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# Summary of v1.2 Revisions

## Summary

This document outlines the changes implemented to the Equitable Earth Programme Manual, the Equitable Earth Standard, M001 and their affiliated documents. For the most significant revisions, more details can be found in the summary of RP003 to RP006, which contain the detailed revision propositions that were submitted to the Technical Advisory Board (TAB).

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# 1 Revision Summary

Version 1.2 of the Equitable Earth (formerly ERS) Programme includes a comprehensive revision of the Programme Manual, Standard, and M001 methodology documents. The updates incorporate feedback from developers, internal teams, validation and verification bodies (VVBs), and other external stakeholders, following the implementation of v1.1 and certification of the first projects. The revisions clarify, align, and improve all technical and procedural requirements across Programme documents while upholding integrity and core principles.

In v1.2, the Programme architecture has been redesigned for greater coherence and consistency. The former 'ERS Programme' document has been divided into two core documents: the Programme Manual, which details all the overarching rules, governance, and procedures governing the Equitable Earth Programme, and the Equitable Earth Standard, which sets out the rules and requirements for all projects certified under the Equitable Earth Programme. As part of this restructuring, the Livelihood Pillar – previously set out in the M001 methodology – has been fully integrated into the Standard, because its requirements apply to all projects, regardless of the methodology applied. Other key changes include consolidating guidelines previously in separate documents into the Standard or methodology, as appropriate.

Programme-level documentation includes new and clarified requirements and procedures covering essential topics such as deviations, effective dates, certification timelines, governance procedures, and project transfers.

The M001 methodology has been substantially revised. Under the Carbon Pillar, updates include refined approaches to calculating dynamic baseline and leakage, monitoring loss events, and analysing uncertainty. The GHG accounting methods have also been revised to increase accuracy. Under the Ecological Condition (formerly Ecological Recovery) Pillar, several technical protocols have been introduced or revised, including those for thinning practices, introduction and use of non-timber forest products (NTFPs), secondary forest growth, site preparation techniques, and methods for ecological recovery assessment.

Finally, this version also marks the formal transition of ERS to Equitable Earth, with all documentation and supporting materials rebranded and publicly available under the new identity. Equitable Earth is pleased to present this summary and the new Equitable Earth Standard to the public as the team remains committed to its mission: empowering people and organisations to restore and protect the natural world.

# 2 Programme-level Revisions

## 2.1 New Document Architecture

**Document(s) impacted:** Programme Manual, Equitable Earth Standard, M001

**Type of change:** Substantial

**Summary of revision:**

- The Programme document has been divided into two separate documents:
    - **Programme Manual:** Outlines overarching rules and requirements governing the Equitable Earth Programme, including programme management, roles and responsibilities, governance, and procedures.
    - **Equitable Earth Standard:** Sets out general and project design requirements applicable to all Equitable Earth projects, including criteria for developers and Equitable Earth.
- General requirements previously included in M001 that apply to all projects have been transferred to the Standard document.
- Duplicated requirements between the Programme Manual, the Standard, and methodologies have been consolidated to ensure consistency and clarity.
- The restructuring enables the development of new methodologies by establishing a set of robust, broadly-applicable requirements within the Standard document.

## 2.2 Removed the Concept of Projected Restoration Units (PRUs)

**Document(s) impacted:** Programme Manual, M001, Registry Procedures

**Type of change:** Editorial, Substantial

**Summary of revision:**

- The concept of Projected Restoration Units (PRUs) (i.e., ex ante crediting) has been removed from the Equitable Earth Programme and all related documents as a response to industry feedback following a public consultation in early 2025. All associated PRU conversion requirements and procedures have been removed.

- An estimation of 'PRUs' (i.e., ex ante reductions and removals) remains available to developers, now referred to as an estimation of 'carbon potential'.

## 2.3 Updated Requirements for Monitoring Loss Events

**Document(s) impacted:** M001, Standard

**Type of change:** Clarification

**Summary of revision:**

- The requirement for continuous monitoring of loss events throughout the crediting period has been formalised.

