



RULES FOR THE VALIDATION AND VERIFICATION OF GREENHOUSE GAS STATEMENTS

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CHAPTER 1 – OVERVIEW

1.1 Scope

These Rules define the procedures applied by RINA to validate and verify statements related to greenhouse gases (GHG), as for example the validation and verification of GHG emission reduction projects.

The validation and verification of GHG statements is carried out in accordance with the criteria/requirements of the agreed schemes and any additional elements indicated by the supervisory body of the scheme, the accreditation body or the Competent Authority.

Agreed scheme means the specific programme that can be defined by third parties (e.g. UNFCCC, VERRA, etc.) or by the proposing organisation..

For every scheme relative to a GHG statement, RINA can publish specific rules/guidelines integrating the requirements of these Rules.

The list of the schemes for which RINA is accredited is available on the RINA website: www.rina.org.

In these Rules the term “validation” covers the term “determination” and “assessment” used for some schemes.

RINA applies its current fees and guarantees fairness and uniformity of application.

RINA may legitimately refuse requests related to organisations and/or their products/activities that are subject to restriction, suspension or proscription by a public authority.

In the event that the results of a project are accounted under the NDC (Nationally Determined Contribution) and, at the same time, public incentives are associated with the project itself (e.g. Energy Efficiency Certificates - TEE issued by the GSE in Italy for savings TEP) RINA, through verification, will certify the reduced/avoided/removed tons of CO₂eq to clearly explain in the Verification

Opinion the presence of concomitant incentives.

1.2 Criteria

At present, RINA offers what listed in the following.

Validation and verification of GHG emission reduction projects:

- validation and verification of Clean Development Mechanism (CDM), Verified Carbon Standard (VCS), Gold Standard for the Global Goals (GS4GG), Climate, Community & Biodiversity Alliance (CCB) projects (included also grouped projects);
- determination and verification of Joint Implementation (JI) projects;
- World Commission on Dams assessment;
- validation and verification of the Social Carbon (SCS) Report for GHG emission reduction projects; and
- validation and verification of upstream or upstream (UER) emission reduction projects pursuant to directives 2009/30/EC (which amends directive 98/70/EC) and (EU) 2015/652.

1.3 Terminology

The terminology used in these Rules is the same as that used in the reference documents normally available on the websites of the supervisors' body of the schemes, of the accreditation bodies or of the competent authorities.

1.4 Principles for validation and verification

RINA recognises key guiding principles of the validation, assessment and verification processes and conducts all the activities to ensure accuracy, conservatism, relevance, credibility, reliability, completeness, consistency, transparency, impartiality, independence, safeguarding against conflicts of interest and confidentiality.



CHAPTER 2 – CONTRACT REVIEW

2.1 Request

Organisations wishing to apply to obtain validation and verification of their GHG statement must provide RINA with the data related to the statement, by sending the latest revision of the informative questionnaire form or the same data in another format.

These data are used by RINA to make its offer.

RINA can proceed with the offer based on the following data/documentation:

Validation and verification of GHG emission reduction projects:

- name and address of the organisation;
- name and address of the client;
- Starting date of the project (in case of UER);
- title of the project (and, in case of UER, the unique certificate number identifying the project and the claimed quantity of emission reductions);
- location of the project site/s;
- indication of the applied methodology(ies) (and, in case of UER, the unique number identifying the calculation method and the associated scheme);
- agreed scheme/s;
- relative size (in gCO₂equivalent) of the GHG statement; and
- all the information reported in the informative questionnaire.

Before accepting the contract, the organisation must provide all the missing information requested by RINA (for example data related to all the project participants, representatives of the organisation and the consultant data).

2.2 Contract

Organisations must formalise their order by sending RINA the request form or a contract duly signed by the Chief Executive Officer or

authorised representative, by way of a power of attorney.

On receipt of the request form or the signed contract and the related documentation/annexes, and after a preliminary review to check their completeness, RINA appropriately informs the organisation of its acceptance of the order.

Only after RINA notifies to the organisation the acceptance of the order, the contract between RINA and the organization is considered stipulated.

