

Reef Credit Scheme

Reef Credit Methodology Application and Review Procedure

Version 2.1



eco
markets
AUSTRALIA



reef
credit
scheme

Version Control

Reef Credit Methodology Application and Review approval Procedures

Version 2.1

Last updated [insert date]

Version Number	Author	Change	Date	Date Approved
1.2	Secretariat	Minor revisions to incorporate learnings from first method approval process	11 October 2019 revisions approved by the TAC	11 October 2019
2.0	Review panel	Beta phase review	30 August 2021	14 October 2021
2.1	Secretariat	Minor review	TBA	TBA

DRAFT

Table of Contents

Purpose	3
Scope	3
Application	3
Procedure	3
Procedure for revisions to approved Methodologies (new section)	3
Procedure for new Methodology applications	4
1. Methodology Developer submits application to the Secretariat	4
2. Preliminary review of Methodology against Reef Credit Guide and Reef Credit Standard	4
3. Technical Advisory Committee selects two (2) peer reviewers	5
4. Public consultation period (30 days)	6
5. Peer review (30 days)	6
6. Secretariat receives completed peer review	7
7. Peer review result	7
8. Methodology Developers revise	8
9. Technical Advisory Committee to confirm process integrity	8
10. Methodology is approved	9
11. Endorsement by Board	9
12. Publish Methodology	9
Definitions	10
Related Documents	10
Attachment 1 – Peer Review Process Flowchart	11
Attachment 2 – Methodology Application Form	12
Attachment 3 – Methodology Template	14
Attachment 4 – Methodology Eligibility Checklist	16
Attachment 5 – Public Consultation Feedback Form	17
Attachment 6 – Peer Review Feedback Form	20
Attachment 7 – Conflict of Interest Policy for peer review	22
Attachment 8 – Peer Review Summary Report Template	23
Attachment 9 – Peer Reviewer Declaration	24
Attachment 10 – Guidance Note for selection of peer reviewers	25
Attachment 11 – Simple Methodology Guide Template (new)	26

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to ~~describe in~~ detail the procedure to follow when applying for approval of a draft Methodology, or a revision to an approved Methodology when:

- a. ~~a Methodology is submitted for approval under the Reef Credit Standard.~~

Scope

This procedure applies to all draft and approved Methodologies under the Reef Credit Scheme. to all new and revised Methodology applications.

Application

This procedure is for use by Methodology Developers, the Reef Credit Secretariat (Secretariat), Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and Eco-Markets Australia Board (Board), Peer Reviewers, and any third-party applying to revise an approved Methodology ~~any other parties who use the Methodology Approval Procedure process.~~

This document will be updated from time-to-time by Eco-Markets Australia; the Reef Credit Scheme administrator, and the Secretariat via delegated administrative functions.

Procedure

This procedure ~~elaborates~~ describes the steps to apply for approval of a draft Methodology on each step involved in the Methodology approval process as set out in the Peer Review Process Flowchart (Attachment 1) and the steps to apply to revise an approved Methodology.

This ~~procedure document~~ provides further requirements and guidance for specific elements within the process, and attaches associated forms, templates and checklists (Related Documents). The Related Documents referred to throughout this document are listed at the end of this document and available online on the Eco-Markets Australia website.

Terms used in this ~~procedure document~~ are defined in the Reef Credit Definitions.

Procedure for revisions to approved Methodologies (new section)

Applications to revise approved Reef Credit methodologies may be initiated by a Methodology Developer, the Secretariat or a third-party ('the applicant').

The procedure to apply to revise a methodology is as follows:

- a. Email to the Secretariat (secretariat@eco-markets.org.au) outlining the scope of the proposed revision.
- b. The Secretariat will determine whether the revision constitutes a minor error or correction, a minor revision, or a major revision.
 - a. For minor revisions or correction of a minor error:
 - i. the Secretariat will liaise with the applicant to review the proposed revision and may decide to open the proposed revision for a 30-day public consultation period, taking into account:

1. guidance (if sought) provided by the TAC.
 2. views of the Methodology Developer (if different to the applicant).
- b. For major revisions:
- i. the process is the same as for new Methodology applications.

For clarity, responsibility for bearing the costs of revisions:

- a. initiated by a Methodology Developer, costs will be met by the Methodology Developer;
- b. initiated by the Secretariat, costs will be met by the Secretariat;
- c. initiated by a third-party, costs will be met by the third-party, except where the Secretariat at its discretion determines otherwise on a case-by-case basis.

The Secretariat will issue an invoice for the Methodology Review Fee set out in the Fee Schedule.

Procedure for new Methodology applications

1. Methodology Developer submits application to the Secretariat

The Methodology Developer must prepare and submit to the Secretariat by email to secretariat@eco-markets.org.au a completed:

- a. Methodology ~~Approval-Application-Process-Submission~~ Form (Attachment 2); ~~and~~
- b. ~~Draft-Proposed~~ Methodology using the Methodology Template (Attachment 3)
- ~~b.c.~~ Draft Simple Methodology Guide using the Simple Methodology Guide Template (Attachment 11) ('Methodology documentation').

