



# Definitions

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## About

Developed in 2005 in Tocantins, Brazil the SOCIALCARBON Standard was created by Social Carbon Foundation, a Civil Society Organisation of Public Interest (OSCIP). The SOCIALCARBON Standard was designed during the implementation of Brazil's first carbon sequestration project in the Bananal Island, with the differential of ensuring community involvement in the initiative. Since 2022, SOCIALCARBON has been managed by the Social Carbon Foundation, a UK Charity with the mission to act in mitigating the effects of climate change through scientific research, environmental conservation, and community-based sustainability activities.

Since 2022, the SOCIALCARBON Standard has transitioned from a co-benefits standard to a full standard for nature-based solutions. We believe that climate action and nature-based solutions must include the participation of the local people or they will not be sustainable in the long-term. The transition of the SOCIALCARBON Standard into a full standard for nature-based solutions further supports our mission of scaling local action against biodiversity loss and climate change, but on a global scale. To enable this vision to become a reality, the Social Carbon Foundation develops high quality standards to facilitate market-driven mechanisms that accelerate the development of projects which deliver real results for our communities and the planet.

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# 1. Introduction

This document provides the definitions for terms used in the SOCIALCARBON Standard documents. In addition, the definitions set out in ISO 14064-2:2006, ISO 14064-3:2006 and ISO 14065:2016 shall apply to the SOCIALCARBON Standard. Note that defined terms in the SOCIALCARBON Standard documents, in common with ISO convention, are used without capital first letters. Section 3 lists acronyms used in the SOCIALCARBON Standard documents. This document will be updated from time-to-time and readers shall ensure that they are using the most current version of the document.

## 2. Definitions

### Aboveground Biomass

Living biomass above the soil, including the stem, stump, branches, bark, seeds and foliage.

### Agroforestry

An ecologically-based natural resource management system in which trees are integrated in farmland and rangeland.

### Agro-ecological zones

Geographic areas based on similar characteristics such as combinations of soil, landform and climatic conditions.

### Accession Representation

The deed issued by the project proponent, and an acceding entity, made in respect of an acceding entity joining a project as project proponent, and which is prepared using the *SOCIALCARBON Deed of Accession in Respect of Registration Deed of Representation Template*.

### Activity Method

A methodological approach that determines additionality for a given class of project activity in accordance with the SOCIALCARBON Standard rules.

### Afforestation

The direct human-induced conversion of land that has not been forested for a period of at least 50 years to forested land through planting, seeding and/or the human-induced promotion of natural seed sources.

### Afforestation, Reforestation and Revegetation (ARR)

Activities that increase carbon stocks in woody biomass (and in some cases soils) by establishing, increasing and/or restoring vegetative cover through planting, sowing and/or the human-assisted natural regeneration of woody vegetation.

### Agriculture, Forestry and Other Land Use (AFOLU)

The sectoral scope that covers GHG emissions and emission reductions and/or removals from project activities in the agriculture, forestry, and other land use/land use change sectors and for which the SOCIALCARBON Standard has established rules and requirements with respect to specific project categories.

### AFOLU Expert

A person with expertise and experience in AFOLU methodologies, tools, modules and/or projects, and who is approved by Social Carbon Foundation for methodology element assessments within a given AFOLU project category.

### AFOLU Buffer Credits

Non-tradable AFOLU buffer credits for covering the risk of unforeseen losses in carbon stocks across the AFOLU project portfolio.

### Approved GHG Program

A GHG program that has been approved by the Social Carbon Foundation Board, through a gap analysis, as a SOCIALCARBON Standard approved GHG program.

### Authorized Representative

An entity authorized by the project proponent to communicate with and provide instructions to the SOCIALCARBON registry on its behalf, with such authorization

granted through a communications agreement signed by both/all parties and submitted to the SOCIALCARBON registry.

### Belowground Biomass

Living biomass of live roots, sometimes excluding fine roots of less than 2 mm diameter because these often cannot be distinguished empirically from soil organic matter or litter.

### Cancellation

The permanent removal of a SCU from circulation in the SOCIALCARBON registry system for purposes other than retirement (e.g., converting SCUs into another form of GHG credit, compensating for excess SCU issuance).

