



## Carbon initiatives that benefit people, nature and the climate

Mitigating the escalating impacts of global climate change necessitates a paramount focus on reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Recognising the urgency, the United Nations designates the next decade as a critical window to limit global warming to 1.5°C and transition toward a future where emissions align with removals by 2050. This imperative propels businesses and organisations across various sectors to accelerate commitments, actively pursuing decarbonisation, net-zero goals, and advancements in climate sustainability.

In the short term, the complete elimination of GHG emissions remains a challenge for individuals, businesses or organisations. For those unable to offset GHGs through alternative means, **Verified Carbon Units (VCUs)** from forestry, agriculture or other land-use projects provide a viable solution. Navigating the intricacies of carbon offsets and programmes can be complex, but Preferred by Nature offers guidance to those seeking the best carbon offset programmes.

Projects aimed at obtaining VCUs undergo thorough evaluation and certification within the **Voluntary Carbon Market (VCM)** programme. Preferred by Nature, serving as a qualified independent third party, evaluates projects to ensure compliance with standards and proper application of methodologies. Collaboration with well-recognised industry-wide programmes, such as [Verra](#), the [Gold Standard](#) and [Plan](#) clears the path to the expanding VCMs.

The [Integrity Council for the Voluntary Carbon Market \(ICVCM\)](#), an independent governance body, launched its [Core Carbon Principles \(CCP\)](#) to standardise the quality of carbon credits in the voluntary market. This initiative aims to provide a credible and rigorous means of identifying high-integrity carbon credits that create real, verifiable climate impact, based on the latest science and best practices.

Verra and the Gold Standard, among other schemes, have applied to the ICVCM to comply with the Principles, ensuring the generation of high-integrity carbon credits. Gold Standard has already been recognised as CCP eligible, while Verra VCS is currently under assessment.

Take your net zero journey to the next level by offsetting the greenhouse gas emissions that you cannot cut down. Integrate the compensation of GHGs into your net zero strategy through the acquisition of carbon credits.





## What is the difference between validation and verification?

**Validation** means making sure the plan and related documentation for the carbon project are good to go. We check to confirm that if the plan is followed, the project will meet the rules of the chosen carbon standard. This checking happens before doing the project in the field. It usually includes a desk review and an on-site visit to evaluate the project's feasibility. We also figure out if the project follows all the rules of the programme. After we finish validation, you can then submit the project for registration with the programme.

**Verification** is the process of ensuring that the project unfolds according to its plan. This includes thorough checks to confirm that the activities were executed accurately and continuously monitored. A visit to the project site is an integral part of this verification process. If the project passes this check, it can claim carbon credits. The main goal of verification is to confirm that what the project wanted to achieve, as written in its documents, actually happened. We measure everything according to the set standards.

## Steps for carbon reduction projects

1. Select a Carbon Programme/Standard – Verra, Gold Standard or Plan Vivo – for your carbon reduction initiative.
2. Develop a project outlining how it will estimate CO2 removal or reductions in alignment with the chosen Programme's requirements.
3. Obtain validation from Preferred by Nature's experts. It will involve a desk review and field visit to confirm the project's adherence to Programme requirements.
4. Register the validated project with the chosen Carbon Programme/Standard.
5. Implement and monitor your project plan.
6. Have the implementation results verified by Preferred by Nature's experts.
7. The Carbon Programme owner issues credits. Your credits are ready for sale!

1. Programme  
choice  
Project Developer

2. Project design  
Project Developer

3. Project  
Validation  
Preferred by Nature

4. Registration  
Carbon Programme/Standard

5. Implementation  
and monitoring  
Project Developer

6. Verification  
Preferred by Nature

7. Issuance of credits  
Carbon  
Programme/Standard



Verra supports efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, improve livelihoods and protect ecosystems. Its carbon programmes include the **Verified Carbon Standard (VCS) Programme** and **Climate, Community and Biodiversity (CCB) Standards**. The CCB Standards Programme can be used on its own or in combination with the VCS Programme for projects seeking to issue Verified Carbon Units.

The **VCS Programme** is the global leader in GHG crediting. It channels funding into initiatives that cut emissions, enhance livelihoods and safeguard the environment. VCS projects have successfully reduced or eliminated over one billion tons of carbon and other GHG emissions. The VCS Programme encompasses a broad array of project types, e.g. renewable energy projects (wind, solar, hydroelectric, biomass), afforestation and reforestation initiatives, energy efficiency improvements, methane capture and utilisation, waste-to-energy projects, sustainable agriculture practices, carbon capture and storage (CCS) and community-based projects. Click [here](#) to learn more.



