



GAS.VVB-02:2025

Accreditation Criteria for Greenhouse Gas Validation and Verification Bodies

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0. FOREWORD

This document establishes the criteria and procedures for the accreditation of greenhouse gas validation and verification bodies (VVBs) that assess data on greenhouse gas emissions and removals within the voluntary market (i.e., in a non-regulated context).

The purpose of this document is to set out unified, transparent, and internationally recognized requirements for the activities of VVBs, ensuring their competence, impartiality, and the technical reliability of their results.

Accreditation is granted in accordance with the following international standards:

- **ISO/IEC 17029** — Principles of validation and verification;
- **ISO 14065** — Requirements for greenhouse gas validation and verification bodies;
- **ISO 14064-3** — Requirements for conducting GHG data validation/verification procedures.

The requirements of this Policy apply to initial accreditation, surveillance assessments, reassessment, and extension of the scope of accreditation.

This document is mandatory for all applicants and accredited bodies operating within GAS.

1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF APPLICATION

This document establishes the requirements and procedures for the accreditation of Validation and Verification Bodies (VVBs) that assess data on greenhouse gas emissions, removals, or reductions within the voluntary market, i.e., in sectors not regulated by legislation.

The document defines:

- the criteria for competence, impartiality, and independence of VVBs;
- the main stages of the accreditation, surveillance, reaccreditation, and scope-extension procedures;
- the requirements for information management, ethical conduct, and interaction with the GAS Accreditation Agency.

Accreditation granted by the GAS Accreditation Agency provides official recognition of a VVB's technical competence to perform verification and to confirm the reliability of greenhouse gas-related data in accordance with the international standards ISO/IEC 17029, ISO 14065, and ISO 14064-3.

2. NORMATIVE AND REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

This section lists the international and internal documents whose provisions apply during the accreditation of validation and verification bodies.

International standards:

- **ISO/IEC 17029:2019** — Conformity assessment — General principles and requirements for validation and verification bodies.
- **ISO 14065:2020** — General principles and requirements for bodies validating and verifying environmental information.
- **ISO 14064-3:2019** — Greenhouse gases — Part 3: Specification with guidance for the verification and validation of greenhouse gas statements.
- **ISO 14064-1 / ISO 14064-2 (for reference)** — Greenhouse gases — Parts 1 and 2: Specification with guidance at the organization and project levels.
- **ISO 14066:2023** — Competence requirements for teams validating and verifying greenhouse gas statements.

Internal GAS documents:

- **GAS.G-01** — Code of Ethics for GAS experts, assessors and personnel.
- **GAS.G-02** — Policy on the use of GAS accreditation marks and references.
- **GAS.G-03** — Policy on conflict of interest and impartiality.
- **GAS.G-04** — Appeals and complaints procedure.
- **GAS.G-05** — GAS sustainable development and climate responsibility policy.
- **GAS.VVB-01** — GAS accreditation policy for greenhouse gas validation/verification bodies.

This list is not exhaustive. The GAS Accreditation Agency may apply additional standards, guidelines or internal documents if necessary to fully assess the body's conformity with the requirements established in its field of activity.

3. TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

This section lists the key terms used in this document, namely:

Accreditation — the official recognition by the GAS Accreditation Agency of the competence of a validation and verification body to perform specified validation or verification tasks in accordance with international standards.

Validation — confirmation of the reliability of statements or projections regarding future greenhouse gas emissions or removals, based on an analysis of evidence and data prior to the implementation of a project or activity.

Verification — confirmation of the reliability of statements or data on actual GHG emissions or removals, based on the review of evidence, documents, and records after the implementation of an activity.

Validation and Verification Body (VVB) — an organization that assesses the reliability of GHG-related statements within a defined scope of activity, in accordance with ISO/IEC 17029, ISO 14065, and ISO 14064-3.

Voluntary Market — the set of programs, initiatives, and schemes under which organizations voluntarily report, reduce, or offset GHG emissions outside mandatory governmental regulation.

GHG Statement — a statement presented by an organization, project, or program regarding the amount of GHG emissions, removals, or reductions for a specific period or within a particular activity.

Client — an organization or project that engages a VVB to perform validation or verification of its GHG statement.

