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Third Edition of Climate, Community & Biodiversity Standards Released

Showcasing smallholder- and community-led carbon projects and other ‘Gold Level’ land management efforts that deliver exceptional benefits for the global climate, local communities and biodiversity

(Washington, D.C.) – The Climate, Community and Biodiversity Alliance (CCBA) announced today the release of the Third Edition of the Climate, Community and Biodiversity (CCB) Standards and accompanying Rules for the Use of the CCB Standards following a yearlong participatory and inclusive revision process.

Project developers use the CCB Standards to demonstrate the social and environmental quality of their forest carbon projects. Offset buyers and investors use the CCB Standards for screening to reduce risks and to identify projects that are not only delivering emissions reductions but are also delivering tangible benefits to local communities and endangered species around the world.

The new version of the standards strengthens and clarifies the qualifications for high quality, multiple-benefit land management projects that reduce greenhouse gas emissions while also helping local communities and protecting wildlife.

There has been widespread uptake of the CCB Standards in the carbon market since the First Edition was launched in 2005, with a total of 78 projects having achieved validation through an independent audit of their project design against the standards, and 15 projects having achieved verification of their delivery of multiple benefits. The CCB Standards were used for a total of 78 percent of all transacted credits in the forest carbon market using a co-benefit standard in 2012, according to the Ecosystem Marketplace State of the Forest Carbon Market 2013 report.

By addressing the changing context for land-based carbon and by incorporating the substantial feedback received from current users and other stakeholders, the Third Edition ensures that the CCB Standards remain robust and practical, and continue to meet the demands of users. The Third Edition also includes modifications to help showcase the special qualities and multiple benefits of smallholder- and community-led projects. The [CCB Standards Third Edition](#) is available for immediate use.

“We are very grateful for all the feedback, input and support we have received from so many people around the world for this revision of the CCB Standards over the past year,” said Joanna

Durbin, director of the CCBA. “We hope that this Third Edition will highlight and bring even greater support to the diverse and remarkable multiple-benefit projects that are using CCB Standards to showcase their activities to empower local people and conserve nature, while also effectively reducing greenhouse gas emissions to combat climate change.”

Exceptional projects are identified by meeting at least one of the three Gold Level criteria of the CCB Standards in addition to all other required criteria. To earn the prestigious Gold Level, projects must deliver exceptional benefits for climate change adaptation, or for smallholders and communities leading their own projects and poorer households among them, or for the conservation of areas of high global biodiversity priority and the endangered species found there.

"For community-led projects such as the Surui Forest Carbon project, the revised CCB standards and especially the new Community Gold Level will not only ensure that communities are fully in charge of the project design and implementation but will also allow them to distinguish their projects with those who are interested in offsetting their emissions and supporting forest conservation" said Vasco van Roosmalen of Equipe de Conservação da Amazônia (ECAM).

The CCB Standards are widely used to provide social and environmental quality assurance for projects that are using a carbon accounting standard like the Verified Carbon Standard to create carbon credits for use as offsets. Verified Carbon Units issued from a project that is also verified to the CCB Standards may add a CCB Label as a permanent marker to enable transparent tracking of these high quality credits. The Third Edition facilitates this combined use of standards by waiving the climate section for projects using the standards of a greenhouse gas program recognized by the CCBA. As a further development, the climate section of the Third Edition has been simplified to support multiple-benefit land management projects that are not seeking to generate carbon offsets but want to demonstrate their delivery of net positive benefits for climate change mitigation along with other social and environmental benefits, such as those in the agricultural commodity supply chain, protected areas or rural development projects.

“The CCB Standards Third Edition gives us a great basis to show how corporate investment in carbon neutrality can attain multiple targets at once, such as biodiversity goals, water footprint neutrality or other Millennium Development Goals – and all this with concrete effects also from smallholder projects. The CCB Standards also contribute to showing how private sector players can show best practice in safeguards application for REDD+, paving the way for the emerging REDD scheme under UNFCCC. Therefore it comes as no surprise that the CODE REDD Alliance incorporated the CCB Standards as a ‘must’ into their code of conduct,” said Christian Dannecker of South Pole Group.

The CCB Standards Third Edition:

- Showcases smallholder- and community-led projects with equitable benefit sharing.
- Enables the use of programmatic approaches to allow expansion to new project areas.
- Clarifies the requirements for stakeholder engagement including free, prior and informed consent.
- Promotes gender equality and empowerment.

- Simplifies the requirements for demonstrating net positive climate benefits and facilitating combination with a carbon accounting standard.
- Strengthens the Gold Level requirements for projects that generate exceptional benefits for climate change adaptation, for communities and for biodiversity.

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The Climate, Community & Biodiversity Alliance (CCBA) *is a partnership of international NGOs that created the Climate, Community & Biodiversity (CCB) Standards to foster development of, and investment in, land management projects that deliver credible and significant climate, community and biodiversity benefits in an integrated, sustainable manner. www.climate-standards.org The CCBA members — Conservation International, CARE, the Rainforest Alliance, The Nature Conservancy and the Wildlife Conservation Society — are all leading the development and implementation of pioneering land management activities demonstrating how effective partnerships and integrated design can deliver significant multiple benefits.*