



Procedures of the Voluntary

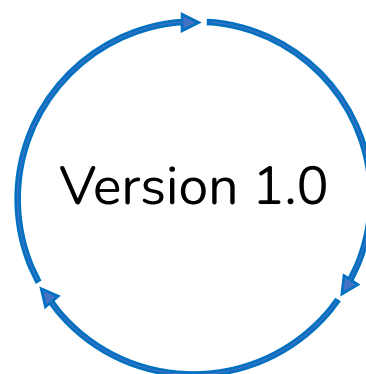
Programme on Circular Economy

Global
ZERO
WASTE
FOUNDATION

CERCARBONO
Certified Carbon Standard



Procedures of the Voluntary Programme on Circular Economy



Content

Index of tables	5
Index of figures.....	5
Abbreviations and acronyms.....	6
1 Introduction	7
2 Document production.....	8
Administrative Procedures.....	9
3 Certification cycle procedures	10
3.1 PCEM formulation and registration	12
3.2 Public comments to the PCEM.....	13
3.3 PCEM validation	14
3.4 PCEM verification	15
3.5 PCEM joint validation and verification	16
3.6 PCEM certification.....	17
4 Procedures for reviewing methodological elements	20
4.1 Additionality	20
4.2 Baseline and project scenarios	20
5 CEC procedures	21
5.1 Emission	21
5.2 Registration.....	22
5.3 Withdrawal.....	23
5.4 Transfer.....	24
5.5 Cancellation	25
5.6 Conversion of credits to CECs.....	26
5.6.1 Requirements	27
5.6.2 Application and process.....	27
5.7 Reallocation of circular economy credits	29
6 Double counting	30
6.1 Mechanisms to avoid double issuance	30
6.1.1 Available information on the holder and the location of the PCEM.....	31
6.1.2 Contractual declaration by the holder of the PCEM	31
6.1.3 Review of PCEM's status in other certification programmes	31
6.2 Mechanisms to avoid double use	31
6.3 Mechanism to avoid double claim.....	32
6.3.1 Attributes assigned to circular economy credits	32
6.3.2 Double counting procedures	33
6.4 Information exchange with other registries.....	33
7 PCEM migration from other standards or certification programmes	35
7.1 Pre-requisites for the migration process	35

7.2 Requirements for applying for migration	35
7.3 Analysis of the accreditation period granted by the standard or certification scheme from which the PCEM originates	37
7.4 Analysis of the standard verification events or certification scheme from which the PCEM originates	37
7.5 Analysis of the renewal of the PCEM accreditation period	37
8 Authorisation of validation and verification bodies.....	39
8.1 General requirements	39
8.2 Eligibility	39
8.3 Need for change in VVBs.....	40
8.4 Authorisation process	40
8.4.1 Submitting an application.....	40
8.4.2 Review of the information	40
8.4.3 Assessment of implementation	41
8.4.4 Signing of agreement.....	41
8.4.5 Account creation on the registration platform	41
8.5 Status of VVBs.....	41
8.6 PCEM processes	41
8.7 Confirmation of Validation and Verification Body Team	42
8.8 VVB non-compliance	43
9 Procedures and articulation between the VPCE and EcoRegistry	45
Legal Procedures	46
10 Confidentiality.....	47
11 Conflict of interest	49
11.1 Situations of conflict of interest.....	49
11.1.1 Use of confidential information	49
11.1.2 Business activities and shareholdings in companies	49
11.1.3 External employment and investment.....	50
11.1.4 Economic activities of persons close to those involved.....	50
11.1.5 Corporate opportunities	50
11.2 Management of conflicts of interest	50
11.2.1 Procedures for managing conflicts of interest	50
11.2.2 Management of conflicts of interest related to stakeholders.....	51
11.3 Mechanisms for reporting conflicts of interest	52
11.4 Prevention of conflicts of interest	52
11.5 Conflicts of interest related to VVBs	53
Technical Procedures	54
12 Approval of methodologies in the framework of the VPCE.....	55
12.1 Technical committee	55
12.2 Approval process	55

12.2.1	Application for approval.....	56
12.2.2	Submission of methodologies	56
12.2.3	Assessment of methodologies.....	57
12.2.4	Review of methodology	59
12.2.5	Public consultation.....	60
12.3	Copyrights, trademarks, brands, and logos	60
13	Request for methodological review, deviation, or clarification	61
14	Guidelines for remote audits and audit deferral.....	62
15	References	63
16	History of the document.....	64
17	Annex	65

Index of tables

Table 1. Procedures for PCEMs formulation and registration.	12
Table 2. Procedures for the public comment period of the PCEMs.	13
Table 3. Procedures for PCEMs validation.	14
Table 4. Procedures for PCEMs verification.	15
Table 5. Procedures for PCEMs joint validation and verification.	16
Table 6. Procedures for PCEMs certification.	17
Table 7. Other possible PCEMs statuses.	18
Table 8. Situations requiring cancellation of CECs.	25
Table 9. Conversion steps from credits to CECs.	28
Table 10. Information required for the migration from a PCEM to the VPCE.	36
Table 11. Management of VVBs non-compliance and inconsistencies.	43
Table 12. Confidentiality of PCEMs' information in the register.	47
Table 13. Assessment points of proposed methodologies.	57

Index of figures

Figure 1. States, stages, processes, and responsible parties for certification in the VPCE.	11
Figure 2. Description of the components of the serial number assigned to each CEC.	22
Figure 3. Coding for activities, type of activity, and type of material.	23
Figure 4. Double counting of circular economy credits.	30
Figure 5. Actors required to file conflict of interest declarations.	52

Abbreviations and acronyms

CEC	Circular Economy Credit
HDPE	High density Polyethylene
IAF	International Accreditation Forum
ISO	International Organization for Standardization
LDPE	Low density Polyethylene
PCEM	Programme or Project on Circular Economy Materials
PDD	Project Description Document
PET (o PETE)	Polyethylene terephthalate
PP	Polypropylene
PS	Polystyrene
PVC	Polyvinyl chloride
VPCE	Voluntary Programme on Circular Economy
VVB	Validation and Verification Body

1 Introduction

This document presents the processes related to Global Zero Waste and Cercarbono's Voluntary Programme on Circular Economy (VPCE). It is complementary to its Protocol¹.

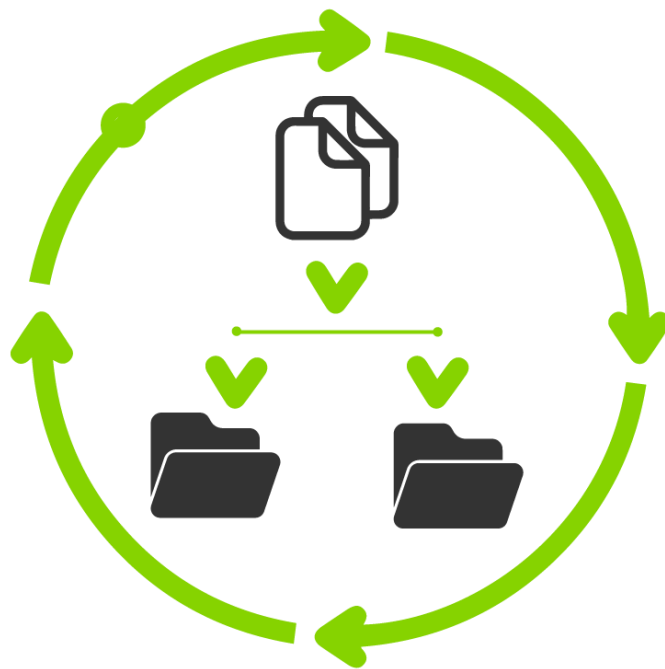
¹ Document available at www.cercarbono.com.

2 Document production

The production, review, approval, and publication of VPCE documents will be conducted by the VPCE technical committee composed of a Global Zero Waste delegate and a Cercarbono delegate. When necessary, support from EcoRegistry members, external consultants, or sectoral experts is requested.

The programme has a documentary database in which each document is continuously monitored in terms of its validity, translated versions, production and update cycle, and special requirements. It also has a document repository stored in the cloud, where all the programme's documents are archived.