The Methodology Developer ~~shall-must~~ nominate three (3) or four (4) peer reviewers ~~in the Methodology Approval-Process-Submission-Application Form. The Secretariat will acknowledge Upon receipt of the Methodology documentation by email and the Secretariat will issue an invoice to the Mmethodology Ddeveloper for the Methodology Lodgement Fee set out in the Fee Schedule.~~

~~The Methodology Developer is required to pay all expenses associated with the Methodology approval process.~~

The Methodology Lodgement Fee must be paid by the Methodology Developer before the Secretariat ~~conducts a can proceed to the next step. preliminary review of the Mmethodology documentation.~~

2. Preliminary review of Methodology against Reef Credit Guide and Reef Credit Standard and Guide

~~Using the Methodology Eligibility Checklist (Attachment 4) The Secretariat will conduct a preliminary review of the Mmethodology documentation within five (5) business days to ensure that to evaluate whether:~~

- a. it is complete;
- b. the requisite format has been followed and completed; and
- c. the ~~draft proposed~~ Methodology is new [or includes revisions to an existing Methodology that require re-submission through these procedures]. ~~If the proposed Mmethodology is covered or partly covered by another Mmethodology or a Mmethodology under development, modifications should be proposed.~~

The Secretariat's preliminary ~~assessment review~~ is based on information provided by the Methodology Developer in the Methodology documentation and attached documents. The Secretariat is not responsible for errors ~~therein and is not liable if or if a draft proposed~~ Methodology fails to meet eligibility requirements. At the conclusion of the preliminary review, the Secretariat will notify the Methodology Developer of the outcome and next steps.

If the draft Methodology is accepted it will ~~be progressed to the~~ public consultation and peer review, and the Secretariat will issue an invoice for the Methodology Review Fee set out in the

Fee Schedule (~~Attachment 7~~). ~~After Upon receipt of payment of the Methodology Review Fee, the draft Methodology documentation will proceed to the next step, or,~~

~~If the Secretariat considers the Methodology documentation to be incomplete, not in the requisite format, covered or partly covered by another Methodology or a draft Methodology being assessed for approval, or otherwise ineligible under the Reef Credit Scheme, the Secretariat will:~~

- ~~a. identify aspects requiring additional completion or adherence to the requisite format,~~
- ~~b. propose modifications, or~~
- ~~c. reject the application and invite a revised application.~~

~~The Methodology documentation may be may be revised and resubmitted, however if such revisions are substantial the application may be considered a new application and subject to a new Methodology Lodgement Fee, by the Methodology Developer. Resubmission of such methodologies will be treated as a new submission and will be subject to the Methodology Lodgement Fee.~~

3. Technical Advisory Committee selects two (2) peer reviewers

~~The purpose of the peer review is to aid evaluation by subject matter experts to ensure methodologies are theoretically rigorous, scientifically robust and practically workable.~~

~~The Secretariat will provide the application documentation to convene the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) to select two (2) peer reviewers from the those nominated proposed by the Methodology Developer Developer in the Methodology Approval Process Submission Form.~~

~~The Secretariat will provide the TAC with the Methodology documentation for the purpose of making its selection.~~

~~The purpose of the peer review is to deliver an informed opinion from subject matter experts to ensure that methodologies are theoretically rigorous, scientifically robust and practically workable.~~

~~To assess the suitability of proposed peer reviewers, the TAC will assess consider the following:~~

- ~~a. the reviewer's subject matter expertise and experience in an area relevant to the draft proposed Methodology, having regard to the reviewers' CV and general public profile and the Guidance Note for selection of peer reviewers (Attachment 10); and~~
- ~~b. the reviewer's ability to provide objective and impartial advice having regard to:
 - ~~a. the Conflict of Interest Policy for peer review (Attachment 7);~~
 - ~~b. any disclosures provided by the peer reviewers or Methodology Developer to the TAC; and~~
 - ~~c. the attestation provided by the Methodology Developer in the Methodology Application and Review Procedure Form regarding conflicts of interest as well as the description provided by the Methodology Developer in the Methodology Application Form regarding the level of involvement, if any, of the peer reviewer(s) in the Methodology development process.~~~~

~~To assess the reviewer's expertise and experience, and the optimal combination of peer reviewers, the TAC will consider:~~

~~the peer review nominees' CVs and general public profiles; and~~

~~the Guidance Note for Selection of Peer Reviewers (Attachment 10).~~

~~To assess the peer reviewers' ability to provide objective and impartial advice, the TAC will consider:~~

- ~~a. the Conflict of Interest Policy for Peer Review (Attachment 7);~~
- ~~b. any disclosures provided by the peer reviewers or Methodology Developer to the TAC; and~~
- ~~c. the attestation provided by the Methodology Developer in the Methodology Approval Process Submission Form regarding conflicts of interest as well as the description provided by the Methodology Developer in the Methodology Approval Process Submission Form regarding the level of involvement, if any, of the peer reviewer(s) in the Methodology development process.~~

If two (2) or more peer reviewers proposed by the Methodology Developer do not meet both suitability criteria, the TAC (~~via the Secretariat~~) may request that the Methodology Developer propose an alternative peer reviewer/s, ~~while retaining the~~. ~~In this instance, the Secretariat will contact the Methodology Developer and request alternative nominee/s for the peer review. The TAC retains the right to recommend to the Secretariat selection of~~ another peer reviewer/s if it is not satisfied with the options provided by the Methodology Developer.

The TAC's recommendation regarding selection of peer reviewers will be formalised through a written resolution.

The Secretariat will contact the selected peer reviewers ~~selected in writing to and~~:

- a. request ~~that~~ their review of the Methodology documentation;
- b. confirm their availability to complete the review of the Methodology documentation within ~~the a~~ 30-day timeframe; and
- c. request that they complete and return the Peer Reviewer Declaration (*Attachment 9*).

