verra.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/SD-VISTA-Program-Guide-v1.0.pdf>
- 3 SDVISTA Validation Report Template. Version 1.0. Document issued on 25 September 2019. Online available at: <https://verra.org/project/sd-vista/rules-requirements/>

Relevant carbon crediting program provisions

- Provision 1 Source 1, section 2.2.7, page 7: “Project proponents shall document consultations in the project description and indicate whether and how the project design and implementation has been revised based on such input. Special attention paid to marginalized and/or vulnerable groups shall be mutually acknowledged and agreed upon by both project proponents and marginalized and/or vulnerable groups.”
- Provision 2 Source 2, section 3.1, page 9: “Final versions of all project documents shall be posted to the project database to ensure transparency.”
- Provision 3 Source 2, section 2.5.4, page 7: “Verra Project Database and Registry. [...] The Verra project database provides full transparency on SD VISta project documentation and information about the project proponent.”
- Provision 4 Source 3, section 1.10, page 2: “1.10 Public Comments.
Summarize any public comments submitted during the public comment period. Assess whether the project proponent has taken due account of all and any comments, and provide an overall conclusion regarding public comments.
Describe how the project proponent, through revisions to the project design or other documented efforts, addressed each comment, and provide an assessment of the extent to which the project proponent’s responses are appropriate.”

Assessment outcome

Yes (1 Point).

Justification of assessment

The standard requires project owners to document the consultations in the project description (Provision 1). The project description will be made publicly available with the project documentation (Provision 2 and 3). This includes that project owners are required to indicate whether and how inputs have influenced the project design (Provision 1). The term “indicate”, however, might give project owners the option to do “cherry-picking” by choosing a few convenient comments and just document whether and how they influenced the design. Provision 1 could be clarified by choosing a provision that requires project owners to document for each and any input received how it has been addressed and how the design and implementation has been revised in response to each input. The respective phrasing in the validation report template on public comments (Provision 4) is, for example, much clearer. . The indicator is nonetheless fulfilled.

Indicator 6.1.20

Relevant scoring methodology provisions

“The program requires that a validation and verification entity assesses whether the project owners have taken due account of all inputs received in the local stakeholder consultation.”

Information sources considered

- 1 SDVISTA Validation Report Template. Version 1.0. Document issued on 25 September 2019. Online available at: <https://verra.org/project/sd-vista/rules-requirements/>

Relevant carbon crediting program provisions

Provision 1 Source 1, section 2.3.3, page 5: “Stakeholder Consultation.

Describe the steps taken to assess the project’s process for conducting effective consultation. Provide an assessment as to whether:

- The project’s process was appropriate for each stakeholder group;
- Information about potential costs, risks and benefits was appropriately shared with each group;
- Each group had an opportunity to influence project design; and
- The project dedicated particular attention to optimizing benefits for any marginalized and vulnerable groups.

Provide and justify an overall conclusion regarding the project’s process for conducting effective stakeholder consultations.”

Assessment outcome

No (0 Points).

Justification of assessment

The provision “each group had an opportunity to influence project design” (Provision 1) is considered not to provide a clear requirement for VVBs to assess whether due account has been taken of all inputs received. The provision for global stakeholder consultations (see indicator 6.1.29) are for example much clearer in this respect. . The indicator is therefore not fulfilled.

Indicator 6.1.21

Relevant scoring methodology provisions

“The program requires that project owners make key information on the project available to local stakeholders prior to conducting the local stakeholder consultation, such as the project design documents and any supplemental project documentation.”

Information sources considered

- 1 Sustainable Development Verified Impact Standard. Version 1.0. Document issued on 22 January 2019. Online available at: <https://verra.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Sustainable-Development-Verified-Impact-Standard-v1.0.pdf>

Relevant carbon crediting program provisions

- Provision 1 Source 1, section 2.2, page 7: “Box 3: Guidance on Effective Consultation. [...] Stakeholder groups should have an opportunity to evaluate impacts and raise concerns about potential negative impacts, express desired outcomes and provide input on the project design, both before the project design is finalized and during implementation.”
- Provision 2 Source 1, section 2.2.6, page 7: “All communications, consultations and participatory processes shall be undertaken with stakeholders directly or through their legitimate representatives, ensuring adequate and timely levels of information sharing with the members of the stakeholder groups in a form they understand. Information sharing shall include provision of information about potential costs, risks and benefits to all stakeholder groups.”

Assessment outcome

No (0 Points).

Justification of assessment

Provision 1 states that stakeholders shall have the opportunity to influence the project design but does not explicitly include a requirement for sharing documents before the consultation. Provision 2 requires “timely levels of information sharing” which also does not explicitly require – and might only imply that – project owners have to share the project design document and other relevant documents before the consultation. Further, the requirement to share “information about potential costs, risks and benefits to all stakeholder groups” does not necessarily include the sharing of the project design document. The standard’s provisions could be strengthened and clarified regarding this indicator.. The indicator is thus considered to not be fulfilled.

Indicator 6.1.22

Relevant scoring methodology provisions

“The program requires free, prior and informed consent if indigenous, tribal or traditional people are directly affected by a project (e.g., in case of re-locations or where property rights or land inhabited or used by people is affected).”

