SUSTAINCERT

USER-CENTRIC IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Official certification body for

Gold Standard®
for the Global Goals

VVB Training

Q2 - 15 June 2020

User-centric impact assessment

What will be discussed in the webinar today?

1. **VVB Performance Management System**
   - Updates
   - Next Steps
2. **Technical Updates**
   - Recent rule updates/clarifications
   - Refresher on other important updates/clarifications
3. **SustainCERT Knowledge Base Resource**
   - New articles added every month
4. **What's coming up**
   - Revised templates
5. **New GS4GG Website for Standard Document**

1. VVB Performance Management System

VVB Performance Management System: Updates

— SC have rolled out the use of conformity checklists for design review and performance review, review forms were updated for this purpose

—Review form is now addressed to VVBs to incentivize better performance (shortfall are addressed by VVBs and not PDs)

—These will be used systematically to assess VVB performance – to end of Q2 performance will be assessed on a target random approach

—End Q2 will see the introduction of an improved performance assessment system after each review – scoring system will be linked to key aspects of GS certification (SDG, SGP, materiality in ER calcs) to provide constructive and structured feedback

—Result of performance assessment will be shared with GS and will be used in their decision making on renewal of approval (36 months)

VVB Performance Management System: Next Steps

- By end of Q2 SC will be reaching out to the VVBs with
  - Overall average scores on the validations/verifications conducted in Q-Q2 2020
  - Individual scores of each validation/verification
  - Areas of improvement
  - Strengths
- SC will be sharing the improved/updated performance management system/scoring system for feedback
- Drop-in sessions to discuss the updated performance management system

2. Technical Updates

New Rule Updates/Clarifications

I. Rule Update: VPA/CPA Inclusion Requirements

— Provides flexibility to Gold Standard for the Global Goals Programme of Activities (PoAs) requirements

  — Validation/Verification Body (VVB) compliance check requirements

  — documentation required for PoA design change request

  — time of submission of design change request for VPAs/CPAs

— Applicable to all small and large scale PoAs, regardless of the version of Programme of Activities requirements under which the PoA was registered

— Entry into force: **13 August 2020**

I. Rule Update: VPA/CPA Inclusion Requirements

- **Inclusion of VPAs/CPAs**
- The CME may directly include VPAs/CPAs in the registered PoA per the “PoA Certification Cycle” specified in PoA requirements, without VVB compliance check;
  - If at least one VPA/CPA of the registered PoA has completed successful performance certification, and
  - The VPA/CPA that has completed performance certification and the VPAs/CPAs that are included by CME without VVB compliance check shall,
    - involve same technology/measure and apply same methodology in case of single technology POA
    - involve same technologies/measures and apply same methodology(ies) combination in case of multi technology PoA

I. Rule Update: VPA/CPA Inclusion Requirements

— **Inclusion of VPAs/CPAs**

—The VVB compliance check is mandatory for VPAs/CPAs inclusion in the registered PoA under following circumstances;

—If VPAs/CPAs are not deemed automatically additional and require additionality demonstration as per the CDM Tool for demonstration and assessment of additionality or the Combined tool to identify baseline scenario and additionality.

—If VPAs/CPAs for which material issues are identified at the preliminary review stage, which require a VVB assessment at the time of validation.

I. Rule Update: VPA/CPA Inclusion Requirements

- **Inclusion of VPAs/CPAs**
- For the VPAs/CPAs directly included by the CME, if the VVB finds at the time of verification that they do not comply with any of the requirements, then;
  - Such VPAs/CPAs shall be deemed to be erroneously included and will be further assessed in line with the requirements defined for treatment of erroneously included VPAs
    - Paragraph 14 of the PoAs and Liability (PoA Requirements) will apply to resolve the established nonconformity
  - No new VPAs/CPA shall be allowed to be included without the positive conclusion of VVB compliance check for the next two VPAs/CPAs.

I. Rule Update: VPA/CPA Inclusion Requirements

- **PoA Design Change**
- PoA level Design Change request does not require the VPA/CPA level documents to be submitted for design change review upfront.
  - For the PoA level design change request, the CME can only submit PoA related documents such as the PoA-DD.
- For VPA/CPA level design change request
  - Prior notification track – When material and permanent changes to the VPA/CPA are made (e.g. changes like installed etc.), the CME shall submit the request for the design change in advance of the CPA/VPA's verification/performance certification following Annex A - Design Change Approval Procedure, Principle and Requirements.
  - Issuance track – When the scope of the CPA/VPA design change is limited to minor changes, the verifying VVB shall review and provide an opinion on the design change as part of the verification. Such design change request shall be submitted in tandem with the request for performance certification of the VPA/CPA.

