

Climate Bonds Standard

CLIMATE BONDS STANDARD | VERSION 3.0 DRAFT

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Foreword

The **Climate Bonds Initiative** is an investor-focused not-for-profit organisation, promoting large-scale investments that will deliver a global low carbon and climate resilient economy. The Initiative seeks to develop mechanisms to better align the interests of investors, industry and government so as to catalyse investments at a speed and scale sufficient to avoid dangerous climate change.

A key component of the Initiative is the **Climate Bonds Standard & Certification Scheme** (“**Certification Scheme**”). The Certification Scheme allows investors, governments and other stakeholders to prioritise ‘low carbon and climate resilient’ investments with confidence that the funds are being used to deliver a low carbon and climate resilient economy. A Scientific Framework underpins the definitions of which projects and assets are consistent with a low carbon and climate resilient economy and therefore eligible for inclusion in a Certified Climate Bond.

The Certification Scheme includes robust frameworks for monitoring, reporting and assurance of conformance with the Climate Bonds Standard. An international **Climate Bonds Standard Board** comprised of large institutional investors and leading environmental NGOs provides ongoing oversight of the Certification Scheme as well as decisions on Certifications. Day-to-day operations and decision making is delegated to the **Climate Bonds Standard Secretariat**.

The Climate Bonds Standard is not a financial standard and does not imply any impact on the credit ratings of specific investments — the obligation to perform financial due-diligence remains with investors, just as it does for other investments.

The **Climate Bond Certified Mark** (“**Certification Mark**”) is registered in multiple countries and is used to designate Certified Climate Bonds.



More information on the Certification Scheme is available on www.climatebonds.net/standards

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The Climate Bonds Initiative is not endorsing, recommending or advising on the financial merits or any other aspect of any debt instrument or investment product and no information within this communication should be taken as such, nor should any information in this communication be relied upon in making any investment decision.

Certification under the Climate Bond Standard exclusively relates to the climate attributes of the use of proceeds of a designated debt instrument in accordance with the applicable Climate Bonds Standard. For the avoidance of doubt, certification does not address any other aspect of the designated debt instrument which is not covered by the applicable Climate Bonds Standard.

A decision to invest in anything is solely yours. The Climate Bonds Initiative accepts no liability of any kind, for any investment made by an individual or organisation, nor for any investment made by third parties on behalf of an individual or organisation, based in whole or in part on any information contained within this, or any other Climate Bonds Initiative public communication.

Introducing the Climate Bonds Standard & Certification Scheme

The green bond market has been growing rapidly. Confidence in the climate objectives and the use of funds intended to address climate change is fundamental to the credibility of the role that green bonds play in a low carbon and climate resilient economy. Trust in the green label and transparency to the underlying assets are essential for this market to reach scale but investor capacity to assess green credentials is limited, especially in the fast-paced bond market.

The Climate Bonds Standard & Certification Scheme aims to provide the green bond market with the trust and assurance that it needs to achieve scale. Activating the mainstream debt capital markets to finance and refinance climate-aligned projects and assets is critical to achieving international climate goals, and robust labelling of green bonds is a key requirement for that mainstream participation.

The Climate Bonds Standard sets out clear criteria to verify certain green credentials of a bond or other debt instrument. It aims to provide a robust approach to verifying that the funds are being used to finance projects and assets that are consistent with delivering a low carbon and climate resilient economy.

Specifically, this includes projects or assets that directly contribute to:

- Developing low carbon industries, technologies and practices that mitigate greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions consistent with avoiding dangerous climate change
- Essential adaptation to the consequences of climate change.

The **Climate Bonds Standard & Certification Scheme** represents an important step, moving from the broad integrity principles contained in the Green Bond Principles¹ to create a robust and effective certification system. Key features include:

- Full alignment with the latest version of the Green Bond Principles
- Clear mandatory requirements for use of proceeds, tracking, and reporting
- Specific eligibility criteria for low carbon and climate resilient projects and assets
- An assurance framework with independent verifiers and clear procedures
- Certification by an independent **Climate Bonds Standard Board**.

Certification against the Climate Bonds Standard allows investors, governments and other stakeholders to prioritise green bonds with confidence that the funds are being used to deliver a low carbon and climate resilient economy.

For investors, the Certification Scheme is a screening tool that labels bonds as Climate Bond Certified. It avoids investors having to make subjective judgements or do expensive due diligence on the green attributes of certified investments.

For issuers, the Certification Scheme is a voluntary initiative, which allows them to clearly demonstrate to the market that their bond meets industry standards for climate integrity, management of proceeds, and transparency.

The Certification Scheme is made up of the overarching Climate Bonds Standard Version 3.0 and a Taxonomy of Green Definitions that provides detailed eligibility criteria for relevant sectors, such as solar energy, wind energy, low carbon buildings, low carbon transport, water, and energy efficiency. Technical Working Groups and Industry Working Groups provide the expertise for the development of these eligibility criteria which are approved by the Climate Bonds Standard Board.

The requirements of the Climate Bonds Standard are separated into *pre-issuance* requirements, which need to be met for issuers seeking certification ahead of issuance, and *post-issuance requirements*, which need to be met by issuers seeking continued certification following the issuance of the bond.

The Climate Bonds Standard is an environmental standard. It is not a substitute for financial due diligence. It is an authoritative standard that eases decision-making and focuses attention on credible climate change solutions in the debt capital markets.