Competence — the combination of knowledge, skills, and experience required to effectively perform validation/verification tasks in accordance with ISO 14066.

Independence — the absence of any financial, business, or other interest that may influence the objectivity and impartiality of the activities of a VVB or GAS personnel.

Impartiality — the principle of ensuring an objective approach to performing validation/verification without conflict of interest or external influence.

GHG Emissions — releases into the atmosphere of gases that contribute to the greenhouse effect (CO₂, CH₄, N₂O, HFCs, PFCs, SF₆, NF₃, etc.).

Scope of Accreditation — the boundaries of activity within which a VVB is competent and authorized to carry out validation or verification of GHG statements.

Applicant — an organization that submits an application for accreditation as a VVB.

On-site Assessment — a stage of the accreditation procedure during which GAS assessors examine the activities of the VVB at its premises.

Re-accreditation — reissuance of accreditation after the expiration of the current term, based on a full assessment.

Accreditation Certificate — an official document confirming the accreditation of a VVB within a specified scope.

GAS Accreditation Commission — the GAS collegial body that makes decisions on granting, extending, suspending, reinstating, or withdrawing accreditation.

4. REQUIREMENTS

4.1 General Requirements

The VVB shall:

- be a legal entity officially registered in the relevant jurisdiction;
- have a clearly defined organizational structure that ensures the distribution of responsibilities, the independence of validators/verifiers, and effective process management;
- operate in accordance with the requirements of ISO/IEC 17029, ISO 14065, ISO 14064-3, and relevant GAS documents;
- have an appropriate quality management system that ensures continual improvement, documentation, and retention of records related to validation and verification;
- demonstrate the availability of adequate resources (technical, human, financial) to perform the declared scope of activities;
- ensure that validation or verification is conducted in accordance with the principles of objectivity, reliability, and transparency.

4.2 Impartiality and Independence

The VVB shall:

- identify, analyze, and document all potential risks to impartiality associated with its activities, its management, personnel, or clients;
- maintain independence from organizations that develop, implement, or consult on GHG management systems;
- ensure that no personnel member or external expert involved in validation/verification has a conflict of interest with the client or the project;
- ensure documentary transparency of all decisions related to assessment, including personnel selection, evidence evaluation, and conclusion approval;
- have an effective recusal procedure for personnel in cases of potential conflicts of interest.

4.3 Personnel Competence

The VVB shall:

- have internal or external personnel whose competence is confirmed in accordance with ISO 14066;
- ensure that each team member has:
 - education, technical knowledge, and experience relevant to the declared scope of activities (e.g., energy, industry, transport, agriculture);
 - knowledge of validation/verification methodologies, ISO 14060 series standards, and relevant guidance documents;

- understanding of national and international voluntary GHG reporting schemes;
- implement a program of capacity building, internal monitoring, and regular re-assessment of personnel competence;
- retain records on personnel competence, training, and assessment results for at least five years.

The VVB shall clearly define the roles of personnel involved in validation and verification processes in accordance with ISO 14066:

- Verifier / Validator — performs the assessment of the GHG assertion, analyzes data, prepares the report;
- Lead Verifier / Validator — coordinates the team and ensures methodological consistency of the process;
- Technical Expert — provides specialized sector-specific knowledge;
- Reviewer — independently checks the completeness and justification of the report;
- Decision Maker — approves results after independent review.

The VVB shall:

- maintain a personnel competence matrix that includes a list of functions, qualification requirements, training records, and assessment results;
- retain competence records for at least five years.

4.4 Validation and Verification Processes

4.4.1 General Provisions

The VVB shall develop, implement, and maintain documented procedures that ensure consistent performance of validation and verification processes in accordance with:

- ISO/IEC 17029;
- ISO 14065;
- ISO 14064-3;
- internal GAS documents that regulate accreditation and oversight.

Procedures shall ensure:

- objectivity of assessment;
- evidence-based conclusions;
- traceability of all actions and decisions;
- an appropriate level of technical expertise according to the declared scope.