Administrative Procedures



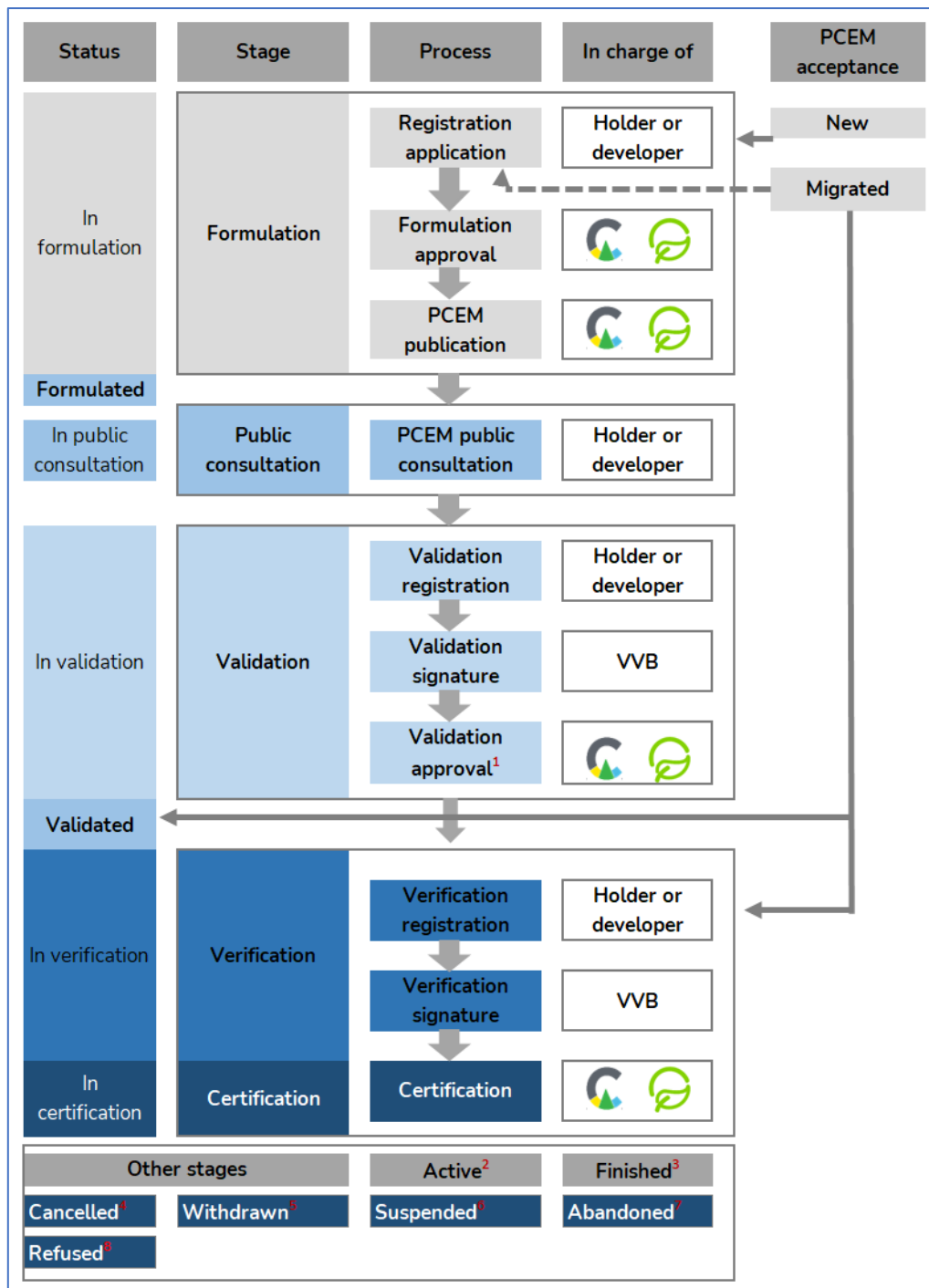
3 Certification cycle procedures

The stages of the voluntary circular economy certification process are formulation, validation, verification, and certification². Depending on the status of a Programme or Project on Circular Economy Material (PCEM) in any of these stages, it may be in one of the following statuses according to its level of compliance with the stages: In formulation, Formulated, In public comments, In validation, Validated, In verification and In certification. Additionally, the PCEM can also be in the following statuses, outside the stages of the certification process: Active, Finished, Cancelled, Withdrawn, Suspended, Abandoned and Refused.

The stages of the voluntary circular economy certification process are schematically presented in **Figure 1** and developed in the following tables of the section. The documentation required at each stage is standardised for the PCEMs according to the reduction and recirculation activities, and the formal and methodological requirements.

² Implementation, i.e. the process by which the holder or developer of the PCEM executes the PCEM activities set out in the PDD, whereby material reduction or recirculation is carried out, and monitoring, i.e. the process of carrying out measurements and calculations of material reduction or recirculation, following the monitoring plan under the PDD, are not detailed in this section as they are internal processes of the PCEM.

Figure 1. States, stages, processes, and responsible parties for certification in the VPCE.



1. Only if the PCEM does not do joint validation and verification.
2. PCEM in implementation that is not at any other stage.
3. PCEM that has reached the end of its lifespan.
4. PCEM that the holder or developer decides not to continue and requests its deregistration.
5. PCEM that the holder retires from the VPCE.
6. Inactive PCEM due to sanction.
7. PCEM inactive for so long that it cannot be reactivated.
8. When a PCEM does not comply with the requirements of the VPCE, it will be rejected.

3.1 PCEM formulation and registration

Table 1 details the procedures PCEMs must comply with, once they have been formulated, to be registered and published on the EcoRegistry platform as a new PCEM or as a migrated PCEM from another certification programme.

Table 1. Procedures for PCEMs formulation and registration.

Stage, Process, Status	Action	Documentation	In charge	Time
Stage: Formulation. Status: In formulation.				
Review of basic client documentation and compliance with requirements for publication on the EcoRegistry platform.				
Application for PCEM registration	Holder or developer of the PCEM uploads the required information to the platform.	Contract or service order.	PCEM.	Depends on the PCEM.
		Proof of ownership or tenure of the PCEM area or facility.		
		Power of attorney (if applicable).		
		Statement of programme change (if migrated).		
		Evidence of withdrawal from the original programme (if migrated).		
		Project Description Document (public comments version).		
		Location of the PCEM (KML format or coordinates link from		

Stage, Process, Status	Action	Documentation	In charge	Time
		a georeferencing platform such as Google Maps).		
Approval of the formulation	The VPCE technical team reviews	Formulation approval form.	Technical team.	3 business days.
PCEM publication	compliance with requirements. Initial review of no double counting.		Technical team.	1 business day.
Result: PCEM in Formulated status and published on the registry platform.				

3.2 Public comments to the PCEM

Once the formulation is approved, the public comment period of the PCEM starts on the Cercarbono website, which links to the PCEM file on the registry platform. This stage remains open for 30 calendar days.

After the public comment period is over, the VPCE collects all comments received and generates a compiled document which becomes part of the PCEM file in Cercarbono and EcoRegistry and is available to the validating VVB. The VPCE may take actions as required, depending on the nature of the comments received. The procedure for this step is presented in [Table 2](#).

Table 2. Procedures for the public comment period of the PCEMs.

Stage, Process, Status	Action	Documentation	In charge	Time
Stage: Public comments. Status: In public comments.				
PCEM public comments	The VPCE makes the PCEM information available for public comment.	Project Description Document (version to be reviewed by the VVB) ¹ .	VPCE.	30 calendar days.
	The VPCE technical team reviews comments	Comments received.	Technical team.	7 business days,

Stage, Process, Status	Action	Documentation	In charge	Time
	received, saves their compilation in the PCEM's file on the registry platform and communicates to the PCEM the required actions.	Compilation of comments and required PCEM actions (if any).		according to the complexity of comments.
	PCEM addresses comments and uploads updated documentation to the registration platform.	PCEM documentation updated as required.	PCEM.	Depends on the PCEM.

¹ The Project Description Document (PDD) confidential sections may be omitted. See [Section 10](#).

3.3 PCEM validation

The PCEMs that are active in the VPCE and undergoing the process of renewing their accreditation period or updating their baseline, must also carry out the procedure presented in the [Table 3](#).

Table 3. Procedures for PCEMs validation.

Stage, Process, Status	Action	Documentation	In charge	Time
Stage: Validation. Status: In validation.				
Review of validation and compliance documents for approval.				
Registration of validation	The holder or developer of the PCEM fills in the information and uploads the required documentation.	Contract or service order.	PCEM.	Depends on the PCEM.
		Validation calculations.		
		Project Description Document.		
		Supporting validation documents.		
Signing of the validation	The VVB uploads validation information and signs the validation of the PCEM.	Declaration of conflict of interest made by the VVB.	VVB.	Depends on the VVB.
		Validation findings report (if applicable).		
		Validation report and appendices.		
		Validation statement.		

Stage, Process, Status	Action	Documentation	In charge	Time
Approval of validation¹	The technical team reviews and approves the PCEM at the validation state.	Independent validation approval report.	Certifier.	Up to 15 business days.
Result: PCEM in Validated status.				

¹ Only if PCEM does not do joint validation and verification.

3.4 PCEM verification

Only those PCEMs active on the EcoRegistry platform will be able to carry out the registration and signing of the verification. The details of the verification procedures are presented in the [Table 4](#).

Table 4. Procedures for PCEMs verification.

Stage, Process, Status	Action	Documentation	In charge	Time
Stage: Verification. Status: In verification.				
Review of verification documents and compliance with requirements to start certification.				
Registration of verification	The holder or developer of the PCEM fills in the information and uploads the required documentation.	Verification calculations.	PCEM.	Depends on the PCEM.
		Verification supporting documentation.		
		Monitoring report.		
Signing of the verification	The VVB uploads verification information and signs the PCEM verification.	Declaration of conflict of interest made by the VVB.	VVB.	Depends on the VVB.
		Verification findings report (if applicable).		
		Verification report and appendices.		
		Verification statement.		

Stage, Process, Status	Action	Documentation	In charge	Time
		Verified calculations.		
Result: PCEM in a Verified status.				

3.5 PCEM joint validation and verification

PCEMs may choose to apply for joint validation and verification or to go through these processes separately. If joint validation and first verification is performed, the approval of validation and verification will occur during the certification stage. The procedure's details are presented in [Table 5](#).

Table 5. Procedures for PCEMs joint validation and verification.

Stage, Process, Status	Action	Documentation	In charge	Time
Stage: Joint validation and verification. Status: In joint validation and verification.				
Review of validation and verification documentation and compliance with requirements for approval.				
Signing of the joint validation and verification	The VVB uploads information on the joint validation and verification and signs the joint validation and verification of the PCEM.	Declaration of conflict of interest in joint validation and verification.	VVB.	Depends on the VVB.
		Joint validation and verification findings report (if applicable).		
		Joint validation and verification report and appendices.		
		Joint validation and verification statement.		

Stage, Process, Status	Action	Documentation	In charge	Time
Approval of joint validation and verification	The technical team reviews and approves the PCEM at the joint validation and verification stage.	Joint validation and verification approval report.	Certifier.	Up to 15 business days.
Result: PCEM in Verified status.				

3.6 PCEM certification

At this stage, active PCEMs or migrated PCEMs from other certification programmes will be able to move to this stage of certification. The procedures to be completed by these PCEMs are detailed in [Table 6](#) below.

Table 6. Procedures for PCEMs certification.

Stage, Process, Status	Action	Documentation	In charge	Time
Stage: Certification.				
Review of compliance with requirements for certification of reported material ³ reduction or recirculation during the verified period and issuance of circular economy credits.				
Certification	The technical team reviews the validation and verification documentation and generates the certification report. The corresponding certificate is sent for signing to the director of Cercarbono.	<div>That generated by the developer and by the VVB in validation and verification stage.</div> <div>Certification report.</div> <div>Certificate for signature by the director.</div>	Certifier.	Up to 20 business days.

³ For the VPCE, materials are understood as all waste materials that can be used.

Stage, Process, Status	Action	Documentation	In charge	Time
Issuance and registration of the certificate	The Cercarbono director signs the certificate and the credits obtained are registered on the EcoRegistry platform.	Issuance of the certificate of materials circularity.	Cercarbono director.	Up to 5 business days.
Result: PCEM in Active status.				

Once the Certification stage is completed and credits are issued, the PCEM enters the **Active** status, indicating that it is in the process of implementation and would eventually request future verification, as the VPCE does not certify PCEMs but their reduction or recirculation of materials.

Finally, other PCEM statuses may occur, as detailed in [Table 7](#).

Table 7. Other possible PCEMs statuses.