¹ Green Bond Principles (GBP) are voluntary process guidelines intended for broad use by the market that recommend transparency and disclosure, and promote integrity in the development of the Green Bond market. The latest edition of the GBP is available from the International Capital Markets Association website (www.icmagroup.org/greenbonds).

Definitions

Standard, certification and structures

Certified Climate Bond: A bond or other debt instrument that is certified by the Climate Bonds Standard Board as meeting the requirements of this Climate Bonds Standard.

Climate Bonds Standard: The requirements and eligibility criteria for Climate Bond Certification, based on the current version as published on the [Climate Bonds Initiative website \(https://www.climatebonds.net/standards\)](https://www.climatebonds.net/standards).

Climate Bonds Standard Board: A board of independent members that approves the Standard, Sector-Specific Criteria and Verifiers, and considers applications for Certification of a bond under the Climate Bonds Standard.

Note: The Climate Bonds Standard Board is constituted, appointed and supported in line with the governance arrangements and processes as published on the Climate Bonds Initiative website.

Climate Bonds Standard Secretariat: Manages the day-to-day interaction with issuers, verifiers and other stakeholders.

Note: Contact details for the Climate Bonds Standard Secretariat are available on the Climate Bonds Initiative website.

Climate Bond Certification: Allows the Issuer to use the Climate Bond Certification Mark in relation to that bond. Climate Bond Certification is provided once the independent Climate Bonds Standard Board is satisfied the bond conforms to the Climate Bonds Standard.

Climate Bond Certification Mark: The certification logo that Issuers may use once they have obtained Climate Bond Certification from the Climate Bonds Standard Board. Use of the logo by an Issuer is specified within the terms and conditions of the Certification Agreement.

Issuer, projects & assets

Issuer: The organisation issuing the bond or other debt instrument.

Eligible Projects & Assets: Projects, physical assets, indebtedness incurred to finance physical assets, or other related and supporting expenditures for physical assets that conform to the eligibility criteria provided in Part C of the Climate Bonds Standard.

Nominated Projects & Assets: Eligible Projects & Assets owned by the Issuer, indebtedness incurred to finance, or other related and supporting expenditures for Eligible Projects & Assets that are associated with the bond or other debt instrument.

Net Proceeds: The value of the bond's or other debt instrument's principal minus issuance costs.

Fair Market Value: The price at which an asset would change hands between a willing buyer and a willing seller, neither being under any compulsion to buy or to sell and both having reasonable knowledge of relevant facts.

Documentation

Bond Disclosure Documentation: Documentation associated with the issuance of a bond or other debt instrument, and that is prepared before a bond or other debt instrument is issued.

Note: This information is required by the relevant financial regulatory body in the jurisdiction of issuance, and may include items such as a prospectus, indenture contract or official bond statement.

Climate Bond Information Form: A template document to be completed by the Issuer and submitted to the Climate Bonds Standard Secretariat as part of the certification process.

Note: The Climate Bond Information Form is available from the Climate Bonds Initiative website. The form includes sections which will be publicly disclosed on the Climate Bonds Initiative website, as well as sections which will be kept confidential. The form is used and updated throughout the certification process.

Certification Agreement: A template legal agreement which must be executed by the Issuer and submitted to the Climate Bonds Standard Board as part of the certification process.

Note: The Certification Agreement is available from the Climate Bonds Initiative website and includes terms and conditions for use of the Climate Bond Certification Mark.

Assurance, reporting and verifiers

Verifier: An independent third party assurance provider or auditor, which has been approved by the Climate Bonds Standard Board and listed on the Climate Bonds Initiative website. Also known as an “Approved Verifier”.

Assurance Engagement: Procedures undertaken by a Verifier, presented as an Assurance Report, to form a conclusion or an opinion as to whether the bond has conformed to the relevant requirements of the Climate Bonds Standard. Assurance procedures are to be conducted in accordance with relevant assurance standards, such as the *International Standard on Assurance Engagements 3000 (ISAE 3000): Assurance Engagements other than Audits or Reviews of Historical Financial Information*. The level of assurance can be either reasonable assurance or limited assurance.

Assurance Report: A document prepared by the Verifier that conveys the Verifier’s conclusion or opinion as to whether the bond or other debt instrument has conformed to the relevant Requirements of the Climate Bonds Standard.

Readiness Assessment: An assessment undertaken by a Verifier, using Agreed-Upon Procedures, to assess whether the bond or other debt instrument has conformed to the relevant Pre-Issuance Requirements of the Climate Bonds Standard. Agreed-Upon Procedures are to be conducted in accordance with relevant standards, such as the *International Standards on Related Services 4400 (ISRS 4400): Engagements to Perform Agreed-upon Procedures Regarding Financial Information* or *AT sec 201: Agreed-Upon Procedures Engagements*.

Note: When agreed-upon procedures are followed, no conclusion or opinion is expressed by the Verifier. Instead, factual findings obtained as a result of the procedures performed are reported. A Readiness Assessment Protocol for Issuers and Verifiers to consider is available from the Climate Bonds Initiative website.

Report of Factual Findings: A document prepared by the Verifier that reports factual findings obtained as a result of the Readiness Assessment to test whether the bond or other debt instrument has conformed to the Pre-Issuance Requirements of the Climate Bonds Standard.

Verifier’s Report: An Assurance Report or a Report of Factual Findings provided by the Verifier to the Issuer which is then provided to the Climate Bonds Standard Secretariat as part of the certification process.

