

MARINE CONSERVATION CREDITS

MCC-200 Methodology Framework v2.0

Revised to integrate Environmental and Social Safeguards, Sustainable Development Contribution, Host Country Authorisation, Corresponding Adjustments, Buffer Pool, and Operational Roadmap

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SCOPE AND PURPOSE

0001 This Framework shall govern the development, approval, application, and revision of all MCC methodologies.

0002 MCC methodologies shall provide scientifically rigorous, transparent, and verifiable approaches to quantify marine environmental credits.

0003 All methodologies shall comply with MCC-001 Charter and Constitution and shall reference applicable cross-cutting frameworks.

0004 Methodology development shall be transparent and shall include peer review, scientific scrutiny, and stakeholder consultation.

0005 All methodologies shall be designed for independent third-party verification and shall not presume AI or automated assessment as final authority.

0006 Methodology approval shall be vested in the MCC Board or delegated committee with full accountability.

0007 All methodologies shall integrate sustainable development assessment, double counting prevention, host country requirements, and safeguards requirements.

0008 Methodology revisions shall follow documented procedures and shall maintain backward compatibility where feasible.

0009 Locked methodologies (M001-M010) shall be identified in Section 9 and shall form the foundation of the MCC credit system.

0010 This Framework shall be reviewed and updated no less than every five years or upon material scientific or policy change.

METHODOLOGY STRUCTURE

0011 MCC methodologies shall be organized into five methodology families, each addressing distinct marine environmental activities.

0012 MCC-F01 (Blue Carbon Sequestration) shall comprise methodologies M001, M002, M003, and M004, focusing on active marine carbon sequestration.

0013 MCC-F02 (Blue Carbon Protection) shall comprise methodologies M005 and M006, focusing on protection of existing blue carbon stocks.

0014 MCC-F03 (Marine Ecosystem Conservation) shall comprise methodology M007, focusing on marine biodiversity and ecosystem conservation.

0015 MCC-F04 (Marine Pollution Prevention) shall comprise methodologies M008 and M009, focusing on marine pollution reduction.

0016 MCC-F05 (Upstream Waste Prevention) shall comprise methodology M010, focusing on waste prevention upstream of marine environments.

0017 Each methodology family shall be mapped to one or more MCC credit types: MCC-CC (Carbon Credit), MCC-HYB (Hybrid Ecosystem-Carbon Credit), MCC-MCU (Marine Conservation Unit).

0018 MCC-F01 shall map to MCC-CC credit type.

0019 MCC-F02 shall map to MCC-HYB credit type.

0020 MCC-F03 shall map to MCC-HYB credit type.

0021 MCC-F04 shall map to MCC-MCU credit type.

0022 MCC-F05 shall map to MCC-MCU credit type.

0023 All methodologies shall be structured using the Methodology Module System (MOD-01 through MOD-10).

0024 MOD-01 (Applicability) shall define scope, geographic applicability, technology scope, and eligibility criteria.

0025 MOD-02 (Baseline and Additionality) shall define the baseline scenario and shall demonstrate additionality of credit issuance.

0026 MOD-03 (Quantification) shall define calculation methods, data sources, and quality requirements.

0027 MOD-04 (Monitoring) shall specify monitoring frequency, parameters, methodologies, and quality assurance requirements.

0028 MOD-05 (Reporting) shall define reporting formats, timing, and stakeholder communication requirements.

0029 MOD-06 (Validation) shall define the validation scope, methodology, and third-party reviewer qualifications.

0030 MOD-07 (Verification) shall define verification frequency, scope, and third-party verifier requirements.

0031 MOD-08 (Permanence and Risk Management) shall address impermanence risks and mitigation strategies.

0031.1 Permanence horizons shall be family-differentiated: MCC-F01 (Blue Carbon — MCC-CC removals) shall apply a 100-year permanence horizon with a 30-year post-crediting monitoring period; MCC-F02 (Restoration — MCC-HYB) shall apply a 30-year permanence horizon with a 20-year post-crediting monitoring period; MCC-F05 (MPA Management — MCC-HYB) shall apply a 30-year permanence horizon with a 10-year post-crediting monitoring period.