I. Rule Update: VPA/CPA Inclusion Requirements

- **PoA Design Change**
- Minor changes are defined as follows:
  - Any corrections to project information of a registered VPA/CPA that do not affect the design
  - Temporary deviations from the registered monitoring plan for which alternative monitoring arrangements are proposed, if the proposed alternative monitoring arrangements produce a conservative estimate of GHG emission reductions or net anthropogenic GHG removals
  - Changes to the monitoring of a registered VPA/CPA that have no material impact on the applicability of the applied methodologies or the other applied methodological regulatory documents, or the accuracy and completeness of the monitoring
  - Changes to the design of a registered VPA/CPA that do not adversely impact any of the following:
    - The applicability and application of the applied methodologies, the applied standardized baselines and the other applied methodological regulatory documents, under which the PoA has been registered;
    - The additionality of the VPA/CPA;
    - The scale of VPA/CPA
  - Changes to the VPA/CPA design to use the positive list for demonstrating additionality

II. Rule Update: Eligibility requirements for RE projects transitioning to or seeking labelling under GS4GG

— Grid connected Renewable Energy projects seeking to transition from another carbon crediting scheme to GS4GG or labelling of emission reductions under GS4GG are exempted from eligibility requirements listed in paragraph 2.1.3, V1.2, RE activity requirements.

—This exemption is only allowed to projects that started the first crediting period with the original carbon crediting scheme from 01/01/2016 or later but before 24/01/2020.

—Entry into force: **13 May 2020**

III. Rule Update: Eligible crediting period for projects transitioning to GS4GG or seeking labelling under Gs4GG

- For projects transitioning to or seeking labelling of emission reductions under GS4GG, the crediting period registered with other voluntary carbon standards or certification schemes cannot be changed/extended.
- For projects seeking transition to GS4GG, the total duration of the crediting period, including the period that has been claimed under the original carbon credit scheme, shall not exceed the maximum crediting period allowed under relevant GS4GG activity requirements.
  - If a given project transitioning to GS4GG, was registered under Standard X with –
  - fixed crediting period (10 years): The total crediting period (Standard X + GS4GG) must remain 10 years. The project can only claim remaining years of its 10 year crediting period after transitioning to GS4GG.
  - renewable crediting period (7*3 year): The total crediting period (Standard X + GS4GG) must be equal to that allowed under relevant GS4GG activity requirements. The project can only claim remaining years of the maximum allowed crediting period after transitioning to GS4GG. For example; the maximum crediting period allowed for renewable energy project is 15 years. A renewable energy project that has already claimed 5 years under Standard X can only claim remaining 10 years of the total 15 years of its allowed crediting period after transitioning to GS4GGs of a given vintage only once, under one single scheme.

III. Rule Update: Eligible crediting period for projects transitioning to GS4GG or seeking labelling under GS4GG

- The labelling of emission reductions after registration with GS4GG is allowed up to maximum crediting period as per relevant GS4GG activity requirements or end of crediting period with Standard X, whichever occurs first.
- If a given project applies for labelling of emission reductions and is registered with Standard X with
- fixed crediting period (10 years): the project can seek labelling under GS4GG for maximum up to 10 years but shall not be extended beyond the end date of crediting period with Standard X.
- renewable crediting period (7*3 year): the project can seek labelling up to the maximum crediting period allowed under relevant GS4GG activity requirements. For example; under GS4GG, the maximum crediting period allowed for renewable energy project is 15 years.
  - A renewable energy project that has already claimed 5 years under Standard X can claim labelling for 15 years of remaining crediting period after transitioning to GS4GG.
  - A renewable energy project that has already claimed 10 years under Standard X can claim labelling for 11 years of remaining crediting period after transitioning to GS4GG, i.e., the end date of crediting period with Standard X

III. Rule Update: Eligible crediting period for projects transitioning to GS4GG or seeking labelling under GS4GG

— The project will be eligible for retroactive crediting for a maximum of two years prior to the date of Gold Standard registration. However, the total duration of the crediting period of the project shall not exceed the standard crediting period allowed under relevant GS4GG activity requirements.

—The projects registered with CDM, seeking labelling or transitioning to GS4GG and have been submitted project for preliminary review before this rule enters into force can claim remaining crediting period under GS4GG, but no more than the maximum allowed under relevant GS4GG activity requirements

—CDM projects that were registered with v2.2 of the Gold Standard or earlier versions (i.e. prior to release of the Gold Standard for the Global Goals) are allowed to seek labelling up to their maximum CDM crediting period, i.e., 10 or 21 as per Transition requirements.