- This revision clarifies the duration of the monitoring period for loss events by Equitable Earth, establishing a fixed period of 100 years from the end of the crediting period.

## 2.4 Clarified Stakeholder Engagement Reporting Requirements

**Document(s) impacted:** Standard, M001

**Type of change:** Substantial

**Summary of revision:**

- The stakeholder engagement requirements were set out across several documents at the programmatic and methodology levels. The requirements are now consolidated in the Standard for ease of use.

- This revision covers the reporting and temporal requirements related to stakeholder mapping and engagement, clarifying what information developers must report during the project feasibility and design phases.

## 2.5 Clarified Template References

**Document(s) impacted:** Standard, Programme Manual, M001

**Type of change:** Editorial

**Summary of revision:**

- The majority of templates are completed by developers on the Equitable Earth Certification Platform (i.e., WebApp) as a means of data collection. References to several of these templates have been removed in the documents to accommodate continuous improvement of the Certification Platform and digitised data collection processes.
- Any references to templates that are made publicly available on the Equitable Earth Registry during the project lifecycle (e.g., project design document [PDD], annual report, GHG monitoring report, validation report) are maintained.

## 2.6 Revised Project Scope Requirements

**Document(s) impacted:** Standard, M001

**Type of change:** Clarification

**Summary of revision:**

- This revision separates and clarifies project scope requirements and eligibility criteria.
- The requirement that projects must be situated in inland forest landscapes between latitudes 51.6° N and 51.6° S was removed from M001 because geographic coverage is now determined by the AGB data provider.

## 2.7 Consolidated Requirements from Guideline Documents

**Document(s) impacted:** All documentation

**Type of change:** Clarification

**Summary of revision:**

- All requirements previously contained in guideline documents have either been:
    - Transferred to tools such as the Certification Platform or Mobile App; OR
    - Integrated as formal requirements into Standard or methodology documents.
- All guideline documents (e.g., Field Assessment guidelines, Community Consultation guidelines, Zonation guidelines) are still available as supporting resources for developers, but will not be publicly listed on the Equitable Earth website.

## 2.8 Addition of Crediting Period Renewal Requirements

**Document(s) impacted:** Programme Manual, Standard

**Type of change:** Substantial

**Summary of revision:**

- This revision establishes requirements and procedures allowing projects to renew their crediting period if they can demonstrate continued progress and additionality. Projects with evidence of ongoing and additional conservation and/or restoration activities, such as biomass growth or ecosystem improvements, have a pathway to renew their crediting period and continue generating carbon benefits.
- Specifically, projects may now renew their crediting period in 20-year increments, provided that the total project lifetime does not exceed 100 years.

## 2.9 Revised Benefit-Sharing Mechanism Requirements

**Document(s) impacted:** Programme Manual, Standard, Terms & Definitions

**Type of change:** Clarification

**Summary of revision:**

- This revision clarifies the scope, structure, and implementation of the benefit-sharing mechanism under the Programme Manual and M001.

- It introduces more detailed requirements for the development of a benefit-sharing plan, including eligibility criteria for community benefits, and alignment with the social additionality plan. It also formalises the validation process through a community validation statement and FPIC, ensuring transparent, inclusive, and culturally appropriate engagement with IPLCs. In addition, it establishes clearer monitoring, reporting, and corrective action requirements to ensure accountability and effective delivery of promised benefits over time.

# 3 Procedural Revisions

## 3.1 Established Procedures for Deviations

**Document(s) impacted:** Programme Manual

**Type of change:** Substantial

**Summary of revision:**

- Version 1.1 of the Programme did not include formal procedures for developers to request deviations. This revision defines the types of deviations that may be requested.
- The Programme Manual now includes procedures to be followed by developers to request deviations and for Equitable Earth to review and subsequently grant or deny such requests.