Status	Action	Documentation	In charge	Time
Other PCEM possible statuses.				
Finished	Occurs when a PCEM reaches the end of its lifetime or crediting periods with no possibility to extend them.	Not required.	Person designated by the VPCE.	Up to 5 business days.
Cancelled	If a holder or developer decides not to continue the implementation of a PCEM and requests to deregister, it will be registered as Cancelled in the EcoRegistry platform.	Letter of request for cancellation.	PCEM.	Depends on the PCEM.
		Certificate of cancellation signed by the director of Cercarbono.	Person designated by the VPCE.	Up to 5 business days.
Withdrawn	If a holder or developer decides to withdraw a PCEM from the Voluntary	Letter of request for withdrawal.	PCEM.	Depends on the PCEM.

Status	Action	Documentation	In charge	Time
	Programme on Circular Economy (e.g., for migration to another standard) and requests its withdrawal, it will be registered as Withdrawn on the EcoRegistry platform.	Withdrawal certificate detailing the status of the PCEM, and its credits signed by the director of Cercarbono.	Person designated by the VPCE.	Up to 5 business days.
Suspended	Occurs when a PCEM has been sanctioned for non-compliance with programme rules or legal irregularities.	Depends on the case.	Person designated by the VPCE.	Depends on the case.
Abandoned	If a PCEM has not performed a verification for more than five years and does not proceed as set out in Section Deadlines for verification events of the Protocol , the VPCE will register it as Abandoned on the EcoRegistry platform.	<div>Not required.</div> <div>Certificate detailing the status of abandonment signed by the director of Cercarbono.</div>	Person designated by the VPCE.	Up to 5 business days.
Refused	If upon review of the validation and verification documentation, the technical team issues a negative certification report, the PCEM will be considered as rejected.	<div>Negative VPCE certification report.</div> <div>Rejection report.</div>	Certifier.	Up to 20 business days.

4 Procedures for reviewing methodological elements

4.1 Additionality

The additionality of the PCEMs is defined in the methodologies developed by the VPCE; the developer of the initiative must support the additionality of the project according to the selected methodology in the PDD.

The first review of the additionality must be carried out by the VVB in charge of validation. The additionality should be reviewed by the VPCE technical team during the validation approval or joint validation and verification stage.

During the implementation of the PCEM, an additionality analysis must be performed when new instances are added in grouped projects and reviewed by the VVB during verifications.

For the renewal of the accreditation period, a new additionality analysis is required.

In turn, the VPCE technical team reviews the additionality during validation approval or during certification, depending on the stage of the PCEM.

The PDD, validation report (or joint validation and verification) and certification report templates have specific sections for the submission and assessment of the additionality.

4.2 Baseline and project scenarios

The baseline and project scenarios must be submitted by the PCEMs in their PDD and must be reviewed by the VVB in the initial validation, as well as in their revalidation, either by renewal of the accreditation period or by the inclusion of new instances in grouped projects.

The PDD, monitoring report, validation report, verification report (or joint validation and verification) and certification report templates have specific sections for the presentation and assessment of both scenarios.

The review of these scenarios should be done in parallel with the review of additionality due to their close relationship.

5 CEC procedures

In order for material reduction or recirculation actions to be real and effective, it is necessary to ensure compliance with the principles of transparency and environmental integrity of the Circular Economy Credits generated by the PCEMs.

This section includes all the procedures the VPCE has established for the CECs during the full lifespan of the PCEMs.

Therefore, the VPCE focuses its efforts on collaborating in the construction of a reliable and transparent market, a scenario in which the need to align the programme's own policies with market mechanisms and national circular economy policies, or policies related to material flows established in the different countries participating in the voluntary market for circular economy credits becomes evident, to achieve the objective of preventing double counting of the credits issued.

5.1 Emission

The issuance of CECs is part of the certification stage of the VPCE ([Figure 1](#)). PCEMs must have successfully completed the formulation, validation, and verification stages, in addition to the internal PCEM design, implementation and monitoring stages.

For the CECs issuance, the PCEM certifier issues a Certification Report, which considers the main elements contained in the PDD, in the monitoring report and in the validation (when applicable) and verification reports.

During the review process, the certifier may identify facts that need to be documented, justified, or corrected, mainly because they go against the activities proposed by the PCEMs. These findings must be notified to the PCEM holders or developers or to the VVBs, as appropriate, as they need to be corrected in the corresponding instance to be able to generate the final certification report. Once the certifier is sure that all the PCEM documentation is complete and that the different corrections identified have been made, he/she will issue the report duly completed and signed.

Once the report has been issued, a certificate of CEC issuance is generated, which includes the assignment of the serial numbers for each metric tonne of materials reduced or recirculated by the PCEM. This certificate lists the number of CECs issued by EcoRegistry under a unique serial number, an indefinite validity of the CECs, a total duration of the PCEM, as well as the VVBs that validated and verified it.

5.2 Registration

The development of a transparent market requires unbiased information through the implementation of processes and record-keeping systems publishing the correct information for each stage. Users must be able to recognise all transactions and traceability of CECs, e.g., where they come from, how they have been traded and who the final beneficiary of each material unit is. The VPCE ensures this through its registration platform called EcoRegistry, based on blockchain technology, where PCEM holders enter the information on their material reduction or recirculation initiatives required by the voluntary programme on circular economy certification.

In EcoRegistry, the units of reduced or recirculated materials are registered and issued via VPCE-approved information flows. The total volume of circular economy credits referred to in the certification, which corresponds to the total volume of credits issued by the VPCE, is issued, and linked to the registration of the PCEM in the registration platform.

EcoRegistry guarantees the secure issuance, tracking and transfer of all CECs, in line with the principle of transparency and avoiding double counting. It also publishes the information necessary for users to be able to recognise the origin, traceability, and final beneficiary of the credits.

The information on each PCEM is always available on the EcoRegistry website (www.ecoregistry.io). All PCEMs are listed with their general information as well as the supporting documentation for each stage. Once credits are generated, the accounting table for each PCEM can identify the credits issued, available, transferred and retired, so that this information can be accessed by anyone. The system provides a unique serial number for each tonne of material reduced or recirculated. The serial number contains all relevant information about the PCEM, as shown in **Figure 2**. The corresponding coding of PCEM activities, activity type and type of material is presented in **Figure 3**.

Figure 2. Description of the components of the serial number assigned to each CEC.

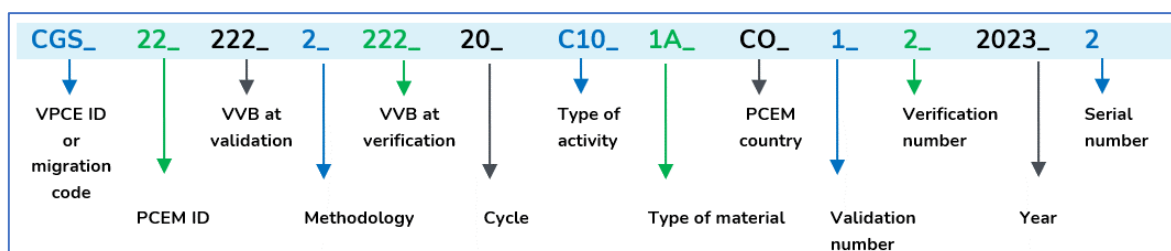


Figure 3. Coding for activities, type of activity, and type of material.

Cycle	Type of activity	Type of material	
19: Biological	C10: Reject	A. Plastic	1A: PET
20: Technological	C11: Rethink		2A: HDPE
	C12: Reduce		3A: PVC
	C20: Reuse/repurpose		4A: LDPE
	C21: Repair		5A: PP
	C22: Restore		6A: PS
	C23: Remanufacture		7A: OTHER
	C24: Recover		
	C25: Recycling		

5.3 Withdrawal

In EcoRegistry, the user who holds a general or developer account type and has the respective authority (either owned or delegated) may use the material reduction or recirculation certificate to be withdrawn on behalf of the end-user of the CECs.

Withdrawal consists of the permanent allocation of a quantity of certified CECs in favour of an end-beneficiary, i.e., a CEC can only be withdrawn once; it cannot be recirculated, it is deducted from the total available certified credits of the initiative so that it cannot be used twice.

To make withdrawals, the user who has custody of the CEC must log in with their username and password to the platform and click on the option to withdraw certificates. There they must enter the following information:

- PCEM from which the reduced or recirculated material units are to be withdrawn.
- Year in which the reduction or recirculation of materials is generated.
- Quantity of CEC to be withdrawn.
- Reason for retirement: voluntary compensation, tax, or other specific compensation scheme.
- Language of the certificate.
- End-user information: country where located, name, document type and ID number.
- Taxable person information, if applicable: country where located, name, document type and ID number.
- Entry of the verification code sent to the mail to carry out the transaction.

The withdrawal certificate issued has the following information:

- Certification programme.
- Date of withdrawal of the CECs.

- Name and ID of the PCEM.
- Name and ID of the PCEM holder.
- Number of CECs withdrawn.
- Serial numbers of the withdrawn CECs.
- Period of the recalled CECs.
- Name or company name and tax identification number or code of the end user of the CEC for the purposes of voluntary compensation or other market mechanisms.
- Accreditation period of the PCEM.
- Stamp of the intended use of the withdrawn certificates.
- ID of the certificate of withdrawal from the PCEM.
- QR code for information authentication.

This certificate of withdrawal of the CECs is generated in PDF format, with electronic signature and can be printed without losing its authenticity, as soon as it is verified against the original issued electronically by EcoRegistry, which is accessed through the e-mail address provided by EcoRegistry, using the verification code assigned by it.

The EcoRegistry registration platform transparently documents the retirement process of the circular economy credits of each PCEM. It publicly shows the number of certificates issued, withdrawn and available for each year in which they were generated, as well as indicating, depending on the year, the reduction or recirculation of materials.

5.4 Transfer

The transfer process consists of the handover of a certain amount of circular economy credits between accounts registered in EcoRegistry. This process involves changing the account holding the CECs. The transfer functionality allows market transfer dynamics to be reflected in the registry, ensuring traceability of information.

The transfer of CECs is carried out automatically under a self-management logic by a general or developer account type user (when applicable). To do so, the user who has the circular economy credit must log in with their username and password to the platform and click on the Transfer certificates option. There they must enter the following information:

- PCEM from which the circular economy credits are to be transferred.
- Period or vintage of the circular economy credits to be transferred.
- Amount of circular economy credits to be transferred.

