



Natural Forest Standard

Guidance Addendum I

Guidance for United Nations Sustainable Development Goals Contributions and Reporting



Version 1.0
October 2024

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About the Natural Forest Standard

Natural Forest Standard (NFS) is an independent, voluntary carbon market crediting program for REDD+ carbon projects. Ecosystem Certification Organisation is the governing body of the Natural Forest Standard (NFS) providing the overall responsibility, oversight and management of the program, in operation since 2011.

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1. Introduction

The NFS aims to conserve and restore natural forests through actions of projects that benefit both local communities while maintaining the biodiversity present in the project area. This all-encompassing approach to environmental, social and biodiversity benefits of projects under the NFS is designed to ensure that social and environmental safeguards are integral throughout the project design and implementation.

The Natural Forest Standard Requirements document sets out the normative requirements for projects using the NFS. The accompanying NFS Guidance document should be consulted in addition to the Standard. The Guidance is designed to assist project developers in meeting the normative requirements of the Standard. The guidance should be interpreted in a pragmatic, professional and balanced manner to address aspects of project design and management that are important for achieving effective forest conservation and restoration in ways that benefit local communities and biodiversity.

The working language of ECO and the NFS is English.

2. Purpose

This addendum serves as an integral extension of our main guidance document, providing additional information and updates necessary for the comprehensive understanding and implementation of the Natural Forest Standard (NFS). It includes recent amendments, and/or clarifications that enhance the original guidance. The purpose of this addendum is to ensure that all stakeholders have access to the most current and relevant information, maintaining the effectiveness and applicability of our program. Please refer to this addendum in conjunction with the main guidance document to ensure that your activities are aligned with the latest standards and practices established by the NFS.

3. Scope

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were originally designed to guide national policies and aggregate global efforts toward sustainable development, focusing on broad, country-level actions. However, this does not preclude projects from making significant contributions to these goals. Indeed, many local and sector-specific initiatives can drive progress, indirectly or directly supporting broader SDG targets.

For instance, a community-level project focused on improving water sanitation can contribute to SDG 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation), demonstrating how localized actions can contribute to global ambitions.

Thus, while the SDGs are framed for national action, projects at all levels can play a critical role in achieving these objectives, fostering a bottom-up approach to global change.

4. Natural Forest Standard Approach

The Natural Forest Standard adopts a holistic approach for projects to deliver Environmental and Social benefits from implementing a project. This places equal emphasis on the combined carbon, socio-economic and biodiversity benefits and values of a project.

This approach can facilitate meaningful contributions to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) enabling projects to support and align their mitigation activities with global sustainability targets.

5. SDG Project Reporting

- Projects shall qualitatively demonstrate positive contribution to at least 3 UN SDGs, using the official UN Global Indicator Framework as a reference.
- The Project Developer should demonstrate how the project activities are aligned with the relevant SDG objectives of the host country, where relevant and feasible.
- Where applicable, Project Developers shall provide a qualitative assessment that illustrates how project activities positively contribute to specific Sustainable Development Goals.

6. Reporting Method

Project Developers may self-report their contributions using the SDG indicators as reference. Self-defined indicators may be used to track and quantify the contributions, as the SDG indicators were designed as country-level targets, and not project-level contributions.

Project Developers should report on the progress of SDG contributions within their Project Implementation Reports (PIR) for each project quantification period. PIRs are made publicly available on the Natural Forest Standard Project Index.

7. Effective Dates for Reporting Applicability

For projects being submitted to the Natural Forest Standard from 1st November 2024, Project Developers should include this qualitative demonstration within the Project Design Document.

For projects registered with the Natural Forest Standard prior to 31st October 2024, Project Developers should include this qualitative demonstration within their Project Implementation Reports from 1st November 2025.

Document Name	NFS Guidance Addendum I Sustainable Development Goals
Publication Date	21 st October 2024
Version	1.0