4.4.2 Process Planning

Before each validation or verification, the VVB shall:

- define the purpose, scope, boundaries, and criteria of the assessment in accordance with the relevant standard or voluntary program;
- evaluate the absence of conflicts of interest among team members;
- develop a validation/verification plan that includes:
 - object and boundaries of assessment;
 - identification of data sources and measurement methods;
 - level of assurance (reasonable / limited);
 - team composition, roles, timelines, scope of onsite and remote activities;
 - methods for collecting and analyzing evidence.

The VVB shall agree the plan with the client before work begins.

4.4.3 Evidence Collection and Assessment

The VVB shall:

- use a combination of methods ensuring reliability of verification (document review, interviews, observations, recalculations);
- confirm the representativeness of data used in GHG assertions;
- ensure traceability of all information sources supporting the conclusion;
- assess data uncertainty and potential measurement errors;
- document all verified facts and their conformity with criteria.

4.4.4 Forming the Conclusion

The VVB shall prepare a validation or verification report that includes:

- description of the object, scope, boundaries, and assessment criteria;
- level of assurance (reasonable / limited);
- methodology used during the assessment;
- description and results of data evaluation;
- identified nonconformities or limitations;
- the VVB's conclusion confirming the reliability of the GHG assertion.

The report shall be:

- clear, complete, and accurate;
- prepared in a format agreed with the program or client requirements;
- signed by the head of the VVB or an authorized person responsible for the quality of the conclusion.

4.4.5 Issuing Validation/Verification Results

Following the assessment, the VVB may issue:

- a validation / verification report;

- a Verification/Validation Statement confirming the reliability of the GHG assertion, which shall include:
 - name of the client and object of assessment;
 - level of assurance;
 - brief description of the object and period;
 - date of issue and unique identification number;
 - reference to standards (ISO 14064-3, ISO 14065);
 - GAS logo (if permitted by rules of use).

Issuing the certificate does not exempt the VVB from responsibility for the accuracy and evidence-based nature of conclusions.

4.4.6 Quality Control and Approval

The VVB shall have a documented internal quality control system that ensures:

- independent review of reports before issuance (peer review);
- internal procedures for approval of conclusions;
- monitoring and analysis of errors or repeated assessments;
- periodic updating of procedures according to changes in standards or voluntary schemes.

4.5 Management of Documented Information

4.5.1 General Requirements

The VVB shall establish, implement, and maintain a documented information management system that ensures:

- reliability, accuracy, and traceability of all data used in validation or verification;
- protection of information from loss, unauthorized access, modification, or destruction;
- compliance with confidentiality requirements established in client contracts and GAS documents;
- retention and version control of all records, procedures, and reports.

4.5.2 Control of Documented Information

The VVB shall:

- maintain a list of current documents required for the system to function (procedures, instructions, templates, forms);
- ensure that all changes to documentation are:
 - identified (with version and update date);
 - approved by an authorized person prior to implementation;
 - communicated to all relevant personnel;
- prevent unintended use of obsolete documents.

4.5.3 Control of Records

The VVB shall maintain records of:

- all client applications and contracts;
- plans, protocols, reports, and conclusions from validation/verification;
- evidence collected during assessments;
- personnel competence evaluations;
- internal audits and quality control results;
- complaints, appeals, and corrective actions.

Records shall:

- be stored in a secure form ensuring integrity, reliability, and availability for the required period (paper or electronic, with backup);
- be accessible only to authorized persons;
- be traceable throughout the accreditation period and at least five years after completion of the assessment.

4.5.4 Confidentiality and Data Security

The VVB shall:

- ensure confidentiality of all client data, including emissions volumes, project calculations, technological solutions;
- have procedures to prevent unauthorized disclosure or data breaches;
- ensure information security by:
 - controlling access to databases and internal systems;
 - using backup systems;
 - protecting electronic communication, including encryption of confidential information;
 - periodic vulnerability testing.

4.5.5 Electronic Systems and Remote Interaction

If the VVB uses electronic management systems or remote platforms for data exchange, it shall:

- ensure their compliance with GAS requirements for data retention and traceability;
- confirm system security (security certificates, compliance with ISO/IEC 27001 or equivalent standards);
- ensure that information obtained remotely has the same evidential weight as information collected during an onsite assessment.

4.5.6 Information Transfer to GAS

The VVB shall promptly provide the Accreditation Agency GAS with:

- updated information on clients and scopes of activity;

- copies of validation/verification reports (as required by surveillance procedures);
- data confirming compliance with accreditation conditions;
- notifications of any changes in organizational structure, management, or the management system.

