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The Voluntary Carbon Standard Peatland Rewetting and Conservation

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Voluntary markets

- “ Until 2012 no perspectives for peatland under UNFCCC and KP.
- “ Voluntary markets are faster...
- “ But also voluntary markets need clear international standards (what, how much, how)

VCS

- “ The most important Carbon standard on the voluntary market is the Voluntary Carbon Standard (VCS): www.v-c-s.org
- “ Designed to be as robust as Kyoto Protocol & Clean Development Mechanism (CDM), while reducing costs and bottlenecks
- “ Real, additional, measurable, permanent, independently verified and unique offsets (VCUs)

VCS

VCS-AFOLU standards available for

- “ Afforestation, Reforestation and Revegetation (ARR)
- “ Agricultural Land Management (ALM)
- “ Improved Forest Management (IFM)
- “ Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation (REDD)

Currently under development:

- “ Peatland Rewetting and Conservation (PCR)
- “ Sylvestrum, Terra Carbon, Uni Greifswald

VCS

A separate peatland standard is made because:

- “ the soil carbon pool (peat) is large and dominant compared to the other carbon pools;
- “ GHG emissions and carbon stock changes largely depend on hydrological conditions
- “ emission reductions may be in a different order of magnitude per project compared to the other AFOLU categories.

VCS-PCR

Four broad categories of activities are considered:

- “ Rewetting (or reducing drainage depth) of drained peatland
- “ Conservation of undrained non-forested peatland
- “ AFOLU activities carried out on peatland:
 - . Afforestation on peatland
 - . Agriculture on peatland
 - . Improved Forest Management on peatland
 - . REDD on peatland
- “ Other activities carried out on peatland
 - . Peatland Fire Management
 - . Avoiding peat mining

important aspects

- “ Monitoring methodologies
- “ Baseline/reference
- “ Additionality
- “ Leakage
- “ Permanence

Monitoring methodologies

Not prescribed, but should be separately peer-reviewed.

Methods e.g.

- “ direct on-site gas flux measurements
- “ well-documented relationships between emissions and vegetation types, annual water level or annual subsidence,
- “ remote sensing techniques that adequately assess and monitor soil moisture

Baseline

- “ Future development without project
- “ Baseline is thus related to peat thickness: too thin remaining peat brings not long reductions.

Additionality

- “ Only emission reductions that are the effect of aimed activities
- “ E.g. If you would anyhow rewet for biodiversity, you cannot claim carbon credits
- “ E.g. Rewetting by collapsing dikes, beavers, revegetation or subsidence etcõ does not count
- “ Also spontaneous peat growth does not countõ

Leakage

- “ The activities that are stopped may not continue elsewhere, e.g. peat extraction or agriculture
- “ Leakage limited to country (not international, cf. CDM)

Permanence

- “ The emission reductions must be ~~for ever~~ ∞
- “ Depending on the risk of non-permanence, a part of the credits is withhold in a ~~buffer~~ q
- “ Risk depending on ownership, user rights, hydrologic connectivity, technical capability, current and future opportunity costs, endorsement of local population and national authorities, etc.

| PRC Risk Class | Buffer Range |
|----------------|--------------|
| High | 40%-60% |
| Medium | 20%-40% |
| Low | 10%-20% |

Biofuel

- “ Biofuel crop production on drained peat is not eligible.
- “ Drainage of peatland to increase forest productivity is not eligible
- “ Biofuel plus rewetting (paludiculture): use PRC guidance



- “ Because monitoring of N_2O emission and N input (from fertiliser) is complicated and susceptible to fraud, reducing emissions from N fertilisation on peatland is not eligible
- “ N-fertiliser application in ALM on peat is not eligible
- “ Upon rewetting, N_2O emission will not increase, therefore, ignoring N_2O emission implies a conservative approach

Fire management

- “ Only eligible in combination with rewetting
- “ Complicated baseline setting → 25% bonus on total baseline emissions, when fire prone
- “ Otherwise Tier-3 methods

Outlook

- “ Complete draft standard ready
- “ Being submitted to VCS Board
- “ They will hurry to adopt it (much demand)
- “ Expectation: fully operational begin 2010
- “ Concrete projects are being prepared (e.g. Belarus)