Soil Enrichment Protocol V1.0

Protocol Summary

CLIMATE ACTION RESERVE

Project Definition

The adoption of agricultural management practices that are intended to increase soil organic carbon (SOC) storage and/or decrease net emissions of CO_2, CH_4, and N_2O from agricultural operations, as compared to the baseline. Soil enrichment projects must be located on land which is, as of the project start date, cropland or grassland (including managed rangeland and/or pastureland), and which remains in agricultural production throughout the crediting period. Project developers may aggregate any number of eligible fields into a single project.

Project Eligibility Requirements

Activities: The protocol is not limited to a specific set of activities – so long as the project management practices have changed from the baseline scenario, result in measurable changes to SOC or greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, and are additional according to the performance standard test and legal requirement test, they may be considered for a project[1]. Practice changes may be qualitative (like changing tillage practices) or quantitative (like reducing fertilizer applications), and multiple practices may be stacked on a single project area.

Location: Any non-federal land in the U.S., U.S. territories, and U.S. tribal land is eligible.

Start Date: The first day of a new cultivation cycle during which the eligible practice change(s) is/are implemented. Start dates are tied to the fields within a project, so the earliest start date within a project will dictate the project submittal and verification deadlines.

Crediting Period: Ten years. Each field within a project will have a separate 10-year crediting period. The crediting period is renewable up to two times.

Performance Standard Test: Projects may not implement a practice on the "negative list," which identifies counties where reduced-till, no-till, cover crops, and rotational grazing are already "common practice." However, projects may pursue an exemption to the negative list if they meet one of the conditions listed in Section 3.4.1.2.

Legal Requirement Test: Projects must demonstrate that the GHG reductions achieved by the project would not otherwise have occurred due to federal, state or local regulations, or other legally binding mandates.

Ecosystem Services Payment Stacking: The stacking of offsets with other payments (such as Natural Resources Conservation Service payments) may be permissible in some circumstances.

Regulatory Compliance: Projects must be in compliance with all relevant federal, state and local regulations. Project developer must sign the Attestation of Regulatory Compliance for each verification period.

Reporting and Verification Schedule: Projects must report annually. Projects must undergo verification at least once every five reporting periods. Risk-based assessments and random sampling are used for verification of projects with multiple fields, and site visits are not required in all cases.

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[1] Modeling limitations may also be a limiting factor for adoption of an otherwise eligible practice change.

Important Note: This is a summary of the protocol. Please read the full protocol for a complete description of project requirements.