Force Majeure: The occurrence of an event or circumstance beyond the control of contracted parties, such as natural disasters, and that could not be avoided through the exercise of due care, which results in or causes the failure of a party to maintain its conformance with the Climate Bonds Standard, provided that such party did not play a substantial role in bringing about the event or circumstance.

Bond types

Bond Types: The different financial structures of bonds and other debt instruments which can be Certified under the Climate Bonds Standard & Certification Scheme. The term “bond” is used in this Standard to describe the debt instrument being considered for Certification whether that be structured as a bond or some other form of debt instrument:

- **Use of Proceeds Bond:** a standard recourse-to-the-issuer debt obligation for which the proceeds shall be credited to a sub-account, moved to a sub-portfolio or otherwise tracked by the issuer and attested to by a formal internal process that will be linked to the issuer’s lending and investment operations for Eligible Projects & Assets.
- **Use of Proceeds Revenue Bond:** a non-recourse debt obligation in which the credit exposure in the bond is to the pledged cash flows of the revenue streams, fees, taxes etc., and the use of proceeds of the bond goes to related or unrelated Eligible Projects & Assets. The proceeds shall be credited to a sub-account, moved to a sub-portfolio or otherwise tracked by the issuer and attested to by a formal internal process that will be linked to the issuer’s lending and investment operations for Eligible Projects and Assets.
- **Project Bond:** a project bond for a single or multiple Eligible Projects & Assets for which the investor has direct exposure to the risk of the project(s) with or without potential recourse to the issuer.
- **Securitized Bond:** a bond collateralized by one or more specific Eligible Projects & Assets, including but not limited to covered bonds, Asset Backed Securities (“ABS”), Mortgage Backed Securities (“MBS”), and other structures. The first source of repayment is generally the cash flows of the assets.
- **Other Debt Instrument:** other forms of debt instruments as per the latest version of the *List of Debt Instruments* on the Climate Bonds Initiative website at <http://www.climatebonds.net/standards/certification/types-of-bonds>.

Climate Bonds Standard

The Climate Bonds Standard sets out the requirements to be met for Issuers seeking Climate Bond Certification. The requirements are separated into pre-issuance requirements, which need to be met for Issuers seeking certification ahead of issuance, and post-issuance requirements, which need to be met by Issuers seeking continued certification following the issuance of the bond.

Part A: Pre-Issuance Requirements

This Section of the Climate Bonds Standard sets out the requirements that apply to all Certified Climate Bonds prior to issuance of the bond. These requirements are designed to ensure that the Issuer has established appropriate internal processes and controls prior to issuance of the Certified Climate Bond, and that these internal processes and controls are sufficient to enable conformance with the Climate Bonds Standard after the Climate Bond has been issued and allocation of the proceeds is underway. For Issuers seeking pre-issuance Climate Bond Certification, all requirements set out in this section shall be met.

1. Use of Proceeds

- 1.1. The Issuer shall document the Nominated Projects & Assets which are proposed to be associated with the bond and which have been assessed as likely to be Eligible Projects & Assets. The Issuer shall establish a list of Nominated Projects & Assets which can be kept up-to-date during the term of the bond.
- 1.2. Nominated Projects & Assets shall not be nominated to other Certified Climate Bonds unless it is demonstrated by the Issuer that distinct portions of the Nominated Projects & Assets are being funded by different Certified Climate Bonds or that the existing Certified Climate Bond is being refinanced via another Certified Climate Bond.
- 1.3. The expected Net Proceeds of the bond shall be no greater than the Issuer's debt obligation to the proposed Nominated Projects & Assets, or the Fair Market Value of the proposed Nominated Projects & Assets which are owned by the Issuer.

Note: The Issuer may choose whether to use its debt obligation to the Nominated Projects & Assets or their Fair Market Value when satisfying Clause 1.5

2. Process for Evaluation and Selection of Projects & Assets

- 2.1. The Issuer shall establish, document and maintain a decision-making process which it uses to determine the eligibility of the Nominated Projects & Assets. This includes, without limitation:
 - 2.1.1. a statement on the environmental objectives of the bond;
Note: A wide variety of environmental objectives are possible for climate bonds. These can vary from increasing the installed capacity of low carbon assets, such as solar power facilities, to having a specific objective focused on the operations or indirect effects of the projects & assets, such as emissions reductions from displacement of higher emitting power sources on the grid. The environmental objectives of the bond, as stated by the Issuer, have implications for the reporting requirements under the Standard.
 - 2.1.2. a process to determine whether the Nominated Projects & Assets meet the eligibility requirements specified in Part C of the Climate Bonds Standard.
 - 2.1.3. the related eligibility criteria, including exclusion criteria or any other process, applied to identify and manage potentially material environmental and social risks associated with the Nominated Projects & Assets.
- 2.2. The Issuer shall assess that all proposed Nominated Projects & Assets to be associated with the bond meet the bond's documented objectives as stated under Clause 2.1.1 and are likely to conform to the relevant eligibility requirements under Part C of the Climate Bonds Standard.

3. Management of Proceeds

- 3.1. The systems, policies and processes to be used for management of bond funds and investments made shall be documented by the Issuer and disclosed to the Verifier, and shall include arrangements for the following activities:
 - 3.1.1. **Tracking of proceeds:** The Net Proceeds of the bond can be credited to a sub-account, moved to a sub-portfolio, or otherwise tracked by the Issuer in an appropriate manner and documented.
 - 3.1.2. **Managing unallocated proceeds:** The balance of unallocated Net Proceeds can be managed as per the requirements in Clause 7.2
 - 3.1.3. **Earmarking funds to Nominated Projects & Assets:** An earmarking process that can be used to manage and account for funding to the Nominated Projects & Assets and enables estimation of the share of the Net Proceeds being used for financing and refinancing.