The contract stipulated between RINA and the organisation covers:

- document/desk review of the organisation documents;
- follow-up actions (on-site visit/assessment and telephone or email interviews);
 - the on-site visit/assessment which is always performed when it is a requirement of the supervisory body of the scheme or of the accreditation body/competent authority; it is at the discretion of RINA, in relation to the nature of the statement in all other cases; and
- any additional services stated in the offer.

CHAPTER 3 – SELECTION OF THE TEAM

3.1 Team assignment

RINA selects the team who performs the activity and the personnel who performs the independent technical review on the basis of the knowledge, skills and competency required, taking into consideration the validation and verification criteria/requirements of the agreed scheme and any additional elements indicated by the supervisory body of the scheme or by the accreditation body/competent authority.

The team is fully independent of all aspects of the statement and have not assisted in the design of any statement components or of the GHG information system, according to the procedures stated by the Committee for the Safeguard of Impartiality.



3.2 Team communication

In advance of the activity, RINA notifies to the organisation in writing of the names of the team members and in case of CDM with attached a summary of the curriculum vitae of each team member. The organisation may object to these appointments, within 5 working days of the notification, giving their reasons.

RINA reconstitutes the team in response to any valid objection.

CHAPTER 4 - VALIDATION AND VERIFICATION OF GHG EMISSION REDUCTION PROJECTS

4.1 Validation

RINA evaluates the project documents and the project's compliance with the criteria/requirements of the agreed scheme.

The end result of this process is a Report that identifies any areas that need further elaboration or need to be rectified, the nature of the responses provided by the organisation, the means of validation of such responses, clear reference to any resulting changes in the project document or supporting annexes, and express an opinion as to whether the project is valid to claim emission reductions.

4.1.1 Document review

Normally, the documents that the organisation shall be required to provide RINA are included in the following:

- Project Document/Project Design Document (word and pdf version) drawn up according to the latest version of the format required by the GHG scheme (if available) (in case of UER, the project starting date must be after 1 January 2011);
- Emission Reductions (ERs) calculation spreadsheet;

- Any information/documents, requested by the GHG agreed scheme.

RINA may, at its discretion, request also other documents for review apart from those indicated above, considered important for the purpose of validation.

When applicable in relation to the scheme agreed, RINA makes the statement publicly available on the web and during the validation of the project activity, RINA takes into account the comments received during the commenting period.

The team reviews the project documents to ensure that they meet the established criteria/requirements, including the baseline and monitoring methodologies for the project. Any issues that cannot be sustained by sufficient monitoring, or assumptions that the team cannot fully recognise or approve of are investigated and tested further.

4.1.2 Follow-up actions

Following the document review and, if applicable, right after the end of the commenting period, the team identifies additional questions and issues (objective evidence) that need to be addressed with the organisation.

The process also covers key local or international stakeholders that may have important comments to provide.

The process also demands an on-site visit when it is a requirement of the supervisory body of the scheme or by the accreditation body, or at the discretion of RINA in relation to the nature of the statement in all other cases.

The date of the on-site visit is agreed with the organisation sufficiently in advance and officially confirmed at least one week before.

4.1.3 Draft Report

After the follow-up actions, the team provides to the organisation a Draft Validation Report that summarises the issues that need further elaboration upon, researched or added to by the organisation in order to confirm that the project meets the requirements and can achieve credible emission reductions.



The findings of this phase can be either Corrective Action Requests (CARs), Requests for Clarifications (CLs/CRs) or Forward Action Request (FAR)¹.

The organisation must provide additional information to clarify or otherwise make necessary improvements to the project and documentation that would result in a positive validation outcome for the project.

According to the nature of the improvements/corrections and/or the provided documentation, an additional on-site visit could be needed to check the correct implementation of the corrective actions proposed.

4.1.4 Final Validation Report

Upon receipt of responses and modified documents from the organisation to the issues (CLs/CRs and CARs), the Draft Validation Report is revised to reflect the responses of the representatives of the organisation and comments of the team against each of the issues. The Final Validation Report is prepared including the final validation opinion.

The Final Validation Report is issued once all the issues in the Draft Validation Report have been solved by the organisation and accepted by RINA.

