



Launch of the New Version of the Climate, Community & Biodiversity Standards

The CCB Standards Second Edition brings new confidence and investment to multiple-benefit forest carbon projects

Poznan, Poland (December 6, 2008) – One of the best ways for some of the poorest people in developing countries to benefit from land-based projects to help prevent climate change and protect their local natural resources just got better.

The Climate, Community & Biodiversity Alliance today launched the Second Edition of the Climate, Community & Biodiversity (CCB) Standards, following a nine-month review to strengthen the leading standards for multiple-benefit land-based carbon offset projects. Experts from environmental, development and indigenous peoples' organizations, the private sector, government agencies and research institutes contributed to the Second Edition.

The CCB Standards provide a set of rigorous and verifiable criteria to determine the ability of a project to reduce greenhouse gas emissions while delivering lasting benefits for local communities and biodiversity. Independent third-party auditors verify that the project satisfies all required criteria, which demonstrate the project will mitigate climate change, conserve wildlife and natural ecosystems, and improve local livelihoods.

Currently, over 100 land-based projects around the world are using the CCB Standards to improve project design and generate compelling climate, community and biodiversity benefits. The world's pre-eminent carbon market investors, including the World Bank, Merrill Lynch and EcoSecurities, are applying the Standards to their extensive portfolios.

The CCB Standards provide project quality assurance to investors and offset buyers, many of whom are attracted by the risk mitigation of the strong multiple benefits of these forest carbon projects as well as by the opportunity to achieve multiple social responsibility goals.

"CCB certification assists market entry for projects with significant co-benefits by demonstrating their quality to buyers and, particularly in voluntary markets, attracting a price premium for the credits they generate. We see this as a good way to bring carbon finance to high-quality forestry projects and to boost investor and buyer confidence in the sector" said Jan Fehse, Head of Forestry Services at EcoSecurities.

The Second Edition criteria provide even clearer benchmarks for investors, offset buyers and project developers for ensuring that projects protect the rights of indigenous people and local communities and that environmental and social monitoring programs are in place, no invasive plant species is used, local stakeholders are effectively involved, carbon property rights are clear, and there are no unresolved land tenure disputes.

A new ‘Gold Level’ is reserved for projects that generate exceptional benefits by helping the poorer people of the world, by conserving sites of highest global significance for biodiversity conservation, or by providing significant support to assist with adaptation to the impacts of climate change.

“Forest carbon projects have great potential to generate new and improved livelihoods for many of the world’s poorer people as well as provide them with a means to tap the emerging global carbon finance mechanisms including markets to fund their land stewardship activities. However, there are also significant threats to the rights of the poorest and most vulnerable communities from these markets, so the CCB Standards are also extremely important as a means to safeguard and promote the interests of these often marginalized groups. We have been impressed with the broad interest and participation in the revision process to produce an even more effective set of criteria for the new Second Edition” said Charles Ehrhart, head of the Climate Change Program at CARE International.

“We have been delighted with the rapid and broad uptake of the CCB Standards since the first edition was release in 2005. It is clear they have played an important role in fostering the development of robust forest carbon projects that are helping mitigate climate change while conserving threatened species and improving local livelihoods throughout the developing world. The Second Edition has incorporated the lessons learned from three years of applying the Standards to further raise the bar. We expect this latest version to bring additional confidence to this important sector and to catalyze hundreds of millions of dollars of new carbon investment into multiple-benefit forest conservation and restoration activities around the globe” said Toby Janson-Smith, the senior director of forest carbon markets at Conservation International.

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The Climate, Community & Biodiversity Alliance (CCBA) is a Conservation International convened partnership between leading companies and NGOs seeking to foster the development of forest protection and restoration activities around the world that deliver significant climate, local community and biodiversity benefits. CCBA members include six companies—BP, Intel, SC Johnson, Sustainable Forestry Management, Weyerhaeuser and GFA Envest—and five NGOs—Conservation International, CARE, Rainforest Alliance, The Nature Conservancy and the Wildlife Conservation Society.

The Second Edition can be downloaded at www.climate-standards.org.