Information sources considered

- 1 Sustainable Development Verified Impact Standard. Version 1.0. Document issued on 22 January 2019. Online available at: <https://verra.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Sustainable-Development-Verified-Impact-Standard-v1.0.pdf>

Relevant carbon crediting program provisions

- Provision 1 Source 1, section 2.4, page 9: “Principle. All stakeholders’ customary and statutory rights to resources and tenure shall be respected in the course of project design and implementation. Project proponents shall have the necessary approvals from

appropriate authorities to claim ownership of the project's benefits as represented in SD VISta project documentation.”

Provision 2 Source 1, section 2.4, page 10-11: “Criteria. Respect for Rights to Lands, Territories and Resources and Free, Prior and Informed Consent.

2.4.1 Statutory and customary tenure/use/access/management rights to lands, territories and resources directly affected by project activities (including individual and collective rights and overlapping or conflicting rights), if any, shall be described and mapped in the project description.

2.4.2 All property rights shall be recognized, respected and supported. Projects shall not encroach uninvited on private property, community property (including lands, territories and resources to which communities have collective rights, either customary or statutory), or government property.

2.4.3 The free, prior and informed consent shall be obtained of those whose property rights are affected by a project through a transparent, agreed process. See Box 4 below for more information on free, prior and informed consent. [..]

2.4.5 Project activities shall not lead to involuntary removal or relocation of property rights holders from their lands or territories and shall not force property rights holders to relocate activities important to their culture or livelihood. Where any relocation of habitation or activities important to their culture or livelihood is undertaken within the terms of an agreement, the project proponent shall demonstrate in the project description (or monitoring report, where relevant) that the agreement was made with the free, prior and informed consent of those concerned and includes provisions for just and fair compensation.⁶

2.4.6 Where appropriate, projects shall take measures to help secure statutory rights for traditional communities. [..]

⁶ In accordance with Article 28 of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, unless otherwise agreed upon, compensation shall be in the form of lands, territories or resources equivalent in quality, size and legal status to those taken. [..]”

Assessment outcome

Yes (2 Points).

Justification of assessment

Provisions 1 and 2 set out the requirements for rights to land and free, prior and informed consent. The standard requires project owners to identify if any statutory or customary right to lands, territories or resources are affected. Provision 2 elaborates on the requirement of free, prior and informed consent and also refers to “traditional communities” and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples”. The indicator is considered to be fulfilled.

Indicator 6.1.23

Relevant scoring methodology provisions

“The program requires the project owners to establish mechanisms for ongoing communication with local stakeholders (e.g., periodic consultations) in a manner appropriate to the context of the stakeholders (e.g., literacy, culture and language) and take due account of input received.”

Information sources considered

- 1 Sustainable Development Verified Impact Standard. Version 1.0. Document issued on 22 January 2019. Online available at: <https://verra.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Sustainable-Development-Verified-Impact-Standard-v1.0.pdf>
- 2 SDVista Monitoring Report Template. Version 1.0. Document issued on 22 January 2019. Online available at: <https://verra.org/project/sd-vista/rules-requirements/>

Relevant carbon crediting program provisions

Provision 1 Source 1, section 2.2, page 5: “Principle. Stakeholders must be involved with projects on an ongoing basis.”

Provision 2 Source 1, section 2.2.6, page 7: “All communications, consultations and participatory processes shall be undertaken with stakeholders directly or through their legitimate representatives, ensuring adequate and timely levels of information sharing with the members of the stakeholder groups in a form they understand. Information sharing shall include provision of information about potential costs, risks and benefits to all stakeholder groups. Different stakeholder groups may require different communication and consultation methods; communication and consultation shall be implemented in a culturally appropriate and gender sensitive manner.”

Provision 3 Source 1, section 2.2.8, page 7: “A plan shall be developed, described in the project description and implemented to continue communication and consultation between project proponents and all stakeholder groups about the project and its impacts. This information exchange should facilitate adaptive management throughout the life of the project. This plan shall include measures to enable the meaningful influence of all stakeholder groups that want and need to be involved in evolving project design, implementation, monitoring and assessment throughout a project lifetime.”

Provision 4 Source 2, section 2.2.1, page 6: “Stakeholder Consultation and Adaptive Management

Describe how communication and consultation about the project and its impacts have continued between the project proponent(s) and identified stakeholder groups, with special attention paid to marginalized and/or vulnerable groups. Explain the processes used throughout this monitoring period to solicit and consider stakeholder input and adapt management accordingly.

Where different communication and consultation channels were required for different stakeholder groups, provide a description of the implementation status of each.”

Assessment outcome

Yes (1 Point).

Justification of assessment

There is a provision to establish mechanisms for ongoing communication (Provision 3) and it is also established as a principle of the standard (Provision 1). Provision 2 states that communication and consultation shall be done in a culturally appropriate manner. It needs to be documented how inputs from ongoing communications were taken into account (Provision 4). The indicator is therefore fulfilled.

Indicator 6.1.24

Relevant scoring methodology provisions

“The program requires that a record of how issues from local stakeholder consultations (6.1.18), grievances communicated to project owners (6.1.12) and ongoing communication (6.1.23) have been addressed is made publicly available or made available upon request.”

