

Greenhouse Gas Protocol

Governance Overview

Version No.	Date adopted	Description of Amendment
1.0	19 September 2024	
1.1	26 November 2024	Added Annex A: Decision-making criteria

1 About this Document

1.1 Definitions

- 1.1.1 “Co-Hosts” refers to the co-hosts of Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Protocol, i.e., World Resources Institute (WRI) and World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD). GHG Protocol is an unincorporated joint initiative of WRI and WBCSD.
- 1.1.2 “GHG Protocol” describes the partnership established between the Co-Hosts to work with academia, businesses, governments, industry associations, nongovernmental organizations and others to develop the most credible, accessible and widely used GHG accounting and reporting standards and to actively support their global adoption and implementation in order to enable all private and public entities to account for and reduce their GHG emissions in line with the global warming limits required by science.
- 1.1.3 “Independent Standards Board” (ISB) describes the body that oversees the standards development process, including but not limited to advising the GHG Protocol Steering Committee (SC) on the need for, objectives and scope of new and/or revised standards, reviewing and approving GHG Protocol Standards according to the *GHG Protocol Standard Development and Revision Procedure*, appointing Technical Working Group (TWG) members, and making decisions related to the content of standards.
- 1.1.4 “Secretariat” describes the body that runs the day-to-day activities of GHG Protocol, including but not limited to drafting standards and supporting the SC and ISB with meetings and documentation.
- 1.1.5 “Standard” describes any normative document informed by subject matter experts and approved by GHG Protocol governance bodies that provides guidance on the accounting of GHG emissions and supports implementation.
- 1.1.6 “Steering Committee” describes the body that provides strategic guidance on the goals and direction of GHG Protocol, including advising the Co-Hosts on the optimal organizational set-up and governance structure. It approves the GHG Protocol strategy, including its overarching mission, vision, short- and long-term strategic goals, appoints ISB members, decides whether new standards or revisions are needed, and ratifies the decisions of the ISB to publish final standards.
- 1.1.7 “Technical Working Groups” are the multi-stakeholder bodies that support the development of GHG Protocol Standards’ technical content according to the *GHG Protocol Standard Development and Revision Procedure*.

1.2 Abbreviations

The following abbreviations are used in this document:

GHG	Greenhouse Gas
GHG Protocol	Greenhouse Gas Protocol
ISB	Independent Standards Board
PTG	Pilot Testing Group
SC	Steering Committee
ToR	Terms of Reference

TWG	Technical Working Group
WBCSD	World Business Council for Sustainable Development
WRI	World Resources Institute

1.3 About this document

- 1.3.1 This document summarizes the GHG Protocol governance structures, respective roles and responsibilities, normative documents and processes to develop, revise and approve any standards owned by GHG Protocol, and to maintain them over time.
- 1.3.2 The GHG Protocol Governance Overview is the intellectual property of the Co-Hosts and is approved by the SC, which may request additional insight from the ISB and Secretariat. All rights, title and interests in and to the GHG Protocol Governance Overview are owned exclusively by the Co-Hosts.
- 1.3.3 The latest version of the GHG Protocol Governance Overview and all related Terms of Reference (ToRs) will be made publicly available on the GHG Protocol website and shall supersede any previous versions thereof. It is the user's responsibility to check that any printed copies correspond to the current version.