- Selection of the account to which the credits are to be transferred.
- Verification code sent to the mail to carry out the transaction.

The transaction can be confirmed via the **Transfer History** tab, which records the following information on all transfers sent and received by the user:

- Type of transaction: sending or receiving circular economy credits.
- PCEM generating the circular economy credits.
- Serial transferred.
- Number of circular economy credits transferred.
- Interaction user of the transfer.
- Date of the transfer.

Each transfer and its information, including the holders of each unit of materials, is traceable by the platform through blockchain technology. Historical transfer reports can be generated automatically by the registry administrator.

5.5 Cancellation

This is the process where credits registered on the VPCE registration platform are disabled from performing any of the procedures that Global Zero Waste and Cercarbono have set up to implement with the CECs before the credits are retired.

The cancellation of credits is defined by the VPCE according to the relevant situation. The situations in which a CEC cancellation is necessary and the procedure to be followed are presented in **Table 8**.

Table 8. Situations requiring cancellation of CECs.

Situation	Responsible for the request	Procedure
Conversion of CEC to another standard.	The holder of the credits must apply to the VPCE.	<p>The holder must send an email to globalzerowaste@cercarbono.com requesting the conversion, including the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Name of the PCEM. - ID of the PCEM in EcoRegistry. - Number of credits to be cancelled with their respective serial numbers. - Letter of cancellation acceptance by the holder.

Situation	Responsible for the request	Procedure
Migration of a PCEM from the VPCE to another standard with available credits.	The PCEM holder must make the application to the VPCE.	The initiative holder must send a formal letter to the VPCE requesting the migration of the PCEM to another standard, clarifying the need for the cancellation of the credits. The letter must be duly signed by the initiative holder.
Double counting event.	VPCE notifies the PCEM holder.	In the event of double counting of PCEM credits, it is possible that the VPCE, within the options of compensation mechanisms, evaluates the possibility of cancellation of these credits, which will be duly communicated to the PCEM holder.

If the credits were previously transferred to other accounts, it is not possible to request cancellation.

5.6 Conversion of credits to CECs

This process consists of converting circular economy credits obtained from material reduction or recirculation activities, which have been cancelled and transferred from a standard or certification programme to the VPCE by migrating the materials circularity initiative to the programme registry or without the need to migrate the PCEM.

Only the credits that have not been traded under the registration of the standard or certification programme from which they originate can be converted to CEC. The conversion of credits generated in another standard or certification programme is studied on a case-by-case basis, as the verification event under which they were generated (as well as relevant supporting documentation), the certification programme from which they originate, the VVB in charge of verification, and other relevant elements of the PCEM are reviewed in depth.

Following this study, the exact number of credits (indicating the year associated with the results of the PCEM activity) that can be converted to CEC through EcoRegistry by external transfer is determined.

The VPCE ensures that this process does not generate double counting by guaranteeing full compliance with the procedures and stages defined here.

When credit conversion processes are carried out without the migration of the originating programme or project, the VPCE registration platform will indicate that the credits are registered, but not the programme or project.

5.6.1 Requirements

The requirements for the conversion of credits are listed below:

- **Procedures of the originating standard or programme:** the originating standard or programme must have policies and procedures for the cancellation of credits to ensure that double counting does not occur.
- **Activities:** the conversion of credits is accepted in all activities enabled in the VPCE.

Credits to be converted must have a recent certification from the originating standard or programme indicating the following:

- The standard or programme under which the credits were certified.
- The name of the reduction or recirculation initiative from which they originated.
- The type of activity of the circularity initiative (material reduction or recirculation).
- The number of credits from the programme or project that have been issued, traded and available.
- The generation years (vintage) and serial numbers of the credits to be transferred.
- The cancellation and transfer of credits with their respective serial numbers.
- The monitoring and verification reports supporting the issuance of the credits to be converted.

In the case of conversion of credits from more than one PCEM, separate applications must be submitted for each project.

5.6.2 Application and process

The application for conversion, together with the supporting documentation, must be reviewed by the technical team in charge of certifications, which analyses the technical conditions for the verification of the proposed credits and determines whether it is feasible. For this purpose, the technical team may require additional documentation or answers to specific questions.

If the conversion is approved, the VPCE registry assigns serial numbers to the converted credits.

Summarily, the steps defining the conversion of credits to CECs are presented in the [Table 9](#).

Table 9. Conversion steps from credits to CECs.

Step	Description	Responsible	Time
Cancellation	The holder or authorised representative of the circular economy credits must request the cancellation of these credits from the standard or programme, or from the registry.	Holder or authorised representative.	Depends on the standard or programme of origin.
Application to VPCE	The form <i>Application for Conversion of Circular Economy Credits from other Standards or Programmes to the VPCE</i> , available at www.cercarbono.com , must be filled and submitted. Once the form has been filled in, the formal application is sent to globalzerowaste@cercarbono.com , where the form and the monitoring and verification report corresponding to the credits are attached.	Holder or authorised representative.	Depends on the holder of the credits.
Review of documentation	The technical team is responsible for verifying that the minimum parameters for the evaluation of the application are met. Once they are met, the secretariat is responsible for sending it to the technical management.	Technical team.	2-3 business days.
Assessment of the application	The technical team analyses and assesses the feasibility of converting the credits to CECs.	Technical team.	4 business days.

Step	Description	Responsible	Time
Response to the application	The technical team sends a response to the holder or authorised representative approving or refusing the conversion of the credits.	Technical team.	1 business day.
Account creation on the registration platform	An account is created for the holder or authorised representative in EcoRegistry.	Administrator of the VPCE registry.	4 business days.
Certification and issuance of credits	The technical team generates the certification and credit issuance, as well as the documentation of the process.	Technical team.	1 business day.
Registration of credits	EcoRegistry registers credits on the registration platform.	EcoRegistry.	1 business day.

5.7 Reallocation of circular economy credits

If a PCEM wishes to change the destination of credits earned or to be earned, it should take into account the considerations in [Section 6](#).

6 Double counting

Double counting is a practice in which the circular economy credits generated by the PCEMs are counted or claimed more than once, which represents a deviation from the optimal use of resources for materials circularity, a situation that certification schemes such as the VPCE must control and avoid. Double counting of credits is often represented by double issuance, double use, and double claiming (see [Figure 4](#)). It is therefore necessary to understand them separately, as the prevention mechanisms implemented in each case are different.

Figure 4. Double counting of circular economy credits.

Double issuance	Double use	Double claim
Occurs when more than one CEC is issued for the same reduction or recirculation of materials.	Occurs when the same CEC issued is counted more than once.	Occurs when there is more than one claimant (entity) in order to demonstrate the achievement of their materials circularity (reduction or recirculation) objectives.
Example: The same unit of material (reduction or recirculation) is registered in two different certification schemes.	Example: The same unit of material (reduction or recirculation) is used more than once by its holder.	Example: The same unit of materials (reduction or recirculation) is reclaimed for use by an entity.

6.1 Mechanisms to avoid double issuance

Whenever a PCEM is registered, all the holders of the PCEM must be identified by providing the supports registered in the PDD, as well as the exact location of the areas or operating units that make up the PCEM by using KML formats or a link to the coordinates of a georeferencing platform such as Google Maps.

The information on ownership and authority for the development of the PCEM is reviewed by the VVB in the validation and verification processes.

The ownership of the CECs is always defined in the issuance certificates and in the withdrawal certificates.

6.1.1 Available information on the holder and the location of the PCEM

By means of a contract signed between the two parties (PCEM holder and Cercarbono), the holder declares that the PCEM is their legitimate and exclusive property. In addition, the holder declares that (at the time of applying for certification and subsequent registration of the materials reduction or recirculation certificates) they are not aware of the fact that:

- These have been, are being, or will be certified or registered in other registry systems.
- Concurrent benefits have been obtained from them contrary to the law.
- They are being used for multiple accounting purposes to obtain additional benefits.

6.1.2 Contractual declaration by the holder of the PCEM

By means of a contract signed between the two parties (PCEM holder and VPCE), the holder declares that the PCEM is their legitimate and exclusive property. In addition, the holder declares that (at the time of applying for certification and subsequent registration of the materials reduction or recirculation certificates) they are not aware of the fact that:

- These have been, are being or will be certified or registered in other registry systems.
- Concurrent benefits have been obtained from them contrary to the law.
- They are being used for multiple accounting purposes to obtain additional benefits.

6.1.3 Review of PCEM's status in other certification programmes

As part of the PCEM registration approval process, the VPCE performs an inspection on other registration platforms to ensure that the PCEM is not already registered in another registry, this information should also be reviewed by the VVB in the validation and verification processes.

This inspection should also ensure that the PCEMs are not registered under other environmental offset schemes that could imply double counting.

6.2 Mechanisms to avoid double use

A robust registration system or platform is an essential tool to ensure accuracy in the accounting of material reduction and recirculation actions and to prevent the

risk of double counting. The VPCE uses the EcoRegistry registry platform to guarantee the different CEC procedures.

VPCE-certified circular economy credits are only issued once. This implies that a given credit can only be used in the framework of a compliance scheme (national or international), as assessed in the certification process.

EcoRegistry works efficiently by allowing the user to enter information on the final destination of the credits. Thus, the VPCE issues its credits specifying their final use in national, corporate, or independent circularity initiatives, such as material taxes (e.g., plastic taxes), tax exemption mechanisms for the certification of materials circularity and own, independent, or other voluntary purposes.

Double use is also avoided by using the EcoRegistry platform, as when a unit of materials is removed from the platform, the token⁴ representing that unit within the blockchain goes to a burn address, i.e., an inaccessible place to take them out of circulation.

All this is supported by the assignment of a unique serial number to each circular economy credit, which is assigned by the EcoRegistry platform, thus ensuring that no double use of these credits is generated.

The EcoRegistry platform publicly indicates, within each PCEM's retired certificate information, whether or not a given offset credit has been qualified by the certification programme for use under an offset or material reduction scheme.

6.3 Mechanism to avoid double claim

The tools established to avoid double claim are primarily intended to be used under voluntary compensation schemes, tax or other specific compensation schemes involving several countries in their development and end-use.

6.3.1 Attributes assigned to circular economy credits

The main attributes of the serial numbers assigned by the registry system, that facilitate the process of identifying offset credits to avoid double claim, are the identification of the country where the PCEM was developed, and the year associated with the occurrence of the reduction or recirculation of materials.