Information sources considered

- 1 Sustainable Development Verified Impact Standard. Version 1.0. Document issued on 22 January 2019. Online available at: <https://verra.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Sustainable-Development-Verified-Impact-Standard-v1.0.pdf>
- 2 SDVISTa Monitoring Report Template. Version 1.0. Document issued on 22 January 2019. Online available at: <https://verra.org/project/sd-vista/rules-requirements/>
- 3 SDVISTa Program Guide. Version 1.0. Document issued on 22 January 2019. Online available at: <https://verra.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/SD-VISTa-Program-Guide-v1.0.pdf>

Relevant carbon crediting program provisions

Provision 1 Source 1, section 2.2.7, page 7: “Project proponents shall document consultations in the project description and indicate whether and how the project design and implementation has been revised based on such input.”

Provision 2 Source 2, section 2.2.1, page 6: “Stakeholder Consultation and Adaptive Management.

Describe how communication and consultation about the project and its impacts have continued between the project proponent(s) and identified stakeholder groups, with special attention paid to marginalized and/or vulnerable groups. Explain the processes used throughout this monitoring period to solicit and consider stakeholder input and adapt management accordingly.

Where different communication and consultation channels were required for different stakeholder groups, provide a description of the implementation status of each.”

- Provision 3 Source 3, section 3.1, page 9: “Final versions of all project documents shall be posted to the project database to ensure transparency.”
- Provision 4 Source 3, section 2.5.4, page 7: “Verra Project Database and Registry. [...] The Verra project database provides full transparency on SD VISta project documentation and information about the project proponent.”
- Provision 5 Source 1, section 2.2, page 8: “Grievance Redress Procedure.
- 2.2.14 Projects shall establish a clear feedback and grievance redress procedure to address disputes with stakeholders that may arise during project planning and implementation. The feedback and grievance redress procedure shall take into account traditional methods that stakeholders use to resolve conflicts.
- 2.2.15 The feedback and grievance redress procedure shall be set out in the project description as well as publicized and accessible to all project stakeholders, including any interested stakeholders. Grievances and project responses, including any redress, shall be documented in the next project description or monitoring report.”

Assessment outcome

Yes (1 Point).

Justification of assessment

How inputs from local stakeholder consultations were taken into account is documented and made public in the project description (Provision 1). How inputs from ongoing communication were taken into account is documented in the monitoring report (Provision 2). Both documents are made public (Provision 3 and 4). It is also required that grievances and the responses by the project owners are documented in the project description and monitoring report (Provision 5). The indicator is thus fulfilled.

Indicator 6.1.25

Relevant scoring methodology provisions

“The program requires project validation and verification entities to contact and engage with affected local stakeholders during validation.”

Information sources considered

- 1 SDVISta Validation Report Template. Version 1.0. Document issued on 25 September 2019. Online available at: <https://verra.org/project/sd-vista/rules-requirements/>

Relevant carbon crediting program provisions

- Provision 1 Source 1, section 1.9, page 2: “1.9 Site Inspections.

Describe the method and objectives for on-site inspections performed. Include in the description details of all project activity locations visited, the physical and

organizational aspects of the project inspected and the dates when such site inspections took place.”

Provision 2 Source 1, section 2.3, page 4: “2.3.1 Stakeholder Identification.

Describe the steps taken to assess the process of stakeholder identification and analysis used to identify stakeholders and stakeholder groups. Include details of documentation assessed and observations made during the site visit. Provide a conclusion as to whether the process is likely to identify all stakeholders who will be impacted by the project activities.

2.3.2 Stakeholder Description.

Describe the steps taken to assess that all stakeholders and stakeholder groups that are included in the project, or may be included through the grouped project approach at a later time, were identified and described appropriately in the project description.

2.3.3 Stakeholder Consultation.

Describe the steps taken to assess the project’s process for conducting effective consultation. Provide an assessment as to whether:

- The project’s process was appropriate for each stakeholder group;
- Information about potential costs, risks and benefits was appropriately shared with each group;
- Each group had an opportunity to influence project design; and
- The project dedicated particular attention to optimizing benefits for any marginalized and vulnerable groups.

Provide and justify an overall conclusion regarding the project’s process for conducting effective stakeholder consultations.”

Assessment outcome

No (0 Points).

Justification of assessment

The standard requires that a site visit is conducted during the validation process (Provision 1). It is, however, not mentioned if the site visit referred to in the stakeholder section of the validation template (Source 1) includes contact or engagement with local stakeholders (Provision 2). Further, the validation entity shall check the robustness of the stakeholder consultation process, but it is not prescribed how that should be done and if that includes a direct contact and engagement with local stakeholders. The indicator is therefore considered not be fulfilled.

Indicator 6.1.26

Relevant scoring methodology provisions

“The program requires that projects be subject to public consultation on the global level via online facilities (e.g., submitting comments on an online platform or portal) prior to project registration.”

