



**Publication Date:**  
05/08/2025

**Version:**  
V1.2

**Contact:**  
Equitable Earth  
[info@eq-earth.com](mailto:info@eq-earth.com)

## Programme

# Standard Setting and Methodology Development Procedure

## Summary

The Standard Setting and Methodology Development Procedure ensures that any modifications to the Programme Manual, the Equitable Earth Standard, and methodologies are driven by a transparent and well-informed decision-making process. This procedure is divided into two parts: one dedicated to standard-setting for modifying standard documents, and the other focused on developing or revising methodologies. In this process, decisions of the Technical Advisory Board (TAB) are sovereign and cannot be challenged or opposed formally or informally by Equitable Earth.



# Table of Contents

<b>Table of Contents</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>1 Introduction</b>	<b>2</b>
1.2 Normative References	2
<b>2 General Principles</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>3 Standard Setting Procedure</b>	<b>5</b>
3.1 Development Phase	5
3.2 Review Phase	6
3.3 Approval Phase	7
<b>4 Methodology Development and Revision Procedure</b>	<b>8</b>
4.1 Development Phase	8
4.2 Review Phase	9
4.3 Approval Phase	11
4.4 Withdrawal	12



# 1 Introduction

- 1.1.1 The document establishes a step-by-step procedure for developing and approving rules, requirements, and procedures under the Equitable Earth Programme, including the [Programme Manual](#), the [Equitable Earth Standard](#), and all associated methodologies.
- 1.1.2 This approach ensures that rules, requirements, and procedures are accurate and robust, and further supported by the review and approval of updates by the Technical Advisory Body (TAB).
- 1.1.3 The document establishes procedures for the following:
  - 1) Development of new standard documents
  - 2) Revision of existing standard documents
  - 3) Development of new methodologies
  - 4) Revision of existing methodologies

## 1.2 Normative References

- 1.2.1 This document must be read in conjunction with the following documents:
  - [Code of Ethics and Business Conduct](#)
  - [Equitable Earth Governance](#)
  - [Programme Manual](#)
  - [Technical Advisory Board](#)
  - [Terms & Definitions](#)



## 2 General Principles

2.1.1 **Application.** The procedures established in this document apply to Equitable Earth and the TAB Members. It includes additional guidance for stakeholders such as developers, Validation and Verification Bodies (VVBs), and other global stakeholders.

2.1.2 **Roles.**

2.1.2.1 The Secretariat, in collaboration with other Equitable Earth entities, is responsible for developing and revising the Programme Manual, Equitable Earth Standard, and methodologies.

2.1.2.2 The Technical Advisory Board (TAB) provides scientific and technical insights and is responsible for reviewing Programme, Standard, and methodology documents as part of the approval process. For more information on the role and responsibilities of the TAB, please refer to the [Technical Advisory Board](#) document.

2.1.3 **Revisions.** The development of a new Programme or Standard document, methodology, and subsequent revisions must follow the procedures described below unless they are considered direct revisions.

2.1.4 **Direct revisions.** This procedure allows the Secretariat to directly modify Standard documents to adapt to market changes swiftly without engaging the TAB. Direct revisions can be made in the following instances:

2.1.4.1 **Accreditation and endorsement bodies.** An effort to comply with international standards and accreditation bodies (e.g., ICROA, CORSIA, IC-VCM).

2.1.4.2 **Legal and regulatory framework.** An effort to adapt to changes in the applicable legal and regulatory framework.

2.1.4.3 **Minor changes.** For matters that do not significantly alter the intent or implications of existing Standard or methodology documents.

2.1.4.4 Direct revisions are not subjected to TAB approval or public comment periods. A direct revision is strictly restricted to the topic that justifies it.

2.1.5 **Continuous improvement.** All procedures described in this document aim to strengthen the Programme Manual, Standard, methodologies, and supporting documents.



2.1.6 **Record keeping.** The Secretariat is responsible for keeping a permanent record of all elements and versions of Programme, Standard, and methodology documents. This includes every version of each Standard Setting and Methodology Development Procedure document, and any:

- 1) Methodology development/revision mandates or standard development/revision mandates
- 2) Methodology development/revision mandates or standard development/revision propositions
- 3) Calls for public comment periods
- 4) Public Comment Digests

2.1.7 **Public disclosure.** The Secretariat is responsible for publicly disclosing the above documents on the [Equitable Earth website](#), and for guaranteeing that stakeholders have equal access to them.



## 3 Standard Setting Procedure

### 3.1 Development Phase

The development or revision of an Equitable Earth Programme or Standard (hereinafter referred to as Standard documents) document may be triggered by one or more of the following three situations.