Information shall be transmitted securely through GAS-designated channels, ensuring data integrity and confidentiality.

4.6 Ethical Principles and Conflict-of-Interest Prevention

4.6.1 General Provisions

VVBs shall act in accordance with high standards of professional ethics, integrity, and impartiality.

Any activity that may compromise the objectivity or independence of the VVB is unacceptable.

Ethical behavior of personnel is the basis for trust in validation and verification results on the voluntary market.

4.6.2 Conflict-of-Interest Prevention

The VVB shall:

- identify, analyze, and document potential or actual conflicts of interest in accordance with GAS.G-03 “Impartiality and Conflict-of-Interest Prevention”;
- not conduct validation or verification for organizations to which it has provided consultancy or with which it has had financial, employment, or commercial ties within the last 24 months;
- ensure that persons involved in assessments have no personal or organizational interest in the results;
- apply a recusal procedure in case of suspected conflict of interest.

All identified conflicts of interest shall be recorded in the VVB register and reported to GAS.

4.6.3 Personnel Independence

VVB personnel, including permanent and external experts, shall be independent from clients, their contractors, and affiliated entities.

Any professional, business, or family ties that may affect impartiality must be declared in writing before work begins.

The VVB shall ensure:

- separation of functions between units responsible for assessment, commercial activities, and administration;
- absence of financial or organizational dependence between assessors and the client;

- independence of decisions regarding approval of reports and conclusions.

4.6.4 Declaration of Impartiality

Each personnel member involved in validation or verification shall sign a Declaration of Impartiality and Confidentiality confirming:

- absence of conflict of interest;
- understanding of the requirements of this Policy and GAS documents;
- obligation to adhere to principles of integrity and professional conduct.

4.6.5 Responsibility and Disciplinary Measures

If violations of ethical norms or involvement in activities creating a conflict of interest are identified:

- the assessment results shall be reviewed;
- the responsible person may be suspended or removed from the team;
- information shall be transmitted to GAS for further action in accordance with GAS.G-03 “Conflict-of-Interest and Impartiality Policy”.

4.7 Risk Management Related to VVB Activities

4.7.1 General Provisions

VVBs shall identify, assess, and manage risks that may affect the objectivity, reliability, and credibility of its results.

The risk-management system shall be documented, regularly reviewed, and cover operational and reputational risks.

The process shall comply with GAS.G-05 “Risk Management Policy”.

4.7.2 Risk Identification and Classification

The VVB shall systematically identify risks related to:

- impartiality and personnel independence;
- incorrect or incomplete GHG data assessment;
- use of inappropriate methodologies or input data;
- involvement of external individuals without confirmed competence;
- incorrect storage or transmission of information;
- reputational impacts in case of major deficiencies identified in verification reports.

The VVB shall maintain a risk register that includes description, category, level, and mitigation measures.

4.7.3 Risk Assessment and Prioritization

Risks shall be assessed by likelihood and potential impact on:

- reliability of validation/verification results;
- reputation of the VVB and GAS;
- environmental or climate value of outcomes.

The VVB shall document risk-assessment criteria and update them regularly (at least annually or after significant operational changes).

4.7.4 Impartiality-Related Risk Management

Special attention shall be paid to risks affecting impartiality.

The VVB shall:

- regularly analyze potential sources of conflict of interest;
- implement control measures (separation of functions, rotation of experts, independent decision-making);
- ensure independent review of results when impartiality concerns arise;
- inform GAS of any cases or risks that may compromise objectivity.

4.7.5 Monitoring and Improvement

The VVB shall:

- regularly review the effectiveness of risk-management measures;
- analyze incidents, complaints, client feedback, and internal audit results;
- implement corrective actions to prevent recurrence;
- provide summarized information on risk status in the annual report to GAS.

4.8 Management of Complaints, Appeals, and Comments

4.8.1 General Provisions

The VVB shall have a documented procedure for receiving, analyzing, and responding to complaints, appeals, and comments that ensures impartiality, transparency, and traceability of each case.

The procedure shall be publicly available and communicated to all clients, stakeholders, and personnel.