Information sources considered

- 1 SDVISTA Program Guide. Version 1.0. Document issued on 22 January 2019. Online available at: <https://verra.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/SD-VISTA-Program-Guide-v1.0.pdf>

Relevant carbon crediting program provisions

- Provision 1 Source 1, section 3.2, page 10: “Public Comment Periods.
- 3.2.1 Projects shall undergo at least one 30-day public comment period per assessment (i.e., per validation, verification and independent expert evaluation). While a project is open for comment, stakeholders (including interested stakeholders) are invited to provide feedback on the design or implementation of a project, either from personal knowledge or as the design or implementation is represented in the project description or monitoring report.”
- Provision 2 Source 1, section 3.2, page 10: “30-day public comment periods are initiated at the following stages:
- 1) When a project is first listed on the Verra project database (see Section 3.3 below for information regarding project listing).
 - 2) The date on which the project’s draft monitoring report is posted to the Verra project database).
 - 3) At the project proponent’s request.”
- Provision 3 Source 1, section 3.2, page 10: “3.2.3 Any comments shall be submitted to Verra at secretariat@verra.org. Commenters shall provide the project name and Verra identification number, their name, organization, country and email address. At the end of the public comment period, Verra provides all and any comments received to the project proponent and the assessor.”
- Provision 4 Source 1, section 3.1, page 9: “Introduction. This section outlines the SD VISTA project cycle, which includes listing projects, validating and registering projects, posting verifications and issuing SD VISTA assets.”
- Provision 5 Source 1, section 3.3.4, page 12: “When a project is listed, its initial status will be either undergoing validation or undergoing design evaluation, as appropriate given

the circumstances of the project, and the Verra registry initiates a public comment period (as set out in Section 3.2).”

Assessment outcome

Yes (1 Point).

Justification of assessment

Projects are subject to public consultation at different points in time (Provision 1), including before project registration. Project registration takes place after listing of projects and their subsequent validation (Provision 4). Provision 2 and 5 state that as soon as a project is listed, a public comment period shall be initiated. The comments can be submitted online via email (Provision 3). The indicator is thus fulfilled.

Indicator 6.1.27

Relevant scoring methodology provisions

“The program requires that global public consultations of projects make available key information on the project, such as the project design documents and any supplemental project documentation.”

Information sources considered

- 1 SDVISTA Program Guide. Version 1.0. Document issued on 22 January 2019. Online available at: <https://verra.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/SD-VISta-Program-Guide-v1.0.pdf>

Relevant carbon crediting program provisions

Provision 1 Source 1, section 3.2, page 10: “Public Comment Periods.

3.2.1 Projects shall undergo at least one 30-day public comment period per assessment (i.e., per validation, verification and independent expert evaluation). While a project is open for comment, stakeholders (including interested stakeholders) are invited to provide feedback on the design or implementation of a project, either from personal knowledge or as the design or implementation is represented in the project description or monitoring report.”

Provision 2 Source 1, section 3.3, page 11: “3.3.1 Listing, as set out in Diagram 3 above, is the initial posting of the project and its documentation on the Verra project database. To list a project, the following shall be submitted to the Verra registry by the project proponent or its authorized representative (see Section 3.14 below for further information regarding authorized representatives):

1) A completed project description; [..]”

Provision 2 Source 1, section 3.3, page 12: “ 3.3.2 The Verra registry shall ensure that all required documentation has been submitted. In addition, Verra reviews project documents to ensure that sufficient information is present for a project to undergo public comment.

Verra may require the project proponent to update project documentation before the project is listed on the project database.”

Assessment outcome

Yes (1 Point).

Justification of assessment

The standard foresees that stakeholders can provide feedback during the public comment period based on the information in the project description or monitoring report (Provision 1). For this, project documentation is made available on the Verra website/registry beforehand during listing (Provision 2). Additionally, Verra reviews the documents provided by the project owners for listing a project to ensure that sufficient information is available for the public comment period (Provision 3). The indicator is therefore fulfilled.

Indicator 6.1.28

Relevant scoring methodology provisions

“The program requires that input received through global public consultations of projects is publicly documented, that the project owners must take due account of the inputs received, and that it is publicly documented how inputs received are addressed.”

Information sources considered

- 1 SDVISTA Program Guide. Version 1.0. Document issued on 22 January 2019. Online available at: <https://verra.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/SD-VISta-Program-Guide-v1.0.pdf>
- 2 SDVISTA Validation Report Template. Version 1.0. Document issued on 25 September 2019. Online available at: <https://verra.org/project/sd-vista/rules-requirements/>

Relevant carbon crediting program provisions

Provision 1 Source 1, section 3, page 10: “3.2.4 Where the project proponent receives any public comments from Verra, it shall acknowledge receipt of the comments. The project proponent shall respond to public comments through revisions to the project description/monitoring report or other documented efforts.

3.2.5 Where an assessor receives any public comments from Verra, it shall acknowledge receipt of the comments. Assessors shall take such comments into account when determining whether a project meets the SD VISTA rules and criteria. Assessment reports shall describe how each comment was addressed by the project proponent.”

Provision 2 Source 2, section 1.10, page 2: “1.10 Public Comments.

Summarize any public comments submitted during the public comment period. Assess whether the project proponent has taken due account of all and any comments, and provide an overall conclusion regarding public comments.

Describe how the project proponent, through revisions to the project design or other documented efforts, addressed each comment, and provide an assessment of the extent to which the project proponent's responses are appropriate.”

Assessment outcome

Yes (1 Point).