## 3.2 Addition of Effective Dates and Grace Period Requirements

**Document(s) impacted:** Programme Manual

**Type of change:** Substantial

**Summary of revision:**

- This revision sets out high-level requirements for Equitable Earth to define effective dates and grace periods for all new Programme Manual, Standard, and methodology requirements.
- Equitable Earth now formally establishes dates upon which new requirements go into effect and releases those dates with the publication of revised Standard or methodology documents. Some requirements may go into effect immediately, while others may have associated grace periods (i.e., projects do not necessarily have to conform with new requirements until a set date).

## 3.3 Addition of Procedures for Terminating the Certification Process

**Document(s) impacted:** Programme Manual

**Type of change:** Minor

**Summary of revision:**

- This revision enables Equitable Earth to terminate the certification process during the feasibility or design phases in cases where developers do not submit required information or documentation for more than six months.

## 3.4 Clarified Start Date Requirements

**Document(s) impacted:** Programme Manual

**Type of change:** Minor

**Summary of revision:**

- This revision clarifies the requirements related to the start date of project activities.
- In cases where no pre-submission activities have occurred and the project start date is in the future (e.g., after validation) developers may now include an expected start date in the PDD.

## 3.5 Adjusted Internal Audit Recurrence

**Document(s) impacted:** Programme Manual

**Type of change:** Minor

**Summary of revision:**

- This revision updates the internal audit requirement for Equitable Earth from an ‘annual’ to a ‘periodic’ schedule. While internal audits are crucial for maintaining quality and compliance, conducting them every year is resource-intensive without yielding clear benefits.

- By adjusting the frequency, Equitable Earth aims to balance operational efficiency with rigorous oversight, enabling the team to gather more experience and data to determine the most appropriate audit frequency in the future. This flexible approach supports continuous improvement while reducing unnecessary burden on developers and auditors.

## 3.6 Revised Working Group Requirements and Procedures

**Document(s) impacted:** Technical Advisory Board (TAB)

**Type of change:** Clarification

**Summary of revision:**

- This revision streamlines the procedure for forming working groups.
- Previously, the appointment process mirrored that of the TAB. The Secretariat may now directly appoint members to working groups without issuing a formal call for applications. This change aims to streamline decision-making and improve efficiency for Standard and methodology revisions.

## 3.7 Removed the Final Revision Proposition

**Document(s) impacted:** Standard Setting and Methodology Development Procedure

**Type of change:** Substantial

**Summary of revision:**

- Under v1.1, a final revision proposition summarising all updates made during a revision cycle had to be submitted and approved by the TAB. This additional step created unnecessary duplication of effort, as all substantive changes had already been reviewed and approved by the TAB individually throughout the revision cycle.
- The Secretariat now integrates approved revisions directly, without the need for a separate consolidated submission. The TAB will continue to have the opportunity to review and provide final feedback on the full set of changes before publication.

# 4 Standard-level Revisions

## 4.1 Clarified Project Transfer Requirements

**Document(s) impacted:** Standard

**Type of change:** Substantial

**Summary of revision:**

- This revision clarifies requirements and procedures for the transfer of projects from other certification programmes to Equitable Earth. The revised Standard now includes eligibility criteria and conditions under which a project may be accepted for transfer.

## 4.2 Added Definition of ‘Forest’

**Document(s) impacted:** Terms & Definitions

**Type of change:** Minor

**Summary of revision:**

- Under v1.2, a formal definition of the term *forest* has been introduced in the Terms & Definitions document to ensure consistency and clarity across all documentation.

- This term was previously not defined, despite the central role of the concept in the scope of M001.

# 5 Methodology-level Revisions

## 5.1 Revised ‘Inland Forest’ Terminology

**Document(s) impacted:** M001

**Type of change:** Minor

**Summary of revision:**

- Under v1.2, the term ‘inland forest’ has been replaced with ‘terrestrial forest’ to provide a more accurate definition of eligible ecosystems.
- This revision ensures that coastal forests — already within the scope of M001 — are included, while maintaining a clear exclusion of intertidal or blue carbon ecosystems, for which no methodology is currently available under Equitable Earth.