4. Reporting Prior to Issuance

- 4.1. The Issuer shall disclose in the Bond Disclosure Documentation:
 - 4.1.1. The investment areas, as provided in Clause 9.1, into which the Nominated Projects & Assets fall.
 - 4.1.2. Where a proportion of the Net Proceeds of the bond are used for refinancing, an estimate of the share of the Net Proceeds used for financing and re-financing, and which Nominated Projects & Assets may be refinanced
 - 4.1.3. The intended types of temporary investment instruments for the management of unallocated proceeds in accordance with Clause 3.1.2.
 - 4.1.4. The Verifier selected by the Issuer for the pre-issuance and any post-issuance engagements.
 - 4.1.5. Whether periodic Assurance Engagements will be undertaken during the term of the bond to reaffirm conformance with the Climate Bonds Standard, and the expected frequency of any periodic Assurance Engagements

Note: Conducting periodic Assurance Engagements over the term of the bond is at the discretion of the bond Issuer. Any Periodic Assurance Engagements undertaken are in addition to any post-issuance Assurance Engagement which must be undertaken following issuance of the Certified Climate Bond. Periodic Assurance Engagements can be aligned with other financial auditing or sustainability assurance cycles to streamline Verifier activities.

Part B: Post-Issuance Requirements

This Section of the Climate Bonds Standard sets out the requirements that apply to all Certified Climate Bonds after the issuance of the bond.

5. Use of Proceeds

- 5.1. The Net Proceeds of the bond shall be allocated to the Nominated Projects & Assets.
- 5.2. All Nominated Projects & Assets funded by the bond's proceeds shall meet the bond's documented objectives as stated under Clause 1.1, and shall be in conformance with the requirements of Part C of the Climate Bonds Standard.
- 5.3. The Issuer shall allocate funds to Nominated Projects & Assets within 24 months of issuance of the bond or shall disclose under clause 8.3 the estimated timeline for allocation of funds to Nominated Projects & Assets. Funds may be reallocated to other Nominated Projects & Assets at any time during the term of the bond.
- 5.4. Nominated Projects & Assets shall not be nominated to other Certified Climate Bonds unless it is demonstrated by the Issuer that distinct portions of the Nominated Projects & Assets are being funded by different Certified Climate Bonds or that the existing Certified Climate Bond is being refinanced via another Certified Climate Bond.
- 5.5. Where a proportion of the Net Proceeds of the bond are used for refinancing, the Issuer shall provide an estimate of the share of the Net Proceeds used for financing and re-financing, and identify which Nominated Projects & Assets may be refinanced.
- 5.6. The Net Proceeds of the bond shall be tracked by the Issuer following a formal internal process as disclosed to the Verifier by the Issuer under Clause 2.1.
- 5.7. The Net Proceeds of the bond shall be no greater than the total investment in the Nominated Projects & Assets or the total Fair Market Value of the Nominated Projects & Assets at the time of issuance.

Note: The Issuer may choose whether to use the investment in the Nominated Projects & Assets or their Fair Market Value when satisfying Clause 5.7

- 5.8. The Issuer of the bond shall continue to hold Nominated Projects & Assets which have Fair Market Value at least equal to the outstanding amount of the bond at that time.
 - 5.8.1. Additional Nominated Project & Assets may be added to, or used to substitute or replenish, the portfolio of Nominated Project & Assets as long as the additional Nominated Project & Assets are eligible under Part C of the Climate Bonds Standard and the bond's environmental objective as set out in Clause 2.1.1.

Note: Where there are changes to the market value of the portfolio of Nominated Project & Assets, additional Nominated Project & Assets are not required to be added to the portfolio.

6. Process for Evaluation and Selection of Projects & Assets

- 6.1. The Issuer shall maintain a decision-making process which it uses to determine the continuing eligibility of the Nominated Projects & Assets. This includes, without limitation:
 - 6.1.1. a statement on the environmental objectives of the bond
 - 6.1.2. a process to determine whether the Nominated Projects & Assets meet the eligibility requirements specified in Part C of the Climate Bonds Standard;

7. Management of Proceeds

- 7.1. The Net Proceeds of the bond shall be credited to a sub-account, moved to a sub-portfolio or otherwise identified by the Issuer in an appropriate manner, and documented.
- 7.2. The Issuer of the bond shall maintain the earmarking process to manage and account for funding to the Nominated Projects & Assets as disclosed under Clauses 3.1 and 3.1.3.
- 7.3. While the bond remains outstanding, the balance of the tracked proceeds shall be reduced by amounts matching eligible investments or loan disbursements made. Pending such investments or disbursements to Nominated Projects & Assets, the balance of unallocated proceeds shall be:

- 7.3.1. Held in temporary investment instruments that are cash, or cash equivalent instruments, within a Treasury function; or
 - 7.3.2. Held in temporary investment instruments that do not include greenhouse gas intensive projects which are inconsistent with the delivery of a low carbon and climate resilient economy; or
 - 7.3.3. Applied to temporarily reduce indebtedness of a revolving nature before being redrawn for investments or disbursements to Nominated Projects & Assets.
- 7.4. In the case of a Force Majeure, the Issuer may apply to the Climate Bonds Standard Board for an extension to the asset allocation period. During the extension period the balance of unallocated proceeds shall be deemed to be conforming to Clause 7.3.