0031.2 MCC-F03 (Fisheries — MCC-MCU avoided emissions) and MCC-F04 (Marine Pollution Prevention — MCC-MCU avoided emissions) shall not apply a permanence horizon, as avoided fuel/methane emissions (F03) and avoided decomposition emissions (F04) are flow measures and not stored carbon.

0031.3 The F01 100-year permanence horizon shall align with the EU Carbon Removal Certification Framework (CRCF) "permanent storage" category and Verra VM0033. The F01 contractual obligation shall include a 30-year binding commitment plus landowner notice on intent to convert.

0032 MOD-09 (Safeguards and Co-Benefits) shall define environmental and social safeguards and co-benefit assessment requirements.

0033 MOD-10 (Registry and Claims) shall define credit serialisation, claim statement requirements, and public transparency.

0034 Each locked methodology (M001-M010) shall include all ten modules in a complete, integrated package.

0035 Methodology families may share common module approaches where scientifically appropriate, subject to family-specific tailoring.

0036 The Module System shall enable consistent application across different methodologies while preserving methodology-specific requirements.

0037 All modules shall be documented in plain language accessible to stakeholders and project developers.

0038 Technical annexes shall provide detailed calculation procedures, reference data, and worked examples.

Methodology Family	Scope	Methodologies	Credit Type	Marine Focus
MCC-F01	Blue Carbon Sequestration	M001–M004	MCC-CC	Active sequestration
MCC-F02	Blue Carbon Protection	M005–M006	MCC-HYB	Stock protection
MCC-F03	Marine Ecosystem Conservation	M007	MCC-HYB	Biodiversity conservation
MCC-F04	Marine Pollution Prevention	M008–M009	MCC-MCU	Pollution reduction
MCC-F05	Upstream Waste Prevention	M010	MCC-MCU	Waste diversion

Module	Function	Key Outputs
MOD-01	Applicability	Scope, eligibility, geographic/technology boundaries
MOD-02	Baseline & Additionality	Baseline scenario, additionality proof
MOD-03	Quantification	Calculation formulae, data requirements
MOD-04	Monitoring	Monitoring plan, QA/QC procedures
MOD-05	Reporting	Reporting formats, timelines, transparency
MOD-06	Validation	Validation methodology, verifier qualifications
MOD-07	Verification	Verification cycle, independent review
MOD-08	Permanence & Risk	Risk assessment, mitigation strategies
MOD-09	Safeguards & Co-Benefits	E&S safeguards, SD contribution assessment
MOD-10	Registry & Claims	Credit serialisation, public claims

METHODOLOGY APPROVAL

0039 All new methodologies shall be subject to formal approval by the MCC Board or delegated Methodology Review Committee.

0040 Methodology approval shall be preceded by at least one round of external peer review by qualified independent scientists.

0041 Peer review shall assess scientific rigor, marine environmental relevance, baseline and additionality logic, quantification validity, and consistency with MCC standards.

0042 Following peer review, each methodology shall be publicly available for stakeholder consultation for a minimum of 30 days.

0043 Stakeholder consultation shall include project developers, VVBs, host country representatives, environmental organisations, and civil society.

0044 The proponent shall provide written responses to all material public comments received during consultation.

0045 The approval committee shall consider peer review feedback, stakeholder comments, and proponent responses before final approval.

0046 Approval shall require documented evidence that the methodology is scientifically sound, operationally feasible, and aligned with MCC standards.

0047 Approval decisions shall be publicly documented with rationale.

0048 Methodologies shall not be approved unless they demonstrate compliance with all applicable requirements of this Framework, including safeguards (Section 7), sustainable development integration (Section 4), double counting prevention (Section 5), and host country requirements (Section 6).

0049 Each approved methodology shall be assigned an official code (M001 through M010 for locked methodologies) and shall be registered in the MCC Methodology Registry.

0050 Upon approval, a methodology shall be assigned a status of either 'Active' (available for new projects) or 'Conditional' (available under specified conditions).

0051 Conditional status shall be assigned where a methodology is operationally sound but requires supplementary requirements or oversight.