~~The Secretariat will engage and pay the peer reviewers to conduct the review, which is covered by the Methodology Developer through the. The Secretariat will recover this cost from the methodology developer through the m~~The cost of the peer review is included in the Methodology Review Fee and will be paid to the peer reviewers on the Methodology Developer's behalf. Standard rates for peer reviewers may be set by the Secretariat based on the scope and complexity of the Methodology.

The ~~Secretariat will then provide the selected~~ peer reviewers will be provided by the Secretariat with the:

- a. Draft Proposed Methodology;
- ~~a-b~~ Draft Simple Methodology Guide; and
- ~~b-c~~ Peer Review Feedback Form (Attachment 6),

~~and request that the peer reviewer complete for completion and return the review and the Peer Review Feedback Form~~ within the peer review period.

4. Public consultation period (30 days)

The Secretariat will post the draft Methodology and draft Simple Methodology Guide on the Eco-Markets Australia website for public consultation for a period of 30 days, and ~~the Secretariat will also send out a notice via email to notify~~ key stakeholders ~~on its mailing list informing them of the opportunity to comment accordingly~~.

~~Any~~ Comments shall be submitted to the Secretariat at secretariat@eco-markets.org.au using the Public Consultation Feedback Form (Attachment 5) ~~and respondents shall provide their name, organisation and email address. Apart from c~~Contact details, ~~the content of submissions will be considered -will not be published or otherwise disclosed. However, all submissions will be considered~~ public documents free of any claims to intellectual property and will be published on the website at the conclusion of the public consultation and peer review process.

The Secretariat shall collate all comments received during the public consultation period and provide these to the Methodology Developer and peer reviewers.

Note: the public consultation process is distinct from the Methodology Developer's stakeholder engagement process. ~~The Secretariat may develop separate guidelines regarding best practice stakeholder engagement processes for methodology developers.~~

5. Peer rReview (30 days)

The peer reviewers will conduct their assessment of the proposed Methodology documentation over of a period of 30 days.

The commencement of the peer review process (step 5) may occur during or after the public consultation period (step 4).

If the peer review coincides with the public consultation period, the Secretariat may **opt to** extend the peer review period to allow the peer reviewers time to consider any comments received during the public consultation.

6. Secretariat receives completed **peer review**

The Secretariat will receive the completed Peer Review Feedback Form(s) and any marked-up versions of the **draft proposed Methodology and draft Simple Methodology Guide** from the peer reviewers (Peer Review documentation) at the conclusion of the peer review period.

7. Peer review result

The Secretariat will consider the **result of the peer review feedback process** and determine if the peer review resulted in one of the following recommendations:

- a. Endorse with no revisions
- b. Endorse with minor revisions as specified
- c. Major revisions are needed to respond to specified matters before the Methodology can be endorsed
- d. The Methodology is rejected for specified reasons
- e. There are conflicting views between the reviewers on substantive elements of the Methodology.

The process to follow in relation to each of these steps, as summarised in the Peer Review Process Flowchart in Attachment 1, is as follows:

- a. If both peer reviewers agree that no changes are recommended, the Secretariat will refer the **draft Methodology documentation** and peer review feedback to the TAC to confirm the integrity of the process followed (step 9).
- b. If **specified** minor changes **as specified** are recommended, the Secretariat will return the **draft Methodology documentation** to the Methodology Developer with the peer reviewers' **feedback advice** regarding the revisions required (step 8). Once the revisions are made and the revised **draft Methodology documentation** is **provided submitted** to the Secretariat, the Secretariat will refer the **documentation draft methodology** and peer review feedback to the TAC to confirm the integrity of the process followed (step 9).
- c. If major revision is recommended to respond to specified matters, the Secretariat will return the **draft Methodology documentation** to the Methodology Developer with the peer reviewers' **feedback advice** regarding the revisions required (step 8). The Secretariat will prepare a Peer Review Summary Report (Attachment 8) summarising key topics arising from the peer reviewer's comments and the public consultation comments and the Methodology Developer's responses, including advice from the peer reviewers about the extent to which the revisions adequately respond to the matters raised.

After the Methodology **documentation** is revised, the Secretariat may send the revised **documentation methodology** back to the peer reviewers for further review, and provide an opportunity for the Methodology Developer to explain **how they responded to the peer review comments their response**. The peer reviewers will be given the opportunity to recommend any of options 1 **(a– d)** again (step 7) after reviewing the revised Methodology **documentation**.

After the Methodology Developers have responded to any further peer review (step 8), the Secretariat will then refer the **draft Methodology documentation** and peer review feedback to the TAC to confirm the integrity of the process followed (step 9).

- d. If it is recommended that the Methodology be rejected for specified reasons, the Secretariat will refer the **draft Methodology documentation** and peer review feedback to the TAC which will make a recommendation to the Board for decision to either:
 - i. reject the draft Methodology; or
 - ii. follow another course of action suggested by the TAC or at the discretion of the Board.

The recommendation of the TAC under step 7 d. will be formalised by the Secretariat through a written resolution. The written resolution will be presented to the Board as a formal recommendation of the TAC and the Board may, at its discretion, endorse the recommendation.