Justification of assessment

The standard requires project owners to take public comments into account by revising the relevant documents (Provision 1). Public comments and how they were addressed are documented in the validation report (Provision 2). The indicator is therefore fulfilled.

Indicator 6.1.29

Relevant scoring methodology provisions

“The program requires that a validation and verification entity assesses whether the project owners have taken due account of all inputs received in the global stakeholder consultation.”

Information sources considered

- 1 SDVISTa Validation Report Template. Version 1.0. Document issued on 25 September 2019. Online available at: <https://verra.org/project/sd-vista/rules-requirements/>

Relevant carbon crediting program provisions

Provision 1 Source 1, section 1.10, page 2: “1.10 Public Comments.

Summarize any public comments submitted during the public comment period. Assess whether the project proponent has taken due account of all and any comments, and provide an overall conclusion regarding public comments.

Describe how the project proponent, through revisions to the project design or other documented efforts, addressed each comment, and provide an assessment of the extent to which the project proponent's responses are appropriate.”

Assessment outcome

Yes (1 Point).

Justification of assessment

The above documentation specifies that the indicator is fulfilled.

Indicator 6.1.30

Relevant scoring methodology provisions

“The program has established provisions that allow the public (both global and local project stakeholders) to submit comments to the program about a project at any time during project operation. This includes provisions for the program’s due consideration of the comments received and possible action to address the concern (e.g., halting the issuance of credits, deregistering the project, or requiring compensation for over-issuance).”

Information sources considered

- 1 SDVISTA Program Guide. Version 1.0. Document issued on 22 January 2019. Online available at: <https://verra.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/SD-VISta-Program-Guide-v1.0.pdf>

Relevant carbon crediting program provisions

- Provision 1 Source 1, section 5 “Complaints and appeals”, page 38: “Project proponents, assessors, methodology element developers and other stakeholders (including interested stakeholders) may submit enquiries to Verra at any time. In addition, the SD VISTA Program provides a complaints and appeals procedure as set out in the Verra Appeals, Complaints and Conduct Policy available on the Verra website.”
- Provision 2 Source 1, section 3.11, page 24: “Quality Control of Listed and Registered Projects.
- 3.11.1 Verra may, at its discretion, review listed and registered projects and issued SD VISTA assets where it has concerns about adherence of the project to the SD VISTA rules and the applied methodology (when relevant). A review may be triggered by any of the following:
- 1) The assessor identifies an error or quality issue from a previous assessment.
 - 2) The project proponent identifies an error or quality issue after the listing, registration or issuance of a project.
 - 3) Any stakeholder, including an interested stakeholder, has concerns about a project.
 - 4) Verra itself identifies an error or quality issue, as part of routine operations.
- 3.11.2 Where a review is triggered, Verra will notify the project proponent (or their authorized representative) and the relevant assessor of the review and where relevant may suspend further SD VISTA asset issuance while the review is performed.”
- Provision 3 Source 1, section 3.11.3, page 24: “Where non-conformances are identified during the review, the assessor shall provide a written response to findings (e.g., corrective action requests or clarification requests) issued by Verra, reverting to the project proponent as necessary for more information or updates to project documentation. Verra also suspends further SD VISTA asset issuance, where it has not already done so (and where relevant).”

Assessment outcome

Yes (1 Point).

Justification of assessment

The standard provides the option for stakeholder to raise concerns about registered projects with Verra (Provision 2) at any time (Provision 1). Such a concern may trigger a review of the project by Verra (Provision 2). During the review further issuance of SDVISTa assets will be suspended (Provision 2). If the review identifies non-conformance of the project, the VVB will be requested to follow-up on the findings by the program and further SDVISTa asset issuance is suspended (Provision 3). The indicator is therefore considered to be fulfilled.

Indicator 6.1.31

Relevant scoring methodology provisions

“The program provisions explicitly ban any violation of human rights by the project owner or any other entity involved in project design or implementation.”

Information sources considered

- 1 Sustainable Development Verified Impact Standard. Version 1.0. Document issued on 22 January 2019. Online available at: <https://verra.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Sustainable-Development-Verified-Impact-Standard-v1.0.pdf>

Relevant carbon crediting program provisions

Provision 1 Source 1, section 2.2, page 7: “Anti-Discrimination.

2.2.9 Appropriate measures shall be taken to ensure that the project proponent and all other entities involved in project design and implementation are not involved or complicit in any form of discrimination⁴ or sexual harassment with respect to the project.

Footnote 4: Discrimination may include but is not limited to that based on gender, race, religion, sexual orientation or other habits.”

Assessment outcome

No (0 Points).

Justification of assessment

The standard bans any form of discrimination, but does not explicitly ban any violation of human rights. Therefore, the indicator is considered not to be fulfilled.

Indicator 6.1.32

Relevant scoring methodology provisions

“The program has safeguards in place that require preserving and protecting cultural heritage in projects.”

Information sources considered

- 1 Sustainable Development Verified Impact Standard. Version 1.0. Document issued on 22 January 2019. Online available at: <https://verra.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Sustainable-Development-Verified-Impact-Standard-v1.0.pdf>

Relevant carbon crediting program provisions

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Assessment outcome

No (0 Points).

Justification of assessment

There was no specific requirement for projects found to preserve and protect cultural heritage. The indicator is thus not fulfilled.

