

# Standard Operating Procedure (SOP): Accreditation of Methods under the eva Forest Climate Standard

eva service gmbh

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**Approved by:** Nisse Oberwalleney

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## 1. Purpose

This SOP defines the process for accrediting new **methods** (i.e., sets of indicators) under the eva Forest Climate Standard. Methods translate the standard's **principles and criteria** into measurable objectives and guardrails. The procedure enables the development and continuous improvement of methods, integrating external parties, while safeguarding scientific robustness, stakeholder legitimacy, and practical applicability.

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## 2. Scope

This SOP applies to:

- All new methods developed solely by eva or jointly with external parties for use in eva-certified climate projects
- All indicator-based methods for land-use, forestry, and climate impact accounting under the eva system

It ranges from submission of a draft method to the release of an accredited set of indicators.

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### 3. Definitions

| <b>Term</b>                              | <b>Definition</b>  |
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| <b>Method</b>                            | A defined set of indicators used to implement the eva Forest Climate Standard in a specific type of project.                           |
| <b>Accreditation</b>                     | The formal approval and recognition of a method as eligible for use within eva.  |
| <b>Forest Climate Council</b>            | A multi-stakeholder forum that supports the development and revision of the Forest Climate Standard and its methods.                   |
| <b>Technical Committee</b>               | A standing committee of subject-matter experts, elected by the Forest Climate Council and convened by eva.                             |
| <b>Stakeholder Consultation</b>          | A structured process to gather input from relevant and affected stakeholders   |
| <b>Expert Evaluation (Fachgutachten)</b> | A written assessment by an independent scientific or technical expert  |
| <b>Pilot Phase</b>                       | Field testing of the method in at least five eva Climate Projects with the objective to test and prove a method's broad applicability. |

### 4. Responsibilities

| <b>Role</b> | <b>Responsibility</b> |
|-------------|-----------------------|
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|------------------------|--|
| External Party         | Proposes a new method to be jointly developed with eva.<br>Co-develops the method and supports pilot implementation.   |
| Technical Committee    | Reviews draft versions of method, provides expert feedback, discusses learnings from pilot phase and makes recommendations for refining and adapting a method further. |
| Forest Climate Council | Initial stage to review draft methods and to provide expert feedback   |
| eva Secretariat        | Coordinates the process, documentation, and stakeholder engagement.  |
| Scientific Reviewer    | Prepares the expert evaluation (Fachgutachten).  |
| Standard Director      | Grants final approval and accreditation of the method.   |

## 5. Accreditation Process

### Step 1: Submission of Draft Method

- eva develops new draft methods internally, or an external party submits a draft method (set of indicators, rationale, scope, and data requirements) to eva.
- eva Secretariat evaluates the draft in terms of its market potential and strategic relevance.
- eva decides whether the accreditation process will be started and reserves the discretionary right to abort the accreditation process for good reason at any time.

### Step 2: Stakeholder Consultation (1st Round)

- The draft method is first presented to the Forest Climate Council and the Technical Committee.
- eva then organizes an online stakeholder consultation to gather additional feedback. Interested stakeholders have the opportunity to comment on the draft method during a 30-day public consultation.

- The public consultation is organized, evaluated and documented by eva.

### Step 3: Expert Evaluation (Fachgutachten)

- An independent expert is assigned by eva to prepare a **scientific and technical assessment** of the method. The evaluation covers:
  - Scientific consistency,
  - Technical feasibility, and
  - Alignment with eva standard's principles.
- The expert evaluation is made available alongside other documentation regarding the method.

### Step 4: Technical Committee Evaluation

- Based on stakeholder feedback and expert evaluation, a revised version of the method is submitted to the Technical Committee for review.
- The Committee evaluates the revised version and decides about its recommendation to apply the method in a pilot phase.
- Based on this recommendation eva decides whether the pilot phase will be started.

### Step 5: Pilot Phase

- The method is tested in **at least five eva Climate Projects**.
- Project developers report on usability, clarity, and challenges.
- Accredited and trained VVBs carry out audits.
- Observations and audit feedback are collected and used to further refine the method.
- A **Pilot Summary Report** is prepared and included in the accreditation file.

### Step 6: Public Consultation (2nd Round)

- The revised version (candidate v1.0) is published for a **minimum 30-day public consultation**.
- Stakeholders, including the Forest Climate Council, Technical Committee and interested others, are informed in meetings or via website, email, and partner channels.
- The public consultation is organized, evaluated and documented by eva.

### Step 7: Final Review by Technical Committee

- A second expert evaluation as described in step 3 may be assigned, if the eva Secretariat deems same necessary.
- The Technical Committee reviews the final draft, the results from the second public consultation and potentially the report on the second expert evaluation.
- The Technical Committee decides about its recommendation to the Standard Director to approve the first full version of the new method.

### Step 8: Approval and Release

- The **Standard Director** approves version 1.0 of the method and formally accredits same for use.
- The method is published on the eva website with a **version label, approval date, and validity period**.

### Step 9: Review

Revision procedures are used to continuously update and improve methods on the basis of new scientific findings, experience from projects and changes in political, legal and market conditions. Revisions are carried out regularly:

- at least every 3 years,
  - in the event of model adjustments that lead to significant changes in the calculation results,
  - in the event of reliable information that the projections of carbon storage deviate significantly from reality.
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## 6. Documentation Requirements

Each accredited method must have a complete dossier containing:

- Initial submission by external developer,
- Technical Committee comments and revisions,
- Comment Matrices from both consultations,
- Expert evaluation (Fachgutachten),
- PDDs from pilot phase projects,
- Pilot Summary Report,
- Final method document (v1.0) and supporting tools,
- Approval notification and metadata.

All records are archived in the eva Quality Management System for at least **10 years**.

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## 7. Transparency and Communication

- The status of each method under development is published on the eva website.
  - Stakeholders may sign up for updates and consultation notifications.
  - Accredited methods are listed in the **Method Registry** with version control.
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## 8. Revision of Accredited Methods

Once accredited, methods may be revised based on implementation experience, policy changes, or scientific updates. Revisions follow SOP-STD-002 (Review of Standards and Methodology).

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## 9. References

- ISO 14064-2:2019
  - ISEAL Standard-Setting and Assurance Codes
  - eva SOP-STD-002: Review of Standards and Methodology
  - eva SOP-STD-003: Stakeholder Involvement
  - eva Document Control Procedure
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## 10. Revision History

| <b>Version</b> | <b>Date</b> | <b>Description</b> | <b>Author</b>    |
|----------------|-------------|--------------------|------------------|
| 1.0            | 14.04.2025  | Initial Version    | Nils von Schmidt |