



Summary of Inventory and Verification Revisions to the Forest Protocols (Updated September 2007)

The California Climate Action Registry (California Registry) is proposing to make a number of refinements to its Forest Protocols. These proposed refinements have been recommended by the California Registry's Forest Committee (RFC), a multi-stakeholder group of experts who were part of the core working group that drafted the original protocols. These refinements are aimed at providing a measure of additional flexibility in the inventory methodologies allowable under the Protocols, in a way that does not compromise accuracy, and at improving the efficiency of verification. This summary sheet provides an overview of the incorporated refinements.

Forest Sector Protocol

1. The requirement that forest inventories employ a stratification system has been removed. A complete verifiable inventory methodology no longer is required to employ a stratification system. The California Registry does however continue to recommend that stratification be employed, in order to improve the efficiency of verification and decrease its potential cost. It should be noted that in proposing to remove the requirement of stratification the California Registry is in no way changing the minimum confidence levels required for forest inventories (that the standard error of all carbon pools be within 20% of the mean for entity reporting, and for projects that reductions be discounted if the error exceeds 5% of the mean).
Relevant section of FSP: p.23, 25
2. The requirement for monumenting sampling plots used in creating a forestry inventory has been clarified. Plots should be monumented in fashion that would allow them to be relocated for a period of up to 12 years after they are installed, or two verification cycles (see proposed change to the length of the verification cycle below). Some guidance has been included as to the sorts of monumenting that would likely satisfy this requirement.
Relevant section of FSP: p.25
3. Additional guidance has been added to the protocols to aid reporters in quantifying their likely significant anthropogenic sources of non-CO₂ greenhouse gas emissions, a requirement for forest sector reporters beginning in the fourth year of reporting to the California Registry.

Relevant section of FSP: p.49-50

4. Clarified methodology for the calculation of below-ground live biomass. Originally the Forest Sector Protocol included a methodology for calculating root carbon, but was omitted in later versions as an oversight. Calculations for assessing the total carbon of the tree now include above- and below-ground biomass.

Relevant section of FSP: p.22 & 26

Forest Project Protocol

1. Consistent with the proposed change to the Forest Sector Protocol, the requirement for stratification of inventories has been removed. No changes have been made to standards for inventory accuracy.

Relevant section of FPP: p35-37

2. Clarifications regarding the monumenting of sampling plots have been made, consistent with the Forest Sector Protocol.

Relevant section of FPP: p36-37

3. Clarified methodology for the calculation of below-ground live biomass, consistent with the Forest Sector Protocol.

Relevant section of FSP: p.32-33 & 36

Forest Verification Protocol

1. The forest verification cycle for both forest entities and forest project has been changed to align with the three-year verification cycle of non-biological emissions. The forest verification cycle is now based on a six-year cycle such that in year 1 the verifier conducts an assessment of C stocks and stock change resulting in emissions reductions. In years 2 – 5 the verifier reviews the Annual Monitoring Reports and in year 6 the same verifier can repeat an assessment of C stocks and stock change resulting in emissions reductions. In year 7 a new verifier must be chosen who will conduct an assessment of C stocks and stock change resulting in emissions reductions. This new verifier will then review the Annual Monitoring Reports in years 8 – 11 and finally in year 12 repeat an assessment of C stocks and stock change resulting in emissions reductions then a new verifier must be chosen to begin the cycle anew.

Relevant section of FCP: Changes to cycle throughout

2. The overall organization of Table 2: Verification Review Guides for Entity and Project Forest Carbon Inventories, Baselines, and Emissions/Reductions Calculations has been revised to more clearly follow the process of verification for an entity and project outlined in the respective reporting protocols. Also, to help clarify expectations and inform professional judgments, guidance was also provided for when a first level and/or a second level of review may be required.

Relevant section of FCP: pp. 15-28

3. Additional guidance was also provided in determining activity-shifting leakage and the review of a baseline adjustment for an entity, if reported.

Relevant section of FCP: p. 26