Validation and re-validation of PDD for a Global C-Sink standard

The Project Design Document (PDD) is a crucial document required for project validation. This document aims to provide a clear understanding of the initial validation process for the PDD and the circumstances or adaptations that require a re-validation.

Validation is a process for evaluating the reasonableness of the assumptions, limitations, and methods that support a statement about the outcome of future activities.

All (sub)activities involved in the creation of a carbon sink must be covered by a PDD or an appendix thereto. Depending on the C-sink standard, this project planning is either fulfilled comprehensively by the C-sink manager, or each sub-activity proponent creates their own part. Throughout this document, all are referred to as activity proponents. For the PDD, templates that have already been adapted to the specific requirements of the C-sink standard can be found on the website of the respective C-Sink standards. Their use is highly recommended.

1. Validation process

Step	Description	Responsible party
0	The activity proponent registers for the services at CSI.	Activity proponent
	The activity proponent completes the project endorsement process with CSI.	Activity proponent
1	The activity proponent registers for the services at the VVB.	Activity proponent
	The activity proponent submits PDD(-annex), Annexes and other supporting documents to the VVB.	Activity proponent
2	VVB checks whether the PDD meets the basic quality requirements, informs CSI.	VVB
	CSI starts public consultation process (30 days) and changes status on project page to "ongoing validation".	CSI
3	The VVB validates the PDD, Annexes and additional documents and issues where applicable a Validation Finding Report with non-compliances.	VVB
	Submission of corrective actions	Activity proponent
	Activity proponent reacts on comments raised during public consultation and updates PDD if needed	Activity proponent
	VVB reviews the corrective actions and finalizes the validation opinion	VVB
	Review and confirmation of the validation opinion by CSI	CSI
	VVB finalises the validation review and sends report and statement to the operator	VVB
4	CSI publishes all relevant project documents in the C-Sink registry	CSI

1.1. Validity

The PDD (Project Design Document) is valid for five years and requires re-validation after five years. There is no limit to the number of possible re-validations as a C-Sink project duration is not limited. These regular re-validations evaluate whether the respective C-Sink Standard has been correctly interpreted for the project, i.e. that there have been no material changes to the project vs. the C-Sink Standard.
If an update is necessary, only the modified part is revalidated, and a supplement to the validation statement and report is created by the VVB. If the changes affect the entire project design, the VVB may decide that a complete revalidation is necessary. The progression and changes are visible on the project page in the Global C-Sink Registry.
An update to the PDD may be necessary when a new version of a relevant standard is released, which can be identified by the leading number before the decimal point.
The PDD must always reflect the current project design and is reviewed during project verification audits. An update is needed if the project undergoes changes. The following sections will explain, specific to each C-sink standard, what changes require an update and re-validation of the PDD.

2. Re-validation of PDD

2.1. General scenarios for Global C-Sink

In the following table, general scenarios attributable to changes of the requirements that require an update and revalidation of the PDD are listed.

Scenario	Description and steps
Update of the C-sink Standard that defines and requires the change or adaption of a PDD	0. CSI informs via newsletter about the necessity 1. Activity proponent updates PDD and sends it to the VVB 2. VVB performs re-validation.
An external endorsement, which is required for the recognition of the C-sink standard in the Voluntary Carbon Market, necessitates an adjustment.	0. CSI informs via newsletter about the necessity 1. Activity proponent updates PDD and sends it to the VVB 2. VVB performs re-validation.

In the following table, general scenarios attributable to the project implementation that require an update and re-validation of the PDD are listed.

Scenario	Description and steps
Finding of a critical deviation from the described project design during annual site visit.	0. VVB informs in finding report of verification audit about the necessity 1. Activity proponent updates PDD and sends it to the VVB 2. VVB performs re-validation.

2.2. Specific scenarios for Global Artisan C-Sink Standard

In the following table, scenarios attributable to changes in the project that require an update and re-validation of the PDD are listed.

Scenario	Description and steps
Additional feedstock added in the project[1)]	1. Send e-mail to service@carbon-standards.com informing about the additional feedstock and submitting required documents dependent on the type of feedstock. Methane compensation: • Endorsement as Tree C-Sink Manager, or • Screenshot of SPC online calculator with description and explanation Methane avoidance: • Methane avoidance request per feedstock. 2. Receive acceptance letter from Carbon Standards. 3. Project proponent updates PDD and submits re-validation request to VVB. 4. VVB performs re-validation.
Change or additional pyrolysis technology used in the project	If Artisan C-Sink Manager is switching to another already endorsed technology provider: 1. Send e-mail to service@carbon-standards.com informing about the change, cc VVB. 2. Carbon Standards confirms the change. 3. Project proponent updates PDD and submits request to VVB. 4. VVB performs re-validation. If Artisan C-Sink Manager is developing a new dMRV, please refer to Endorsement of System Provider under Global Artisan C-Sink.[2)]
Change or additional dMRV system used in the project	If Artisan C-Sink Manager is switching to another already endorsed dMRV provider: 1. Send e-mail to service@carbon-standards.com informing about the change, cc VVB. 2. Carbon Standards confirm the change with VVB on cc. 3. Project proponent updates PDD and submits re-validation request to VVB. 4. VVB performs re-validation. If Artisan C-Sink Manager is developing a new dMRV, please refer to Endorsement of dMRV for a Global C-Sink Standard.[3)]
Change of methane compensation plan for one or multiple feedstocks	1. Send e-mail to service@carbon-standards.com informing about the additional feedstock and submitting required documents. 2. Receive acceptance letter from Carbon Standards. 3. Carbon Standards inform VVB. 4. Project proponent updates PDD and submits re-validation request to VVB. 5. VVB performs re-validation.

[1)] Carbon Standards might issue an invoice for feedstock evaluation.
[2)] Carbon Standards will issue an invoice for new technology evaluation.
[3)] Carbon Standards will issue an invoice for new dMRV evaluation.

2.3. Specific scenarios for Global Biochar C-Sink Standard

In the following table, scenarios attributable to changes in the project that require an update and re-validation of the PDD are listed.

Scenario	Description and steps
Change or additional pyrolysis technology used in the project	If producer is installing additional pyrolysis machines of the same type at the same site no re-validation is necessary. Documentation in Biochar Tool is sufficient. 1. If new the use of another pyrolysis technology is planned or in case of doubt: Send e-mail to service@carbon-standards.com informing about the planned addition of a machine, cc VVB. 2. Carbon Standards confirm the change with VVB on cc. 3. Project proponent updates PDD and submits re-validation request to VVB. 4. VVB performs re-validation.
New regulations make carbon removal mandatory	If there are new regulations or laws published, that make biochar carbon removal mandatory, the Assessment of regulatory requirements for biochar production and application as a removal technology (chapter 1.7.1) has to be renewed. The PDD must clearly exclude the mandatory amount of carbon removal from the ex-ante estimation and in the monitoring plan.
Deviation from ex-ante estimation by more than 10times the expected amount	1. Update PDD, with specific focus on chapter 1.7.3 and 3.3. 2. Submit re-validation request to VVB. 3. VVB performs re-validation.
Sales to a region that is not part of described project location	1. Update PDD, with specific focus on chapter 1.1 2. Submit re-validation request to VVB. 3. VVB performs re-validation.
Update of processes that lead to an outdated monitoring plan	1. Update PDD, with specific focus on chapter 4 2. Submit re-validation request to VVB. 3. VVB performs re-validation.
Usage of new feedstock that is not mentioned in PDD	1. Update PDD 2. Submit re-validation request to VVB. 3. VVB performs re-validation.