2 GHG Protocol Governance

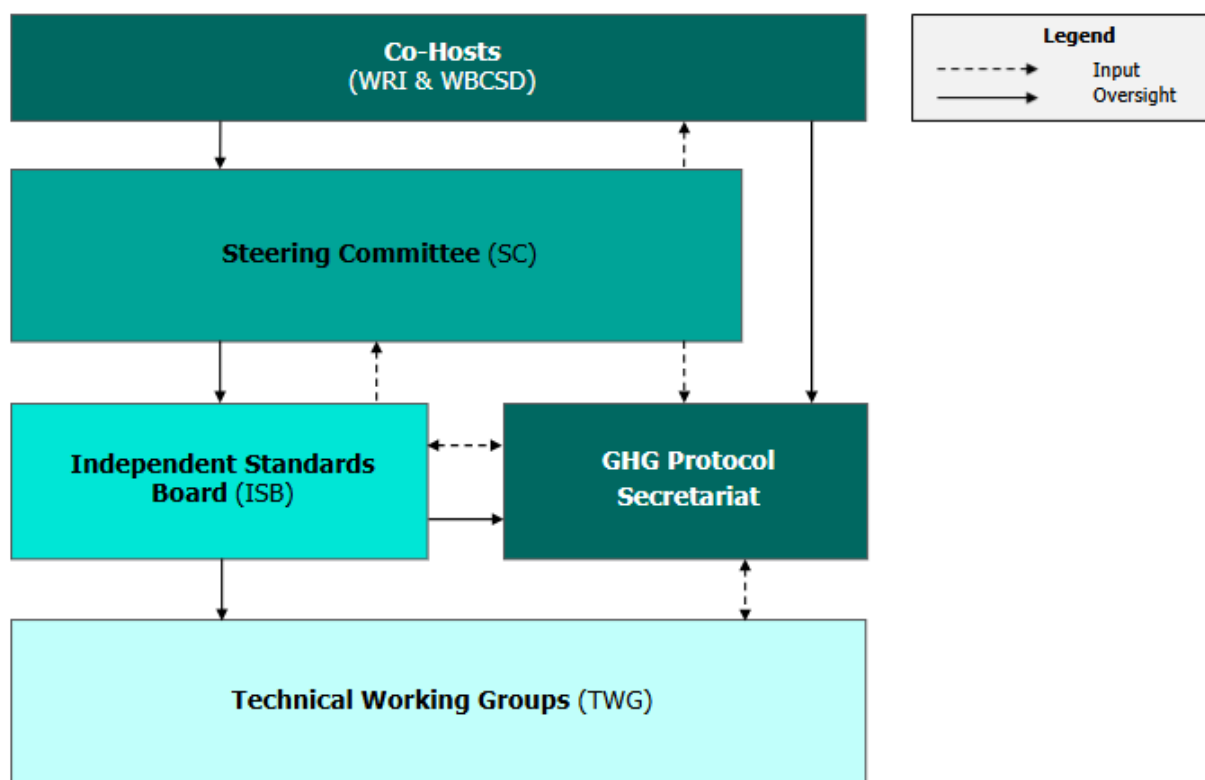
2.1 Multi-stakeholder initiative

- 2.1.1 GHG Protocol acknowledges the importance of and is committed to engaging and collaborating with a range of stakeholders in its broader ecosystem, with the objective of jointly maximizing the impact of GHG Protocol.
- 2.1.2 All new standards and guidance, as well as revisions of existing standards and guidance, will be developed through an inclusive, global, multi-stakeholder process, with participation solicited from academia, businesses, governments, industry associations, NGOs, and other organizations worldwide. This process will be subject to transparent and publicly available procedures. Where relevant, GHG Protocol will enter into formal partnership arrangements, for example in the form of a Memorandum of Understanding to further strengthen collaboration efforts.