0052 All approved methodologies shall be versioned, and version history shall be publicly maintained.

0053 Methodology approval shall not confer any claim regarding external programme eligibility or regulatory status; all external programme claims shall be subject to Section 6 of MCC-001.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT INTEGRATION

0054 All MCC methodologies shall integrate sustainable development contribution assessment as a mandatory requirement.

0055 This integration shall be structured in accordance with MCC-SDCF-v1.0 (Sustainable Development Contribution Framework).

0056 Each methodology family shall define methodology-specific Sustainable Development indicators aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

0057 MCC-F01 (Blue Carbon Sequestration) shall emphasise SDG 13 (Climate Action), SDG 14 (Life Below Water), and SDG 15 (Life on Land).

0058 MCC-F02 (Blue Carbon Protection) shall emphasise SDG 13 (Climate Action), SDG 14 (Life Below Water), and SDG 15 (Life on Land).

0059 MCC-F03 (Marine Ecosystem Conservation) shall emphasise SDG 14 (Life Below Water), SDG 15 (Life on Land), and SDG 1 (No Poverty).

0060 MCC-F04 (Marine Pollution Prevention) shall emphasise SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production), SDG 14 (Life Below Water), and SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-Being).

0061 MCC-F05 (Upstream Waste Prevention) shall emphasise SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production), SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), and SDG 14 (Life Below Water).

0062 Each methodology shall define a minimum of three SDG alignment indicators for the covered activity.

0063 For each SDG indicator, the methodology shall specify baseline value, target value, measurement approach, and monitoring frequency.

0064 Sustainable development scoring shall be integrated into MOD-06 (Validation) and MOD-07 (Verification) to ensure ongoing SD contribution assessment.

0065 Projects shall be required to report on SD indicators at each verification cycle using the methodology-specified approach.

0066 SD contribution shall not automatically create additional credits or financial incentives; SD assessment shall be transparent and public but distinct from credit issuance.

0067 The MCC Board shall annually review and report on aggregate SD contributions across all active projects.

0068 All methodology references to sustainable development shall cite MCC-SDCF-v1.0 as the authoritative framework.

Methodology Family	Primary SDG Focus	Secondary SDGs	Example Indicators
MCC-F01	SDG 13 (Climate Action)	SDG 14, 15	GHG reduction (tCO ₂ e), coastal resilience
MCC-F02	SDG 13 (Climate Action)	SDG 14, 15	Blue carbon stock protection (tC), ecosystem integrity

MCC-F03	SDG 14 (Life Below Water)	SDG 15, 1	Species abundance index, community livelihood index
MCC-F04	SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption)	SDG 14, 3	Pollution mass reduction (t/yr), health impact score
MCC-F05	SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption)	SDG 8, 14	Waste diverted (t/yr), green jobs created

DOUBLE COUNTING PREVENTION IN METHODOLOGY APPLICATION

0069 All MCC methodologies shall incorporate double counting prevention requirements in accordance with MCC-CADCP-v1.0 (Corresponding Adjustment and Double Counting Prevention Framework).

0070 For the purposes of this section, 'double counting' shall mean the issuance of more than one credit (MCC or external) for the same underlying environmental benefit.

0071 The baseline methodology (MOD-02) shall explicitly account for the existence and influence of any other existing carbon credit programmes, environmental programmes, or compliance frameworks operating in the same geographic area or activity scope.

0072 Where overlapping programmes or frameworks exist, the baseline shall be adjusted downward or shall exclude overlapping benefits to prevent double issuance.

0073 Leakage assessment (within MOD-02) shall explicitly include assessment of cross-programme displacement, wherein activity displacement to other programmes or jurisdictions shall be quantified and accounted for.

0074 All quantification methods (MOD-03) shall be structured to prevent issuance of overlapping credits for the same mitigation or conservation outcome.

0075 Where a project activity is designed to satisfy requirements of both MCC and an external compliance framework (e.g., renewable energy mandate), the methodology shall define a clear allocation rule specifying credit type and ownership.

0076 MOD-05 (Reporting) shall require projects to disclose any concurrent external credit programmes, certifications, or regulatory frameworks applicable to the same project activity.