## 5.2 Revised Project Team Composition Requirements

**Document(s) impacted:** M001

**Type of change:** Minor

**Summary of revision:**

- This revision makes project team composition requirements more flexible for a broader range of project types, while still ensuring robust requirements to ensure project teams have sufficient technical knowledge and capacity.

## 5.3 Clarified Options for Project Areas Under a Conservation Easement

**Document(s) impacted:** M001

**Type of change:** Clarification

**Summary of revision:**

- This revision clarified a requirement encouraging developers to register the project area as a ‘protected site’ at the end of the crediting period. ‘Protected site’ was replaced by ‘conservation easement or equivalent legal mechanism’, providing greater flexibility to developers.

## 5.4 Revised the Risk Assessment Matrix

**Document(s) impacted:** Risk Matrix

**Type of change:** Substantial

**Summary of revision:**

- The risk assessment matrix was reviewed and updated to:
    - Adjust wording to improve clarity and accuracy.
    - Add new risks related to overcrediting, permanence, and social safeguards, among others.
    - Remove risks already addressed by existing Standard safeguards and requirements.

## 5.5 Revised the Terminology & References Document

**Document(s) impacted:** Terms & Definitions

**Type of change:** Clarification, Editorial

**Summary of revision:**

- This revision represents a comprehensive update of the Terms & Definitions (formerly Terminology & References) document to enhance clarity and precision.
- Definitions have been carefully reviewed and refined to ensure unambiguous interpretation and to support consistent application across projects and requirements.

## 5.6 Refined the Dynamic Baseline Approach

**Document(s) impacted:** M001

**Type of Change:** Substantial

**Summary of Revision:**

- The first version of the dynamic baseline methods in v1.1 of M001 had two limitations:
    - Some indicators became outdated over time
    - The KNN algorithm compared individual pixels rather than areas, limiting spatial relevance
- The updated methodology addresses these by using time series of AGB data as indicators and by shifting the identification method to an area-level comparison, offering a more accurate and robust identification of control plots.

## 5.7 Revised Loss Event Requirements

**Document(s) impacted:** M001, Terminology & References

**Type of change:** Substantial

**Summary of revision:**

- This revision adjusts the loss event reporting requirement to accommodate both small- and large-scale projects. Instead of using a fixed 1-hectare threshold, the new approach defines loss events based on a percentage of verified net GHG removals already achieved by the project. This ensures that only statistically significant losses trigger mandatory reporting, reducing unnecessary notifications while maintaining the integrity of permanence monitoring.

## 5.8 Added a Protocol for Carbon Curve Modelling

**Document(s) impacted:** M001, Protocol for Carbon Curve Modelling

**Type of change:** Substantial

**Summary of revision:**

- This revision introduces carbon sequestration curves, ensuring greater transparency in VRU projections. The curve provides a structured projection of expected VRU issuance throughout the crediting period, based on standardised methods that apply conservative AGB growth rates across diverse climatic regions.

- A new document, the Protocol for Carbon Curve Modelling, has been created detailing the scope, applicability, and methods for generating a carbon curve.

## 5.9 Replaced Woody/Non-Woody Masks with AGB Provider Data

**Document(s) impacted:** M001

**Type of change:** Substantial

**Summary of revision:**

- This revision removes the distinction between woody and non-woody vegetation masks, as the classification relied on land cover datasets that have not been regularly updated. Instead, v1.2 uses data from the AGB provider to assess AGB across all land cover types.

- These estimates are consistent with values previously used and offer the advantage of being continuously updated and derived from a harmonised, project-wide approach.

## 5.10 Improved Monte Carlo Uncertainty Calculations

**Document(s) impacted:** M001

**Type of change:** Substantial

**Summary of revision:**

- This revision enhances the uncertainty quantification methods to improve accuracy and spatial representation of AGB estimates. The Monte Carlo approach now samples AGB values from a log-normal distribution, ensuring positivity and better reflecting biomass variability.