If the findings are not satisfactorily solved and accepted:

- after 3 months of the first issuance of the Draft Report; or
- there are more than three revisions,

RINA reserves the right to terminate the contract or to issue the Final Validation Report and a negative opinion, following agreement with the organisation, the right to receive the fees agreed being understood.

4.1.5 Independent Technical Review

The following statuses of the report submitted by the team are subjected to an independent technical review, to ensure that the project activity meets all the requirements:

- the Draft Validation Report, in relation to the agreed scheme; and
- the Final Validation Report, always.

4.1.6 Approval of the Final Report

The Final Validation Report is subsequently approved by the authorised people.

The approved and signed Final Validation Report follows the request for the registration procedure in the case of CDM/JI and in all other cases is submitted to the organisation for the following actions.

4.1.7 Request for registration (for CDM and JI)

Following the positive outcome of the validation process, RINA submits the Final Validation Report, through a dedicated interface, to the CDM/JI Executive Committee, together with the supporting documents, to request the registration of the project in the international CDM/JI register, available on the UNFCCC website.

The Final Validation Report with a negative opinion is sent to the CDM/JI Executive Board.

A reference number for payment of the registration fee is received by RINA from the UNFCCC and sent to the organisation to proceed with the due fee payment.

4.1.8 Validation Opinion for VER and UER projects

Once the validation process has been successfully completed, a validation opinion is issued to the organization, which contains a declaration of the project's compliance with the principles identified by the reference standard.

4.2 Verification

The verification is the evaluation concerning the ex post determination of the monitored reductions in GHG emissions that took place as a result of the realization of a project, in a given period.

¹ For the definition of CAR, CL and FAR see the criteria/requirements of the agreed scheme



The verification:

- ensures that the project has been implemented and operated as per the project and that all physical features (technology, project equipment and monitoring and metering equipment) of the project are in place;
- ensures that the monitoring report and other supporting documents provided are complete, verifiable and in accordance with applicable requirements;
- ensures that actual monitoring systems and procedures comply with the monitoring systems and procedures described in the monitoring plan and the approved methodology; and
- ensures the data recorded and stored as per the monitoring methodology.

The end result of this process is a Verification Report, that identifies any areas that need further elaboration or need to be rectified, the nature of the responses provided by representatives of the organisation, the means of verification of such responses and clear references to any resulting changes in the monitoring report or supporting annexes.

4.2.1 Document Review

Normally, the documents that the organisation shall be required to provide RINA are included in the following, if applicable:

- Monitoring Report (MR) (word and pdf version) drawn up according to the latest version of the format required by the GHG scheme;
- Project Document/Project Design Document (word and pdf version) registered or approved (in case of UER, the project starting date must be after 1 January 2011);
- monitoring plan;
- validation report;
- previous verification reports;
- Emission Reductions (ERs) calculation spreadsheet of the monitoring period; and
- any information/documents requested by the agreed GHG scheme.

RINA may, at its discretion, request also other documents for review apart from those indicated above, considered important for the purpose of verification.

If applicable, RINA makes the Monitoring Report publicly available on the UNFCCC website.

The team reviews the project documents to ensure that they meet the established verification criteria.

Any issues that cannot be sustained by sufficient monitoring, or assumptions that the team cannot fully recognise or approve are investigated and tested further.

4.2.2 Follow-up actions

Following the desk review, the team identifies additional questions and issues (aspects and objective evidence) that need to be addressed with the organisation.

The process also demands an on-site assessment when it is a requirement of the supervisory body of the system/scheme or by the accreditation body, or at the discretion of RINA, in relation to the nature of the statement in all other cases.

The on-site assessment mainly involves:

- assessment of the implementation and operation of the proposed project activity as per the registered document;
- review of information flows for generating the reporting parameters;
- interviews with relevant personnel to confirm that the operational and data collection procedures are implemented in accordance with the monitoring plan in the registered project design document;
- cross-check between information provided in the monitoring report and data from other sources such as plant log books, inventories, purchase records or similar data sources;
- check of the monitoring equipment including calibration performance and observations of monitoring practices against the requirements of the registered project design document and the selected methodology;



- review of calculations and assumptions made in determining the GHG data and emission reductions; and
- identification of quality control and quality assurance procedures in place to prevent or identify and correct any errors or omissions in the reported monitoring parameters.