0077 MOD-06 (Validation) and MOD-07 (Verification) shall include explicit verification of double counting prevention compliance.

0078 The MCC Registry (MOD-10) shall maintain a public register of corresponding adjustments and shall cross-reference external programme registries where data is publicly available.

0079 Host country corresponding adjustment tracking shall be integrated per MCC-CADCP-v1.0 requirements.

0080 All methodology references to double counting prevention shall cite MCC-CADCP-v1.0 as the authoritative framework.

HOST COUNTRY REQUIREMENTS IN METHODOLOGY APPLICATION

0081 All MCC methodologies shall incorporate host country requirements and regulatory context in accordance with MCC-HCA-v1.0 (Host Country Authorisation Framework).

0082 Applicability criteria (MOD-01) shall include explicit assessment of compatibility with host country regulatory context, including environmental laws, marine policies, and institutional frameworks.

0083 The baseline methodology (MOD-02) shall incorporate the host country's national environmental policies, marine spatial planning policies, and Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) as relevant context.

0084 Where host country policies prohibit or constrain the activity, the baseline shall reflect such constraints, and methodologies shall not be applied in jurisdictions where they are inconsistent with host country law.

0085 Crediting period limits (MOD-02) shall respect and align with the time horizons established in host country policy frameworks, including national environmental management plans and NDC implementation timelines.

0086 MOD-06 (Validation) shall include explicit host country regulatory compatibility assessment.

0087 Projects shall be required to evidence host country authorisation or non-objection prior to credit issuance (MOD-10).

0088 MOD-05 (Reporting) shall require projects to disclose any material changes to host country regulatory context and shall assess implications for ongoing project operation.

0089 Where host country policies change materially, projects shall reassess compatibility, and the MCC Board shall determine whether remedial measures, methodology amendments, or project suspension are necessary.

0090 All methodology references to host country requirements shall cite MCC-HCA-v1.0 as the authoritative framework.

SAFEGUARDS IN METHODOLOGY APPLICATION

0091 All MCC methodologies shall define and integrate environmental and social (E&S) safeguards requirements in accordance with MCC-ESS-v1.0 (Environmental and Social Safeguards Standard).

0092 E&S safeguards shall address potential negative environmental and social impacts and shall establish mitigation and monitoring requirements.

0093 MOD-09 (Safeguards and Co-Benefits) shall be elevated to a mandatory programme-level requirement for all methodologies and shall be integrated into validation and verification cycles.

0094 Each methodology shall define methodology-type-specific safeguards, including but not limited to: ecosystem integrity, biodiversity, livelihood impacts, cultural heritage, labour rights, and stakeholder engagement.

0095 MCC-F01 (Blue Carbon Sequestration) shall include safeguards addressing potential habitat disruption, species displacement, and livelihood impacts on coastal communities.

0096 MCC-F02 (Blue Carbon Protection) shall include safeguards addressing potential access restrictions, livelihood changes, and ecosystem trade-offs.

0097 MCC-F03 (Marine Ecosystem Conservation) shall include safeguards addressing livelihood impacts, indigenous rights, and equitable benefit sharing.

0098 MCC-F04 (Marine Pollution Prevention) shall include safeguards addressing technology safety, waste management, and community health impacts.

0099 MCC-F05 (Upstream Waste Prevention) shall include safeguards addressing supply chain labour practices and waste management environmental impacts.

0100 An Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) shall be required for all projects under methodologies addressing sensitive ecosystems, vulnerable communities, or high-impact activities.

0101 ESIA scope and depth shall be proportionate to the methodology type and geographic context, as specified in each methodology's MOD-01.

0102 MOD-06 (Validation) and MOD-07 (Verification) shall include explicit E&S safeguards compliance assessment.

0103 Projects shall report on safeguards implementation at each verification cycle using the methodology-specified approach.

0104 All methodology references to safeguards shall cite MCC-ESS-v1.0 as the authoritative framework.

0105 E&S safeguards shall be non-negotiable requirements, and credit issuance shall be conditioned on demonstrated compliance.

METHODOLOGY REVISION AND RETIREMENT

0106 Methodologies may be revised to reflect scientific advances, operational experience, or changes in policy or regulatory context.