## 5.11 Developed a Field Calibration Protocol

**Document(s) impacted:** M001, Protocol for Field Calibration

**Type of change:** Clarification

**Summary of revision:**

- This revision introduces a new protocol for calibrating AGB values using field data, allowing developers to improve the accuracy of biomass estimates when *in situ* project-specific measurements are available.

- The protocol applies to the initial carbon stock and carbon stock evolution of the restoration site(s) and the carbon stock of the reference site(s).

## 5.12 Revised the Carbon Potential Approach

**Document(s) impacted:** M001

**Type of change:** Clarification

**Summary of revision:**

- This update clarifies the step-by-step process Equitable Earth follows upon receiving the shapefiles of the reference site(s), including how to operate if the site meets all criteria or if it falls short on the age requirement.

## 5.13 Modified VRU Accounting Methods

**Document(s) impacted:** M001

**Type of change:** Substantial

**Summary of revision:**

- This revision updates the VRU issuance approach to improve accuracy and address potential conservativeness issues.

- Under the previous method, carbon stock was measured relative to the previous verification period. However, because AGB data are now updated each year across the project lifetime, this method could result in mismatches and then under- or over-estimation of net GHG removals.

- The revised approach resolves this by anchoring all carbon stock comparisons to the project start date. At each verification period, total removals since the start date are recalculated using the latest data, and any VRUs already issued are deducted accordingly.

## 5.14 Revised Monte Carlo Carbon Stock Simulations

**Document(s) impacted:** M001

**Type of change:** Substantial

**Summary of revision:**

- This revision adjusts the percentile applied to Monte Carlo simulation outputs for carbon stock estimates. The use of the 2.5th percentile under v1.1 was identified as overly conservative.

- To better reflect the true confidence level of the estimates while maintaining a conservative approach, the approach was updated to the 15th percentile. This adjustment reduces the risk of systematically under-crediting projects while still ensuring that VRU issuance is based on conservative and statistically robust assumptions.

## 5.15 Revised Barrier Analysis Requirements

**Document(s) impacted:** M001

**Type of change:** Substantial

**Summary of revision:**

- This revision improves and clarifies the requirements for the barrier analysis component of the additionality assessment.

- Under v1.1, certain relevant barriers were not explicitly listed, and others required clearer definitions. The updated version expands the set of barriers that must be considered and refines their descriptions to ensure more consistent application across projects.

## 5.16 Updated the Uncertainty and Conservativeness Requirements

**Document(s) impacted:** M001

**Type of change:** Substantial

**Summary of revision:**

- This section of the methodology was updated to reflect the current carbon quantification procedures used by Equitable Earth.
- The revision clarifies that a Monte Carlo approach is applied to quantify uncertainty for both AGB estimates and the root-to-shoot (RS) ratio.
- Additional updates improve clarity on the treatment of leakage, including how conservativeness is applied.

## 5.17 Adjusted Carbon Baseline Date to Accommodate AGB Data Cadence

**Document(s) impacted:** M001

**Type of change:** Clarification

**Summary of revision:**

- The current AGB provider, Chloris Geospatial, publishes AGB data for year y-1 around Q2 of year y. Depending on when the project is starting or has started, Equitable Earth must choose which year to use for the baseline. For example, if project activities started in January 2022, only data from 2020 would be available at that time. Meanwhile, if project activities start in December 2022, it makes more sense to use the newly published 2021 data.
- Based on these assumptions, Equitable Earth updated its processes under v1.2 and now uses:

- The y-2 data as the baseline for projects undergoing certification from January 1 to June 30 (included) of year y.
- The y-1 data as the baseline for projects undergoing certification (or expected to start activities) from July 1 to December 31 (included) of year y.
- The y-1 data as the baseline for projects having a start date in year y when pre-submission activities have been declared.

The chosen baseline year (e.g., y-1 or y-2) is used throughout the project's crediting period.

