

Responsible Carbon Finance Advisory Council: Meeting 2

Date: Thursday, 11 July 2024

Time: 15:00 – 16:15 CEST

Location: Zoom

Members: Emanuele Banfi, Gordon Benett, Verena Brinkmann, James Cooper, Kato Kibuka, Sarah Leugers, Hanaan Marwah, Marcel Raats, Peter Scott, Ash Sharma, Pascal Siegwart, Justin Wheler, Dymphna van der Lans

Secretariat: Ronan Ferguson, Feisal Hussain

Absent: Bianca Gichangi, Jules Kortenhorst, Kandeh Yumkella

Decisions and Action Items

Decisions:

- The minutes from the first Advisory Council meeting were unanimously approved.
- An RCF advocacy strategy should be explored for the next COP meeting.
- The RCF certification “label” will be designed for project developers, rather than for projects, because carbon standards already define the conditions for project certification and RCF does not wish to duplicate effort.
- The CoC Approach should be revisited by the Advisory Council after the CoC has been drafted and shared with the Council.

Action items:

For AC Members:

1. Provide suggestions for potential additional Working Group members for an African venture with an African CEO, to give broader representation to the Working Group, by July 22nd.
2. Share timing and details for any planned meetings during COP where RCF could be relevant to the agenda, to create a calendar of potential RCF advocacy targets.

For CCA:

1. Research ICROA and IC-VCM to see if any learnings from their approach can be applied to the RCF CoC Approach.
2. Compile a calendar of COP-related engagements that can be used to inform an RCF COP advocacy strategy.
3. Engage with ratings agencies on a draft of the CoC to gather their feedback.

Discussion

1. **Forward process.** In reviewing the high level RCF timeline, Council members encouraged the RCF team to explore appropriate advocacy opportunities at COP29 to raise the profile of RCF.
2. **The Code of Conduct Approach.** The main themes of feedback received on the CoC Approach were:
 - i. Start out by designing CoC compliance around project developers, rather than projects to avoid duplication with the work of existing registries. Suggestions included:
 - Exploring the provision of standardized documentation that can be used in data rooms with buyers.
 - Designing the CoC to guide project developer conduct regarding previously existing projects, as well as for new projects that start after endorsing the CoC.
 - ii. Leverage existing verification processes and institutions to expedite audited assessments for CoC compliance, whilst minimizing costs and complexity. Suggestions included*:
 - Establishing a standardized template for VVBs to review project developer compliance (rather than project compliance).
 - Leveraging existing review cycles arising from existing VVB review processes.
 - Loading verification documents into existing carbon standards' infrastructure.
 - Engaging with ratings agencies to gather their feedback on the draft Code of Conduct, and understand implications for the RCF Buyer's Guide.
 - * Post-meeting note: During one-on-one consultations between CCA and AC members that were unable to attend the meeting, a view was raised that it might be best to approach independent auditors for an annual review of a project developer's operations, rather than leverage existing players such as VVBs. Independent auditors are outside of the carbon ecosystem, which could mean that their findings are more likely to carry more weight, and are more likely to be trusted by buyers than VVB addendums.
 - iii. Be inclusive of smaller or newer project developers. Suggestions included:
 - Providing training on the final CoC to make it accessible to smaller, newer project developers.
 - Asking the Working group to explore ways that any extra costs experienced by smaller project developers might be minimized.