- e. If the peer reviewers have conflicting views about a substantive matter affecting the acceptability of the draft Methodology, or as to whether to reject the draft Methodology, the TAC will make a recommendation to the Secretariat to either:
- i. pursue a proposed process to see if conflicting responses can be resolved;
 - ii. send the Methodology [documentation](#) back to the Methodology Developer seeking a solution to the contested matters;
 - iii. appoint a third peer reviewer to review the ~~draft~~ Methodology [documentation](#) within a period of fourteen (14) days. If the third peer reviewer proposed by the Methodology Developer is not acceptable to the TAC, the TAC will make a recommendation to the Secretariat that a request be made that the Methodology Developer propose an alternative peer reviewer/s. The TAC retains the right to recommend to the Secretariat another peer reviewer/s if it is not satisfied with the options provided by the Methodology Developer; or
 - iv. follow another course of action recommended by the TAC or at the discretion of the Board.

The Secretariat may in its discretion, choose to escalate the matter to the Board for decision.

8. [Methodology Developers](#) ~~Authors~~ revise

If the result of the process in step 7 is that revisions are recommended, the Secretariat will refer the ~~draft~~ [Methodology documentation](#) to the Methodology Developer with the peer reviewers' advice regarding the revisions required.

The Methodology Developer must respond to all of the peer reviewer findings by incorporating revisions and/or justifications for the proposed approach.

The Methodology Developer must also provide its responses to the public consultation comments [by annotating the received](#) ~~using the~~ Public Consultation Feedback Form ~~(s)~~ [\(Attachment 5\)](#).

The Methodology Developer shall take due account of all comments received and either propose to adjust the Methodology or leave the Methodology unchanged, in either case providing the rationale for the proposed adjustment, or reasons why the substance of the comment should not be reflected in the Methodology [documentation](#).

9. Technical Advisory Committee to confirm process integrity

The Secretariat will convene the TAC to review the revised draft Methodology documentation and associated documents and resolve whether or not the Methodology approval process has been properly followed.

The TAC will review the most recent Methodology documentation, and associated documents, to satisfy itself that the Methodology has been assessed in accordance with Reef Credit [Guide and Reef Credit Standard](#) ~~and Guide~~.

Where the TAC resolves that the Methodology approval process has not been properly followed or the Methodology has not been assessed in accordance with Reef Credit [Guide and Reef Credit Standard](#) ~~and Guide~~, the TAC may require that the ~~proposed~~ Methodology [documentation](#) go through any or all of the Methodology approval process steps again. The resolution of matters by the TAC will not be unreasonable or arbitrary or dictated by imperfection of process.

The resolution of the TAC will be formalised through a written resolution. The written resolution will be presented to the Board as a formal recommendation of the TAC and the Board may, at its discretion, endorse the recommendation.

10. Methodology is approved

If the process is found to have been properly followed, the ~~draft~~ Methodology [documentation](#) will be recommended by the TAC to the Board for approval at the next Board Meeting.

The Board reserves the right not to accept the [proposed](#) Methodology [documentation](#) where it is not consistent with the Reef Credit Scheme principles or may have an adverse impact on the integrity or reputation of the Reef Credit Scheme.

11. Endorsement by Board

With the successful approval vote of the Board, the Methodology is accepted as a Reef Credit Methodology.

The Secretariat will then publish the Methodology [and Simple Methodology Guide](#) on the [Eco-Markets website](#).

An approved Methodology may be used by any Project Proponent, including the Methodology Developer.

12. Publish Methodology

The Secretariat will post on the [Eco-Markets Australia](#) website all public comments and documented responses, and all peer review comments and documented responses, together with the public comment version of the Methodology [documentation](#) and the final approved Methodology [documentation](#) to provide transparency in the development process.

Definitions

Terms used in this document are defined in the Reef Credit Definitions.

Related Documents

Requirement Documents

Reef Credit Standard Version 2.10

Reef Credit Guide Version 2.10

Reef Credit Fee Schedule [Version 2.1](#)

Reef Credit Definitions Version 2.10

Templates, Forms and Policies

Attachment 2 - Methodology ~~Approval Process Submission~~ [Application Form](#)

Attachment 3 - Methodology Template

Attachment 4 - Methodology Eligibility Checklist

Attachment 5 - Public Consultation Feedback Form

Attachment 6 - Peer Review Feedback Form

Attachment 7 - Conflict of Interest Policy for Peer Review

Attachment 8 - Peer Review Summary Report Template

Attachment 9 - Peer Reviewer Declaration Form

Attachment 10 - Guidance Note for selection of peer reviewers

[Attachment 11 – Simple Methodology Guide Template](#)

Attachment 2 – Methodology Approval Process Submission Application Form

Instructions: this form is to be completed by the Methodology Developer and submitted together with attachments (including the proposed peer reviewers' curriculum vitae), ~~and~~ the ~~draft~~ proposed Methodology (using the Methodology Template) and draft Simple Methodology Guide (using the Simple Methodology Guide Template) ('Methodology documentation') to the Secretariat at secretariat@eco-markets.org.au. On receipt of the Methodology documentation, the Secretariat will issue an invoice for the Methodology Lodgement Fee specified in the Fee Schedule.