8. Reporting

- 8.1. Information about the Nominated Projects & Assets shall be provided to the Verifier and to the Climate Bonds Standard Board to support the assessment of conformance with the Climate Bonds Standard.

Note: The information disclosed to the Verifier and the Climate Bonds Standard Board may be subject to confidentiality arrangements as required by the owners of the Nominated Projects & Assets in circumstances where such confidentiality is required.

- 8.2. The Issuer should disclose information about the bond and the Nominated Projects & Assets to the market.

Note: Disclosure to the market should be in line with any existing confidentiality agreements which the Issuer may have in place concerning the Nominated Projects & Assets or other aspects of the bond.

- 8.3. The Issuer shall make publicly available at least annually a report containing the list of Nominated Projects & Assets to which proceeds of the bond have been allocated (or re-allocated). The report shall include a brief description of the projects and the amounts disbursed, as well as the expected impact of the Nominated Projects & Assets.

8.5.1. The Issuer shall use qualitative performance indicators and, where feasible, quantitative performance measures of the impact of the Nominated Projects & Assets;

8.5.2. The Issuer shall disclose the methods and the key underlying assumptions used in preparation of the performance indicators and metrics;

8.5.3. Where confidentiality agreements, competitive considerations or a large number of underlying assets limit the amount of detail that can be made available about specific Nominated Projects & Assets, information shall be presented on the investment areas which the Nominated Projects & Assets fall into, as provided in Clause 9.1.

Note 1: Some bonds have very stable allocation of proceeds and do not need to track any performance indicators to maintain the eligibility of the projects & assets (such as financing for a single large-scale solar facility). This means that the report provided by the Issuer each year can be very simple,

Note 2: The timing of reporting under this clause can be aligned with the schedule of regular reporting of the Issuer, and does not need to follow the anniversary of the certification or issuance of the Certified Climate Bond.

Note 3: Examples of quantitative performance measures of the impact of Nominated Projects & Assets include, but are not limited to: energy capacity installed, electricity generated, greenhouse gas emissions performance of buildings, number of passengers carried by public transport, number of electric vehicles manufactured, volume of waste water treated.

Part C: Eligibility of Projects & Assets

This Part of the Climate Bonds Standard serves to determine the eligibility of specific projects and physical assets that, for the purposes of this Climate Bonds Standard, will be regarded as contributing to the delivery of a low carbon and climate resilient economy.

Clause 9 refers to the Taxonomy of Green Definitions (see Annex A). The taxonomy provides clear guidelines on the mitigation and adaptation investment opportunities across the major sectors of the global economy. It serves as an initial screen for clear inclusions and exclusions for all sectors based off of the latest climate science and 2 degree scenarios.

Clause 10 refers to sector-specific technical criteria, contained in the Sector-Specific Criteria documents. **Where relevant Sector-Specific Criteria are available for particular projects and assets, the technical criteria contained in these documents must be met** for projects and assets to be considered eligible. Sector-Specific Criteria for a wide variety of projects and assets are available on the Climate Bonds Initiative website.

At the time of publication of Version 3.0 of the Climate Bonds Standard (this document), **six** Sector-Specific Criteria are available. These cover projects & assets in wind energy, solar energy, geothermal energy, low carbon buildings, low carbon transport, and water infrastructure. **Further Sector-Specific Criteria are in advanced stages of preparation, covering land use, bioenergy, hydro power, marine assets, and nature-based water assets.** The process to prepare Sector-Specific Criteria is commencing for industrial energy efficiency, waste management, information technology & broadband, energy management (including grid infrastructure and smart systems), and infrastructure adaptation & resilience.

9. Taxonomy of Green Definitions

- 9.1. Nominated Projects & Assets, as identified by the Issuer under Clauses 2.2 and 5.1, shall fall into one or more of the investment areas contained in the latest version of the **Taxonomy of Green Definitions** (see Annex A).

10. Technical Criteria

- 10.1. **Where relevant Sector-Specific Criteria are available for particular projects and assets, the Nominated Projects & Assets shall meet the specific eligibility criteria** provided in the latest version of the relevant Sector-Specific Criteria document

Note: All Sector-Specific Criteria are approved by the Climate Bonds Standard Board following a criteria development process involving Technical Working Groups, Industry Working Groups and stakeholder consultation. Further details on the development process and the specific technical criteria are available from the Climate Bonds Initiative website.

- 10.2. Where the proceeds of a bond are allocated to Nominated Projects & Assets that are covered by more than one Sector-Specific Criteria (e.g. solar and wind investments in a portfolio), then each of the Nominated Projects & Assets shall meet the specific eligibility criteria provided in the Sector-Specific Criteria relevant to that Nominated Project & Asset.

Part D: Climate Bond Certification

This section of the Climate Bonds Standard sets out the rules for Climate Bond Certification. Further detail on the process steps and administrative workflow for Certification is provided in Guidance documents available from the Climate Bonds Initiative website.

Outline of the Climate Bond Certification Process

The Climate Bond Certification Process has two distinct phases that are aligned with the normal process for issuing a bond. This allows the Climate Bond Certification Mark to be used during the pricing and marketing of the bond and ensures that the integrity of the mark is maintained after issuance of the bond and the allocation of bond proceeds.