The VVB shall accept both identified and anonymous complaints if they contain sufficient facts for preliminary analysis.

All reports shall be recorded in the complaints and appeals log, indicating the date, subject matter, responsible person, and review deadline.

4.8.2 Complaints

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction with the actions of a VVB or its personnel that is not directly related to a decision regarding a GHG statement.

The VVB shall:

- acknowledge receipt of the complaint within 5 working days;
- conduct an analysis and provide a response no later than 30 calendar days (or 60, if needed, with an explanation of the reasons);
- ensure that the review is carried out by a person not involved in the subject of the complaint.

4.8.3 Appeals

An appeal is a client's request to review the VVB's decision regarding the results of a validation or verification.

Appeals are reviewed by an independent appeals committee, whose composition is approved by the VVB's management and does not include persons involved in the initial decision.

The appeals committee makes a decision based on documents, evidence and, if necessary, additional technical analysis.

4.8.4 Comments and Suggestions

A comment is a submission containing recommendations or suggestions for improving validation, verification, or communication processes with clients.

They are analyzed during internal quality meetings and may initiate corrective actions.

4.8.5 Confidentiality and Impartiality

All information obtained during the review is confidential.

The person submitting a complaint or appeal shall not be subject to discrimination or restrictions in future relations with the VVB.

4.8.6 Monitoring and Improvement

The VVB must regularly analyze received complaints, appeals, and comments to identify systemic issues and improve processes.

Summarized information on review results may be included in the annual activity report (without disclosure of personal data).

4.9 Climate Responsibility and Reporting

4.9.1 General Provisions

The VVB shall conduct its activities in accordance with the principles of environmental and climate responsibility, recognizing its environmental impact and committing to minimize it throughout all stages of validation and verification.

The VVB shall integrate sustainable development and climate neutrality considerations into its management system.

The VVB's policy shall include commitments to reduce its own GHG emissions, use resources efficiently, and manage waste in an environmentally responsible manner.

All VVB activities must comply with applicable international and national climate-responsibility initiatives.

4.9.2 Resource Management

The VVB shall efficiently manage the use of energy, water, fuel, and paper, giving preference to digital processes and remote assessments where this does not affect the reliability of results.

When site visits are required, the use of low-carbon modes of transport is encouraged.

4.9.3 GHG Emissions and Climate Impact Management

The VVB shall account for and periodically assess its own GHG emissions.

Where possible, it shall develop plans to offset or reduce emissions associated with personnel activities.

4.9.4 Environmental Competence of Personnel

All members of validation/verification teams must have basic knowledge of:

- international climate goals (Paris Agreement, UN SDGs);
- principles of measuring, reporting, and verifying emissions;
- the impact of activities on climate processes.

Training on these topics shall be part of the personnel competence-maintenance program (see section 4.3).

4.9.5 Reporting and Monitoring

The VVB shall annually submit a climate-responsibility report to the GAS Accreditation Agency, containing:

- information on measures to reduce or offset its own emissions;
- results of environmental initiatives (energy efficiency, digitalization, reuse of materials, etc.);

- updates to the sustainable development policy (if applicable).

The reports are analyzed by the GAS Accreditation Agency as part of the surveillance procedure, as an element of assessing the social and environmental responsibility of accredited bodies.

5. ACCREDITATION PROCEDURE FOR VVBs

5.1 General Provisions

The VVB accreditation procedure defines the sequence of actions by which the GAS Accreditation Agency evaluates the competence, impartiality, and conformity of the VVB's activities to the requirements of ISO/IEC 17029, ISO 14065, and ISO 14064-3.

Accreditation is a voluntary procedure based on the principles of transparency, evidence-based evaluation, and international recognition.

All accreditation stages are documented, and decisions are made by the independent GAS Accreditation Commission.

5.2 Accreditation Stages

5.2.1 Application Submission

The body submits an official application to the GAS Accreditation Agency with a package of documents confirming:

- legal status;
- management system (including procedures for impartiality, risk management, and personnel competence);
- description of the scope of activities (types of projects, sectors, GHG categories);
- results of internal audits and personnel training programs.

5.2.2 Preliminary Document Review

The GAS Accreditation Agency conducts an initial review of the submitted materials to determine completeness, readiness for assessment, and any gaps requiring correction.