⁴ These are units of value, which represent carbon credits in a digital form.

6.3.2 Double counting procedures

If double counting is identified, the VPCE, through its registry, defines procedures to cancel or block the offset credits that were double claimed and immediately informs the actors involved.

Depending on the situation and the seriousness of the occurrence, the technical committee of the VPCE defines the sanction to be applied:

- **Minimum sanction:** cancellation or blocking of circular economy credits that were subject to double counting.
- **Moderate sanction:** forced compensation consisting in the registry system taking a certain amount of circular economy credits, defined by the VPCE, to compensate for the occurrence of double counting.
- **Severe sanction:** invalidation of the entire PCEM.
- **Maximum sanction:** in addition to the invalidation of the entire PCEM, the holder of the PCEM is permanently disqualified from registering a PCEM in the VPCE.

For minimum and moderate sanctions, the technical committee may request additional actions from the PCEM holder to help compensate the double-counting occurrence.

Depending on the technical committee's assessment, the user's access to the platform may be blocked or conditioned to be authorised by the VPCE for each movement on the platform.

All procedures are focused on preventing double counting, but if double emission or double use of previously traded credits should occur, the VPCE will bring enforcement actions against the holder involved with the sole objective of compensating the purchaser of the credits for the damages incurred.

6.4 Information exchange with other registries

The VPCE registry (EcoRegistry) has web services for automatic connections to other registries. The web services use a combination of communication protocols and standards to transfer information between two independent technological platforms.

Through this information exchange, EcoRegistry can expose the information associated with the PCEMs that are registered, their specific characteristics, and the amounts of credits that are certified, transferred, withdrawn, and cancelled. This interface has public consultation options, in which public information on the PCEMs is provided, and has an option that is used when another platform is to be connected. Connections with other platforms must have the indicated

confidentiality documentation in place, so that detailed account information, credit balances and end-user information can be shared.

7 PCEM migration from other standards or certification programmes

PCEM migration allows programmes or projects designed and implemented under other standards or certification programmes to continue their material reduction or recirculation activities under the VPCE certification rules after they have been deregistered from the originating standard or programme.

7.1 Pre-requisites for the migration process

The requirements for the PCEM to consider when changing from a standard or certification programme to the VPCE are as follows:

- That the PCEM must come from circular economy or related standards or certification programmes⁵.
- That the activity of the PCEM to be migrated to the VPCE is included among the reduction and recirculation activities established in the **Global Zero Waste and Cercarbono's Protocol for Voluntary Certification of Circular Economy**.
- That the elements or processes under which the PCEM was developed are included in the methodologies allowed for the development of programmes or projects in the VPCE.

7.2 Requirements for applying for migration

The following are the requirements to apply for migration of a PCEM to the VPCE:

- a) Withdrawal of PCEM from the standard or certification scheme from which it originated: PCEM must provide evidence of the withdrawal from the registration of the standard or certification scheme from which it originated. The evidence includes letters of the formal request for the withdrawal of the PCEM from the certification programme and the response generated to this request, the proof of the external transfer of the circular economy credits or their equivalents (including circular or plastic credits), the URL or link of the programme or project registration where it is evidenced that it is currently cancelled, and other supports guaranteeing the cancellation and withdrawal of the PCEM from said standard or certification programme.

⁵ The PCEM should come from circular economy standards or certification programmes that support the market for environmental services related to the reduction (reject, rethink, and reduce) and recirculation (reuse/repurpose, repair, restore, remanufacture, recover, and recycling) of materials that pollute the environment today, which should be endorsed by the VPCE Technical Committee, such as the Plastic Waste Reduction Standard (Verra) and the Circular Credit Mechanism™ (CCM) (Circular Action Hub a BVRio initiative).

- b) Completed **Declaration of Migration from Other Standards or Certification Programmes to VPCE** form, available at www.cercarbono.com.
- c) General and supported information from the PCEM including the items listed in **Table 10** and request for external transfer for the conversion of the circular economy credits (where applicable).

Table 10. Information required for the migration from a PCEM to the VPCE.

Element	Description
Name of the PCEM.	Name of the PCEM as found in the standard or certification scheme from which it originated.
Short description.	Description of the PCEM activity.
Certification standard or programme.	Standard or certification programme where the credits are to be cancelled.
Status of the PCEM.	Active and inactive.
Stage of development of the PCEM.	Formulation, validation, verification, or implementation, as appropriate to the originating standard or programme.
Accreditation period granted.	Day/month/year to what day/month/year.
Renewal of the accreditation period granted.	Describe if granted or scheduled to be granted. If granted, from what day/month/year to what day/month/year.
Verification events.	Number of verification events conducted.
Credits to be reissued.	Total number of credits to be transferred and converted to CEC.
PCEM link.	Link to the website where the PCEM was registered.
Documents of the PCEM and its audits.	PDD of the PCEM or its equivalent in the source standard. Validation, monitoring and verification reports, according to the stage of the PCEM in the original standard or programme.

Once the PCEM has this evidence and the information described in points a), b) and c), it can request its migration by emailing globalzerowaste@cercarbono.com.

7.3 Analysis of the accreditation period granted by the standard or certification scheme from which the PCEM originates

Depending on the status of the accreditation period of the PCEM under migration, there are two possibilities:

- The PCEM has an accreditation period in force: in this case, the VPCE recognises and guarantees compliance with the guidelines and requirements established by the standard or certification programme from which the PCEM originates until the end of the accreditation period.
- The PCEM's accreditation period has been expired for more than a year: the PCEM must apply for the renewal of the accreditation period under the requirements of the VPCE, as long as the lifespan of the PCEM allows it.

If the PCEM has exceeded its lifespan, its accreditation period cannot be renewed.

7.4 Analysis of the standard verification events or certification scheme from which the PCEM originates

PCEMs that have not performed their verifications on a regular basis should take additional actions, depending on their irregularity.

- PCEMs with verification delays: if the PCEM has a delay of five or more years in its verification events, it must consider the requirements of **Section Deadlines for verification events** of the **VPCE Protocol**, and its entry is conditional on an analysis. If the PCEM has a delay of less than one year, it can be verified under the VPCE by an authorised VVB by submitting the required documentation at this stage.
- PCEM that did not perform verification events: if the PCEM did not perform verification events in the accreditation period granted by the standard or certification programme from which it originates, it must conduct a revalidation justifying the absence of verifications or postulate the PCEM as a new programme or project considering the changes that have been generated in the baseline scenario and in other important elements of the PCEM.

7.5 Analysis of the renewal of the PCEM accreditation period

Renewal of the accreditation period in the standard or certification programme from which the PCEM originates:

- In cases where the standard or certification programme has renewed the PCEM's accreditation period and the PCEM has not completed its accreditation period

when migrated to the VPCE, subsequent pending verification events should consider the provisions of **Section Deadlines for verification events** of the **VPCE Protocol**.

- In cases where the standard or certification programme has scheduled or planned the renewal of a PCEM's accreditation period and this has not been generated because the PCEM has not completed its initial accreditation period, the requirements of [Section 7.3](#) should be considered when migrating to the VPCE.

Renewal of the accreditation period in the VPCE:

- Once the PCEM has migrated to the VPCE and demonstrates that it has completed its accreditation period granted in the standard or certification programme from which it originates and still has a lifespan, the programme will be able to renew its accreditation period.
- Once the PCEM has migrated to the VPCE and demonstrates that it has completed its accreditation period granted in the standard or certification programme from which it originates, but has no lifespan, the programme will not be able to renew its accreditation period.

8 Authorisation of validation and verification bodies

This section describes the requirements for VVBs to obtain authorisation to operate under the VPCE.

The requirements and procedures must be applied and fully complied with by VVBs performing PCEM validation and verification processes.

8.1 General requirements

All VVBs authorised by the VPCE must comply with the requirements described and any other guidelines or requirements defined in the VPCE Protocol.

The results obtained in the validation and verification processes must be in accordance with ISO/IEC 17029:2019 and ISO 14065:2020.

VPCEs must not have any pending legal proceedings for malpractice or fraud at any time.

VVBs must ensure that throughout their authorisation period they will have sufficient resources and technical staff to guarantee the necessary proficiency to perform their operations related to the validation and verification processes.

Final decisions related to the approval, suspension, or cancellation of the authorisation status of VVBs will be always made by the VPCE technical committee.

8.2 Eligibility

VVBs authorised by the VPCE must be accredited by an International Accreditation Forum (IAF) signatory member accreditation body or other organizations recognized internationally which has in its service offering the Validation or Verification Body accreditation programme for circularity of materials.

Bodies in the process of gaining authorisation may perform a validation or verification process as a witness audit during their accreditation process.

If a VVB has its accreditation cancelled, modified, or not renewed by the above-mentioned bodies, it must immediately notify the VPCE at globalzerowaste@cercarbono.com. The VVB must provide all the information related to the PCEMs with which it is currently involved; in the case of programmes or projects that have pending validation or verification processes, the technical committee of the VPCE will decide on any additional conditions or actions required.

The VPCE will have a record of the accreditation dates of each of the programme's authorised VVBs. The authorised VVBs are obliged to provide the programme with updated accreditation information, as well as the list of auditors. In the case of evidence of expiry without renewal of accreditations or the performance of a process with an unauthorised technician, the authorisation of the VVB will be suspended.

8.3 Need for change in VVBs

In order to ensure the transparency of the validation and verification processes, as well as to prevent situations generating conflicts of interest, it is necessary that the VVB attending the validation and subsequent verifications is changed after two of these consecutive events.

In cases where it can be demonstrated that the PCEM has no other authorised VVB option to perform the verification, it will not be necessary to change the VVB after having performed a second consecutive verification.

8.4 Authorisation process

VVBs authorised by the VPCE must comply with the steps described below.

8.4.1 Submitting an application

The representative of the VVB must send an email to globalzerowaste@cercarbono.com with the subject “Application for VVB approval”, in which they must attach the following supports or documents:

- **Application for Accreditation as a Validation and Verification Body** form, available at www.cercarbono.com.
- Documentary evidence referenced in Section B of the above-mentioned form. This evidence must be clear, specifying the activity or activities considered by the programme to be within the scope of the authorisation held by the VVB.

8.4.2 Review of the information

The VPCE generates a response to the VVB representative confirming receipt of the information and subsequently initiates the study of the documents submitted by the VVB and verifies the completeness of the same. The technical team reviews the documentation, notifies the VVB if it is incomplete and suspends the process until it is completed.