## 5.18 Revised Leakage Quantification and Terminology

**Document(s) impacted:** M001

**Type of change:** Clarification

**Summary of revision:**

- This revision redefined the leakage approach for cases when the hosting area (i.e., location where activities have been displaced to) is unknown to the developer, as follows:
  - At certification, a conservative estimate of the total leakage is established by calculating the distribution of carbon stock per pixel across the leakage belt and taking the 95th percentile of that distribution as the per-hectare carbon loss due to the activity displaced.
  - Following each verification, a similar method is used to quantify actual leakage, based on monitored carbon stock losses within the leakage belt. The 95th percentile of that distribution will represent a conservative per-hectare carbon loss due to the activity displaced.
- In this context, all terms related to leakage (e.g., hosting area, displaced activity area, leakage belt) were adjusted or redefined for improved clarity and consistency.

## 5.19 Updated Variable Names

**Document(s) impacted:** M001

**Type of change:** Substantial

**Summary of revision:**

- All variables used in the quantification methodology have been reviewed and aligned to ensure clarity, consistency, and ease of implementation.
- This revision standardises terminology and updates the variable names to reflect the current quantification procedure and data sources used.

## 5.20 Updated Descriptions of Carbon Parameters and QA/QC Measures

**Document(s) impacted:** M001

**Type of Change:** Clarification, Substantial

**Summary of Revision:**

- Equitable Earth updated the descriptions of quality assurance and quality control measures for all carbon parameters to better reflect the process applied during certification.

## 5.21 Clarified Accounting of Invasive Species Removal

**Document(s) impacted:** M001, Future Improvements & Limitations

**Type of change:** Clarification

**Summary of revision:**

- The methodology has been refined to clarify the treatment of invasive species removal within restoration activities.
- M001 now explicitly states that emissions associated with the removal of invasive species are not explicitly included in GHG calculations, ensuring that developers are not penalised for implementing ecologically necessary activities.

## 5.22 Added Secondary Forest Growth Requirements

**Document(s) impacted:** M001

**Type of change:** Substantial

**Summary of revision:**

- This revision aims to refine restoration activities allowed under M001 by clearly distinguishing two key categories:
    - **Restoration of degraded ecosystems** - Either through active interventions (e.g., replanting) or passive processes (e.g., enhanced natural regeneration).
    - **Secondary growth resulting from the conservation of degraded forests** - Achieved by mitigating or eliminating the drivers of degradation, allowing natural forest regrowth.
- A definition for ‘degraded forest’ was also added to the Terms & Definitions document for clarity.

## 5.23 Simplified Reference Site Accessibility Requirements

**Document(s) impacted:** M001

**Type of change:** Substantial

**Summary of revision:**

- This revision simplifies the accessibility requirements by requesting that the reference site(s) be accessible up to the project registration date.
- Additionally, a new provision specifies what developers must do if a 40-year-old reference site is unavailable, providing a clear pathway for selecting a younger site while ensuring it meets key ecological attributes.

## 5.24 Simplified Requirements for Selection of Reference Site(s) in the Case of Multiple Biomes

**Document(s) impacted:** M001

**Type of change:** Substantial

**Summary of revision:**

- This revision updates the requirements for identifying separate reference sites for projects that span multiple biomes. Previously, developers were required to provide at least one reference site per biome. Requirements have now been revised to offer greater flexibility.
- This change acknowledges the presence of ecological gradients and transitional zones between biomes. Since Equitable Earth relies on global datasets that inherently involve certain assumptions and generalisations, requiring multiple reference sites in such contexts was unnecessarily rigid. This revised approach allows for more context-specific and scientifically robust decision-making.

## 5.25 Revised Fire Prevention Requirements

**Document(s) impacted:** M001

**Type of change:** Clarification

**Summary of revision:**

- The previous requirement specifying fire towers for fire monitoring and response was revised to allow greater flexibility.
- The updated methodology broadens the range of acceptable approaches for fire prevention and monitoring, enabling projects to apply context-appropriate and locally-feasible solutions.