2. Technical Updates

COVID-19 Interim Measures

Interim measures will be in place globally until at least 1st September 2020

COVID-19 INTERIM MEASURES: STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATIONS

— **Measures**

—The project developer may postpone physical meeting and the stakeholder feedback round for Gold Standard project/POA/VPAs until the COVID-19 situation eases.

—PoA Design Consultations proceed as normal since design consultation does not necessarily require a physical meeting

—**Requirements**

—If stakeholder meetings are postponed, then the physical meetings and stakeholder feedback round have to be conducted before the project is submitted for design review.

—Any comments received during the postponed physical stakeholder consultation meeting, shall be accounted for and discussed in the documentation submitted for design review.

COVID-19 INTERIM MEASURES: STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATIONS

— **Documentation for Preliminary Review**

—Project/CPA/VPA can be submitted without conducting the physical meeting and stakeholder feedback round.

—Draft Stakeholder Consultation Report with self assessment of Sustainable Development Goals and safeguards assessment with other required documents.

COVID-19 INTERIM MEASURES: MONITORING REQUIREMENTS

- **Measures:** One of the below deviations can be granted on a case by case basis for the interim period
- Alternative monitoring approach:
  - Alternative monitoring approach/arrangements can be proposed which enables the project to meet the monitoring requirements while ensuring completeness and conservativeness of the monitored parameters.
- Postpone the monitoring activity:
  - Suspend the monitoring until the end of the validity period of the interim measures.
  - The project should complete the monitoring at a later stage and/or apply credible, conservative assumptions or discount factors to the extent required to ensure that GHG emission reductions or removals will not be overestimated as a result of the postponement of monitoring.
- Gaps in monitoring:
  - A 'gap' period in monitoring until the end of validity period of interim measures and extend the current project crediting period by a period equal to the gap period.

COVID-19 INTERIM MEASURES: MONITORING REQUIREMENTS

- **Deviation Requests:**
- Deviation requests should be submitted before the end of the validity period of interim measures;
- Deviation requests should:
  - Clearly state the start and end date of the monitoring period for which deviation applies.
  - Where the end date of deviation is not known and is intended to be the end date of the Interim Measures, the deviation request should state 'End of Interim Measures'.
  - The monitoring deviation ends 28 calendar days from the GS declared end date of the Interim Measures.
  - Project proponents that can re-establish monitoring sooner, may resort to the original registered monitoring plan sooner, clearly reporting the date of changing from interim to registered monitoring.
- A complete Deviation Request Form should be sent to GS at "covid19@goldstandard.org

COVID-19 INTERIM MEASURES: MANDATORY SITE VISITS BY VVB

- **Measures:**
- If site visit cannot be postponed, VVB may replace mandatory on-site visits with desk-based review for audits.
  - Cross checks between information provided in the documents and information from third-party or publicly available sources other than those used
  - Telephone, video or email Interviews with relevant stakeholders, such as personnel with knowledge of the Project/PoA design and implementation;
  - Cross checks between the information provided by interviewed personnel (i.e. by checking sources or other interviews) to ensure that no relevant information has been omitted;
  - Reference to available information relating to projects similar to the proposed Project/PoA under validation/verification;
  - Review, based on the selected methodologies, the selected standardized baselines and other applied methodological regulatory documents, of the appropriateness of formulae and accuracy of calculations;
  - Where no means of validation/verification is specified, the VVB shall apply the standard auditing techniques.
- Transparently disclose in the audit report that audit is undertaken by desk-based review including the alternative means used and their justification
- Must submit the audit report requesting design certification and/or performance certification within 6 months of the declared end date of the Interim Measures.
- Maximum monitoring period which can be verified based on desk review is 2 years.

COVID-19 INTERIM MEASURES

Send suggestions on alternative measures and means that can be used to facilitate the stakeholder consultations, monitoring, validation & verification to support Gold Standard projects ”covid19@goldstandard.org”.

2. Technical Updates

Other important recent rule updates

Rule Update: Validation & Verification by same VVB

- **Applicability**
- The same VVB may undertake the validation/inclusion, verification, crediting period renewal, design change review for a given project seeking Gold Standard for Global Goals certification, irrespective of;
  - Project, programmes or interventions
  - Certification types and pathway, e.g. Gold Standard Certified Impact Statements or Products
  - Project scale, e.g. micro, other scales (large and small scale)

- The Gold Standard projects registered with previous versions of the Standard may also apply this rule update.