Indicator 6.1.33

Relevant scoring methodology provisions

“The program has safeguards in place in relation to health that at least address the need to avoid or minimize the risks and impacts to (community) health, safety and security that may arise from projects.”

Information sources considered

- 1 Sustainable Development Verified Impact Standard. Version 1.0. Document issued on 22 January 2019. Online available at: <https://verra.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Sustainable-Development-Verified-Impact-Standard-v1.0.pdf>

Relevant carbon crediting program provisions

Provision 1 Source 1, section 3.1, page 14: “Principle.

The project proponent demonstrates net positive well-being impacts for all stakeholders directly affected by their project’s activities. [..]

3.1.4 The project proponent shall estimate in the project description, and present data in each monitoring report, the type and magnitude of a project’s impacts, including:

- 1) Changes in stakeholders' well-being due to project activities. This appraisal should include documentation of any activities intended to mitigate negative impacts to stakeholder groups."

Provision 2 Source 1, section 3.1.5, page 15: "Net stakeholder well-being impacts of a project shall be positive for all stakeholder groups."

Assessment outcome

No (0 Points).

Justification of assessment

The standard's overall goal is to create net-benefits for stakeholders and regarding environmental impacts. For social impacts, this includes the well-being of stakeholders (Provision 2). It is required to mitigate negative impacts on stakeholder groups and their well-being (Provision 1). There are no specific safeguards regarding health found in the standard provisions – for example a list of specific health or safety aspects to consider for the project owners. The indicator is therefore not fulfilled.

Indicator 6.1.34

Relevant scoring methodology provisions

"The program provisions specifically require that projects avoid physical and economic displacement in its projects and that, in exceptional circumstances where avoidance is not possible, displacement occurs only with appropriate forms of legal protection and compensation as well as informed participation of those affected."

Information sources considered

- 1 Sustainable Development Verified Impact Standard. Version 1.0. Document issued on 22 January 2019. Online available at: <https://verra.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Sustainable-Development-Verified-Impact-Standard-v1.0.pdf>

Relevant carbon crediting program provisions

Provision 1 Source 1, section 2.4, page 10: "Respect for Rights to Lands, Territories and Resources and Free, Prior and Informed Consent.

2.4.2 All property rights shall be recognized, respected and supported. Projects shall not encroach uninvited on private property, community property (including lands, territories and resources to which communities have collective rights, either customary or statutory), or government property."

Provision 2 Source 1, section 2.4, page 10: " 2.4.4 Appropriate restitution or compensation for financial and non-financial costs of the loss of land (e.g., loss of culture or loss of business opportunity) shall be allocated to any parties whose lands or access to resources have been or will be negatively affected by a project."

Provision 3 Source 1, section 2.4, page 11: “2.4.5 Project activities shall not lead to involuntary removal or relocation of property rights holders from their lands or territories and shall not force property rights holders to relocate activities important to their culture or livelihood. Where any relocation of habitation or activities important to their culture or livelihood is undertaken within the terms of an agreement, the project proponent shall demonstrate in the project description (or monitoring report, where relevant) that the agreement was made with the free, prior and informed consent of those concerned and includes provisions for just and fair compensation.⁶”

Footnote 6: In accordance with Article 28 of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, unless otherwise agreed upon, compensation shall be in the form of lands, territories or resources equivalent in quality, size and legal status to those taken. When such compensation is not available, monetary compensation is appropriate. This principle is consistent with Article 16 of the International Labour Organization's Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989 (No. 169): Convention concerning Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries (available at http://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO::P12100_ILO_CODE:C169.)”

Provision 4 Source 1, section 2.4, page 10: “ 2.4.3 The free, prior and informed consent shall be obtained of those whose property rights are affected by a project through a transparent, agreed process. See Box 4 below for more information on free, prior and informed consent. [..]”

Assessment outcome

No (0 Points).

Justification of assessment

The standard requires project owners to respect property rights (Provision 1). In general, “involuntary removal or relocation of property rights holders” or the relocation of activities important to culture or livelihood shall not occur (Provision 3). If any loss of land or resources occurs, an “appropriate restitution or compensation for financial and non-financial costs” is required as well as free, prior and informed consent if property rights are affected at all (Provision 2 and 4). However, as the provisions are only about involuntary relocations, a requirement that displacement shall be avoided, and only allowed in exceptional circumstances, is missing. The indicator is therefore not fulfilled.

Indicator 6.1.35

Relevant scoring methodology provisions

“The program has safeguards in place in relation to labour rights that at least require projects to ensure decent and safe working conditions, fair treatment, sound worker-management relationships and equal opportunity for workers.”

Information sources considered

- 1 Sustainable Development Verified Impact Standard. Version 1.0. Document issued on 22 January 2019. Online available at: <https://verra.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Sustainable-Development-Verified-Impact-Standard-v1.0.pdf>

Relevant carbon crediting program provisions

Provision 1 Source 1, section 2.2, page 8: “Worker Relations.

2.2.10 Orientation and training shall be provided for a project’s workers and individual stakeholders involved in carrying out project activities with an objective of building locally useful skills and knowledge to increase local participation in project implementation. These capacity-building efforts should target a wide range of people from among the stakeholders. Training shall be passed on to new workers when there is staff turnover, so that local capacity will not be lost. Special attention shall be given to marginalized and/or vulnerable people.”