Reef Credit Methodology Application Form	
Date	<i>dd/mm/yr</i>
Methodology Developer	<i>Individual/organisation</i>
Contact	<i>Name; organisation; address; email; phone</i>
Methodology element sectoral scope	<i>e.g. land management practice change</i>
Name of Methodology element	<i>Title of Methodology</i>
Short description	<i>Less than 50 words</i>
Methodology element documentation	<i>Document id</i>
Peer reviewer 1 (3 or 4 nominees must be provided)	<i>Name; organisation; email address</i>
Peer reviewer 2	<i>Name; organisation; email address</i>
Peer reviewer 3	<i>Name; organisation; email address</i>
Peer reviewer 4	<i>Name; organisation; email address</i>
Peer reviewers have agreed to be considered and have been advised the TAC may contact them, via the Secretariat, for further information	<i>Y</i>
Peer reviewer CV's attached (required)	<i>Y</i>
Please provide a brief synopsis of why the Methodology Developer is proposing each of the peer reviewers with reference to their technical strengths in testing scientific rigour and identifying methodological vulnerabilities and risks, and where they are likely to be able to add value to development of the draft Methodology	<i>Insert relevant details</i>
List of technical experts engaged in the development of the draft Methodology	<i>Insert relevant details</i>

Please provide a statement of the scope and extent of involvement, if any, that peer review nominees have had in the development of the draft Methodology.	<i>Insert relevant details</i>
--	--------------------------------

Attestation

By signing and submitting this draft Methodology [documentation](#), the Methodology Developer agrees to pay the Secretariat the non-refundable Methodology Lodgment Fee, the rate of which is set out in the Reef Credit Fee Schedule. The Methodology Developer also acknowledges and agrees that it has read, understood and will comply with the [Reef Credit Guide and Reef Credit Standard and Guide](#), that no perceived or actual conflict of interest exists in relation to the proposed peer reviewers, and that the acceptance or non-acceptance of this draft Methodology [documentation](#) shall be at the sole discretion of the Secretariat.

Signed for and on behalf of:

Name of organisation:	Click or tap here to enter text.
Signature:	
Name of signatory:	Click or tap here to enter text.
Date:	Click or tap here to enter text.

DRAFT

Attachment 3 – Methodology Template

Instructions: the Methodology Developer is to use this template when drafting the *proposed* Methodology. The purpose of this template is to help ensure clarity and consistency in methodologies developed for use under the Reef Credit Scheme. If the draft Methodology deviates from the template in any way, the Methodology Developer must provide reasons.

Methodology Template	
Methodology title	
Version	
Author/s	
Acknowledgments <i>[provide a complete list of all experts and organisations involved in the development of the Methodology]</i>	
Consultation Process <i>[include a description of the consultation process the Methodology Developer went through in developing the Methodology]</i>	
Table of Contents	
1. Project Description	
1.1 Governing documents	<i>[e.g. Reef Credit Standard and Reef Credit Guide version x1.x0]</i>
1.2 References	<i>[indicate key documents and/or tools upon which the draftproposed Methodology is based]</i>
1.3 Summary description of Methodology	<i>[concise summary of the proposed draft Methodology (less than 100 words)]</i>
1.4 Project activities	<i>[include a description of the Project activities to which the Methodology applies]</i>
1.5 Definitions	<i>[include definitions of terms used in the Methodology unless already defined in the Reef Credit Definitions Standard]</i>
1.6 Documentation requirements	<i>[outline the documentation required for Project Application and for issuance of Reef Credits]</i>
2. Eligibility	
<i>[describe the conditions under which the Methodology can (and cannot) be applied. Note: the proposed draft Methodology must not be related to an activity <i>that will lead to a pollutant reduction</i> included on the Reef Credit Standard, Schedule 2, Negative List]</i>	
2.1 Location	<i>[provides requirement that proposed Project Area is within the geographical boundaries of the GBR catchment]</i>
2.2 Project land characteristics	<i>[provides guidelines for defining land characteristics of the Project Area]</i>
2.3 Project activities	<i>[provide guidelines for defining the scope of activities and Pollutant pools to be accounted for in the Project]</i>
2.4 Land use change	<i>[any necessary permits to demonstrate that the Project will not have a significant negative impact]</i>
2.5 Additionality	<i>[establish procedures for the demonstration and assessment of Additionality. The draftproposed Methodology may adopt any of the following approaches to the assessment of Additionality a. implementation barriers b. Common Practice c. Performance Benchmark]</i>
2.6 Leakage	<i>[include procedures for identifying the risk of Project Leakage and provide a method for accounting in the calculation of Reef Credits the deduction as a result of Project Leakage]</i>
2.7 Determine if the project may be at risk of Leakage	
3. Project Mapping	
<i>[Provide guidelines for delineating project area boundaries]</i>	
3.1 Geospatial capture	<i>[describe how the spatial boundary is defined and specify the maps or GIS shape files required]</i>
3.2 Fitness for purpose	<i>[specify appropriateness of dataset for purpose]</i>
3.3. Accuracy	<i>[specify minimum requirements for spatial data]</i>
3.4 Reef Credit Accounting Zones	

4. Reef Credit Project Plan	<i>[provide requirements for plan outlining management strategies]</i>
5. Project Accounting	
5.1 Relevant pools	<i>[provide guidelines for defining the Pollutant pools to be accounted for in the Project. Identify all sources and sinks of relevant Pollutant source within the Project Area]</i>
5.2 Baseline Scenario	<i>[provide an explanation of why the baseline was chosen and guidelines for determining average Pollutant loss for the Baseline Scenario e.g. methodologies must be founded on a comparative assessment of the Business As Usual scenario and the alternatives to determine the Baseline Scenario. This must include an assessment of the barriers to implementation of the draftproposed Methodology activities.]</i>
5.3 Project reporting period calculations	<i>[provide guidelines for quantifying Project Pollutant loss for the reporting period. Describe how the proposed draft Methodology uses either direct measurement and/or modelling approaches to estimate Pollutant reduction.]</i>
5.4 Calculation of change in Pollutant loss	<i>[assumptions, parameters and procedures involved in calculation of Pollutant reduction must be clearly stated]</i>
5.5 Calculation of change in Pollutant entering the Great Barrier Reef	<i>[detail how to determine pollutant reductions resulting from Project activities at end of catchment for the reporting period.]</i>
5.6 Calculation of reporting period Reef Credits	<i>[outline the steps to determine the number of Reef Credits based on calculated Pollutant reductions]</i>
5.7 Uncertainty	<i>[provide details of how the Methodology takes into account any uncertainty and makes an appropriate confidence deduction (correction factor).]</i>
6. Monitoring and Record Keeping Requirements	<i>[provides guidelines for the implementation of a monitoring plan and identify monitored parameters to assess management strategy]</i>
Appendices	