### Capacity Limit

A limitation on any quantity in relation to the project imposed by a methodology applied to the project, the GHG program under which the methodology applied to the project was developed or the GHG program under which the project was developed.

### Capital Expenditure

The costs to the project activity of acquiring new assets or improving existing assets that are utilized for the duration of the project crediting period.

### Carbon Pools

A reservoir of carbon that has the potential to accumulate (or lose) carbon over time, which for AFOLU projects encompasses aboveground biomass, belowground biomass, litter, dead wood, soil and wood products.

### Carbon Stock

The quantity of carbon held within a pool, measured in tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>

### Catastrophic Reversal

A type of reversal caused by disasters such as hurricanes, earthquakes, flooding, drought, fires, tornados or winter storms, or man-made events over which the project

proponent has no control such as acts of terrorism or war.

### Communications Agreement

The agreement by which the project proponent authorizes a third party to communicate with and provide instructions to the SOCIALCARBON registry on its behalf, the form and scope of which shall be determined solely by the SOCIALCARBON registry and the signatories to the agreement.

### Crediting Period

The time period for which GHG emission reductions or removals generated by the project are eligible for issuance as SCUs, the rules with respect to the length of such time period and the renewal of the project crediting period being set out in the *SOCIALCARBON Standard*. Also referred to as “Project Crediting Period”.

### Cropland

Arable and tillage land and agro-forestry systems where vegetation falls below the threshold used for the forest land category.

### Dead Wood

Non-living woody biomass not contained in the litter, either standing, lying on the ground or in the soil. Dead wood includes wood lying on the surface, dead roots, and stumps larger than or equal to 10 cm in diameter or any other diameter used by the host country for its UNFCCC national inventory accounting.

### Deemed Savings Factor

A type of default factor used to estimate the GHG emission reductions or removals associated with a unit of activity implemented by the project, such as a project activity instance.

### Default Factor

A parameter value that is specified in a methodology with the intention of standardizing the calculation of net GHG emission reductions and/or removals and providing greater consistency of calculations across projects.

### Deforestation

The direct human-induced conversion of forest land to non-forest land.

### Degradation

The persistent reduction of canopy cover and/or carbon stocks in a forest due to human activities such as animal grazing, fuelwood extraction, timber removal or other such activities, but that does not result in the conversion of forest to non-forest land, and falls under the *IPCC 2003 Good Practice Guidance* land category of *forest remaining forest*.

### Drained Peatland

A peatland having a lower than natural average annual water level due to accelerated water loss or decreased water supply resulting from human activities and constructions, both on- and off-site.

### Double Counting

The scenario under which a singular GHG emission reduction or removal is monetized separately by two different entities or where a GHG emission reduction or removal is sold to multiple buyers.

### Free-rider

An activity that is undertaken without requiring any intervention from the carbon market but that nonetheless receives credit for the GHG emission reductions or removals that it generates.

### Forest

Land with woody vegetation that meets an internationally accepted definition (e.g., UNFCCC, FAO or IPCC) of what constitutes a forest, which includes threshold parameters, such as minimum forest area, tree height and level of crown cover, and may include mature, secondary, degraded and wetland forests.

### Emission Trading Program

A voluntary or regulatory program that allows for trading in GHG credits or allowances.



### GHG Emission Reductions Rights

The right to participate in benefit-sharing or transact GHG emission reductions or removals resulting from 1) formal or informal, statutory, customary or ancestral land rights or land management rights, or 2) participation in activities that generate emission reductions or removals.

### GHG Program

A formal or organized program, system or arrangement for the recognition of activities leading to GHG emission reductions or removals, and/or the crediting or issuance of instruments representing, or acknowledging, GHG emission reductions or removals.

### Grassland

Areas dominated by grasses with a density of trees too low to meet an internationally accepted definition of forest, including savannas (i.e., grasslands with scattered trees). Grasslands also include managed rangeland and pastureland that is not considered cropland where the primary land use is grazing, and which may also include grass-dominated systems managed for conservation or recreational purposes.

### Grouped Project

A project to which additional instances of the project activity, which meet pre-established eligibility criteria, may be added subsequent to project validation.