The duration of this stage is three to four business days, as long as the documentation is complete. Otherwise, the time is extended until completion.

8.4.3 Assessment of implementation

Once the technical team has verified that the documentation for the application is complete, the assessment of the application starts with a notification to the management of the VPCE.

The duration of this stage is approximately two weeks, as long as the executives do not make additional requests to the agency. Otherwise, the time is extended until these requests are attended to by the VVB.

Once the assessment is completed, the VPCE will communicate to the VVB the decision made by the executives on the approval or rejection of the application.

8.4.4 Signing of agreement

If the application is approved, a collaboration agreement is signed, formalising the relationship between the VVB and the VPCE.

8.4.5 Account creation on the registration platform

VVBs that are approved by the VPCE must have an account on the EcoRegistry platform to perform the validation and verification processes.

8.5 Status of VVBs

A list of authorised VVBs, their accreditation period and status can be found at www.cercarbono.com:

- **Active:** when the VVB has updated its accreditation supports and has no non-compliance faults that have not been duly resolved.
- **Inactive:** in cases where the VVB does not renew the documentation, but it has not been suspended.
- **Suspended:** in cases where the programme identified a persistent inconsistency regarding the validity of the accreditation or technical equipment or failures within the validation or verification processes that have not been resolved according to the VPCE guidelines.

8.6 PCEM processes

- The PCEM chooses the VVB with which it is to perform the validation and verification processes based on the list of VVBs authorised by the VPCE. The PCEM must verify that it is within the scope of accreditation of the selected VVB.

- Before initiating the processes, it is necessary for the PCEM holder or developer to be familiar with the validation and verification plan of the VVB, which specifies the requirements for sampling, field visits, internal and external data audits, among others.
- During the validation and verification of the PCEM, it is necessary to ensure compliance with this section, as the contractual relationship between the holder or developer and the VVB is direct and the decision on the selection of the VVB rests solely with the holder of the PCEM.
- The PCEM must identify whether the dates on which the validation or verification processes are to be conducted are within the timeframe covered by the accreditation of the VVB.
- The PCEM should change the VVB after the second verification event to ensure compliance with the principle of transparency.

8.7 Confirmation of Validation and Verification Body Team

The knowledge and composition requirements for audit teams conducting validation and verification processes in the VPCE are described below, with the understanding that the VVBs must ensure compliance with these requirements.

The VVB must have specialised personnel in the materials circularity: one person who is the validator or verifier and one person who fulfils the functions of an expert technical reviewer. The VPCE allows personnel to be directly linked to the company or external individuals to be appointed, as long as they have some contractual link between the parties. In the case of external validators or verifiers, the VVB assumes full responsibility for the work performed.

The skills and capacities that VVBs must have in order to perform activities under the VPCE are listed below:

Capacities needed in the methodological content audit:

- Understanding of the certification programme guidelines.
- Selected methodologies and establishment of the baseline scenario.
- Assessment of additionality.
- Quantification of material reduction or recirculation.
- Monitoring system.
- Assessment of legal compliance and environmental and social requirements.

Capacities needed in the measurements audit:

- Data collection through different means.
- Verification of accuracy and veracity of collected data.

- Data and systems audit procedures and techniques.
- Risk analysis procedures and techniques.

8.8 VVB non-compliance

The technical management of the VPCE supervises the performance of the authorised VVBs by reviewing the completeness of the documents and procedures developed by the VVBs in order to verify compliance with the requirements established by the VPCE.

The procedures to be followed with the VVBs in case of non-compliance or inconsistencies are defined according to the seriousness of the non-compliance and the repetition of this, as shown in [Table 11](#).

Table 11. Management of VVBs non-compliance and inconsistencies.

Fault or infringement	Occurrence	Sanction
Intentionally providing false information.	First time	Written notification and request for clarification of the information. During the process, the VVB may no longer carry out validations or verifications.
	Second time	Indefinite suspension and sanction of the VVB's authorisation, disqualifying it from conducting validations and verifications under the VPCE.
Incursion of conflict of interest.	First time	Written notification and request for clarification of information and reporting of corrective measures.
	Second time	Sanction of VVB's authorisation, disqualifying it from conducting validations and verifications under the VPCE.
Persistent underperformance.	First time	Written or verbal notification of the inconsistencies presented. The VVB must present a plan aimed at avoiding the occurrence of the issues detected.
	Second time	Indefinite suspension of the VVB's authorisation, disqualifying it from carrying out validations and verifications under the VPCE.

Fault or infringement	Occurrence	Sanction
Lack of monitoring on the findings in validation or verification processes.	First time	The error or omission is communicated, and correction is requested. Request for review of internal processes to prevent this type of misconduct.
	Second time	Indefinite suspension of the VVB's authorisation, disqualifying it from conducting validations and verifications under the VPCE.

9 Procedures and articulation between the VPCE and EcoRegistry

In all relevant aspects, the principles and standards established in the VPCEs Protocol, and the procedures defined in this document are mandatory for EcoRegistry.

The VPCE and EcoRegistry hold frequent coordination meetings and maintain permanent contact, through the participation of members of both teams in different internal communication channels of each institution, in order to ensure coherence and cohesion in the processes required for the issuance of the CECs.

Legal Procedures



10 Confidentiality

In order to guarantee the confidentiality of the documents supporting the certification and of any information that, due to the certification, becomes known to the staff or delegates of Global Zero Waste and Cercarbono, EcoRegistry, the VVBs and consultants performing the audits or certifications and which are not of a public nature, the aforementioned staff must sign annually (or when assigned, in the case of temporary or specific staff) a confidentiality agreement.

The procedure for the management and control of the information deposited in the registration platform is defined in the **EcoRegistry User Guide Registry Platform**, available at www.ecoregistry.io/documents, which must be followed by EcoRegistry, Cercarbono, Global Zero Waste and other personnel assigned to certification processes. This manual also includes a section on confidentiality of information and a mechanism for monitoring and quality control of the content of the documents in each account.

Table 12 identifies the documents that are part of the regular VPCE certification process and their confidentiality.

Table 12. Confidentiality of PCEMs' information in the register.

Document	Format	Type of information
Location of the PCEM	jpg/png	Public
Programme change declaration (if applicable)	pdf	Public
Previous documentation (if applicable)	pdf	Mixed
PCEM description document	pdf	Public
Summary of the PCEM ⁶	pdf	Public
Supporting documents	pdf	Private
Power of attorney	pdf	Private
Validation calculations	xlsx	Private
Validator's conflict of interest statement	pdf	Public
Validation report and appendices	pdf	Public
Validation statement	pdf	Public

⁶ In case the PDD has not been submitted in English, the PCEM shall submit a summary in English.

Document	Format	Type of information
Monitoring report	pdf/xlsx	Public
Verification calculations	xlsx	Private
SDGs' tool and evidence	pdf/xlsx	Public
SDGs rubric	pdf	Public
Verifier's conflict of interest statement	pdf	Public
Verification report and appendices	pdf	Public
Verification statement	pdf	Public
Issuance certificate	pdf	Public
Certification report	pdf	Public
PCEM notes	pdf	Private
Withdrawal certificates	pdf	Public

11 Conflict of interest

The VPCE seeks to ensure that the outcome of the service it offers is not improperly affected by factors external to the certification process, and therefore establishes procedures to understand, identify, and appropriately manage conflicts of interest that may arise.

The principles and procedures described are useful for directors and employees of Global Zero Waste and Cercarbono, registry administrators, as well as third parties, to identify situations that may represent a conflict of interest, directly or indirectly affecting the interests of the parties involved in the provision of the certification service offered by the VPCE.

The regulations specified are mandatory for directors, employees, validation, and verification bodies, PCEM developers, registry platform, external consultants and all those involved in the certification and registration process of materials recirculation initiatives.

11.1 Situations of conflict of interest

The following are some situations or actions that lead to conflicts of interest.

11.1.1 Use of confidential information

Information and documentation related to the PCEMs certification activity and potential business must be handled within the organisation and may not be used for personal gain or for the benefit of a third party.

Misuse of confidential company information occurs when any of the following actions are taken:

- Information is published without prior authorisation.
- Using or concealing company information for personal gain or for the benefit of a third party.
- Providing information to persons who are not authorised to have it.

11.1.2 Business activities and shareholdings in companies

Related conflicts of interest occur in cases where any employee or director has a direct (as a legal representative, partner, employee, or executive) or indirect (as a consultant) involvement in a supplier company that is directly related to Global Zero Waste and Cercarbono.

11.1.3 External employment and investment

Global Zero Waste and Cercarbono employees must not work for a company that has the same corporate name; nor should they serve on boards of directors or be consultants to companies that are direct competitors, regardless of whether or not remuneration is received.

Investments outside the company that represent an economic interest likely to influence the judgement of employees are considered a conflict of interest.

11.1.4 Economic activities of persons close to those involved

If any director, employee, supplier, or consultant identifies that in one of the companies with which the VPCE has business or plans to have business, there is a relationship with a person with whom there is a degree of kinship, it should be reported and declared if it is related with the work performed in the programme.

11.1.5 Corporate opportunities

An employee, external consultant or director cannot personally take advantage of an opportunity generated in the process of performing their work in the VPCE.

11.2 Management of conflicts of interest

VPCE expects all employees to report and declare, both during the hiring process and subsequently, any identified conflicts of interest. Zero Waste Global and Cercarbono directors are responsible for managing these when they arise and for identifying potential conflicts.