The date of the on-site assessment is agreed with the organisation sufficiently in advance and officially confirmed at least one week before.

4.2.3 Draft Report

After the follow-up actions, the team provides to the Organisation a Draft Verification Report that summarises the issues related to the monitoring, implementation or operation of the proposed project activity that could impair the capacity of the proposed project activity to achieve emission reductions or influence the reporting of emission reductions.

The findings of this verification phase can be either Corrective Action Requests (CARs), Requests for Clarifications (CLs/CRs) or Forward Action Request (FAR)².

The organisation is to provide the additional clarifications or make the necessary improvements to the report and documentation to obtain a positive outcome of the report.

According to the nature of the improvements/corrections and/or the documentation provided, an additional on-site assessment could be needed to check the correct implementation of the corrective actions proposed.

4.2.4 Final Verification Report

Upon receipt of responses and modified documents from the organisation to the issues (CLs/CRs and CARs), the Draft Verification Report is revised to reflect the responses of the organisation and comments of the team against each of the issues. The Final

Verification Report is prepared including the final opinion.

The Final Verification Report is issued once all the issues in the Draft Verification Report - have been solved by the organisation and accepted by RINA.

If the findings are not satisfactorily solved and accepted:

- after 3 months of the first issuance of the Draft Verification Report; or
- there are more than three revisions,

RINA reserves the right to terminate the contract or to issue the Final Verification Report and a negative opinion, following agreement with the organisation, the right to receive the fees agreed being understood.

4.2.5 Final Verification/Certification Report

The team includes in the Final Verification Report the written assurance that, during a specified time period, the project activity achieved the GHG emission reductions, as verified.

The Final Verification Report becomes the Final Verification/Certification Report.

4.2.6 Independent Technical Review

The following statuses of the report submitted by the team are subjected to an independent technical review, to ensure that the project activity meets all the requirements:

- the Draft Verification Report, in relation to the agreed scheme; and
- the Final Verification Report.

4.2.7 Approval of the Final Report

The Final Verification Report is subsequently approved by the authorised people.

The approved and signed Final Verification Report follows the request for the issuance procedure in the case of CDM/JI/UER and in all other cases is submitted to the organisation for the following actions.

² See note 1



4.2.8 Request for issuance (CDM, JI)

Following the positive outcome of the final verification process RINA, through a dedicated interface, submits the Final Verification/Certification Report to the CDM Executive Board, along with the supporting documents and the request for issuance of Certified Emissions Reductions/Emission Reduction Units (CERs/ERUs).

The Final Verification Report with a negative verification opinion is sent to the CDM/JI Executive Board.

4.2.9 Verification Opinion for VER Projects and UERs

Once the verification process has been successfully completed a verification opinion is issued to the organisation which contains a quantification of GHG emission reductions or removal enhancements of the project, expressed as gCO_{2e}, for the relevant period of time.

The cost of the verification that RINA carries out on the basis of the complaint, if justified, is borne by the Organisation owning the validated/verified claim.

CHAPTER 6 - CONTRACTUAL CONDITIONS

For the contractual conditions and for anything not provided for in these Rules, the provisions contained in the RINA document "GENERAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS FOR THE CERTIFICATION OF SYSTEMS, PRODUCTS AND PERSONNEL", available on the website www.rina.org, apply.

CHAPTER 5 - COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS MANAGEMENT

The Organisation can appeal against the decisions of RINA, setting out the reasons for the dissent, within 30 days from the date of notification of the decision.

RINA will keep the Organisation informed of the progress in evaluating the complaint or appeal, will investigate the matter and specify its proposed actions in response to the complaint or appeal within 3 months of its receipt.

If justified complaints are received by RINA against a validated/verified claim, RINA reserves the right to carry out a verification on the validated/verified claim itself, aimed at checking the correct handling of the complaint. If the complaint proves to be well founded and of high gravity, RINA reserves the right to suspend, withdrawal or modify the validation/verification statement.



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Technical rules