Attachment 4 – Methodology Eligibility Checklist

Instructions: the purpose of the checklist is to guide the Secretariat’s preliminary [review/assessment](#) of the draft Methodology documentation for completeness and consistency with the Methodology approval requirements under the Reef Credit [Guide and Reef Credit Standard](#) ~~and Guide~~ before the [documentation proposed methodology](#) is progressed through the peer review and public consultation process. The checklist is to be completed by the Secretariat.

The Secretariat’s review of the Methodology documentation at this stage is only a preliminary determination of the Methodology’s compliance with the Methodology approval process under the Reef Credit [Guide and Reef Credit Standard](#) ~~and Guide~~. The final approval of the ~~proposed draft M~~ methodology is confirmed in later phases.

The Secretariat’s preliminary [review/assessment](#) is based on information provided by the Methodology Developer in the Methodology documentation and attached documents. The Secretariat is not responsible for errors therein and is not liable if a ~~proposed draft~~ Methodology fails to meet eligibility requirements.

Methodology Eligibility Checklist	
Methodology Title	
Methodology Developer	
Decision	Accept / Revise minor / Decline
Date	
Assessment Question	Response (Yes/No)
Is the Methodology Approval Process Submission Form complete (including signature and attachments)?	Y/N
Is the draft/proposed M methodology written in accordance with the Methodology Template and have all sections of the template Methodology Template been completed?	Y/N
Is the draft Simple Methodology Guide written in accordance with the Simple Methodology Guide Template and have all sections of the template been completed?	Y/N
Is the draft/proposed Methodology new? [If the draft/proposed Methodology is partly covered by another approved Methodology or a Methodology under development, modifications should be proposed]	Y/N

Attachment 5 – Public Consultation Feedback Form

Current as at (insert new date)

The Secretariat is seeking comment on the following Methodology/ies for use under the Reef Credit Standard.

[insert details]

The Methodology/ies will be subject to peer review prior to adoption under the Reef Credit Standard in accordance with the rules set out in the Standard.

Specific feedback on the draft Methodology is sought on:

1. *[insert details e.g. whether the assumptions, parameters and procedures involved in the calculation of Pollutant reduction are clearly stated?]*

Publication

All submissions are public documents and will be published on the website. Please do not include personally identifying information or comments about other persons in the body of your submission. Contact details will not be published or disclosed to others.

Submission Deadline - 5pm (AEST) [day], [date].

Any submissions received after this date will be considered at the Secretariat's discretion. All submissions must include this cover sheet.

Submissions should be emailed to: secretariat@eco-markets.org.au

Your contribution is greatly appreciated. For further information, please contact the Secretariat.

Contact Details	
Name (required)	
Position within organisation (if applicable)	
Organisation (if applicable)	
Postal address (required)	
Email address (required)	
Phone number (required)	

Public Consultation Feedback Form

Which draft Methodology are you commenting on?

Please use a separate [Public Consultation Methodology](#) Feedback Form for each Methodology you wish to comment on.

[Methodology title]

Section	Comment	Response by Methodology Developer
1. Project Description		
1.1 Governing documents		
1.2 References		
1.3 Summary description of Methodology		
1.4 Project activities		
1.5 Definitions		
1.6 Documentation requirements		
1.7 Project application		
1.8 Project crediting		
2. Eligibility		
2.1 Location		
2.2 Project land characteristics		
2.3 Project activities		
2.4 Land use change		
2.5 Additionality		
2.6 Leakage		
2.7 Determine if the Project may be at risk of Leakage		
3. Project Mapping		
3.1 Geospatial capture		
3.2 Fitness for purpose		
3.3 Accuracy		
3.4 Reef Credit Accounting Zones		
4. Reef Credit Project Plan		
5. Project Accounting		
5.1 Relevant pools		
5.2 Baseline period calculations		
5.3 Project reporting period calculations		
5.4 Calculation of change in Pollutant loss		
5.5 Calculation of change in Pollutant entering the Great Barrier Reef		
5.6 Calculation of reporting period Reef Credits		
5.7 Uncertainty		
6. Monitoring and Record Keeping Requirements		
Appendices		
Specific questions for from the Reef Credit Secretariat		

Any other comments on the draft Methodology [documentation](#)?

DRAFT

Attachment 6 – Peer Review Feedback Form

Current [\(insert new date\)](#)

Instructions for reviewers: please contact the Secretariat immediately if the topic is outside your area of expertise or if you cannot meet the deadline for review comments. Please complete and return this template (and the draft Methodology [documentation](#) if it contains review comments) to the Secretariat, who will provide it to the Technical Advisory Committee.

The Secretariat will send a copy or a summary of information submitted by all reviewers to the Methodology Developer. Please consider the criteria below in order to determine the scientific validity of the Methodology. The following information will be used to reach decisions on approval of the ~~draft~~[proposed](#) Methodology for use under the Reef Credit Standard. Please provide detailed comments on this form. Attach additional pages to provide specific comments that support your recommendations.