- No prior authorization from Gold Standard Secretariat

Rule Update: Validation & Verification by same VVB

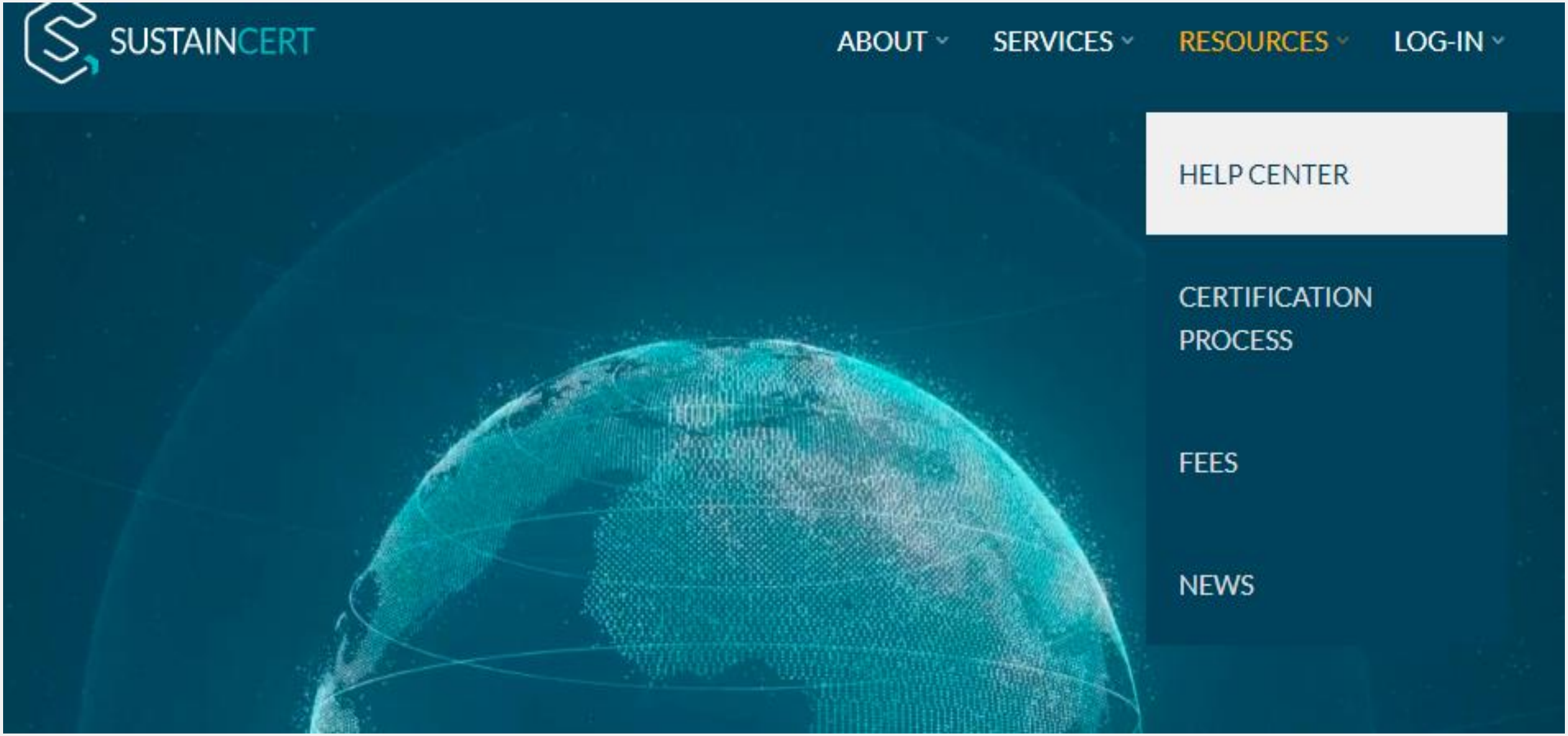
- **Requirements**
- The VVB shall ensure that the integrity and impartiality of the verification audit are maintained.
  - The entire verification audit team, including the lead auditors, auditors and sectoral experts, are different from the team that performed the validation activity (including the inclusion of VPA/CPA, renewal of crediting period, design change review).

    And
  - Transparently disclose in the verification report that the same VVB has performed validation activity (including the inclusion of VPA/CPA, renewal of crediting period, design change review) for the given project/PoA.
    - The VVB shall disclose the details of the audit team, including names of all the team members and their roles in the previous audit performed by the same VVB.
- This requirement does not apply to combined Design Certification with first verification and performance review for a given project
- Gold Standard retains the right to take action in case of fraud or malfeasance:
  - suspension of the project, retraction of certified products & statements, blacklisting entities and their registry accounts, or cancellation of VVB approval status.

Rule Update: Validation & Verification by same VVB

- **Entry into effect**
- This requirement comes into force from **02 October 2020**
- After this date
  - If VVB signs an agreement to perform verification for project/PoA for which the same VVB performed validation activity, the VVB shall meet different audit team requirement as mentioned above.
  - In case of PoAs, the VVB may apply the rule update effective immediately by appointing a different audit team for verification activities.