1. **Pre-Issuance Certification:** Assessment and certification of the bond issuer's internal processes, including its selection process for projects & assets, internal tracking of proceeds, and the allocation system for funds. This includes a Verifier undertaking procedures to assess the readiness of the issuer and the proposed bond to conform to the Standard, and follows an agreed Protocol (or checklist) to assess the conformance with the Pre-Issuance Requirements of the Climate Bonds Standard.
2. **Post-Issuance Certification:** Assessment and certification of the bond, which must be undertaken after the allocation of bond proceeds is underway. This includes post-issuance and annual reporting, and in some circumstances includes assurance from the Verifier, that the issuer and the bond conform with all of the Post-Issuance Requirements of the Climate Bonds Standard.

An issuer may also choose to repeat the post-issuance certification process on a periodic basis, if it feels that periodic use of assurance and certification adds value to its use of the Climate Bond Certification Mark. Periodic Certification is not mandatory but is available for issuers if they choose to reaffirm their ongoing conformance with the Climate Bonds Standard during or after the term of the bond.

Programmatic Certification is also available for Issuers with large portfolios of Eligible Projects & Assets and programmes for issuance of multiple Certified Climate Bonds each year. Issuers using Programmatic Certification have a reduced verification burden during the certification and issuance process within their programme.

If a bond has already been issued, the issuer of the bond can seek certification from the Climate Bonds Standard Board that the bond conforms with the Post-Issuance Requirements of the Climate Bonds Standard. Certification of existing bonds follows the Post-Issuance Certification Process.

The rules and the requirements for the certification process, including readiness assessments, assurance and certification decisions are provided in this document under the next section.

Pre-Issuance Climate Bond Certification

P1. Initiating the certification process

- P1.1. Issuers seeking Climate Bond Certification and the use of the Climate Bond Certification Mark to a bond prior to its issuance shall complete the Climate Bonds Information Form and submit the completed form to the Climate Bonds Standard Secretariat prior to issuance of the bond.
 - P1.1.1. The Issuer shall identify within the Climate Bonds Information Form what components of the information provided are confidential and what components can be publically disclosed by the Climate Bonds Initiative once Climate Bond Certification has been confirmed and issuance of the Certified Climate Bond has occurred.

Note 1: The Climate Bonds Information Form is available from the Climate Bonds Initiative website.

Note 2: The Issuer may submit a draft or incomplete Climate Bonds Information Form to the Climate Bonds Standard Secretariat in order to seek feedback from the Climate Bonds Standards Secretariat.

P2. Use of a Verifier Prior to Issuance

- P2.1. Issuers seeking Climate Bond Certification and the use of the Climate Bond Certification Mark for a bond prior to its issuance shall engage a Verifier to undertake either:

- P2.1.1. An Assurance Engagement of the Issuer's and the proposed bond's conformance with the Pre-Issuance Requirements of the Climate Bonds Standard. The Verifier shall issue an Assurance Report expressing a conclusion or an opinion as to whether the Issuer and the proposed bond have conformed to the Pre-Issuance requirements of the Climate Bonds Standard; or
- P2.1.2. An Agreed-Upon Procedures Engagement to assess the Issuer's and the proposed bond's conformance with the Pre-Issuance Requirements of the Climate Bonds Standard. The Verifier shall consider the Readiness Assessment Protocol provided on the Climate Bonds Initiative website and shall issue a Report of Factual Findings providing the assessment of the Issuer's and the proposed bond's conformance with the Pre-Issuance Requirements of the Climate Bonds Standard.
- P2.2. The subject matter considered by the Verifier shall include those requirements set out in the Pre-Issuance Requirements section of the Climate Bonds Standard.
- P2.3. The Verifier's Report shall include a summary of how the Issuer and the proposed bond have conformed with the pre-issuance requirements of the Climate Bonds Standard.

P3. Applying for Pre-Issuance Climate Bond Certification

- P3.1. An Issuer that has completed a Pre-Issuance Assurance Engagement or Agreed-Upon Procedures Engagement (as appropriate) may apply to the Climate Bonds Standard Board to receive Certification of the bond's conformance with the Climate Bonds Standard.
- P3.2. The Issuer shall supply the Climate Bonds Standard Board with a completed Climate Bonds Information Form, the Verifier's Report, and an executed Certification Agreement. These documents shall be submitted to the Climate Bonds Standard Secretariat.

P4. Pre-Issuance Certification of a Climate Bond

- P4.1. If the Climate Bonds Standard Board is satisfied that the Issuer and proposed bond are in conformance with the Pre-Issuance Requirements, then it shall provide a statement which confirms the Climate Bond Certification of the bond. The Issuer then has the right (subject to the Certification Agreement) to use the Climate Bond Certification Mark in association with the relevant bond until the compulsory post-issuance report has been submitted to the Climate Bonds Standard Secretariat and the Post-Issuance Certification is confirmed.
- P4.2. An Issuer shall stop using the Climate Bond Certification Mark:
 - P4.2.1. Within one year of issuance, unless the Issuer has received confirmation of post issuance certification from the Climate Bonds Standard Board; or

Note: The Climate Bond Certification at the pre-issuance stage is only valid for one year from the issuance of the Certified Climate Bond. Post-issuance Certification must be confirmed within that timeframe for the continuing use of the Climate Bond Certification Mark
 - P4.2.2. Where the Issuer becomes aware that the bond no longer conforms with the Climate Bonds Standard; or
 - P4.2.3. Where an Assurance Engagement commissioned by the Issuer or the Climate Bonds Standard Board finds that the bond no longer conforms with the Climate Bonds Standard.

