

# GCOM VVB PROCEDURES

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## PROCEDURES FOR ACCREDITING VALIDATION/VERIFICATION BODIES (VVB)

Procedures for a validation/verification body in Saudi Arabia's  
voluntary Greenhouse Gas Crediting & Offsetting Mechanism  
(GCOM)

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## 1. Introduction

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### *1.1. Purpose*

1.1.1. The purpose of the VVB procedures is to establish a clear and transparent framework for accrediting VVBs under GCOM. It sets out the procedures

upon which the VVBs will undergo to receive and maintain a valid accreditation under the GHG Credit and Offsetting Mechanism (GCOM).

## 1.2. Background

1.2.1. The Designated National Authority (DNA) has established GCOM's VVBs accreditation criteria and standards which VVBs are expected to fulfill and adhere to in order to receive and maintain a valid accreditation under the Kingdom's GHG Crediting and Offsetting Mechanism (GCOM). Additionally, the DNA established the Accreditation Expert Panel (AEP), a body of independent technical experts established to ensure the integrity and effectiveness of the accreditation process for the Validating and Verifying Bodies (VVBs) in Saudi Arabia's Greenhouse Gas Crediting and Offsetting Mechanism (GCOM). Its primary role is to evaluate and recommend a decision on the VVBs accreditation application based on rigorous criteria, procedures, and standards, thereby enhancing the quality and credibility of validation and verification processes.

## 2. Entry into Force

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2.1. This version of the procedure is effective as of [x]

## 3. Accreditation, Reaccreditation and Expanding Sectoral Scopes Procedure

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3.1.1. VVBs shall submit the "Application for Accreditation of VVBs" form available on the GCOM's website, including all required supporting documents in line with GCOM's VVB accreditation criteria and standards documents.

- 3.1.2. The application shall provide comprehensive details about the VVB's organization, its capabilities and operations.
- 3.1.3. The application submitted by the VVB shall undergo a completeness check to ensure it has been completed accurately, providing detailed information.
- 3.1.4. The AEP, in line with its rules of procedure, shall assess the VVB application submitted and all supporting documentation according to GCOM's VVB criteria and standards.
- 3.1.5. The VVB shall be subject to follow-up questions that may arise during the assessment of the application and may be requested for clarification calls or on-site assessment as needed.

## 4. Post Accreditation

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### *4.1. Monitoring and Compliance*

- 4.1.1. The VVB shall comply with the most recent VVB accreditation criteria and standards and shall promptly provide additional information and documentation as required by any updates to the criteria and standards.
- 4.1.2. Accredited VVBs shall be subject to periodic performance check every two years to ensure continued compliance with GCOM's accreditation criteria and standards.
- 4.1.3. The VVB may undergo ad-hoc compliance assessment as recommended by the AEP or initiated by DNA. These checks may be triggered by specific concerns, such as complaints or identified performance issues.

### *4.2. Reapplication*

- 4.3. VVBs with rejected applications may reapply the same accreditation procedure provided they demonstrate that they've addressed the issues identified.

- 4.4. VVBs looking for a reaccreditation shall provide the most recent accreditation and indicate any organizational, operational, or administrative changes from the previous accreditation.
- 4.5. VVBs looking for a reaccreditation shall reapply at least [6 months] before the expiry of the accreditation.

#### *4.6. Application for Expanding Sectoral Scopes*

- 4.6.1. A VVBs may apply for accreditation for additional sectoral scopes at any time throughout the VVB's accreditation term.
- 4.6.2. The DNA will initiate the accreditation procedure outlined in section (1.5) above and the AEP will assess the application considering both the sectoral scopes for which the VVB is currently accredited, and the new sectoral scopes requested.

#### *4.7. Project Specific Accreditation*

- 4.7.1. Certain types of projects may require VVBs to hold specific accreditations or qualifications beyond those listed in section (4) of the VVB Accreditation Standards document. These requirements will be detailed in the project-specific guidelines issued by the DNA.
- 4.7.2. VVBs must ensure they meet all additional project-specific accreditation requirements before undertaking validation or verification activities for such projects.
- 4.7.3. The DNA reserves the right to audit VVBs for compliance with project-specific accreditation requirements and may suspend approval if noncompliance is identified.

## 5. Decision Making

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- 5.1.1. The AEP shall recommend an outcome to the Designated National Authority (DNA) post-assessment of the VVB application on whether to (1) approve

accreditation, (2) conditionally approve accreditation (3) deny accreditation, or (4) return for modification and/or additional information.