3.1.1 **Standard development/revision proposition.** Based on strategic objectives and/or feedback collected from stakeholders such as developers, VVBs, external experts, and other Equitable Earth entities, the Secretariat may submit a standard development/revision proposition to the TAB. The proposition must thoroughly detail all the new rules, requirements, procedures, or changes proposed for the Standard and its affiliated documents. The Secretariat may draft the propositions in collaboration with other Equitable Earth entities.

3.1.2 **Standard development/revision mandate.** The TAB may also mandate the Secretariat to draft a standard development/revision proposition. This mandate must include guidelines for:

- 1) The identification number of the development/revision
- 2) The aim and rationale for the development/revision
- 3) The scope of the development/revision
- 4) A provisional timeline for the development/revision
- 5) The expected risks associated with the proposed development/revision, if applicable
- 6) The duration of the expected public comment period if different from the usual thirty days

3.1.3 **Regular updates.** All Standard documentation shall be reviewed at least every two years or as requested by the TAB. The revisions can be specific to a document (such as the [Programme Manual](#)) or the entire Programme, as deemed appropriate by the TAB.



## 3.2 Review Phase

3.2.1 **Review.** The TAB must review and respond to standard development/revision propositions within 30 consecutive days or any other pre-defined timeline. If the TAB fails to respond within this period, the proposition is considered rejected. Based on their review, the TAB may:

- 1) Accept the standard development/revision proposition.
- 2) Request the Secretariat for further revisions. A standard development/revision proposition can be sent back to the Secretariat up to five times, after which it will be rejected.
- 3) Reject the standard development/revision proposition.

3.2.2 **Justification.** In every case, the TAB must provide a written justification for its decision.

3.2.3 **Public comment period.** Depending on the subject of the development/revision, a public comment period may be required to account for stakeholder comments and feedback.

3.2.3.1 This public comment period is mandatory when the standard development/revision proposition:

- 1) Modifies existing Standard documents in a way that significantly alters their requirements, procedures, or concepts
- 2) Introduces a new Standard document, with contents not previously included in any Standard document~

3.2.4 **Call for public comment.** If necessary, the Secretariat must organise and launch a public comment period that runs for at least 30 consecutive days, unless otherwise mandated by the TAB.

3.2.4.1 The call for public comment will be published on the [Equitable Earth website](#) and social media.

3.2.4.2 The Secretariat must proactively reach out to key stakeholders, including local stakeholders where projects are certified.

3.2.4.3 Equitable Earth must strive to include diverse views from ecologists, carbon market experts, and livelihood experts.



- 3.2.5 **Consultation digest.** The Secretariat assesses all comments, feedback, and suggestions received during the consultation and summarises them in a Consultation Digest, which must include:
- 1) A structured review of all suggestions and the Secretariat response on whether or not these suggestions will be implemented
  - 2) A justification for each comment or suggestion that is accepted or rejected
- 3.2.6 **Timeline.** The Secretariat must publish the Consultation Digest no more than 45 business days from the closing date of the public consultation on the [Equitable Earth website](#) and social media. If this timeline is exceeded, Equitable Earth must issue a public justification for the delay.

### 3.3 Approval Phase

- 3.3.1 If no public consultation is required, the Secretariat will finalise the Standard revision. If a public consultation is required, the Secretariat must integrate its feedback and finalise the documentation accordingly.
- 3.3.2 **Final TAB review and comments.** The Secretariat will send a final version of all documents revised to the TAB for comments. The TAB may provide feedback, which must be considered before the final version is published.
- 3.3.3 **Public disclosure.** The Secretariat then publishes the final version of the Standard and/or its affiliated documents on the [Equitable Earth website](#).





## 4 Methodology Development and Revision Procedure

### 4.1 Development Phase

The creation of a new methodology or the revision of an existing one may be triggered by one or more of the following three situations:

4.1.1 **Methodology development/revision proposition.** Based on strategic objectives and/or the feedback collected internally and from stakeholders such as developers, VVBs, external experts, and Equitable Earth entities, the Secretariat may develop or revise a methodology and its associated documents and submit it to the TAB. The Secretariat may draft the development/revision with other Equitable Earth Entities and external experts gathered in a working group. The methodology developed/revised must exhaustively detail all relevant rules, requirements, and procedures. This includes but is not limited to:

- 1) Eligibility criteria
- 2) Ecological Recovery Pillar, with its principles and methods
- 3) Livelihoods Pillar, with its principles and methods
- 4) Carbon Pillar, with its principles, methods, and associated quantification methodology, specifically how to:
  - a) Determine the project boundary, including the selection of relevant GHG sources, sinks, and reservoirs.
  - b) Establish a baseline scenario.
  - c) Demonstrate additionality.
  - d) Quantify net GHG removals by determining the following:
    - i) Baseline emissions/initial carbon stock
    - ii) Resulting emissions
    - iii) Achieved removals



- iv) Leakage
- v) Uncertainty and associated parameters.
- e) Determination of GHG reversal risk and a reversal mitigation plan.
- f) Monitoring and reporting of achieved net GHG removals and project interventions.