Post-Issuance Climate Bond Certification

P5. Maintaining Climate Bond Certification after Issuance ***** **Clauses to be drafted** *****

- P5.1. [Clauses which lay out the reporting requirements and how they must be done]
- P5.2. [Post-issuance report, which must be submitted within xx months from issuance of the bond]
- P5.3. [Annual report, which must be made publicly available]
- P5.4. [Reporting up until full allocation of proceeds, and then every year after while the bond remains outstanding]
- P5.5. [For some bonds, a post-issuance verification is required to maintain the Certification.]
 - P5.5.1. [Table of different bond types or structures, and whether post-issuance verification is required]

P6. Use of a Verifier for Post-Issuance Assurance

- P6.1. Where prescribed under clause P5, the Issuer shall engage a Verifier to undertake an Assurance Engagement after issuance of the bond to confirm that the Issuer and the bond are in conformance with the Post-issuance Requirements of the Climate Bonds Standard. This Assurance Engagement must be completed within one year of the bond's issuance.
- P6.1.1. The subject matter considered by the Verifier shall include those requirements set out in the Post-Issuance Requirements section of the Climate Bonds Standard.
- Note 1: The Issuer should engage the same Verifier to undertake both the pre-issuance and post-issuance activities under the one engagement.*
- Note 2: The Issuer may also engage a Verifier to undertake further Assurance Engagements on a periodic basis (such as annually) to confirm that the Issuer and the bond have maintained conformance with the Post Issuance Requirements of the Climate Bonds Standard, but this is not mandatory.*
- P6.2. Verifier's Reports submitted to the Climate Bonds Standard Board shall be considered to be confidential unless the Issuer voluntarily discloses the Verifier's Report, or the Standards Board is required by law or national regulators to disclose the Verifier's Report. The Climate Bonds Standard Board shall consult with the Issuer and Verifier on the presentation of the information prior to any public release of the Verifier's Report.
- P6.3. An Issuer using the Climate Bond Certification Mark shall provide further information if requested by the Climate Bonds Standard Board.

P7. Post-Issuance Climate Bond Certification

- P7.1. An Issuer must complete the relevant processes under clause P5 and submit reports to the Climate Bonds Standard Board to maintain the Certification status of the bond awarded at the pre-issuance stage; proving its conformance with the Climate Bonds Standard.
- P7.2. The Issuer shall supply the Climate Bonds Standard Board with an updated Climate Bonds Information Form and other relevant reports through the Climate Bonds Standard Secretariat.

P8. Post-Issuance Certification of a Climate Bond

- P8.1. If the Climate Bonds Standard Board is satisfied that the Issuer and the bond are compliant with the Post-Issuance Requirements of the Climate Bonds Standard, then it shall provide a statement that confirms the certification of the bond. The Issuer then has the right to continue using the Climate Bond Certification Mark in association with the relevant bond (but no others) for the duration of the bond term.
- P8.2. An Issuer shall stop using the Climate Bond Certification Mark if:
- P8.2.1. It becomes aware that the bond and/or the Issuer no longer conform with the Climate Bonds Standard; or
- P8.2.2. A Reasonable Assurance Engagement commissioned by the Climate Bonds Standard Board finds that the bond and/or the Issuer no longer conform with the Climate Bonds Standard.

P9. Programmatic Certification

- P9.1. An Issuer may use the option of Programmatic Certification if the Issuer:
- P9.1.1. Can identify a large portfolio of Eligible Projects & Assets which could cover issuance of multiple Certified Climate Bonds, and
- P9.1.2. Has initiated a Programme to issue Certified Climate Bonds over multiple years and with at least two issuances planned per year ("the Programme").
- P9.2. For the first issuance under the Programme, the Issuer shall follow the normal process for Climate Bond Certification as per clauses P1 to P7.
- P9.3. For subsequent issuance under the Programme, the Issuer shall apply to the Climate Bonds Standard Board to receive Certification of the bond's conformance with the Climate Bonds Standard by:

- P9.3.1. Prior to issuance, supplying the Climate Bonds Standard Board with a completed Climate Bonds Information Form and an executed Certification Agreement. These documents shall be submitted to the Climate Bonds Standard Secretariat.
- P9.3.2. Following issuance, supplying the Climate Bonds Standard Board with an updated Climate Bonds Information Form through the Climate Bonds Standard Secretariat.
- P9.4. Every year after the first issuance under the Programme, the Issuer must engage a Verifier to undertake an Assurance Engagement to confirm that the Issuer and the bonds issued under the Programme are in conformance with the Post-issuance Requirements of the Climate Bonds Standard.
 - P9.4.1. The subject matter considered by the Verifier shall include those requirements set out in the Post-Issuance Requirements section of the Climate Bonds Standard.
 - P9.4.2. The Issuer shall supply the Climate Bonds Standard Board with an updated Climate Bonds Information Form and the Verifier's Report through the Climate Bonds Standard Secretariat.

