



# PLASTIC WASTE REDUCTION STANDARD: DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

*Note - The 3R Standard for Project Accounting was renamed the Plastic Recovery and Recycling Project Accounting Program in February 2020 and again to be the Plastic Waste Reduction Program in July 2020. Terminology changes have been made throughout this document, but the document has not been updated in any other way since it was originally published on 16 October 2019.*

## 1. Background

Verra is a non-profit organization based in Washington D.C. that supports efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, improve livelihoods and protect ecosystems and the services they provide. We support climate action and sustainable development with standards and programs that credibly, transparently and robustly assess environmental and social impacts and enable funding for sustaining and scaling up these benefits.

Verra is part of the 3R Initiative, which aims to increase the value of waste plastic and bring attention and resources to new and scaled-up plastic collection and recycling activities by crediting projects that measurably increase the additional recovery and/or recycling of waste plastic above baseline rates. The Initiative will provide confidence that investments have been deployed in a manner which verifiably reduced plastic in the environment.

Projects looking to generate waste reduction credits will be assessed against the *Plastic Waste Reduction Standard (Plastic Standard)*. As developer and manager of this standard, Verra is establishing the Plastic Standard Development Committee (PSDC) to be a strategic and technical resource. The PSDC's objective is to help ensure that only high-quality projects achieving their stated waste-reduction outcomes will be credited and that its widespread use will result in a significant increase in recovery and recycling rates around the world.

The purpose of this document is to define the role and responsibilities, composition and scope of activities of the PSDC.

## 2. Role and Responsibilities

The role of the PSDC is to guide the development of the *Plastic Standard*, provide strategic guidance to the Verra team and approve the final version of the *Plastic Standard*.

The PSDC will provide insights into the needs of a broad range of *Plastic Standard* stakeholders (as set out in Section 3 below). It will contribute expert recommendations and respond to ideas and suggestions presented by Verra about content and use of the *Plastic Standard*.

The responsibilities of the PSDC are to:

- Agree on the objectives for the *Plastic Standard* and the high-level principles that will guide its development and use;
- Agree on the core operational elements of the *Plastic Standard*, such as:
  - Activities that could be credited;
  - Accounting for different types of plastic (i.e., equivalencies and/or labeling);
  - Demonstration of additionality and baselines;
  - Monitoring, measurement and assessment;
  - Types of credit units that may be generated;
  - Environmental and social safeguards and benefit sharing among those involved in project development; and
  - Demonstration of beyond-plastic environmental and social benefits.
- Review comments received via public consultation and agree to proposed approaches to address such comments within the framework of the *Plastic Standard*; and
- Review each version of the *Plastic Standard* before its public release (i.e., piloting version, versions for public consultation) and approve the final version.

### 3. Member Composition and Commitment

The PSDC intends to represent a balance of experience, expertise, and stakeholder interests to support development and evolution of the *Plastic Standard*. Participants in the PSDC should meet one or more of the following criteria:

- Possess strong knowledge of the waste management or packaging sectors, including recycling processes, plastic materials/packaging and supply chains. Strong technical expertise is desirable;
- Understanding of circularity concepts, Sustainable Development Goals, supply chain sustainability initiatives and/or climate/development finance;
- Understanding of sustainability standards and certification programs (e.g., GRI, AA1000, CDP, Rainforest Alliance, Fair Trade), including the role of auditors;
- Experience working with a variety of carbon or other credit-generating, market-based standards, including the UNFCCC's Clean Development Mechanism, voluntary market standards, and relevant mechanisms; and/or
- Working knowledge of the drivers of corporate demand for plastic waste recycling and recovery.

Verra will endeavor to convene a PSDC that reflects a balance between various program stakeholders, including but not limited to the following:

- Social groups: legitimate representatives of low-income groups (e.g. wastepickers);
- Environmental NGOs: plastic waste and ocean conservation organizations;
- Recycling and waste management experts;
- Complementary initiatives (e.g. the Alliance to End Plastic Waste and the Trash Free Seas Alliance);
- Potential project developers and intermediaries;
- Municipalities/government;
- End users (e.g. corporate leaders from 3R Packaging Initiative, manufacturers and retailers);
- Assessment experts; and
- Plastic footprinting or reporting initiatives.

Two PSDC members will come from the Verra Board of Directors and one will come from BVRio, Verra's co-lead on the 3R Initiative secretariat and coordinator of pilot projects for the *Plastic Standard*. Verra expects the PSDC to comprise approximately 12-15 individuals. Appointment of PSDC members will be at Verra's sole discretion.

PSDC members will commit a limited amount of time to contribute to, and support the development of, the *Plastic Standard*. This will include participation in the PSDC via email and, on average, six 60-90 minute conference calls each year. Budget permitting, Verra will endeavor to convene at least one in-person meeting. Members may be required to spend one to two hours preparing for conference calls, including, *inter alia*, reviewing proposed standards language. If he or she is willing, a member's time commitment may be extended to include participation on ad hoc working groups (see Section 4 below).

#### 4. Operation of the Standard Development Committee

The PSDC will be convened by Verra. Verra staff will be responsible for organizing and facilitating PSDC meetings, preparing and disseminating agendas and minutes, producing plans for ongoing *Plastic Standard* development, developing any draft updates to *Plastic Standard* rules and accompanying documents, organizing input and review by the PSDC, facilitating communication and consultation with other stakeholders and supporting the use of the *Plastic Standard*. Verra may create smaller ad hoc groups for different aspects of *Plastic Standard* development drawn from the PSDC and other stakeholders depending on needs, participant interest, availability and expertise. These ad hoc groups are part of the PSDC and their output is reviewed by the PSDC.

Decisions will be taken by consensus and may occur via email. Given the tight time frame for this standard's development, fast turnaround on document reviews and decisions may be required and lack of response after an adequate time period has elapsed will be taken as "no objection". All recommendations and approvals made by the PSDC that are determined consequential to Verra, including the final standard, are subject to final approval the Verra Board of Directors.

Members of the PSDC will adhere to a confidentiality and conflict of interest policy.

The working language of the PSDC will be English.

## 5. Termination

PSDC members commit to participate for the full development phase of the *Plastic Standard*, which is anticipated to conclude in December 2020. However, PSDC members or Verra may give notice of termination of member participation in the PSDC at any time. Verra reserves the right to terminate the PSDC at any time.

## 6. Application for Membership

Applicants are invited to apply for membership in the Plastic Standard Development Committee until 9 August 2019. An application form is available on the Verra website. Please send applications and a CV/resume to Program Officer Sneha Balasubramanian at [SBalasubramanian@verra.org](mailto:SBalasubramanian@verra.org).