0107 Revisions shall be classified as 'minor' (clarification, correction, or technical revision that does not change scope, baseline methodology, or quantification) or 'major' (scope expansion, baseline methodology change, quantification method change, or substantive change to safeguards). Major revisions are treated as new methodologies for governance purposes.

0108 Minor or technical revisions may be approved by the Methodology Review Committee by simple majority of members present, with stakeholder notification.

0109 Major revisions, and all new methodology approvals, shall require a 75% supermajority of the Methodology Review Committee (or the Standards Committee where MCC-700 assigns it that authority) and shall follow the full approval process specified in Section 3 (Methodology Approval).

0110 Upon approval of a revised methodology, a new version number shall be assigned (e.g., M001 v2.1).

0111 Transitional arrangements shall specify the timeline for application of revised methodologies to new projects and whether existing projects may continue under previous versions.

0112 Transitional periods shall not exceed two years except where justified by operational or scientific necessity.

0113 Projects may opt to transition to a newer methodology version only if doing so maintains or improves credit quality and environmental integrity.

0114 Retired methodologies shall remain available for verification and retirement of existing credits but shall not be available for new projects.

0115 Methodology retirement shall be publicly announced with at least 180 days' notice.

0116 A retired methodology shall be archived in the MCC Methodology Registry with full version history.

LOCKED METHODOLOGY PORTFOLIO

0117 MCC shall maintain a 'locked' portfolio of ten core methodologies (M001 through M010) that form the foundation of the MCC credit system.

0118 Locked methodologies shall be designated as foundational and shall not be retired without Board supermajority approval and 24-month notice.

0119 Locked methodologies may be revised in accordance with Section 8, subject to heightened scrutiny and stakeholder engagement.

0120 The locked portfolio shall comprise: M001 (Mangrove Restoration and Sequestration), M002 (Seagrass Meadow Establishment and Sequestration), M003 (Kelp Forest Cultivation and Sequestration), M004 (Coral Reef Restoration and Sequestration), M005 (Mangrove Protection and Stock Preservation), M006 (Seagrass Meadow Protection and Stock Preservation), M007 (Marine Protected Area Establishment and Biodiversity Conservation), M008 (Marine Plastic Pollution Prevention), M009 (Ship-Based Ballast Water Treatment and Species Invasion Prevention), and M010 (Upstream Plastic Waste Prevention and Diversion).

0121 Each locked methodology shall have a unique code, name, family assignment, credit type, complete module set, and current status.

0122 All locked methodologies shall be version controlled, and all versions shall be publicly archived.

0123 The locked portfolio shall be reviewed annually by the Board to assess adequacy, identify gaps, and recommend new methodologies if needed.

Code	Methodology Name	Family	Credit Type	Module Set	Status
M001	Mangrove Restoration and Sequestration	MCC-F01	MCC-CC	MOD-01 to MOD-10	Active
M002	Seagrass Meadow Establishment and Sequestration	MCC-F01	MCC-CC	MOD-01 to MOD-10	Active
M003	Kelp Forest Cultivation and Sequestration	MCC-F01	MCC-CC	MOD-01 to MOD-10	Active
M004	Coral Reef Restoration and Sequestration	MCC-F01	MCC-CC	MOD-01 to MOD-10	Active
M005	Mangrove Protection and Stock Preservation	MCC-F02	MCC-HYB	MOD-01 to MOD-10	Active
M006	Seagrass	MCC-F02	MCC-HYB	MOD-01 to	Active

	Meadow Protection and Stock Preservation			MOD-10	
M007	Marine Protected Area Establishment and Biodiversity Conservation	MCC-F03	MCC-HYB	MOD-01 to MOD-10	Active
M008	Marine Plastic Pollution Prevention	MCC-F04	MCC-MCU	MOD-01 to MOD-10	Active
M009	Ship-Based Ballast Water Treatment and Species Invasion Prevention	MCC-F04	MCC-MCU	MOD-01 to MOD-10	Active
M010	Upstream Plastic Waste Prevention and Diversion	MCC-F05	MCC-MCU	MOD-01 to MOD-10	Active