3. SustainCERT Knowledge Base



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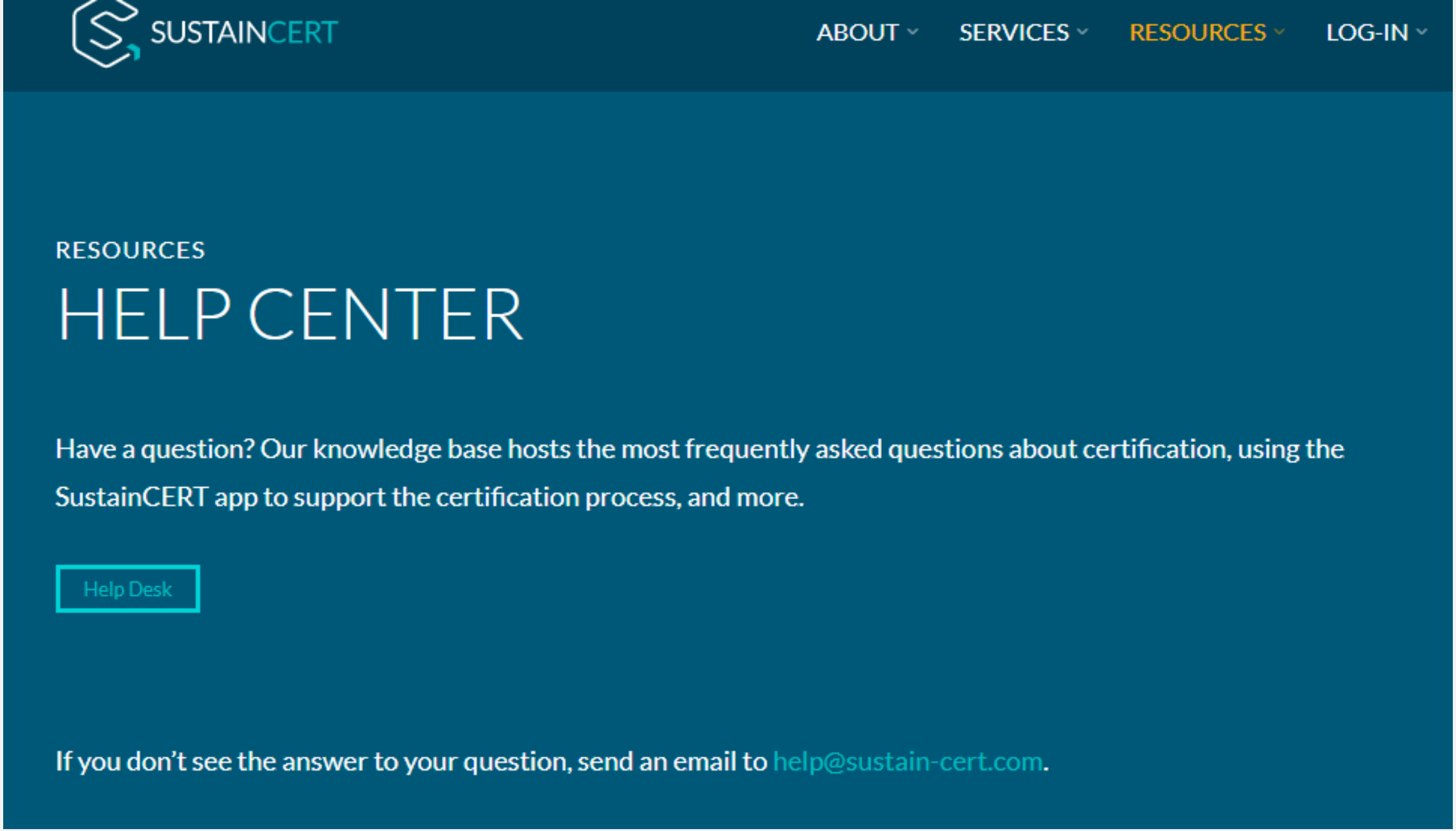
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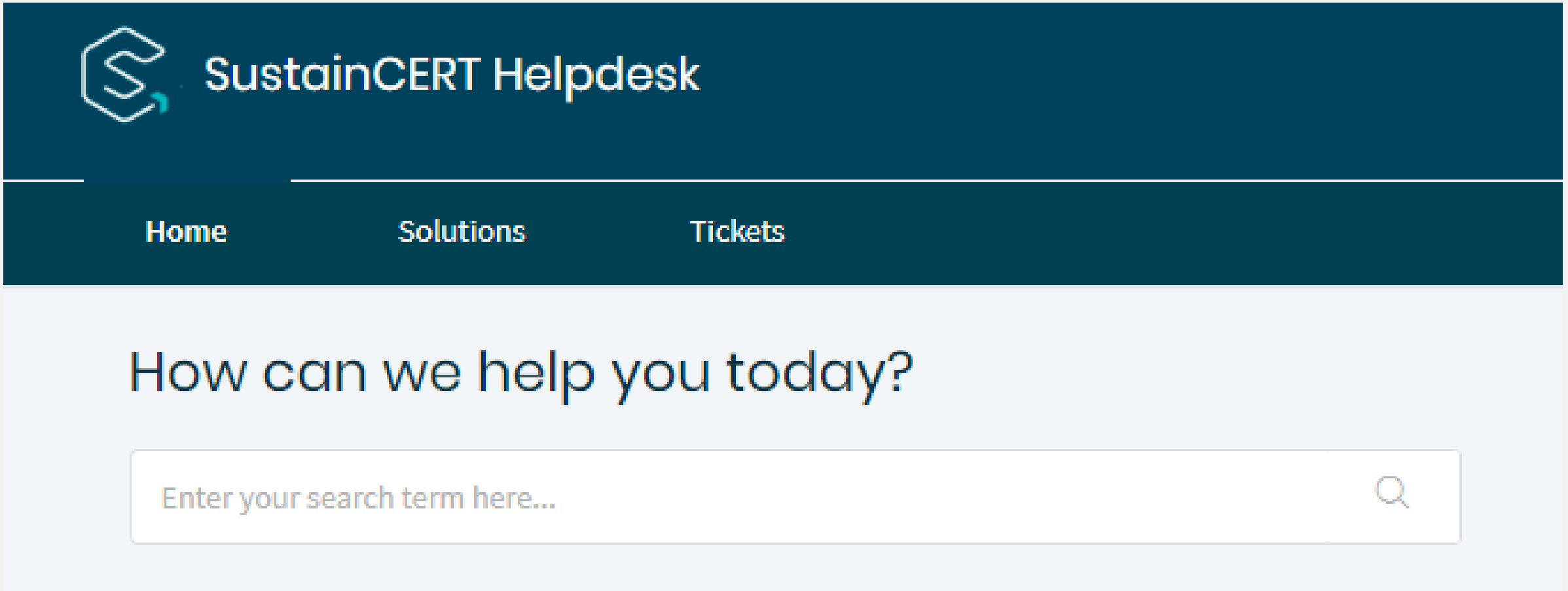
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Knowledge base