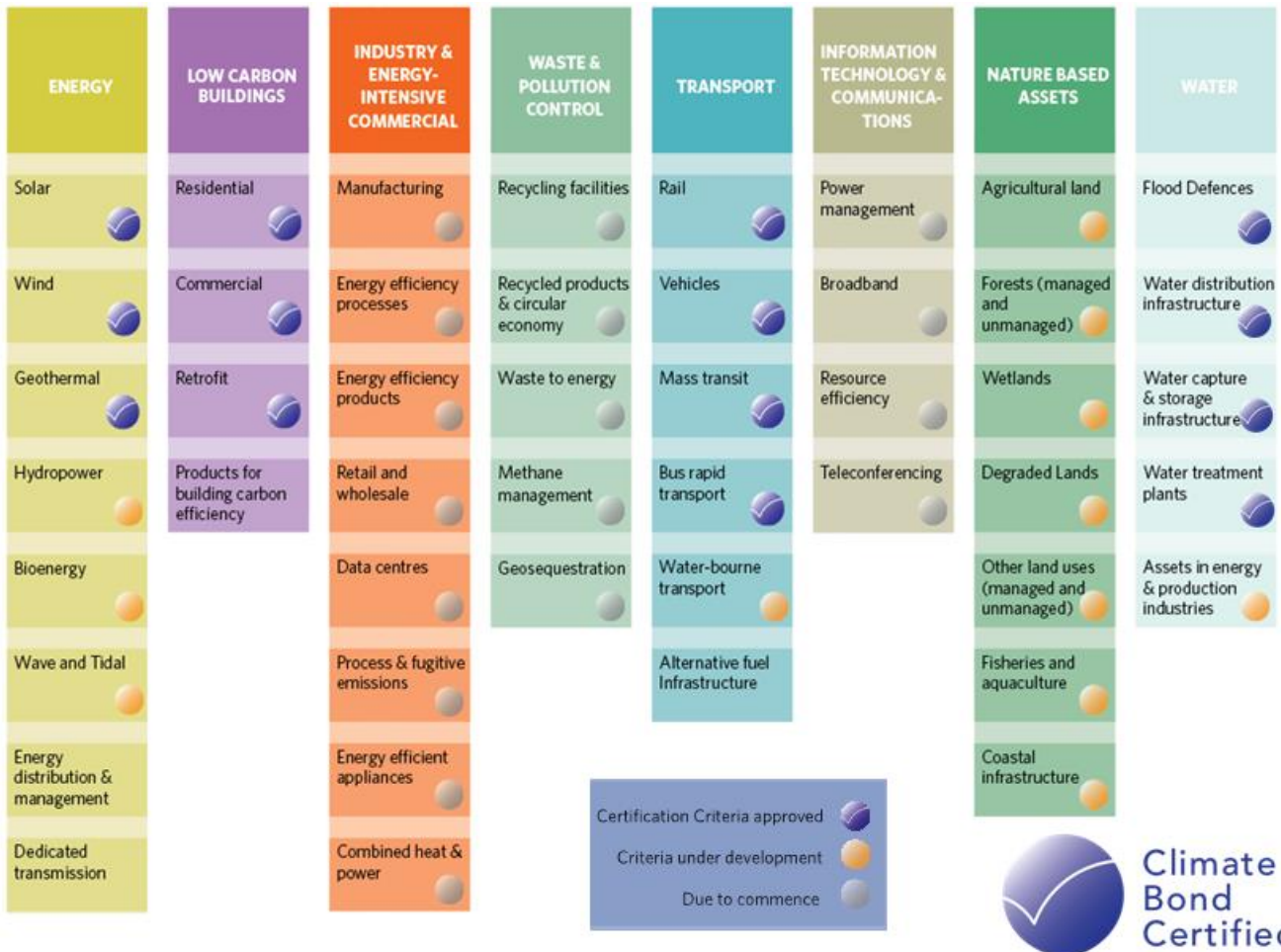
P10. Non-Conformance

- P10.1. In cases of claimed breach of conformance with the Climate Bonds Standard, the Climate Bonds Standard Board may request a new Verifier's Report be prepared by a different Verifier as a condition of maintaining Certification under the Climate Bonds Standard.
 - P10.1.1. This Verifier's Report shall be submitted to the Climate Bonds Standard Board for review within six months of the initial request.
 - P10.1.2. No more than one Verifier's Report in any 12 month period shall be required to be provided by the Issuer following post-issuance certification.
- P10.2. Where a Certified Climate Bond is no longer in conformance with the Climate Bonds Standard, then the Issuer shall disclose that fact to the Climate Bonds Standard Board within one month of becoming aware of the non-conformance.
 - P10.2.1. The Climate Bonds Standard Board may suggest corrective actions for conformance to be restored.
 - P10.2.2. If conformance is not restored within a reasonable time frame, the Climate Bonds Standard Board shall consider the revocation of its certification of that bond.
- P10.3. Once Climate Bond Certification of a bond has been revoked by the Climate Bonds Standard Board, the Issuer shall:
 - P10.3.1. Not use the Climate Bond Certification Mark in association with the bond;
 - P10.3.2. Take all necessary steps to remove that bond from Climate Bond listings; and
 - P10.3.3. Inform the bond holders, relevant exchanges, and the Climate Bond market participants of the change in Climate Bond Certification status of the bond.
- P10.4.** For a bond which has had its Climate Bond Certification revoked to be re-Certified as conforming with the Climate Bonds Standard, the Issuer shall engage a Verifier to undertake an Assurance Engagement and provide the Verifier's Report to the Climate Bonds Standard Board for consideration in accordance with clause P4 and clause P5 above.

Annex A: Taxonomy of Green Definitions

For the most current version of the Taxonomy see the Climate Bonds Initiative website:
<http://www.climatebonds.net/standards/taxonomy>

The diagram below illustrates the Taxonomy’s approach and the relevant investment areas.





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