Peer Review Feedback Form		
Methodology title		
Peer reviewer name		
Peer reviewer position		
Recommendation	<i>Approve / Revise minor / Revise major / Decline</i>	
Review criteria	Yes/No	Comments
Relationship to approved or pending methodologies: could existing Methodology be revised?		
Presentation: is Methodology written in clear and concise way?		
Definitions: are key terms defined clearly and consistently?		
Applicability conditions: does the Methodology set appropriate criteria for eligibility of Projects?		
Project Area, timeline and scope: are appropriate guidelines provided for defining the geographical and temporal boundaries of the Project, scope of activities and Pollutant pools to be accounted for in the Project?		
Baseline Scenario: is the approach for determining the baseline appropriate and in compliance with the Reef Credit Standard?		
Additionality: is the approach/tools provided for assessing Additionality appropriate and in compliance with the Reef Credit Standard?		
Baseline emissions: are guidelines for determining average Pollutant loss for the baseline period appropriate and in compliance with the Reef Credit Standard?		
Project emissions: are guidelines for determining Project Pollutant loss for the reporting period appropriate and in compliance with the Reef Credit Standard?		
Leakage: is the approach to assessment and deductions for Leakage appropriate and in compliance with the Reef Credit Standard?		
Net Pollutant Reductions: is the approach for calculating Project Pollutant reductions at end of catchment appropriate and in compliance with the Reef Credit Standard? The draft proposed Methodology must use either direct measurement and/or modelling approaches to estimate Pollutant reduction. Methodologies must take into account any uncertainty and make an appropriate confidence deduction (correction factor).		

Project Crediting Period: is the proposed duration of the Crediting Period appropriate for the Methodology and Project type? For Crediting Periods that are 10 years or longer, particular attention should be paid to any risks or uncertainties associated with the Baseline Scenario, underlying data or models used to estimate Reef Credits, and how any risks or uncertainties are mitigated.		
Project Reporting and Reef Credit issuance: are requirements for reporting Project abatement and the application process for the issuance of Reef Credits appropriate and in compliance with the Reef Credit Standard?		
Monitoring: are guidelines for the implementation of a monitoring plan and monitored parameters to assess management strategy appropriate and in compliance with the Reef Credit Standard?		
Data and parameters: are specifications for data and parameters appropriate and in compliance with the Reef Credit Standard?		
Does the Methodology meet the requirements of the Reef Credit Guide and Reef Credit Standard and Guide , including (without limitation) the requirements set out in Section 4, Methodology requirements , of the Reef Credit Standard?		
Other considerations		

DRAFT

Attachment 7 – Conflict of Interest Policy for peer review

Current as at [\(insert date\)](#)

An actual or perceived conflict of interest may arise when a peer reviewer's professional judgement about the consideration of the Methodology for approval is influenced by a secondary interest such as financial gain, ~~or~~ career advancement, business or personal relationship, academic competition, or intellectual or ideological beliefs.

All participants in the peer-review and approval process, must identify [actual or perceived](#)~~potential~~ conflicts of interest when fulfilling their roles and disclose all relationships that might be viewed as inappropriate.

Authors~~Methodology Developers~~

When ~~Methodology Developers~~[authors](#) submit a [draft](#) Methodology, they are responsible for disclosing all financial and personal relationships with peer review nominees that might bias or be seen to bias the review. If there are no conflicts of interest, ~~Methodology Developers~~[authors](#) should state that none exist.

~~Methodology Developers~~[Authors](#) may identify reviewers or editors they wish to exclude from handling their Methodology due to an existing conflict of interest.

Reviewers

When asked to review a [draft](#) Methodology, reviewers should disclose any [actual or perceived](#) conflicts of interest that could bias their opinions of the Methodology. If reviewers believe that they cannot judge a Methodology impartially because of a ~~possible~~ conflict of interest, they should decline the invitation to review and provide an explanation. Possible conflicts of interest may occur when reviewers:

- a. have a financial or business relationship; or
- b. were part of an internal review panel for the Methodology before submission.

If a reviewer is unsure whether ~~an actual or perceived conflict of interest~~[the potential for bias](#) exists, advice should be sought from the Technical Advisory Committee.

Reviewers must not use knowledge of the [draft](#) Methodology under review before its publication to further their own interests.

Technical Advisory Committee and [Eco-Markets Australia](#) Board~~Members~~

If a [member of the](#) Technical Advisory Committee or [Eco-Markets Australia](#) Board ~~Member~~ has a conflict of interest or a relationship that may bias their treatment of the Methodology under consideration, they should excuse themselves from ~~involvement in the Methodology approval process~~[handling the methodology](#).

Attachment 8 – Peer Review Summary Report Template

Instructions: this template is for the peer review of new methodologies. The template is to be completed by the Secretariat.

Report Title – ‘Summary Report of Peer Review in relation to [insert name of methodology]’

Prepared by [Secretariat]

Peer Reviewers [names of peer reviewer/s]

Date [insert date review completed]

Summary [describe Methodology and peer review purpose, scope and process including criteria and conclusions]

1. Introduction [purpose and scope]

2. Description of Methodology [short description]

3. Approach to review and criteria [refer to the review [process and](#) criteria listed in the [Methodology Application and Review Procedure](#), Peer Review Feedback Form, ~~Methodology Approval Process Operating Procedures~~; note any qualifications/limitations]

4. Documentation reviewed [Methodology documentation]

5. Review team [names, roles, qualifications]

6. Findings [summarise key topics arising from the peer reviewer’s comments and the public consultation comments and the Methodology Developer’s responses, including advice from the peer reviewers about the extent to which the revisions adequately respond to the matters raised]

7. Conclusion [confirm whether or not the Methodology complies with the review criteria]

ANNEXURES [Final version of [draft/proposed](#) Methodology [and draft Simple Methodology Guide](#)]

Attachment 9 – Peer Reviewer Declaration

Instructions: all persons involved in the peer review process are required to disclose any conflict of interest, ~~perceived or actual~~~~real or apparent~~, that is relevant to their individual role and responsibilities.