- 5.1.2. The DNA shall assess AEP recommendations and produce an official decision on the VVB application shared to the VVB via electronic means.
- 5.1.3. The VVBs with conditional accreditation shall fulfill additional requirements within [30] business days and shall be subject to accreditation withdrawal in case of failure to comply with the given timeline.
- 5.1.4. The VVB shall respond to the DNA within [10] business days in the case that the application was returned for additional information or required modification and shall be subject to automatic rejection if no response was provided by the VVB.
- 5.1.5. The DNA may automatically reject a VVB accreditation application and any future applications in case of significant and persistent non-compliance with GCOM's criteria and standards.

## *5.2. Suspension and Withdrawal of Accreditation*

- 5.2.1. **Corrective actions:** VVBs are expected to proactively disclose any non-conformities with GCOM's criteria and standards and demonstrate the establishment of a corrective action plan that does not compromise impact the validation and/or verification functions.
- 5.2.2. VVBs will be given a timeline to rectify any concerns or issues identified during the periodic performance check or the ad-hoc compliance assessment.
- 5.2.3. **Suspension of the accreditation:** VVBs failure in responding to DNA during the periodic performance check or the ad-hoc compliance assessment within the given timeline may result in automatic suspension of the VVBs accreditation.
- 5.2.4. VVB's consistent and significant non-compliance with the accreditation criteria and standards may lead to the suspension of accreditation by the

DNA. Consistent and significant non-compliance may include, but not limited to:

- Failure to address non-conformities within the specified time frames;
- Repeated non-compliance or significant breach of ethical standards;
- Breach of any conflict of interests and confidentiality standards;
- Conduct that severely undermines the integrity and credibility of GCOM.

5.2.5. The DNA shall notify the VVB of the withdrawal electronically, along with comprehensive reasons and supporting documentation.

5.2.6. The VVB shall suspend all verification and validation activities and shall notify its clients and stakeholders of the withdrawals.

5.2.7. The VVB shall be responsible and accountable for any legal or financial implications that may occur as a consequence of the accreditation suspension.

### *5.3. Voluntary Withdrawal*

5.3.1. The VVB may choose to withdraw their accreditation voluntarily and shall submit the request electronically to the DNA with justification for the reasons of withdrawal.

5.3.2. The VVB shall communicate to all its clients and stakeholders a clear and detailed plan for shutting down its operations, which includes managing ongoing validation and verification activities and notifying clients and other stakeholders.

5.3.3. The DNA shall officially withdraw VVB accreditation once the VVB has demonstrated that it has completed all its ongoing validation and/or verification functions, and it has no open or incomplete activities.

### *5.4. Period of accreditation and reporting of activities*

5.4.1. **Period of accreditation:** The VVB accreditation shall be valid for a period of five years and shall be subject to a periodic performance check every two years.



- 5.4.2. **Reporting of activities:** The VVB is required to submit an annual report to the [CDMDNA] on [day/month] each year until its accreditation is either expired or withdrawn.
- 5.4.3. This annual report should address the period from [day/month] of the previous year to [day/month] of the current year.

## 6. Validity, Maintenance and Continuity of Accreditation

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- 6.1.1. Accredited VVBs are required to maintain their accreditation status with the recognized bodies listed in the VVB Accreditation Criteria document throughout the duration of their approval by the DNA.
- 6.1.2. Failure to maintain valid accreditation, or the lapse of accreditation, may result in the immediate suspension or termination of the VVB's approval status with the DNA.
- 6.1.3. In the event that a VVB's accreditation is suspended, revoked, or not renewed, the VVB must immediately notify the DNA and provide a detailed report on any ongoing projects. The DNA will direct the VVB on the necessary steps to ensure the proper conclusion of these projects.

## 7. Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest

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### 7.1. Code of Conduct

- 7.1.1. VVBs involved must adhere to the highest standards of professionalism, integrity, and ethical behavior. They must ensure that they operate with transparency, impartiality and in respect for all stakeholders. VVBs must ensure the confidentiality of sensitive information obtained during the

validation and verification process. Compliance with relevant laws, regulations, and standards is mandatory.

### *7.2. Conflict of Interest*

7.2.1. VVBs must ensure avoidance of any conflict of interest. This includes financial, personal, or other relationships with the Project Proponent that could compromise their impartiality. VVBs must disclose any conflicts of interest before engaging in validation or verification activities.

## 8. Complaint, Dispute and Appeal

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### *8.1. Complaint Handling*

8.1.1. GCOM maintains a formal complaints procedure for project developers or stakeholders who wish to raise concerns about a VVB's conduct or performance.

8.1.2. VVBs may appeal decisions made by GCOM regarding accreditation status, corrective actions, or non-compliance. Appeals must be submitted electronically, along with evidence supporting the VVB's position.

### *8.2. Continuous Improvement*

8.2.1. VVBs must commit to continuous learning and improvement in line with internationally recognized standards and mechanisms.

8.2.2. VVBs will remain informed of any further documentations issued by DNA such as best practice guidelines and technical updates to accredited VVBs, and it is the VVBs duties to remain compliant to updates.