



## **Mexico Forest Protocol**

### **Summary of Changes from V1.0 to V1.4**

Last Updated January 18, 2017

#### **Version 1.0 to Version 1.2**

- Modified social safeguards from Version 1.0 to 1.1 to make more practical for communities to implement
- Changed the time allowed for the First Reporting Period to be up to 24 months to allow projects to align with the calendar year, and required all Reporting Periods after to be 12 months in duration and cover the same calendar period each year
- Modified time allowed after a reversal, intentional or unintentional, for the Forest Owner to produce a new inventory report; the forest owner now has 1 year to complete the inventory report and the following year to verify the report (in the interim, no additional transactions are allowed)
- Clarified definitions of Activity Areas
- Added further requirement for harvest and other disturbance maps to be provided for review and for verifiers to ground check the project area for natural disturbances through the normal process of verifying inventory
- Allowed Forest Owners the flexibility to postpone their baseline development until their first verification by back-casting an inventory developed within 2 years of the project Start Date
- Removed the allowance for a deferral of inventory development for reforestation projects; all project types must complete the initial inventory by the end of its first Reporting Period (maximum of 2 years)
- Modified Equation 11.1 to remove estimated carbon stocks in harvested wood (HW), as it is an excluded pool, and the estimated carbon stocks lost through a natural disturbance (ND), as it is estimated as part of developing the actual onsite carbon stocks (OS)
- Clarified Table 10.1 requirements for initial verification, on-site verification, desktop verification and annual reports without verification; also corrected in the verification guidance
- Added language to explain that if forest loss occurs as part of a territorial plan or management plan, the Reserve will evaluate the conversions and may determine that it isn't leakage

- Removed guidance referring to stratification and clarified that stratification is currently not required or supported through CALCBOSSK
- Updated eligibility requirements to state that the current area in forest cover must be less than 90% the original area in forest cover in order for the baseline to meet the threshold for additionality
- Simplified the Buffer Pool contribution to remove the calculations of the reversal risk rating and made it a standard 8% for all projects

### Version 1.2 to Version 1.3

- Removed all references to *Mexico Climate Reserve Tonnes (MCRTs)* to no longer distinguish from the Climate Reserve Tonnes (CRTs)
- Modified the first Reporting Period to be completed within 12 months from the project's Start Date
- Modified the definition of the project Start Date to be the date, determined by the Forest Owner and reported on the project submittal form, in which project activities initiated, up to two years prior to the date of project submittal
- Allowed forest owners to postpone submitting a project report until the end of the first or second Reporting Period (the second Reporting Period must still be exactly 12 months from the end of the first Reporting Period); verification must then occur within 12 months from the end of the Reporting Period in which the Project Report was submitted, either the first or second Reporting Period
- Removed the requirement in the Quantification Guidance for project owners to record the estimated original land cover for plot points and simply state if the current land cover is natural or not
- Allowed for forest owners to use alternative methods for estimating growth if there is not a suitable species in the plot to use growth rings
- Added the fourth Environmental Safeguard to require that all Activity Areas must maintain or increase land types categorized as Unique Native Habitats (UNH) over the project life, as identified in the List of UNH located on the Reserve website
  - Included monitoring requirements for UNH
- Allowed the aggregation of projects to alleviate transaction costs for individual landowners. See the Reserve *Guidelines for Aggregating Forest Projects Version 1.1* for further information on requirements and eligibility for joining an aggregate
  - Set maximum area for Forest Owner to enroll in an aggregate at 25,000 acres (10,100 ha)
  - Included Social Safeguard 5 (SS5) to set requirements for approval of an aggregate and included monitoring requirements for SS5
- Modified Equation 8.1 to ensure the value for Secondary Effect emissions will always be negative or zero
- Changed the requirement for site verification from every 5 years to every 6 years
- Modified the additionality risk threshold to state that a project is eligible if the *natural land cover* found in the project area is less than 90% of the original (prior to human influence, i.e., natural) *land cover*, i.e., at least 10% of the *land cover* is no longer a natural *land cover* type, rather than limiting it to only natural *forest cover*

- Allowed the use of publically available photo images (Google Earth, etc.) from current and past years, and other verifiable sources such as local knowledge of management history, to further inform the decision of land cover type
- Allowed the use of a reference area for determining the land cover type of an approximate 1/10<sup>th</sup> of a hectare surrounding the point, and modified guidance for verifying the land cover type
- Included further guidance for the initial verification of baseline carbon stocks

### Version 1.3 to Version 1.4

- Clarified Environmental Safeguard 1 to state that “Activity Areas must maintain or increase standing live and dead carbon stocks over the project life, as determined by a running 10-year average of carbon stocks within the *Activity Areas*”
- Provided further guidance for the additionality analysis, stating that “for eligible projects, areas where legal requirements prohibit all harvesting (i.e., zero harvesting is permitted) must then be excluded from Activity Areas and should not be included in the baseline calculation or be eligible to receive credits; areas where harvesting is monitored, managed or reduced due to legal requirements should still be included within the baseline calculation and are eligible to receive credits due to the risks presented in the additionality analysis”
- Provided further guidance and clarification for project documentation and monitoring requirements
- Clarified that individual *ejidal* parcels may choose to join the project with corresponding parcel certificates as a communal land, or individually as private owners and not as part of the entire *ejido*
- Included definitions for Project Developers and their potential roles as or relation to Forest Owners and Aggregators
- Verification Guidance
  - Provided further guidance for determining defect and decay, stating that verifiers may first consider the inputs of the Forest Owner and determine whether or not they were reasonable and if considered reasonable to use the same classification as the Forest Owner
  - Established that for verifying the project meets the risk threshold for additionality the verifier must “assess at least 10% of the random points and the respective reference areas the Forest Owner used to determine landcover throughout the Project Area and the percent of natural landcover used to meet the risk threshold for eligibility”
  - Created separate Sequential Sampling tests for diameter, height and CO<sub>2</sub>e/hectare so that if and when the stopping rules are met for diameter or height, if met before CO<sub>2</sub>e/hectare, the verifier can use the diameter or height measure provided by the Forest Owner’s database for any additional data inputs needed for the CO<sub>2</sub>e/hectare comparison
  - Established new rules for determining “in” and “out” trees for sequential sampling to provide a buffer for trees that were before considered “out” but have since grown and would be considered “in” during the verification
  - State that during verifications with site visits the Forest Owner, including members of a participating community or *ejido*, may support the verification

process by assisting in the monitoring activities to the extent that the verifier feels confident in the results

- Quantification Guidance
  - Created new vigor codes and decay adjustments to further clarify descriptions of dominant, codominant, suppressed and dead trees
  - Clarified that for fixed 1/25<sup>th</sup> ha radius plots to include all trees greater than or equal to 30 cm DBH and greater than or equal to 3 m in height
  - Clarified that for fixed 1/100<sup>th</sup> ha radius plots to include all trees greater than 10 cm and less than 30 cm
  - Clarified to adjust for inclination when establishing plots and determining whether trees are considered “in” or “out” of the plot
- Posted the List of Unique Native Habitats companion document
- Aggregation Guidance
  - Clarified that only private or communal lands are eligible per requirements in the MFP
  - Modified the acreage limit for a Forest Owner to participate in an aggregation to 25,000 acres or 10,000 ha from Activity Areas