### Implementing Partner

The individual or organization operating the project activity (or activities) in partnership with the project proponent, respectively.

### Improved Forest Management (IFM)

Activities that change forest management practices and increase carbon stock on forest lands managed for wood products such as saw timber, pulpwood and fuelwood.

### Issuance Representation

The unilateral representation issued by the project proponent at each SCU issuance request, made in respect of the GHG emission reductions and/or removals generated by the project, and which is prepared using the *SOCIALCARBON Issuance Deed of Representation Template*; or

### Jurisdiction

The administrative unit such as a nation, state, province, region, department or district, or an eco-region or other defined area, specified in a jurisdictional program description.

### Large Project

A project that generates 300,000 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>e or more of GHG emissions reductions or removals per year.

### Large-Scale Commercial Deforestation

An area of deforestation that exceeds 1,000 ha, cleared in a single monitoring period (or, between two points of remotely sensed historical data), that has a single post-deforestation land use (e.g., commercial agriculture or timber plantation), not including areas covered by the footprint of large infrastructure (such as a dam) or those affected by natural disturbances (i.e., due to geologic or weather-related events).

### Leakage

Net changes of anthropogenic emissions by GHG sources that occur outside the project boundary, but are attributable to the project.

### Listing Representation

The unilateral representation issued by the project proponent at the time of the project pipeline listing request, made in respect of the project, and which is prepared using the *SOCIALCARBON Listing Representation Template*.

### Litter

Non-living biomass, with a size less than a minimum threshold diameter (e.g., 10 cm) chosen by the host country for its UNFCCC national inventory accounting, lying dead, in various states of decomposition above the mineral or organic soil, including litter, fomic and humic layers. Live fine roots (of less than the threshold diameter for belowground biomass) are included in litter where they cannot be distinguished from it empirically.

### Loss Event

In an AFOLU project, any event that results in a loss of more than five percent of previously verified emission reductions and removals due to losses in carbon stocks in pools included in the project boundary that is not planned for in the project description (e.g., harvesting as set out in management plans and described in the project description is not a loss event). Examples include catastrophic events (see definition of catastrophic reversal) as well as human-induced losses such as those caused by poor management, tillage, over-harvesting or encroachment by outside actors (e.g., illegal logging or fuelwood collection).

### Loss Event Report

The document that describes and records a loss event using the *Loss Event Report Template*.

### Loss Event Representation

The unilateral representation issued by the project proponent, prepared using the *SOCIALCARBON Loss Event Deed of Representation Template* and made in respect of the carbon stock loss estimate in a loss event report.

### Market Leakage Evaluation

The evaluation by the project proponent of the project's market leakage impacts and discount factor, documented in the project description, or monitoring report, as applicable.

### Materiality

The concept applied to determine if errors, omissions and misstatements in

information could affect the GHG assertion and influence decisions resulting from it.

### Methodology

A specific set of criteria and procedures, which apply to specific project activities, for identifying the project boundary, determining the baseline scenario, demonstrating additionality, quantifying net GHG emission reductions and/or removals, and specifying the monitoring procedures.

### Methodology Approval Process

The process by which new methodology elements are approved under the SOCIALCARBON Standard.

### Methodology Deviation

A deviation from the criteria and procedures for monitoring or measurement set out in a methodology applied to the project.

### Methodology Element

A methodology, methodology revision, module or tool (including additionality tools, performance benchmarks and technology benchmarks).

### Methodology Element Developer

An entity that develops a methodology element.

### Methodology Revision

A revision to the criteria and procedures of an existing methodology.

### Model

A formula or set of formulae that uses parameters and input values to establish the value of one or more output variables.

### Module

A component of a methodology that can be applied to perform a specific methodological task.

### Monitoring Report

The document that records data to allow the assessment of the GHG emission reductions or removals generated by the project during a given time period in accordance with the monitoring plan set out in the project description, and which is prepared using the *SOCIALCARBON Monitoring Report Template* or an approved combined monitoring report template available on the Social Carbon website.

### Native Ecosystem

A landscape composed of indigenous vegetation not established by planting and/or seeding.