An ~~actual~~~~real~~ conflict of interest exists if the personal interests of an individual improperly influence the performance of his or her official duties. A ~~perceived~~~~or apparent~~ conflict of interest exists if the personal interests of an individual appear to, or could appear to, improperly influence the performance of his or her official duties.

Refer to the **Conflict of Interest Policy for peer review** for additional guidance on identifying ~~actual~~~~or perceived~~~~real or apparent~~ conflicts of interest.

Participants in the peer review process are also required to maintain strictest confidence in relation to the methodologies under review and the peer review process.

Methodology title	
Methodology Developer	
Reviewer name	
Reviewer position	

I. Conflict of interest declaration

I do not have any conflicts of interest that prevent my full and unbiased participation in the peer review process except as disclosed below.

I will inform the Secretariat immediately, should my circumstances change in any way that affects this declaration.

II. Confidentiality declaration

I declare and agree that all the information that comes into my possession and that is deliberated upon during the peer review process, shall not be disclosed to any other person, and to treat all matters discussed in connection with the peer review process in absolute confidence.

I further agree that I will not submit public comments on the methodologies during the public consultation phase of the Methodology approval process.

I confirm that the declarations I have made above are, to the best of my knowledge, correct.

III. Publication of peer review feedback

I understand and agree that the Secretariat may post on the [Eco-Markets Australia](#) website peer review comments (together with the name and position of the peer reviewer who provided the comments) and documented responses to provide transparency in the Methodology ~~approval~~~~development~~ process.

Peer Reviewer Name

Signature

Date:

.....
.....
.....

Attachment 10 – Guidance Note for Selection of Peer Reviewers

Instructions: The purpose of this Guidance Note is to set out some more explicit considerations to assist in the nomination and selection of appropriately qualified peer reviewers for ~~proposed-draft~~ methodologies under the Reef Credit Scheme.

The Technical Advisory Committee (**TAC**) Terms of Reference set out details of the TAC's role in selecting peer reviewers and the Methodology [Application and Review Approval](#) Procedure provides additional guidance.

When selecting a combination of two (2) peer reviewers from the three (3) or four (4) prospective nominees, the TAC will generally seek a combination of technical understanding and expertise in relation to:

1. the subject matter of the draft Methodology; and
2. the rigorous design and operation of the Reef Credit Schemetrading scheme methodologies that have sufficient scope to cover the field within the Methodology's purpose and have a high likelihood of reliable water quality improvement outcomes.

However, as knowledge and expertise in relation to the subject matter of a Methodology is of specific importance, in some circumstances the selection of two (2) subject matter experts may be preferred.

In such cases assurance of the rigour of the design and operation of the Methodology may rely on the accumulated experience of the [Secretariat, Eco-Markets Australia Board \(Board\) and TAC-Reef Credit Scheme governance entities](#) from previously approved Reef Credit methodologies, and/or the expertise and experience of Reef Credit partners or other parties recognised by the Board.

Beyond the above two considerations, the TAC will look for:

3. indications of the peer reviewers' likelihood of providing a pragmatic assessment of the draft Methodology's fitness for purpose. This may include their contextual knowledge about the aspirations, norms, capability and capacity of the relevant industry(ies) and catchment community(ies), that may help finesse the draft Methodology to increase confidence in or reduce barriers to its acceptance, uptake and efficacy.

In relation to prospective peer reviewers, the TAC will take into consideration, their:

4. overall reputation and standing; and
5. experience in peer review processes.

Attachment 11 – Simple Methodology Guide Template (new)

Instructions: the purpose of this template is to provide an overview and easy to understand explanation of a Methodology for project developers and other stakeholders that may be new or lack understanding of the Reef Credit Scheme.

When completing the Simple Methodology Guide Template, it is important to consider the audience, and the type of information they may need to be able to use the Methodology and apply it to a Project. Please provide examples where possible to help explain various processes in the Methodology, and how modelling tools are accessed and applied (where applicable).

<INSERT METHODOLOGY NAME>

SIMPLE METHODOLOGY GUIDE

Version control

(insert details)

Methodology overview

Provide a description of the Project activities for this Methodology and how the Methodology was developed.

Methodology concept and logic

Provide an explanation of the Methodology concept and logic.

Section 1: Project Description

Provide an explanation of the Project Description requirements of the Methodology.

Section 2: Project Eligibility

Provide an explanation of the Project Eligibility requirements of the Methodology.

Section 3: Project Mapping and Data Requirements

Provide an explanation of the Project Mapping and Data Requirements of the Methodology.

Section 4: Reef Credit Project Plan

Provide an explanation of the Reef Credit Project Plan using examples as required.

Section 5: Project Accounting

Step through the Project Accounting requirements of the Methodology using examples as required.

Section 6: Monitoring and Record Keeping Requirements

Provide an explanation of any Monitoring and Record Keeping Requirements that are required by the Methodology.