11.2.1 Procedures for managing conflicts of interest

If a conflict of interest is identified in Global Zero Waste or Cercarbono, the due process is as follows:

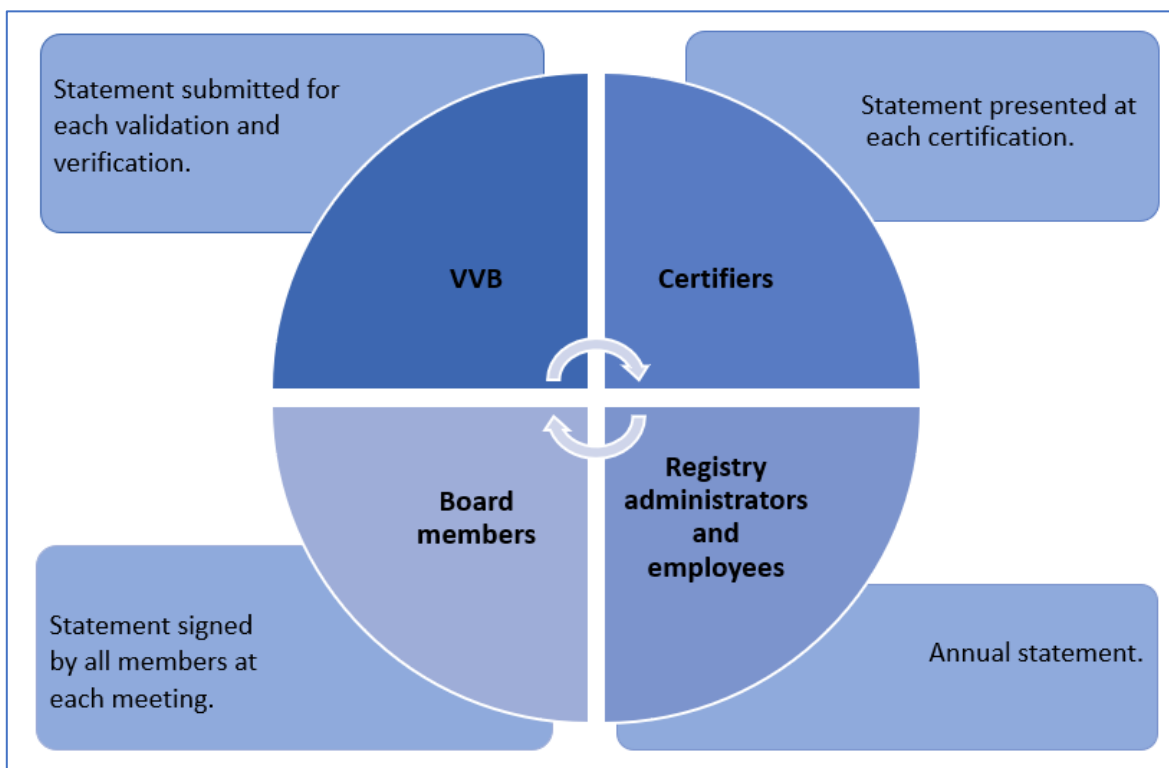
- When a conflict of interest is identified, all actions and direct or indirect involvement in the actions of the person involved must be suspended until it is determined that there is no conflict of interest.
- Inform the immediate superior in a timely manner and as soon as possible, by submitting the **General Declaration of Conflict of Interest** form, which can be found at www.cercarbono.com.
- Provide all the necessary information and documentation to enable the superior and subsequently the directors of Global Zero Waste and Cercarbono to understand the matter in detail.

- The directors of Global Zero Waste and Cercarbono decide whether or not a conflict of interest exists.
- If a conflict of interest does exist, the directors of Global Zero Waste and Cercarbono indicate the actions to be taken in a document, as well as inform the person appointed to assess the case.
- There should be written evidence of the notification and management of the conflict, by the person involved and the directors of Global Zero Waste and Cercarbono.
- If it is concluded that the person involved is presenting a permanent conflict of interest which constantly affects the exercise of their functions, it should be analysed whether the conflict is a cause for termination of contract, due to the impossibility to exercise the position.

11.2.2 Management of conflicts of interest related to stakeholders

In the VPCE certification process, there are several actors involved and as part of the process of prevention and management of possible conflicts of interest that may arise, the following procedures are followed with each of these actors where a declaration of conflict of interest is requested, depending on the activity that each one performs, as shown in [Figure 5](#).

Figure 5. Actors required to file conflict of interest declarations.



11.3 Mechanisms for reporting conflicts of interest

If a staff member encounters a conflict of interest in the performance of their duties, directly or indirectly, they must immediately inform their line manager by sending an email describing the situation and attach the VPCE **General Declaration of Conflict of Interest** form.

The person receiving this report must notify the directors of Global Zero Waste and Cercarbono to initiate the process. Members should consider different alternatives with their respective consequences and analyse previous experiences to find the solution that ensures fairness and transparency.

11.4 Prevention of conflicts of interest

All employees, suppliers and consultants must comply with all decisions and actions taken by the directors of Global Zero Waste and Cercarbono, as well as with what has been agreed and signed in the employment contract.

Persons who are part of the company's shareholding composition shall not take advantage of the company's business opportunities for their own benefit or for the benefit of third parties. Membership on boards of directors or similar activities is

acceptable only to the extent that such activities do not interfere with their work in the company.

All applicants for employment with the Company must agree that they have read and understood the principles and procedures established in this section at the time of their engagement and must complete the **General Declaration of Conflict of Interest** form.

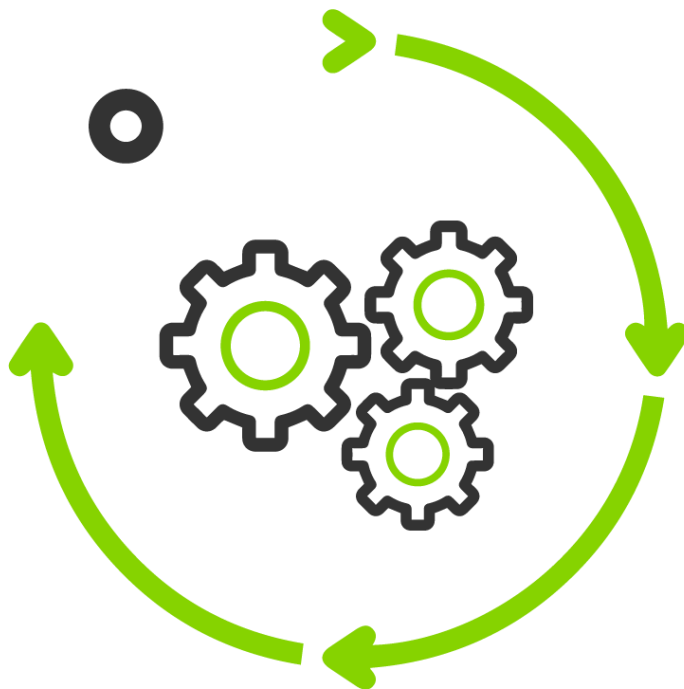
All persons involved in the company should report, through regular channels of communication, their suspicions of possible conflicts of interest if something demonstrable has been evidenced.

11.5 Conflicts of interest related to VVBs

All VVBs should have procedures within their internal policies to ensure that persons involved in the validation and verification processes, senior management or board members or partners do not have financial, commercial, or functional conflicts of interest in the provision of the service. Similarly, they should have procedures in place to ensure that, where such conflicts arise, they are declared and adequately addressed.

VVBs must submit a conflict of interest declaration for validation and a conflict of interest declaration for verification of the PCEMs as a prerequisite for the VPCE. The form for this declaration can be found at www.cercarbono.com. The declaration of conflict of interest for validation or verification must be dated eight calendar days prior to a validation or verification event.

Technical Procedures



12 Approval of methodologies in the framework of the VPCE

If there is no approved methodology applicable to a given PCEM in the VPCE, a new one can be proposed or a revision of an already approved methodology can be requested. Principally, the new methodology option should be pursued if a programme or project activity requires substantially different methodological approaches from an approved methodology.

This section establishes the process by which new or existing methodologies in other standards or certification schemes are approved for implementation by the VPCE.

12.1 Technical committee

The methodology approval process is conducted by an ad hoc technical committee, which is appointed in each case by the directors of Global Zero Waste and Cercarbono and is composed of at least two people, who may be technical personnel from Cercarbono, Global Zero Waste or consultants with expertise in the type of material to which the methodologies correspond.

The participants of the committee must have the following characteristics:

- Have knowledge of the principles and guidelines governing the VPCE, especially those presented in its protocol.
- Have experience in the type of material and core area in which the methodology is developed.
- Be able to guarantee that none of their work, professional or personal activities represent a conflict of interest.

12.2 Approval process

The approval process depends on the type of methodology under consideration, which may be proprietary to the standard or programme, developed by third parties and already subject to public consultation, or new, developed by third parties but not yet subject to public consultation.

The process described only applies to new methodologies developed by third parties or existing methodologies belonging to other standards or programmes, and comprises the stages described below. For the approval of VPCE's own methodologies, the steps described in [Sections 12.2.4](#) and [12.2.5](#) shall be followed.

12.2.1 Application for approval

The proposer of the methodology must complete the form ***Application for Approval of New Methodology or Methodology from Another Standard or Certification Programme***, available at www.cercarbono.com and send it to globalzerowaste@cercarbono.com with the subject “Application for approval of methodology”. In the case of methodologies that have been published under another standard or programme, written and duly legalised authorisation must be attached on behalf of the institution that owns the commercial rights (or, failing this, on behalf of the author) for the use of the methodology by the VPCE and the incorporation of its logo in the place or places in which it corresponds.

Once the application has been studied, the VPCE informs the proposer if the methodology is relevant to the programme; if so, the methodology approval process can continue.

12.2.2 Submission of methodologies

12.2.2.1 Methodologies that have not been subject to public consultation

The methodology draft can be written in English or Spanish and must be submitted in Microsoft Word format and optionally, if necessary, with files in Microsoft Excel format. If the methodology includes tables integrated in the document, these must also be submitted in Microsoft Excel format. If the methodology includes graphs, these must be submitted in editable formats. The proposer of a new methodology may request a template in Microsoft Word format for editing.

The methodology should be sent to globalzerowaste@cercarbono.com with subject “Methodology without public consultation” and should include the following elements:

- Name of the methodology.
- Names of the persons or company in charge of the development of the methodology.
- Definitions and specific terms of the methodology that are not included in the ***Terms and Definitions of the Voluntary Programme on Circular Economy*** and that are relevant for the understanding of the methodology.
- Accreditation period, where applicable.
- Monitoring parameters and frequency of measurement.
- Baseline scenario.
- Programme or project activity.
- Project scenario.

- Other considerations and constraints.

12.2.2.2 Methodologies that have already been subject to public consultation

The proposer must attach the current version of the methodology in an editable format, preferably in Microsoft Word format, and the link where it is published, and must send it to globalzerowaste@cercarbono.com with the subject “Methodology with public consultation”.

12.2.3 Assessment of methodologies

In this stage, the relevance, pertinence, and suitability of the methodologies are analysed, as well as their conformity with the principles of the VPCE, its technical bases and concepts, and its terminology, according to the criteria defined in **Table 13**. Four possible outcomes are obtained from the application of these criteria:

Approved implies the fulfilment, without exception, of all evaluation criteria by a methodology that has already been taken to public consultation and has taken into account the contributions of the public.