4.1.2 **Methodology development/revision mandate.** The TAB may mandate the Secretariat to develop/revise a methodology. The mandate must provide guidelines on:

- 1) The aim and rationale for the methodology development/revision
- 2) The scope of the methodology development/revision
- 3) A provisional timeline for methodology development/revision
- 4) The expected risks associated with the proposed methodology or the project type, if applicable
- 5) The scope and duration of the expected public comment period, if different from the standard 30 days
- 6) The necessity to engage with external experts (individuals or organisations) to review the proposed methodology and/or changes

4.1.3 **Regular updates.** The Secretariat must review and update methodologies every two years, unless otherwise requested by the TAB, to align its requirements with the latest market best practices and the latest science.

## 4.2 Review Phase

4.2.1 **Review.** The TAB must review and respond to methodology development/revision propositions within 30 consecutive days or any other pre-defined timeline. If the TAB fails to respond within this period, the proposition is considered rejected. Based on their review, the TAB may:

- 1) Accept the methodology development/revision proposition.
- 2) Request the Secretariat for further revisions. A methodology development/revision proposition can be sent back to the Secretariat up to five times, after which it will be rejected.



- 3) Request the Secretariat to engage with additional external experts, gathered into a working group alongside the TAB, to review the methodology development/revision proposition to ensure its accuracy and robustness.
  - 4) Reject the methodology development/revision proposition.
- 4.2.2 **Justification.** In every case, the TAB must provide a written justification for its decision.
- 4.2.3 **Public comment.** Depending on the methodology, project type, and scope of development/revision, a public comment period may be required to account for stakeholder comments and feedback.
- 4.2.3.1 A public comment period is mandatory when a proposal is made for:
- 1) A new methodology or methodology document, such as a tool not previously established in any other document
  - 2) A significant revision to the eligibility criteria, the Livelihoods, Ecological Recovery, or Carbon pillars, that significantly alters the approach for baseline setting, monitoring, and reporting. This specifically includes the carbon baseline scenario and the additionality justification.
- 4.2.3.2 If necessary, the Secretariat must organise and launch a public comment period for at least 30 consecutive days unless a different period is mandated by TAB.
- 1) The call for public comment will be published on the Equitable Earth website and social media.
  - 2) The Secretariat must proactively reach out to key stakeholders, including local stakeholders where projects are certified.
  - 3) Equitable Earth must strive to include diverse views from ecologists, carbon market experts, and livelihood experts.
- 4.2.4 **Consultation digest.** The Secretariat assesses all comments, feedback, and suggestions received during the consultation and summarises them in a Consultation Digest, which must include:
- 1) A structured review of all suggestions, with the Secretariat's response on whether or not these suggestions will be implemented



- 2) A justification for each comment or suggestion that is accepted or rejected

4.2.5 **Timeline.** The Secretariat must publish the Consultation Digest no more than 45 business days from the closing date of the public consultation on the [Equitable Earth website](#) and social media. If this timeline is exceeded, Equitable Earth must issue a public justification for the delay.

## 4.3 Approval Phase

4.3.1 **Final methodology version.** If no public consultation is required, the Secretariat must incorporate comments from the TAB (including independent experts if mandated) and submit the Methodology document to the TAB for final review and approval. Where a public consultation was held, the Secretariat must incorporate relevant comments and suggestions into the methodology document for review and approval by TAB.

4.3.2 **Final methodology development/revision.** The TAB can:

- 1) Accept the final methodology document.
- 2) Deem the final methodology version to be incomplete and send it back to the Secretariat for further revisions. This can be done an unlimited number of times, for reasons deemed appropriate by the TAB (e.g., if a public consultation was held, the TAB may determine its feedback was not properly considered).

4.3.3 **Methodology revision.** If no public consultation is required, the Secretariat will directly finalise the methodology revision. If a public consultation was required, the Secretariat must integrate its feedback and finalise the documentation accordingly.

4.3.4 **Final TAB review and comments.** The Secretariat will send a final version of all documents revised to the TAB for comment. The TAB may provide feedback, which must be considered before the final version is published.

4.3.5 **Public disclosure.** The Secretariat then publishes the final version of the methodology and/or its affiliated tools on the Equitable Earth website.



## 4.4 Withdrawal

- 4.4.1 Outdated methodologies or methodologies identified by stakeholders and/or the TAB as overestimating net GHG removals must be immediately put on hold for review by Equitable Earth. If any significant issues or "red flags" concerning conservativeness, baseline scenarios, or additionality arise during a review process, the methodology must be promptly withdrawn.



[www.eq-earth.com](http://www.eq-earth.com)