5.2.3 Competence Assessment

The assessment is carried out by GAS assessors who evaluate conformity to ISO/IEC 17029, ISO 14065, ISO 14064-3, and ISO 14066.

The following is assessed:

- VVB management structure;
- competence of key personnel (management, lead verifiers/validators, reviewers);
- adherence to principles of impartiality and transparency;

- availability of procedures for quality control, training, complaints handling, and risk management.

5.2.4 On-site Assessment

The GAS Accreditation Agency conducts an on-site or remote assessment during which actual validation/verification practices, the management system, and compliance with procedures are evaluated.

The assessment may include witness assessment (observation of the VVB conducting a client audit).

5.2.5 Accreditation Decision

Based on the assessment, a report is prepared containing conclusions, evidence of conformity or nonconformity, and recommendations to grant, refuse, or postpone accreditation.

The decision is made by the Independent GAS Accreditation Commission, whose members did not participate in the audit.

The applicant is notified in writing and, if necessary, receives a corrective action plan.

5.2.6 Issuance of the Accreditation Certificate

If the decision is positive, the Agency issues a GAS Accreditation Certificate indicating:

- scope of accreditation (types of assessments, GHG categories, activity sectors);
- validity period;
- date of the next surveillance assessment.

Information about the accredited VVB is entered into the public GAS registry.

5.4 Suspension, Renewal, and Withdrawal

Accreditation may be suspended or withdrawn if:

- the requirements of standards or GAS policies are violated;
- impartiality or conflict of interest issues are identified;
- false information is submitted or corrective actions are not implemented.

The decision on suspension/withdrawal is made by the GAS Accreditation Commission, after which the information is published in the public registry.

5.5 Change of Accreditation Scope

A VVB may submit an application to expand, narrow, or adjust its scope of accreditation.

The GAS Accreditation Agency conducts a document review and, if necessary, an additional competence assessment for the new sectors.

5.6 Archiving of Assessment Results

All documents related to accreditation, surveillance, and Commission decisions are retained by the GAS Accreditation Agency for at least five years.

The VVB must retain its own records of assessment procedures for at least three years after the expiry of the accreditation.

6. RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS OF ACCREDITED VVBs

6.1 General Provisions

The rights and obligations of accredited VVBs are defined in the document GAS.VVB-01 “General Accreditation Policy for Greenhouse Gas Validation and Verification Bodies.”

This section establishes only additional procedural requirements related to the activities of VVBs within the scope of valid accreditation.

6.2 Key Obligations During the Accreditation Period

An accredited VVB shall:

- ensure continuous compliance with the requirements of ISO/IEC 17029, ISO 14065, and ISO 14064-3;
- maintain personnel competence and promptly report any changes in the composition of key specialists;
- ensure transparent management of client data and timely updating of information in the GAS Registry;
- inform the GAS Accreditation Agency of any significant changes that may affect the validity of the accreditation;
- ensure the implementation of GAS decisions made as a result of surveillance assessments or appeals.

6.3 Use of the Accreditation Mark

Accredited VVBs are entitled to use the GAS accreditation mark exclusively in accordance with the requirements of GAS.G-02 “Policy on the Use of Marks and References to GAS Accreditation.”

Any use of the mark outside the approved scope of accreditation is prohibited.

6.4 Responsibility for Validation/Verification Results

A VVB bears full responsibility for the accuracy and soundness of issued conclusions. In the event of detected violations or errors, the body shall:

- take corrective actions;
- notify the GAS Accreditation Agency;

- withdraw or update the reports, if necessary.

7. FINAL PROVISIONS

7.1. This document is part of the regulatory framework of the Global Accreditation System (GAS) and is mandatory for all VVBs seeking to obtain or maintain GAS accreditation.

7.2. Compliance with the requirements is monitored by the GAS Accreditation Agency during initial, surveillance, and re-assessments.

7.3. The document shall be reviewed at least once every three years or in the event of changes to international standards or GAS policies.

7.4. The GAS Accreditation Agency is responsible for reviewing, updating, approving, and publishing the current edition of the document.

7.5. The current version of the document is published on the official website [**gas.international**](https://gas.international).