



Mexico Forest Protocol Summary of Changes from V1.0 to V2.0

March 2020

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 1/10th 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 CO₂e/hectare so that if and when the stopping rules are met for diameter or height, if met before CO₂e/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 CO₂e/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 1/25th 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 1/100th 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

Version 1.4 to Version 1.5

- Clarified the requirement in Section 3.12 stating that the Forest Owner must have undisputed control of carbon in the trees within the *Activity Areas*
- Clarified the role and requirements for a Project Developer and Forest Owner, including the requirement for the Forest Owner to obtain a Project Owner (Limited) account on the Reserve software when contracting a third-party Project Developer as well as which documents the Project Developer may sign on behalf of a Forest Owner and which documents the Forest Owner is required to sign regardless of contracting a Project Developer
- Clarified that as part of the land tenure documents for communities and *ejidos*, submitting the Communal Land Use Plan (*Ordenamiento Territorial Comunitario*) is optional
- Clarified that the required document for all communities and *ejidos*, the Forest Owner or Project Developer must submit a documented emitted by the *Agrarian Attorney (Procuraduría Agraria)* that states that there are no agrarian conflicts within the Activity Areas
- Stated that for Forest Owners that decide to utilize a Project Implementation Agreement (PIA), the PIA must be registered with the National Agrarian Registry (*Registro Agrario Nacional*) following the requirements stated in the PIA
- Modified the Start Date requirements to be at maximum 6 months prior to the time of project submittal. The Project Developer or Forest Owner must be able to demonstrate that project activities initiated on the stated project Start Date through a verifiable action or event such as a general assembly in which the project was discussed
- Modified the calculation of credits for projects that either do not sign a PIA with the Reserve or sign a PIA for less than 100 years in order to use the radiative forcing coefficients for tonne-year accounting. See Section 9 of the MFP for further information
- Clarified the Buffer Pool contribution

- Clarified the requirements for monitoring and reporting, including the inclusion of an Annual Monitoring Report form
- Clarified requirements for determining the vintage of issued CRTs and established language to clarify the distinction between Verified Removals (VRs) and CRTs
- Clarified the sampling requirement for the i-tree tool when determining the landcover analysis is +/- 10% at one standard error
- Added language regarding the classification of natural landcover types that are found in a non-natural distribution
- Provided further guidance on the verification requirements for eligibility criteria and the PIA
- Clarified the verification requirements for the 5th and 6th Environmental Safeguards
- Clarified the verification requirements for the Legal Requirement Test
- Incorporated a methodology to increase verification efficiencies through the use of a separate sequential sampling tool for height and diameter, which may allow the verifier to reduce the number of measurements for diameter and height during the sequential sampling exercise of site verifications

Version 1.5 to Version 2.0

- Clarified Project Area and Activity Areas definitions for *ejidal*, communal, private and non-federal public lands
- Clarified the definition of Improved Forest Management activities to include forests with an approved forest management program, and added a new activity, Restoration, for sequestration associated with the protection and restoration of natural forests without a forest management program.
- Separated urban forestry activities into Small Urban Forestry and Large Urban Forestry, based on the classification of forest land cover, to allow for different approaches to additionality, native species requirements, and quantification.
- Included guidance for non-federal public agencies to be included as a Forest Owners and clarified the required land tenure documents.
- Provided guidance for private and non-federal public Forest Owners to use the Reserve's Attestation of No Conflicts to confirm that the Activity Areas are free of substantial conflict or dispute with regards to ownership.
- Clarified that compliance with the Social Safeguards for Free, Prior and Informed Consent requires the presentation of forest carbon project concepts, anticipated costs and benefits, and project approval during an *ejidal* or communal Assembly.
- Clarified the applicability for all Environmental Safeguards by activity type.
- Modified the Native Species Environmental Safeguards for Large Urban Forestry activities.
- Incorporated a new Environmental Safeguard for Reforestation activities to require the maintenance of natural land cover throughout the Activity Area.
- Added a new Environmental Safeguard to prohibit the use of deep ripping that affects more than 1% of an Activity Area.
- Modified the Start Date requirements to be at maximum 12 months prior to the time of project submittal and to require that the start date corresponds to the date the Forest Owner officially approves the project or submits the project to the Reserve.
- Modified the Performance Standard Test by activity type, incorporating new methodologies for Restoration and Large Urban Forestry activities.
- Clarified the quantification methods by activity.

- Included a methodology to account for changes in actual onsite carbon in shrubs resulting from site preparation for Reforestation activities and included the quantification within the annual net GHG removals equation.
- Clarified the quantification approach for Reforestation activities to allow for the deferral of the inventory of carbon stocks not affected by site preparation and the second full verification.
- Incorporated a new monitoring and quantification methodology for Small Urban Forestry, Agroforestry, and Silvopastoral activities using remotely sensed data to determine the canopy cover of the Activity Area and applying ratio estimators that represent the relationship between CO₂e and canopy cover.
- Added a methodology to account for Secondary Effects from mobile combustion for Reforestation activities.
- Modified the Secondary Effects for Improved Forest Management activities to account for the shifting of harvest activities over the project life.
- Modified the calculation of credits for projects that either do not sign a PIA with the Reserve or sign a PIA for less than 100 years in order to use the simplified radiative forcing coefficient of 1% per year for tonne-year accounting.
- Clarified the schedule of monitoring report requirements and guidance for monitoring for the social and environmental safeguards.
- Incorporated the verification guidance in Section 8 of the protocol and modified the verification cycle to allow for flexibility in the verification schedule requirements for small projects and projects not seeking CRTs.
- Modified the verification requirement for assessing the reasonableness of change in carbon stocks from one reporting period to the next.
- Clarified verification schedule requirements by activity and provided guidance for full verifications of activities that do not require a site-visit.
- Incorporated the quantification methodologies directly in the protocol, in Appendices A-C.
- Added verification body requirements for full verifications with site-visits in Appendix D.
- Incorporated the Reserve's Guidelines for Aggregating Forest Projects in Appendix E.
- Clarified how Forest Projects can participate in an Aggregate, the verification schedule for Forest Projects participating in an Aggregate, and how Forest Projects with multiple Activity Areas likewise can benefit from the statistical principles applied to inventory standards for Aggregates.