### Native Species

A species is defined as native to a given region or ecosystem if its presence is the result of only “natural” processes; that is to say, not by human agency. Under the SOCIALCARBON Standard the minimum recorded presence of the species to a given region or ecosystem must be at least 1750 AD.

### Natural Disturbance

Non-anthropogenic events or non-anthropogenic circumstances that cause significant emissions from forests and are beyond the control of, and not materially influenced by, a project proponent, such as wildfires, insect and disease infestations, extreme weather events and/or geological disturbances. Harvesting and prescribed burning are not considered natural disturbance.

### Nature-Based Solution

An action to protect, sustainably manage, and restore natural and modified ecosystems that address societal challenges effectively and adaptively, simultaneously benefiting people and nature.

### Nested Crediting Period

The first nested crediting period begins on the date when a nested project first applies an allocated baseline or allocated forest reference emission level.

### Nested Project

A registered REDD+ project, that is not currently subject to a grandparenting period, and that is located within a jurisdiction covered by a jurisdictional program.

### Nested REDD+ (JNR)

The approach under the SOCIALCARBON Standard by which reduced emissions from deforestation and degradation can be credited at the nested project levels.

### No-Objection Letter

A written letter or other written communication from the jurisdictional approval authority of the higher level jurisdiction stating that it does not object to a specific project being submitted for registration under the SOCIALCARBON Standard.

### Non-Project Areas

Forest areas (or areas converted to forest or otherwise revegetated) within a jurisdiction, but outside project boundaries or nested subnational jurisdiction boundaries, that are included in the accounting of GHG emissions and emission reductions and/or removals.

### Non-Permanence Risk Analysis

The assessment of the risk of a potential loss in carbon stock in the project over a period of 100 years, prepared by the project proponent using the *SOCIALCARBON Non-Permanence Risk Report Template*.

### Official Translation

A translation by a member of a member body of the International Federation of Translators.

### Partial Release Representation

The deed issued by the project proponents and the SOCIALCARBON registry, made in respect of a project proponent leaving a project, and which is prepared using the *SOCIALCARBON Deed of Partial Release in Respect of Registration Deed of Representation Template*.

### Peatland

An area with a layer of naturally accumulated organic material (peat) that meets an internationally accepted threshold (e.g., host-country, FAO or IPCC) for the depth of the peat layer and the percentage of organic material composition. Peat originates because of water saturation. Peat soil is either saturated with water for long periods or is artificially drained. Common names for peatland include mire, bog, fen, moor, muskeg, pocosin and peat swamp (forest).

### Performance Benchmark

A benchmark against which the performance of individual projects is assessed for the purpose of determining additionality and/or the crediting baseline.

### Performance Benchmark Metric

The indicator, specified in terms of tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e per unit of output, tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e per unit of input or as a sequestration metric, used to define the performance benchmark.

### Performance Method

A methodological approach that establishes a performance benchmark to determine additionality and/or the crediting baseline in accordance with the SOCIALCARBON Standard rules.

### Project

The project activity or activities implemented as a GHG project and described in the project description.

### Project Activity

The specific set of technologies, measures and/or outcomes, specified in a methodology applied to the project, that alter the conditions identified in the baseline scenario and which result in GHG emission reductions or removals.

### Project Activity Instance (Instance)

A particular set of implemented technologies and/or measures that constitute the

minimum unit of activity necessary to comply with the criteria and procedures applicable to the project activity under the methodology applied to the project.

### Project Crediting Period

See “Crediting Period”

### Project Crediting Period Start Date

The date on which the first monitoring period commences.

### Project Description

The document that describes the project’s GHG emission reduction or removal activities and that uses either the *SOCIALCARBON Project Description Template*, an approved combined project description template available on the Social Carbon website or the project description template specified by the relevant approved GHG program.

### Project Description Deviation

A deviation from the project design, procedures and other specifications set out in the project description.

### Project Documents

The documents required to register the project and/or issue SCUs, as set out in the SOCIALCARBON Standard document *Registration and Issuance Process*.

### Project Method

A methodological approach that uses a project-specific approach for the determination of additionality and/or the crediting baseline in accordance with the SOCIALCARBON Standard rules.