Approved for public consultation implies compliance, without exception, with all assessment criteria, which qualifies it for public consultation.

Approved with request for modifications implies non-compliance with at least one of the evaluation criteria.

Rejected implies non-compliance with at least one of the evaluation criteria on aspects that are difficult to remedy or incompatibility with the principles of the VPCE Protocol and other general provisions of the programme or considers questionable legal, ethical, or commercial aspects.

The results of the evaluation are recorded in a report signed by the technical committee and communicated to the proposer.

Table 13. Assessment points of proposed methodologies.

Element	Compliance		
	Yes	No	Requires adjustments
Is eligible within the material type scope of the VPCE.			
Is fully compatible with the principles of			

Element	Compliance		
	Yes	No	Requires adjustments
the protocol and other general provisions of the VPCE.			
It is fundamentally different from the methodologies approved by the VPCE.			
The terms used are consistent with the most recent version of the Terms and Definitions of the Voluntary Programme on Circular Economy , available at www.cercarbono.com .			
Complies with the most recent version of the Tool to Report Contributions of Circular Economy Initiatives to the Sustainable Development Goals , available at www.cercarbono.com .			
Complies with the VPCE Protocol for determining the baseline scenario.			
Complies with the VPCE Protocol for determining the project scenario.			
Complies with the VPCE Protocol for determining the quantification of materials reductions and recirculation.			

12.2.3.1 Methodologies that have been subject to public consultation

Methodologies developed under other standards or programmes that have already had a public consultation are only given an approved or rejected rating.

Those that are **approved** directly by the committee may be published on the Cercarbono website for use.

Rejected methodologies are not considered in their current versions for use under the VPCE. New versions of these, with substantial changes to address elements that are not compatible with the programme, may be submitted to the approval process.

12.2.3.2 Methodologies that have not been subject to public consultation

For methodologies developed under other standards or certification schemes or by third parties that have not had a public consultation, the steps to be taken depend on the results of the preliminary assessment.

Methodologies **approved for public consultation** may be subject to public consultation, as established in the VPCE Protocol.

Proposers of **approved methodologies with application for modifications** receive a detailed written assessment outlining the modifications or improvements required for acceptance into the programme. Members of the technical committee and the proposers can hold discussion meetings in which the elements and reasons for rejection are presented and possible solutions can be discussed.

Proposers may submit modified versions of the methodologies for evaluation, when they consider that all applications for modifications have been duly addressed. The VPCE may assign the same technical committees that previously evaluated them or define a different composition, depending on the circumstances.

This cycle can be repeated until an **approved** result is obtained or until the proposer withdraws.

The proposers of the **rejected** methodologies receive a detailed written diagnosis defining the elements that make them incompatible with the VPCE. These methodologies can be modified for re-proposal by submitting a list of the substantial changes made. The VPCE may assign the same technical committees that assessed them previously or define a different composition, depending on the circumstances. If the same methodology is rejected twice, it cannot be resubmitted to the approval process under the programme.

12.2.4 Review of methodology

The VPCE technical committee conducts an in-depth review of the proposed methodology in a period of approximately twenty calendar days, depending on its complexity. If necessary, comments and suggestions are sent to those in charge of developing the methodology, who must respond within 15 calendar days, in order to continue with the approval process.

12.2.5 Public consultation

After the final version of the methodology has been defined and all actions and observations have been implemented, a public consultation is held for stakeholders for a period of thirty calendar days.

The public consultation is held through the Cercarbono website in order to have control over the comments received and the persons or companies to which these comments correspond.

At the end of the time the comments are received, they are forwarded to the proposer of the methodology, who ensures that they are duly incorporated or, if they are not considered relevant, demonstrates their irrelevance.

Once all the comments from the public consultation have been processed, the proposer must provide the VPCE with an adjusted version of the methodology, with the comments received in the public consultation incorporated as comments in the margin where appropriate and with the changes made in change control, as well as a clean adjusted version, without comments or editing marks, which is reviewed for approval or non-approval.

The proposer must also submit a table of responses to comments from the public consultation, for publication on the Cercarbono website.

All versions of the proposed methodologies (initial, adjusted with comments and edits, adjusted and clean), accompanying documents, assessment diagnostics and reports are duly archived by the VPCE to ensure transparency and traceability of the approval process.

12.3 Copyrights, trademarks, brands, and logos

In all cases, the VPCE acknowledges and makes explicit the copyrights of the approved methodologies.

In all cases, the VPCE respects and preserves in the published materials (existing methodologies from other standards or programmes) the existing marks and logos on them.

In the case of methodologies that are submitted to the programme approval process and that have not been submitted for public consultation, the VPCE reserves the right to add its own logo in the usual places in its methodologies but respects the right to use the logos of the institutions involved in their development.

In the case of methodologies developed partially or totally by third parties, the VPCE recognises the corresponding royalties for their use by clients.

13 Request for methodological review, deviation, or clarification

If a PCEM requires a methodological deviation from the selected methodology, the following must be submitted:

- Description of the mandatory requirement from which the deviation is requested, including reference to the specific section of the methodology where the requirement is described.
- Justification for requesting the deviation.
- Proposed methodological alternative.
- Proposal to implement the deviation, including its implementation date.
- Assessment and description of the impact of the deviation on reduction or recirculation of PCEM materials.

The deviation request is assessed by the VVB on the basis of the programme rationale and the VVB indicates whether its “proceeds” or “does not proceed”. In the case of “proceeds”, the detailed evaluation and validation of the deviation is done by the VVB.

To make a request for methodological deviation, a completed ***Request for Methodological Deviation*** form must be submitted, which is available at www.cercarbono.com.

If a PCEM developer or, in general, an independent third party considers that an approved methodology can be adapted to apply to specific conditions of a PCEM, it can propose a revision of the methodology to the programme. Depending on the extent and scope of the revision, a technical committee defined by the VPCE will define which of the steps established for the approval of new methodologies will be applicable for the approval of the revision.

14 Guidelines for remote audits and audit deferral

This section is addressed to PCEMs and VVBs involved in certification of circular materials under the VPCE. It is applicable to all activities covered by the Programme Protocol. PCEMs contemplating remote audits can only be certified by Cercarbono if they demonstrate compliance with these guidelines.

In special circumstances, there may be situations where on-site audits are not feasible and remote audits may be required.

In cases where a PCEM is faced with an extraordinary situation that enables a remote audit and does not wish to postpone it, it must submit a request (by letter or mail) to the VPCE requesting authorisation for such a remote audit and the circumstances that enable it.

The circumstances necessary to enable remote auditing are listed below (all must be fulfilled):

- There is an extraordinary situation that implies an impediment to conduct the audit in the field or site visit in a face-to-face manner in accordance with the VPCE Protocol.
- The remote audit is conducted in the framework of a verification event.
- It has a positive opinion and a previously issued validation and verification statement⁷.
- There is an agreement between the PCEM and the VVB ensuring that the infrastructure is in place to conduct a remote audit and specifying the conditions to safeguard the security and confidentiality of the information⁸ (including that of the previous verification event).
- The PCEM has the necessary records or documents (including electronic information), as well as the availability to collaborate with the remote audit, so that the remote audit can be performed under a reasonable level of assurance.
- The risk level of the verification event is low.
- It has a declaration of conflict of interest between the PCEM holder or developer and the VVB to perform the remote audit (stating the justification for implementing it in this way) within a reasonable timeframe.

⁷ The first verification of a PCEM must be conducted in person.

⁸ Such as files, photographs, documents, reports, procedures, among others, to be verified. Some or all of this information may need to be sent to the VVB for review prior to the remote audit, which should be included in the verification plan.

15 References

Cercarbono. (2023a). *Cercarbono's Protocol for Voluntary Carbon Certification*. Version 4.2. Available at: www.cercarbono.com.

Cercarbono. (2023b). *Procedures of Cercarbono's Certification Programme*. Version 2.0. Available at: www.cercarbono.com.

EcoRegistry. (2023). *EcoRegistry User Guide Registry Platform*. Version 2.0. Available at: www.ecoregistry.io/documents.

Global Zero Waste and Cercarbono. (2023a). *Global Zero Waste and Cercarbono's Protocol for Voluntary Certification of Circular Economy*. Version 1.1. Available at: www.cercarbono.com.

Global Zero Waste and Cercarbono. (2023b). *Terms and Definitions of the Voluntary Programme on Circular Economy*. Version 1.0. Available at: www.cercarbono.com.

Global Zero Waste and Cercarbono. (2023c). *Tool to Report Contributions of Circular Economy Initiatives to the Sustainable Development Goals*. Version 1.1. Available at: www.cercarbono.com.

ISO 14065:2020. *General principles and requirements for bodies validating and verifying environmental information*.

ISO/IEC 17029:2019. *Conformity assessment - General principles and requirements for validation and verification bodies*.

16 History of the document

Version	Date	Comments or changes
1.0	17.04.2023	Initial version of the document.

17 Annex

Clarification of documentation for developers, licensees and VVBs

In order to facilitate the management of the PCEMs, Global Zero Waste and Cercarbono have established the documents and templates presented below:

Regulatory documents

Document
Global Zero Waste and Cercarbono's Protocol for Voluntary Certification of Circular Economy.
Procedures of Voluntary Programme on Circular Economy.
Terms and Definitions of the Voluntary Programme on Circular Economy.

Requirements for the development of the PCEM

Pre-registration and formulation
Application for Renewal of Accreditation Period.
Application for Approval of New Methodology or Methodology from Another Standard or Certification Programme.
Project Description Document.
Power of Attorney with Withdrawals.
Power of Attorney Without Withdrawals.
Application for Conversion of Circular Economy Credits (or related) from Other Standards or Programmes to VPCE.
Request for Methodological Deviation.
General Declaration of Conflict of Interest.
Declaration of Migration from Other Standards or Certification Programmes to VPCE.
Change of Organization Name Declaration Form.
PCEM Transfer Declaration Form.

Implementation
Monitoring Report.

Validation and verification
Application for Accreditation as a Validation and Verification Body.

Validation and verification

Declaration of Conflict of Interest Made by the VVB.

Validation Report.

Joint Validation and Verification Report.

Verification Report.

Validation Statement.

Joint Validation and Verification Statement.

Validation Statement.

Tools

Tools

Tool to Report Contributions of Circular Economy Initiatives to the Sustainable Development Goals.

All these documents are available at www.cercarbono.com.