Environmental Markets

Environmental Markets - FAQ (17)

- How do I develop a Gold Standard (GS) project?
- What approaches can be used to quantify contributions to Sustainable Dev…
- What does the process of Certification look like?
- Where can I find information related to certification fees?
- What is the submission deadline for a retroactive project?

See all 17 articles

Carbon FAQ (10)

- What is the project monitoring and verification process?
- Can my project have an original methodology, or does an existing method…
- Am I allowed to make changes to the project design?
- What are the Programme of Activity (PoA) requirements?
- Transition from GS to GS4GG

See all 10 articles

Carbon - Programme of Activities (15)

- What is the Programme of Activity (PoA) submission date?
- Is Programme of Activity (PoA) Design Consultation different from stakehol…
- Can a Programme of Activity (PoA) Design Consultation be conducted elect…
- Who should be invited to a Programme of Activity (PoA) Design Consultation?
- Do Gold Standard Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) Programme of Ac…

See all 15 articles

Carbon-Energy & Waste (11)

- How do I develop a Gold Standard (GS) cookstove project?
- Are renewable energy projects from non-LDC countries still eligible for Gol…
- Which projects are required to demonstrate a clear transfer of carbon credi…
- What are the six main critical issues for hydro projects to address?
- Are all hydro projects required to address the six critical issues listed above?

See all 11 articles

Environmental Markets – FAQ

How do I develop a Gold Standard (GS) project?

The Principles and Requirements explain the process for developing a GS project. Each project goes through a process that we refer to as the “GS project cyc...

Fri, 13 Mar, 2020 at 1:31 PM

What approaches can be used to quantify contributions to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)?

Option 1 – For any SDG Impact, the Project Developer shall review the UN SDG Targets and Indicators from the relevant National SDG Indicators, or in their a...

Fri, 13 Mar, 2020 at 1:33 PM

What does the process of Certification look like?

The detailed description of the certification process, including the various steps and the documentation required at each step, can be found here. The b...

Fri, 13 Mar, 2020 at 1:34 PM

Where can I find information related to certification fees?

All information related to the fees associated with the various steps of the certification process can be found here.