### Project Ownership

The legal right to control and operate the project activities. Distinct from proof of right.



### Project Pipeline

The list of projects on the SOCIALCARBON registry, which are either *under development* or *under validation*.

### Project Proponent

The individual or organization that has overall control and responsibility for the project, or an individual or organization that together with others, each of which is also a project proponent, has overall control or responsibility for the project. The entity(s) that can demonstrate project ownership in respect of the project.

### Project Proponent Representation

A unilateral deed of representation issued by the project proponent(s) and/or individuals or organizations accorded certain rights in respect of a project.

### Project Start Date

See "Start Date".

### Proof of Right

The document(s) demonstrating the entity's right to all and any GHG emission reductions or removals generated by the project during the crediting period or verification period, as the case may be. Such rights can be established on the basis of law, regulation or contract. Distinct from project ownership.

### Proxy

A parameter that is monitored or measured to determine the value of a strongly correlated parameter that is not monitored or measured.

### REDD+

Activities that reduce GHG emissions from deforestation and/or degradation by slowing or stopping conversion of forests to non-forest land and/or reducing the degradation of forest land where forest biomass is lost; and/or activities that enhance carbon stocks through improved forest management and/or afforestation, reforestation or revegetation.

### Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation (REDD)

Activities that reduce GHG emissions by slowing or stopping conversion of forests to non-forest land and/or reduce the degradation of forest land where forest biomass is lost.

### Registration Representation

The unilateral representation issued by the project proponent at the time of the project registration request, made in respect of the project, and which is prepared using the *SOCIALCARBON Registration Deed of Representation Template*.

### Regulatory Surplus

When project activities are not directly mandated by any national and local laws, regulations, rules, procedures, other legally binding mandates and, where relevant, international conventions and agreements.

### Reforestation

The direct human-induced conversion of non-forested land to forested land through planting, seeding and/or the human-induced promotion of natural seed sources on land that was once forested but has been converted to non-forested land.

### Remote Sensing (RS)

The use of an instrument, such as a radar device or camera, to scan the earth from a distance in order to collect data (e.g., for forest inventory or monitoring).

### Retirement

The permanent removal of a SCU from circulation in the SOCIALCARBON registry system which represents an offset of one metric tonne of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent.

### Revegetation

A direct human-induced activity to increase carbon stocks of woody biomass on sites through the establishment of vegetation that covers a minimum area of 0.05 hectares and does not meet the definitions of afforestation and reforestation.

### Reversal

A situation where the net GHG benefit, taking into account project emissions, removals and leakage, in any monitoring period is negative. The amount of a reversal is calculated as the difference between the current total to-date net GHG benefit of the project, compared to the total to date net GHG benefit of the project at the previous verification event.

### Rewetting

The elevation of the average annual water table in drained peatland by partially or entirely reversing the existing drained state.

### Rights to GHG Emission Reductions and Removals

Rights to generate, request issuance and monetize the GHG emission reductions and removals in relation to activities included in the jurisdictional reference level.

### SCU Conversion Representation

The unilateral representation issued by the project proponent, prepared using the applicable SOCIALCARBON Standard template and made in respect of cancellation of GHG credits under another GHG program and/or conversion of GHG credits issued under an approved GHG program into SCUs.

### SCU Issuance Levy

The fee charged by Social Carbon Foundation at the time of SCU issuance to cover the administration costs of the SOCIALCARBON Standard.

### Sensitive Information

Trade secrets, financial, commercial, scientific, technical or other information whose disclosure could reasonably be expected to result in a material financial loss or gain, prejudice the outcome of contractual or other negotiations or otherwise damage or enrich the person or entity to which the information relates. Also referred to as "Commercially Sensitive Information.

### Shrubland

Areas dominated by shrubs, with a density of trees too low to meet an

internationally accepted definition of forest, including chaparral, scrubland, heathland and thickets.

### Social Carbon Unit (SCU)

A unit issued by and held in the SOCIALCARBON registry representing the right of an account holder in whose account the unit is recorded to claim the achievement of a GHG emission reduction or removal in an amount of one (1) metric tonne of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent that has been verified by a validation/verification body in accordance with the SOCIALCARBON Standard rules. Recordation of a SCU in the account of the holder at the SOCIALCARBON registry is prima facie evidence of that holder's entitlement to that SCU.