The **CCB Programme** applies to projects in agriculture, forestry and land use (AFOLU), particularly those demonstrating positive impacts on communities and biodiversity, such as indigenous-led tree planting initiatives and dryland forest protection projects engaging communities to reduce human-wildlife conflict. It offers affiliation with renowned conservation groups: Conservation International, The Nature Conservancy, Rainforest Alliance and Wildlife Conservation Society. When combined with VCS certification, the CCB Programme enhances carbon credit value, facilitating project scalability. Click [here](#) to learn more.



## Gold Standard

**The Gold Standard** is a certification for top-tier sustainable development projects that extend beyond typical carbon offsetting, ensuring contributions to both climate action and sustainable development goals. It covers a diverse range of project types, including renewable energy, energy efficiency, forestry and land use, waste management, water and sanitation, community-based initiatives, agricultural sustainability and climate resilience projects. Certification under the Gold Standard indicates a project's commitment to rigorous environmental and social standards, showcasing a holistic approach to sustainable development beyond carbon mitigation. Click [here](#) to learn more.



**Plan Vivo** is a certification programme emphasising community-based sustainable development and environmental conservation. It involves local communities in managing and benefiting from various certified projects, including agroforestry, afforestation/reforestation, sustainable agriculture, forest conservation, wetland restoration, renewable energy and community-based carbon offset initiatives. These projects prioritise adaptability to diverse local contexts and ensure high standards of sustainability and community engagement. Click [here](#) to learn more.



# Carbon Projects | FAQs

## What services does Preferred by Nature provide within Carbon Projects?

Verra VCS	Validation	Verification	Validation/Verification	MAP*
Verra CBB	Validation	Verification	Validation/Verification	
The Gold Standard	Validation	Verification	Validation/Verification	MAP*
Plan Vivo	Validation	Verification	Validation/Verification	MAP*

**MAP** stands for **Methodology Approval Process (MAP)**, by which new methodologies, existing methodology revisions, tools and modules are assessed and approved.

## What about the costs?

The performance review fee depends on the size and complexity of the project, including factors such as location, the complexity of social aspects and related risks, and the methodologies employed. The overall expense encompasses the time invested by the assessment team and associated direct expenses. Additionally, the selected carbon scheme may entail direct fees payable to that particular scheme. After evaluating all aspects, your contact at Preferred by Nature will provide a detailed proposal. To initiate the evaluation process, please reach out to us using the provided application [form](#).

## What are the rights and duties of applicants and clients?

For clients' rights and duties, please check the [Verification Agreement](#).

## How should a project refer to its validation and/or verification in B2B communications and promotional materials?

### Verification:

Short-form reference: **Verified at a reasonable level of assurance.**

Long-form reference: **In its verification statement dated DD/MM/YYYY, Preferred by Nature concluded with reasonable assurance that the data and information in our statement were fairly stated.**

### Validation:

Short-form reference: **Validated.**

Long-form reference: **In its validation statement dated DD/MM/YYYY, Preferred by Nature stated that it had not found any evidence to indicate that the assumptions, methods, and limitations that we cited in our statement did not provide a reasonable basis for our projections or forecasts.**

## What about impartiality and confidentiality?

Preferred by Nature's Quality Management System includes several policies that allow our organisation to provide assurance services credibly in compliance with accreditation requirements.

These include the [Impartiality Policy](#), which ensures impartiality, transparency and independence in all of our activities, and the [Confidentiality](#), describing our rigorous approach to safeguarding confidential data and information provided by our clients.

## What is the procedure for complaints and appeals?

All complaints and appeals will be processed using the Preferred by Nature's [Dispute](#) for complaints management. Explore "[Our Policies](#)" for additional Preferred by Nature policies and procedures.

Preferred by Nature is a Greenhouse Gas Validation/Verification Body accredited to ISO/IEC 17029:2019 for scope ISO 14065:2020 by the ANSI National Accreditation Board (ANAB), a member of the International Accreditation Forum (IAF).

The use of Preferred by Nature and/or ANAB marks or logos is not allowed for Carbon Projects Validation/Verification.