

Official Statement No. 06

Final clarifications on the use of versions of the Cercarbono's Protocol/templates and on changing methodologies in the forestry sector

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From: **Cercarbono's Voluntary Carbon Certification Programme.**

To: **Holders/developers of CCMPs and authorised Validation and Verification Bodies in Cercarbono.**

The Cercarbono voluntary carbon certification Programme informs holders/developers of Climate Change Mitigation Projects (CCMPs) and the Validation and Verification Bodies (VVBs) authorised in our Programme that:

1. Concerning the use of versions of the Protocol:

On 22 August of this year, the "Cercarbono's Protocol Versioning and Template Implementation Guide for Holders, Developers and VVBs" was published in Excel, available on our website, documentation section: www.cercarbono.com. This guide was developed as a guideline for the development of validation or verification events, highlighting the following aspects:

- A. **A. Use of the guide:** *the start sheet contains general instructions on the use to be made of the different versions of the Cercarbono protocol and templates by holders/developers and VVBs. It states that the respective comments column for each element or criterion to be fulfilled/ revised by these actors in each of the Protocol versions should be kept in mind, considering the letter colours generated for holders/developers (in blue and black letters) and for VVBs (in red and black letters).*
- B. **Use of Protocol version indicated in the guide:** *the protocol version sheet presents the content of each version, highlighting the elements to be considered by each of the actors involved (holders, developers or VVBs). Therefore, CCMPs must consider the version of the Protocol in force at the time of their registry in the EcoRegistry platform, as this will cover the entire accreditation period granted by Cercarbono, which in the case of CCMPs in the land use sector is 20 years and in CCMPs in other sectors is 10 years.*

Each protocol version sets out its publication, effective and transition date. Please note, as mentioned above, the date on which the CCMP was registered in EcoRegistry.

CCMPs registered between 2018 and 2021 will be able to change from Protocol version 1.1 and 2.1 to Protocol version 3.1 until 31 January 2023 (transition period), provided they have a verification event concluded or provide evidence that the VVB in charge is contracted and that the verification is already ongoing. CCMPs that do not avail themselves of this transition period will not be able to change the Protocol version and will continue to be audited under the initial version under which they registered.

C. Use of Cercarbono templates: *Two sheets are presented in the guidance: LU (land use) sector templates and Non-LU sector templates. As stated in the Protocol, the use of these templates is optional. However, it is emphasised that their use facilitates and speeds up the fulfilment of each stage in accordance with the elements of the **Protocol version and methodology used.***

An analysis of the elements or criteria to be considered at each stage of CCMP development was made for each of these templates. Therefore, the holder/developer and the VVB must present in the templates all the elements of the Protocol version and methodology they use at each stage of CCMP development, as mentioned in the guidance worksheet. Therefore, it is urged to implement the templates recently updated by Cercarbono, leaving out non-relevant cells and complying with those that apply according to the version of the Protocol or methodology used.

2. Regarding CCMP in the forestry sector:

Due to the unilateral decision taken by the Colombian National Accreditation Body (ONAC), under the act 2022-005-GEI, forestry CCMPs registered in EcoRegistry and certified by Cercarbono between 2018 and 2021, must change their methodological criteria as follows:

- A. Forest CCMPs focused on REDD+ that used NTC 6208:2016 as methodological criteria should change it to the M/UT-REDD+ Methodology for the Implementation of REDD+ Projects Consistent with National Reference Levels. Version 1.2.
- B. Forestry CCMPs focused on reforestation that used forestry guidance ES-I-CC-002:2018 as methodological criterion shall change it to one of the following methodologies:
 - Methodology M/UT/F-A01 to Implement GHG Removal Projects Through Reforestation, Forest Restoration, and the Establishment of Woody Crops. Version 1.1.
 - A/R Large-scale Consolidated Methodology: Afforestation and reforestation of lands except wetlands. Version 2.0.
- C. Requests for methodological deviations, as each CCMP has its own particularities and for some of them the methodologies listed do not cover their needs completely. Therefore, they may request them if they are oriented to:
 - Monitoring aspects, including variables or ways to implement it.
 - Situations of doubtful applicability.
 - Include any activities that are not in the scope of the methodology but are analogous to it.

It is important to note that the scope of the listed methodologies may not be altered, i.e. no activity may be supported in a contradictory or conflicting manner.

Such methodological deviations will be approved by Cercarbono and assessed by the accredited and authorised validation and verification bodies.

D. In these forestry projects the pooled carbon buffer will remain collective, i.e., 15% of the total removal or reduction reached by each project in each verification event will continue to be applied to ensure the Non-permanence criterion for these CCMPs.

CCMPs switching from Cercarbono's Protocol version 1.1 or 2.1 to version 3.1 will maintain this 15% percentage as a pooled carbon buffer.


CCMPs switching from Cercarbono's Protocol version 1.1, 1.2, 3.1 to version 4.1 must use the Cercarbono carbon buffer tool.

E. In grouped CCMPs, note that, until 31 December 2022, projects that were formulated under forestry guidance ES-I-CC-002:2018 and that **were designed as grouped projects** (i.e., that included an area expansion plan in their design), may include new areas in compliance with the provisions of that guidance with respect to **retroactivity and eligibility**. In all other respects, projects must comply with existing Cercarbono policy documents.

From 01 January 2023, projects that were initially designed as grouped projects will only be able to add new areas by complying with all provisions of the current Cercarbono's regulatory framework.

This Statement supersedes any internal letters or notifications generated around the use of the protocol/template and clarification versions of registered forestry projects.

Best regards,



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CEO

Cercarbono