Fri, 13 Mar, 2020 at 1:35 PM

Do the Gold Standard renewable energy eligibility changes apply to projects supplying electricity to a mini-grid?

Created by: Deepak KumarSC

Modified on: Sat, 28 Mar, 2020 at 12:25 PM

Print

No.

This type of project is exempt from the new eligibility requirements and shall follow Gold Standard (GS) Community Services Activity Requirements to issue GS-VERs (Verified Emission Reductions) or GS-CERs (Certified Emission Reductions).

D

Deepak is the author of this solution article.

Did you find it helpful? Yes No

4. What’s coming up

NEW AND IMPROVED TEMPLATES

SustainCERT ‘s review will

—Provide detailed guidance for MR/PDD/POA/VPA and SCR documents (along with OO template reports) to help all users better understand what the standard requires

—Provide some direction on key rules/concepts that are not intuitive in the standard (for example submission timeline rules)

—A new email address is supplied for which PDs/VVBs can share feedback to continuously improve (SC don’t plan to revise templates regularly, as this will cause confusion, but we will act on all feedback and use it to improve the certification process)

—Expected to publish in July, we will test the templates with VVBs if interested.

5. New GS4GG Website for Standard Documents

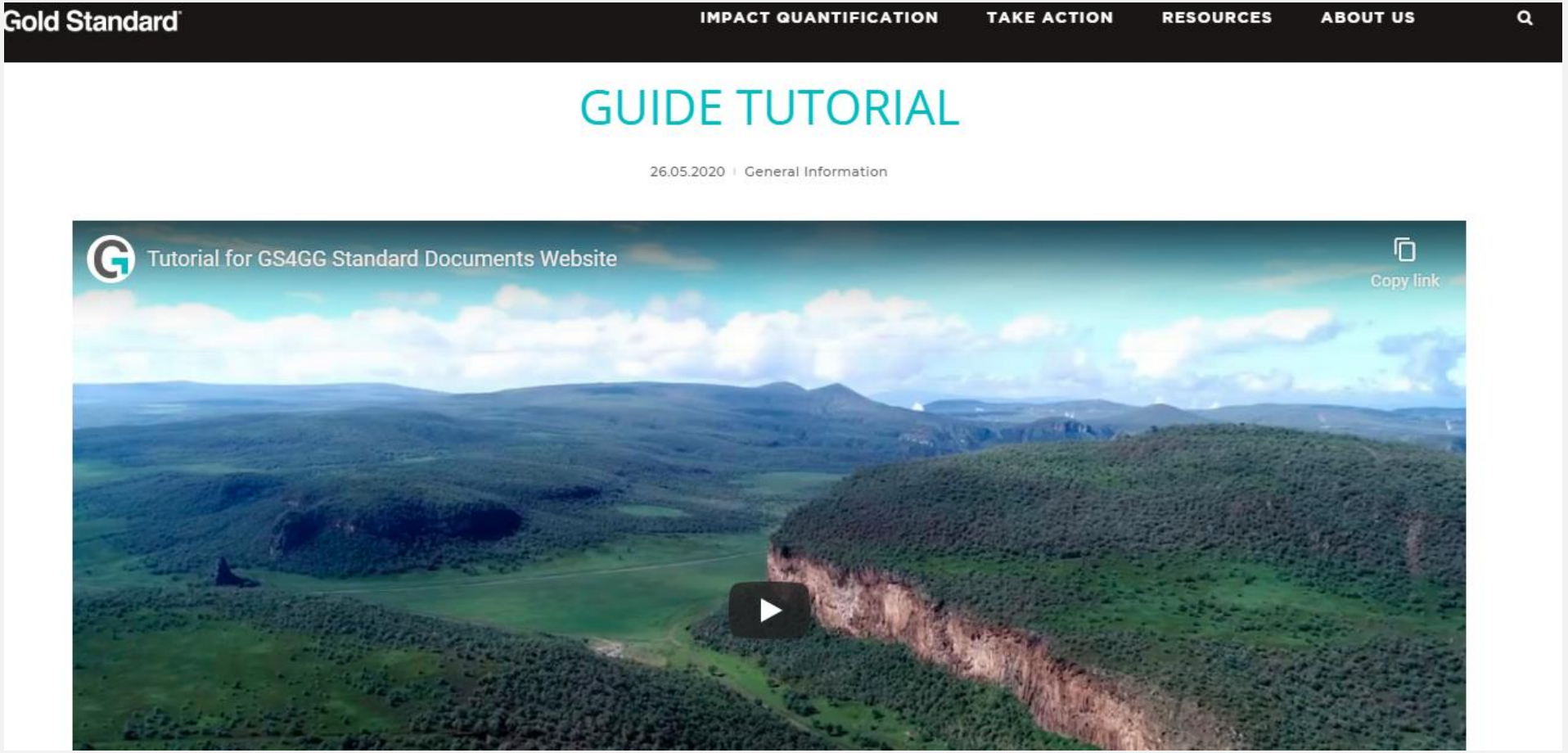
Gold Standard for the Global Goals

Standards PD Resources VVB Resources

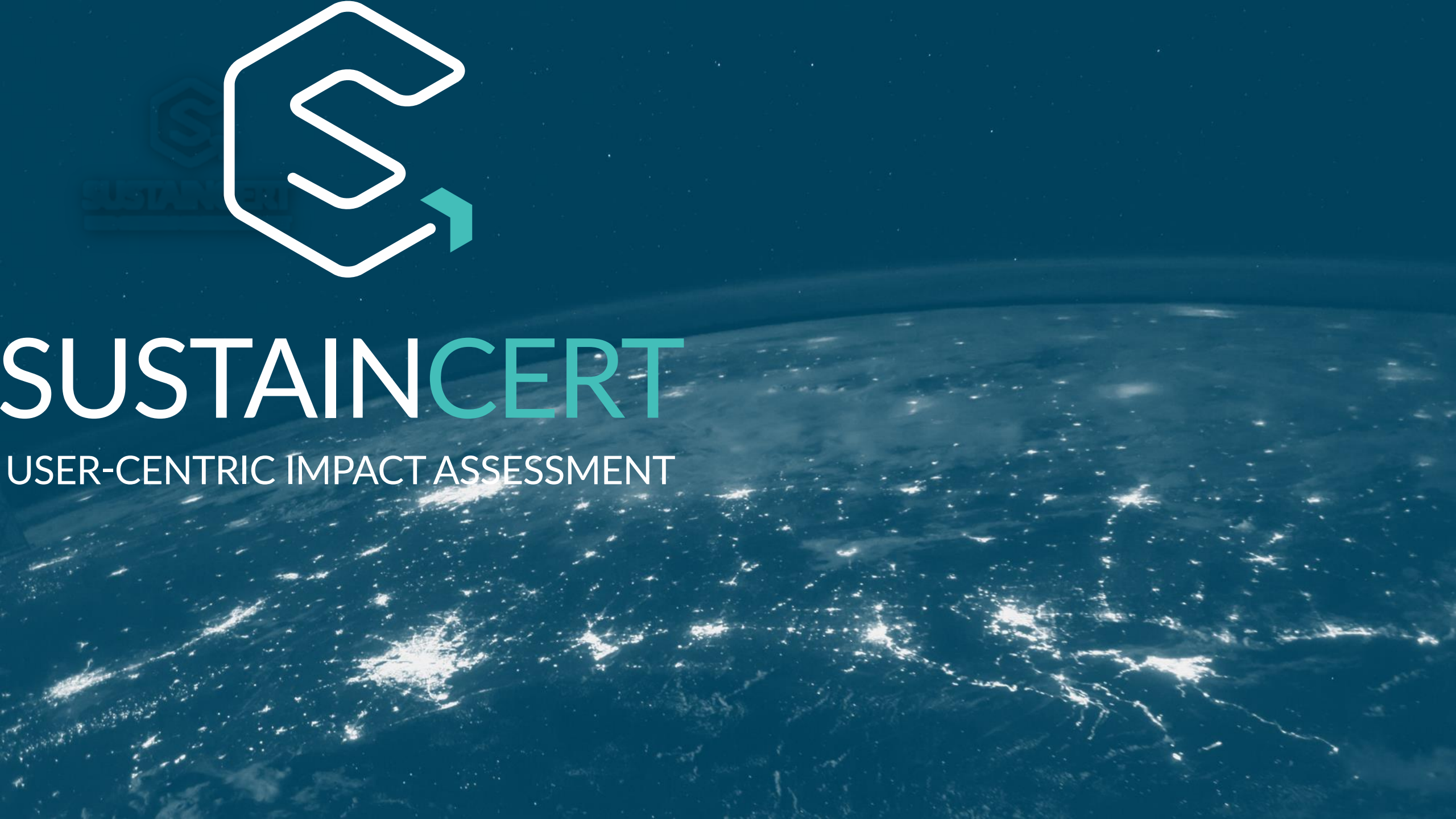
STANDARD DOCUMENTS FOR GOLD STANDARD FOR THE GLOBAL GOALS

We have created a special hub that features information and a tutorial to help guide you through this website and how our documents are structured. If you have any feedback on this site or have any difficulties locating a document, please do not hesitate to contact us

https://youtu.be/mQBZmR9Lytg



Questions
help@sustain-cert.com



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