## 5.26 Added Thinning Requirements

**Document(s) impacted:** M001, Terms & Definitions

**Type of change:** Substantial

**Summary of revision:**

- This revision introduces requirements and best practices for thinning practices as a restoration activity. A definition of 'thinning practices' has been added to the Terms & Definitions document.
- It establishes clear requirements to ensure that, where relevant, thinning is conducted as part of a sustainable management plan with clear monitoring and reporting procedures.

## 5.27 Clarified Requirements for NTFP Species Introduction in Restoration Site(s)

**Document(s) impacted:** M001

**Type of change:** Clarification

**Summary of revision:**

- The methodology was updated to provide clearer guidance on the sustainable inclusion of non-timber forest product (NTFP) species in restoration activities.
- The revision clarifies the conditions under which NTFP species may be introduced in the restoration site(s).

## 5.28 Clarified Principles and Requirements for Pre-Submission Activities

**Document(s) impacted:** M001, Terms & Definitions

**Type of change:** Clarification

**Summary of revision:**

- This revision clarifies definitions and requirements for pre-submission activities.
- All project activities, including pre-submission and site preparation activities, are subject to the rules and requirements set out in the Programme Manual, Standard, and applied methodology. However, this revision leaves some flexibility for projects that started activities before the Standard was released.
- Developers must clearly report on all pre-submission activities at feasibility and identify any potential non-conformities to be mitigated.

## 5.29 Expanded Site Preparation Requirements & Related Emissions Potential

**Document(s) impacted:** M001

**Type of change:** Substantial

**Summary of revision:**

- This revision establishes a comprehensive protocol governing site preparation activities, including requirements and safeguards for more ‘intensive’ site preparation techniques.
- The requirements allow developers to use appropriate site preparation techniques, introduce strict conditional allowances for prescribed burns and chemical treatments, and provide clear guidance on the regulated use of transitory species and mechanical interventions.

## 5.30 Clarified Requirements for Restoration Plan Methods

**Document(s) impacted:** M001

**Type of change:** Clarification

**Summary of revision:**

- This revision introduces clearer requirements for the Restoration Plan to ensure consistency and alignment across project submissions.

- M001 now defines the key elements that must be included in the plan, mirroring the structured approach applied to the Social Additionality Plan.

## 5.31 Clarified ‘Zonation’ Concept

**Document(s) impacted:** M001, Terms & Definitions

**Type of change:** Substantial

**Summary of revision:**

- This revision formally defines the concept of ‘zonation’, which was previously used across the documentation without a consistent definition.
- The term ‘zone’ was used as a standalone term to refer to groups of one or more restoration site(s) with similar ecological characteristics. This term was changed to ‘group(s)’ and refers to a ‘demarcated land area that may include one or more restoration site(s) with similar ecological characteristics, managed under a unified restoration schedule and long-term management plan’.
- All terms encompassed under the concept of ‘zonation’ (e.g., project area, buffer zone, exclusion zone) were either defined or clarified as part of this revision.

## 5.32 Upgraded Random Plot Procedure for Ecological Recovery Assessment

**Document(s) impacted:** M001

**Type of change:** Substantial

**Summary of revision:**

- The baseline assessment procedure under the Ecological Recovery Pillar was updated to improve the relevance and feasibility of field surveys.
- Under v1.1, Equitable Earth randomly assigned one to three plots with a 50-meter radius each, where developers were required to complete field surveys. However, based on field experience and feedback, this procedure sometimes resulted in plots that were physically inaccessible

and did not provide a comprehensive understanding of degradation drivers within and across all restoration site(s).

- The random plot procedure now stratifies the restoration site(s) into a maximum of five clusters. A buffer is then applied around each cluster to prevent overlap and ensure a minimum distance between survey plots. A maximum of three survey plots per stratum is then selected through a weighted random sampling method.


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