Provision 2 Source 1, section 2.2.11, page 8: “All stakeholders shall be given an equal opportunity to fill all work positions (including management) where the job criteria are met. Members of local communities shall be given a fair chance to fill positions for which they can be trained.”

Provision 3 Source 1, section 2.2.12, page 8: “Project proponents shall provide assurance in the project description and monitoring report that a project meets or exceeds all applicable laws and/or regulations covering worker rights⁵ and, where relevant, demonstrate in the project description and monitoring report how compliance is achieved. Measures shall be taken and documented in the project description and monitoring report to inform workers about their rights.”

Provision 4 Source 1, section 2.2.13, page 8: “Project proponents shall comprehensively assess situations and occupations that might arise through the implementation of a project which pose a substantial risk to worker or other stakeholder safety. Measures shall be taken to inform workers and stakeholders involved in carrying out project activities of risks and to explain how to minimize such risks. Where worker or stakeholder safety cannot be guaranteed, the project proponent shall demonstrate in the project description and monitoring report how the risks are minimized using best work practices in line with workers’ and other stakeholders’ culture and customary practices.”

Assessment outcome

Yes (1 Point).

Justification of assessment

The standard’s safeguards include labour rights covering fair and equal treatment and opportunities (Provision 1 and 2), work safety (Provision 4) and adherence to applicable laws (Provision 3). The indicator is therefore fulfilled.

Indicator 6.1.36

Relevant scoring methodology provisions

“The program has safeguards in place in relation to environmental issues that at least address air pollution, water pollution, soil and land protection, waste management, and biodiversity.”

Information sources considered

- 1 Sustainable Development Verified Impact Standard. Version 1.0. Document issued on 22 January 2019. Online available at: <https://verra.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Sustainable-Development-Verified-Impact-Standard-v1.0.pdf>

Relevant carbon crediting program provisions

Provision 1 Source 1, section 3.2.4, page 15: “The project proponent shall estimate in the project description, and present data in each monitoring report, the type and magnitude of a project’s impacts, including:

1) Changes in natural capital and ecosystem services due to project activities. This appraisal should include documentation of any activities intended to mitigate negative impacts on natural capital and ecosystem services.

2) Any SDG target(s) associated with the planet identified in Section 2.1.2 above and any natural capital and ecosystem services benefits that will be used as SD VISTa claims or assets.

All estimates of project impact shall be based on clearly defined and defensible assumptions.”

Provision 2 Source 1, section 3.2.5, page 16: “Net impacts on natural capital and ecosystem services directly affected by the project shall be positive.”

Assessment outcome

No (0 Points).

Justification of assessment

Generally, the standard requires projects to have a net positive impact on the environment (Provision 2). Environmental impacts shall be assessed and mitigated (Provision 1). However, from the phrasing “Changes in natural capital and ecosystem services” it is not clear if the aspects, required by this indicator, are included. The unclear and open definition of environmental impacts, and consequently safeguards, is also reflected in the assessment of indicator 6.1.2. The indicator is therefore not fulfilled.

Indicator 6.1.37

Relevant scoring methodology provisions

“The program requires, at least for specific project types as defined by the program, the establishment of a specific benefits-sharing mechanism with local stakeholders (e.g., that part of carbon credit proceeds are made available for community activities).”

Information sources considered

- 1 Sustainable Development Verified Impact Standard. Version 1.0. Document issued on 22 January 2019. Online available at: <https://verra.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Sustainable-Development-Verified-Impact-Standard-v1.0.pdf>

Relevant carbon crediting program provisions

- Provision 1 Source 1, section 2.4, page 10: “2.4.3 Box 4: Definition of Free, Prior and Informed Consent.

Free means no coercion, intimidation, manipulation, threat and bribery.

Prior means sufficiently in advance of any authorization or commencement of activities and respecting the time requirements of any decision-making processes.

Informed means that information is provided that covers (at least) the following aspects:

- The nature, size, pace, reversibility and scope of any proposed project or activity;
- The reason(s) or purpose of the project and/or activity;
- The duration of the above;
- The locality of areas that will be affected;
- A preliminary assessment of the likely economic, social, cultural and environmental impact, including potential risks and fair and equitable benefit sharing in a context that respects the precautionary principle;
- Personnel likely to be involved in the execution of the proposed project (including Indigenous Peoples, private sector staff, research institutions, government employees and others); and
- Procedures that the project may entail.”

- Provision 2 Source 1, section 2.2, page 8: “Worker Relations.

2.1.10 Orientation and training shall be provided for a project’s workers and individual stakeholders involved in carrying out project activities with an objective of building locally useful skills and knowledge to increase local participation in project implementation. These capacity-building efforts should target a wide range of people from among the stakeholders. Training shall be passed on to new workers when there is staff turnover, so that local capacity will not be lost. Special attention shall be given to marginalized and/or vulnerable people.”

Assessment outcome

No (0 Points).