### SOCIALCARBON registry

The platform that records all projects (listed and registered) and SCUs issued under the SOCIALCARBON Standard. Provides public access to all project and SCU information, including retirements, and provides project proponents with the ability to list and register projects, and issue, hold and retire SCUs.

### SOCIALCARBON Standard Rules

The rules and requirements set out in the *SOCIALCARBON Standard Guide*, the *SOCIALCARBON Standard* and the other SOCIALCARBON Standard documents; such rules and requirements may be updated from time-to-time.

### Social Carbon Website

The Social Carbon website: [www.socialcarbon.org](http://www.socialcarbon.org)

### Soil organic carbon

Organic carbon in mineral and organic soils (including peat) to a specified depth chosen by the host country for its UNFCCC national inventory accounting and applied consistently through the crediting period. Live fine roots (of less than the threshold diameter limit for belowground biomass) are included with soil organic matter where they cannot be distinguished from it empirically. In organic soils, soil organic carbon encompasses the entire depth of the organic layer (i.e., up to the depth of the mineral

substrate). In the case of peatland, this depth can be several meters.

### Standardized Method

A methodological approach that standardizes elements of additionality and/or the crediting baseline, for a given class of project activity, via a performance method or activity method.

### Standardized Methods Expert

A person with expertise and experience in standardized approaches to baselines and additionality, and who is approved by Social Carbon Foundation for assessments of methodology elements that use standardized methods.

### Start Date

The date on which the project began generating GHG emission reductions or removals. Also referred to as “Project Start Date”.

### Tool

A type of module that provides a procedure for performing a specific analysis.

### Uncertainty

Uncertainty is a parameter associated with the result of measurement that characterizes the dispersion of the values that could be reasonably attributed to the measured amount.

### Validation Report

The written report of validation prepared by the validation/verification body in accordance with the SOCIALCARBON Standard rules.

### Validation Representation

The deed issued by the validation/verification body, referencing the validation report to which it relates, containing a unilateral representation that it has validated the project’s compliance with the applicable SOCIALCARBON Standard rules, and which is prepared using the *SOCIALCARBON Validation Deed of Representation Template*.

### Validation/Verification Body (VVB)

An organization approved by Social Carbon Foundation to act as a validation/verification body in respect of providing validation and/or verification services in accordance with the SOCIALCARBON Standard rules.

### Verification Period

The time period specified in a verification report during which the GHG emission reductions or removals were generated and have been verified by a validation/verification body.

### Verification Report

The written report of the verification prepared by the validation/verification body in accordance with the SOCIALCARBON Standard rules.

### Verification Representation

The deed issued by the validation/verification body, referencing the verification report to which it relates, containing a unilateral representation that it has verified the relevant GHG emission reductions or removals in accordance with the applicable SOCIALCARBON Standard rules, and which is prepared using the *SOCIALCARBON Verification Deed of Representation Template*.

### Vintage

The set of GHG emission reductions or removals generated by a project during a single vintage period.

### Vintage Period

The time period for which a particular set of GHG emission reductions or removals generated by the project are verified, which may be any subset of a verification period.

### Wetland

Land that is inundated or saturated by water for all or part of the year (e.g., peatland), at such frequency and duration that under natural conditions they

support organisms adapted to poorly aerated and/or saturated soil. Wetlands (including peatlands) cut across the different AFOLU categories. Project activities may be specific to wetlands or may be combined with other AFOLU activities.

#### Wood products

Products derived from wood harvested from a forest, including fuelwood and logs and the products derived from them such as sawn timber, plywood, wood pulp and paper.

## Appendix 1: document history

Version	Date	Comment
V1.0	03 Jan 2022	Initial version released under SOCIALCARBON Version 6.0.
V1.1	18 April 2023	Addition of definitions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Nature-Based Solution</li><li>• Native Species</li></ul>
V1.2	03 July 2023	Addition of definitions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Regulatory surplus</li></ul>