Justification of assessment

The standard promotes capacity-building in the local population during worker trainings (Provision 2). While this might indirectly imply that local stakeholders might be employed by an SDVISTA project, the provision is not explicit enough to count as a benefit sharing mechanism. Furthermore, the requirements for free, prior and informed consent foresee the assessment of “potential risks and fair and equitable benefit sharing” (Provision 1). However, there is no dedicated benefit-sharing mechanism required for projects. The indicator is therefore not fulfilled.

Indicator 6.1.38

Relevant scoring methodology provisions

“The program explicitly prohibits the introduction of invasive non-native species, where relevant (e.g. land use projects).”

Information sources considered

- 1 Sustainable Development Verified Impact Standard. Version 1.0. Document issued on 22 January 2019. Online available at: <https://verra.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Sustainable-Development-Verified-Impact-Standard-v1.0.pdf>

Relevant carbon crediting program provisions

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Assessment outcome

No (0 Points).

Justification of assessment

No such provision could be found. The indicator is not fulfilled.

Indicator 6.1.39

Relevant scoring methodology provisions

“The program requires experts to support processes dedicated to avoiding physical and economic displacement and to free, prior and informed consent from indigenous people.

OR

The program requires experts to support all safeguard processes which are included in the program’s provisions.”

Information sources considered

- 1 Sustainable Development Verified Impact Standard. Version 1.0. Document issued on 22 January 2019. Online available at: <https://verra.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Sustainable-Development-Verified-Impact-Standard-v1.0.pdf>
- 2 SDVISTA Program Guide. Version 1.0. Document issued on 22 January 2019. Online available at: <https://verra.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/SD-VISTA-Program-Guide-v1.0.pdf>

Relevant carbon crediting program provisions

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Assessment outcome

No (0 Points).

Justification of assessment

There were no such provisions found. The indicator is not fulfilled.

Indicator 6.1.40**Relevant scoring methodology provisions**

“The program provides specific guidance for how each of its safeguards should be applied (for example, similar to the guidance notes of the IFC).”

Information sources considered

- 1 Sustainable Development Verified Impact Standard. Version 1.0. Document issued on 22 January 2019. Online available at: <https://verra.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Sustainable-Development-Verified-Impact-Standard-v1.0.pdf>
- 2 SDVISTA Program Guide. Version 1.0. Document issued on 22 January 2019. Online available at: <https://verra.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/SD-VISTA-Program-Guide-v1.0.pdf>

Relevant carbon crediting program provisions

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Assessment outcome

No (0 Points).

Justification of assessment

The standard has no such specific guidance on safeguards.

Indicator 6.1.41

Relevant scoring methodology provisions

“The program has a dedicated gender policy, strategy or action plan that integrates gender considerations and women empowerment into all aspects of its operations.”

Information sources considered

- 1 SDVISTA Program Guide. Version 1.0. Document issued on 22 January 2019. Online available at: <https://verra.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/SD-VISta-Program-Guide-v1.0.pdf>
- 2 Verra - Who We Are – Important Policies. Online available at: <https://verra.org/about/overview/#important-policies->

Relevant carbon crediting program provisions

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Assessment outcome

No (0 Points).

Justification of assessment

Verra the entity administering the standard has no dedicated gender policy. The indicator is not fulfilled.

Indicator 6.1.42

Relevant scoring methodology provisions

“The program explicitly requires that stakeholder consultations are conducted in a gender sensitive manner, enabling equal participation.”

Information sources considered

- 1 Sustainable Development Verified Impact Standard. Version 1.0. Document issued on 22 January 2019. Online available at: <https://verra.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Sustainable-Development-Verified-Impact-Standard-v1.0.pdf>

Relevant carbon crediting program provisions

Provision 1 Source 1, section 2.2.4, page 6-7: “ Stakeholder Consultation and Participation.

Box 3: Guidance on Effective Consultation.

Effective consultation requires project proponents to inform and engage broadly with stakeholders using socially and culturally appropriate methods to enable meaningful influence on the subject of consultation. Consultations must be gender and inter-

generationally sensitive with special attention to vulnerable and/or marginalized people and must be conducted at mutually agreed locations and through representatives who are designated by the groups themselves in accordance with their own procedures. [..]"

Provision 2 Source 1, section 2.2.6, page 7: "2.2.6 [..] Different stakeholder groups may require different communication and consultation methods; communication and consultation shall be implemented in a culturally appropriate and gender sensitive manner."

Assessment outcome

Yes (1 Point).

Justification of assessment

The standard has provisions in place for an effective consultation (Provision 1) which includes the requirement to conduct consultations in a gender sensitive manner (Provision 1 and 2). The indicator is therefore fulfilled.

Indicator 6.1.43

Relevant scoring methodology provisions

"The program explicitly requires that project developers perform a gender safeguard assessment during project design."

Information sources considered

- 1 Sustainable Development Verified Impact Standard. Version 1.0. Document issued on 22 January 2019. Online available at: <https://verra.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Sustainable-Development-Verified-Impact-Standard-v1.0.pdf>

Relevant carbon crediting program provisions

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Assessment outcome

No (0 Points).

Justification of assessment

The standard has no such provision in place. The indicator is not fulfilled.

Scoring results

According to the above assessment, the carbon crediting program achieves a total point score of 23 for the indicators. Applying the scoring approach in the methodology, this results in a score of 2.57 for the criterion.