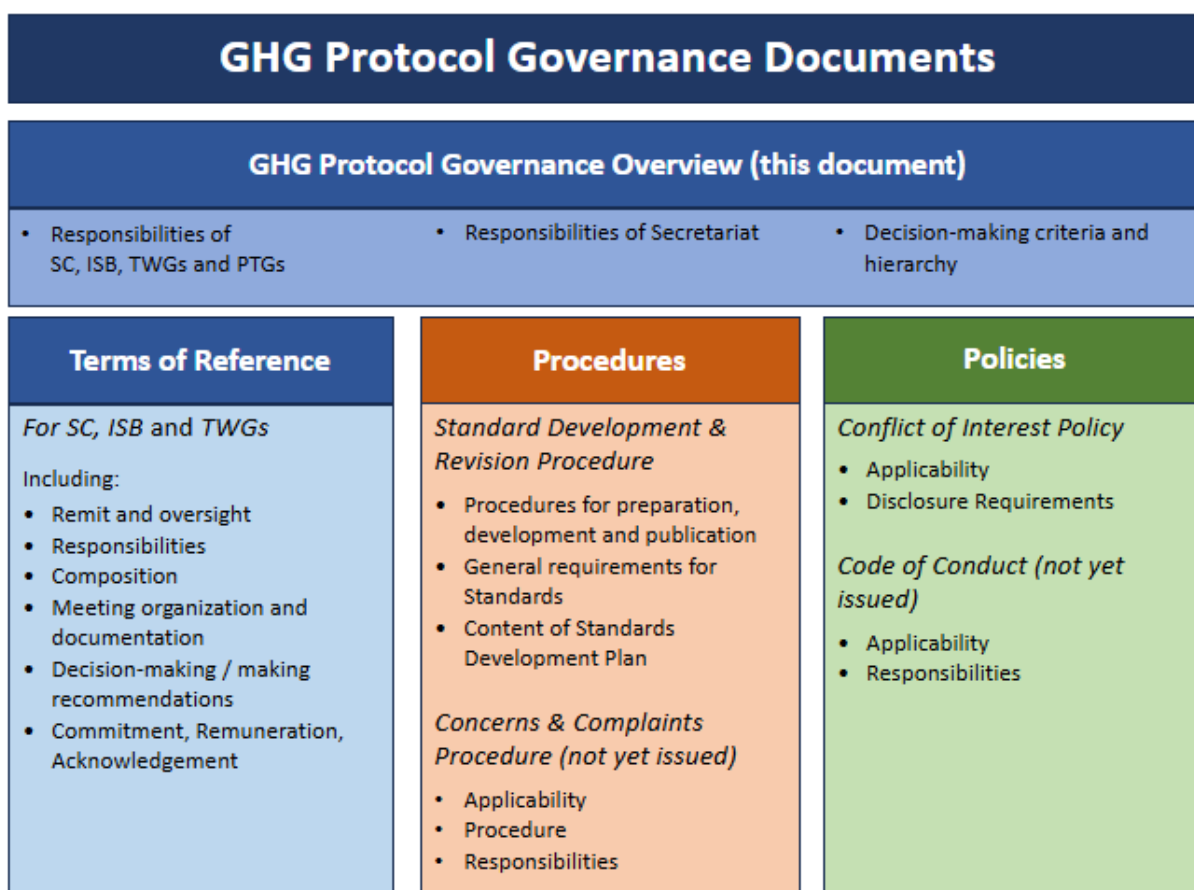
2.2 Governance structure and responsibilities

- 2.2.1 The following bodies as defined above have different roles in the standards development and revision process.
 - i. **Co-Hosts:** The GHG Protocol's Co-Hosts, WRI & WBCSD, are the legal entities that oversee GHG Protocol and in this capacity hire and oversee Secretariat staff, approve annual budgets and progress reports, process grants and contracts, decide on and carry out any actions with legal implications, and publish final standards.
 - ii. **Steering Committee:** The SC provides strategic guidance on the goals and direction of GHG Protocol, including advising the Co-Hosts on the optimal organizational set-up and governance structure. It approves the GHG Protocol strategy, including its overarching

- mission, vision, short- and long-term strategic goals, appoints ISB members, decides whether new standards or revisions are needed, and ratifies the decisions of the ISB to publish final standards. The SC, with approval of the Co-Hosts, may create additional advisory bodies to inform its guidance on non-standard-setting strategic matters.
- iii. **Independent Standards Board:** The ISB oversees the standards development process, including but not limited to advising the SC on the need for, objectives and scope of new and/or revised standards, reviewing and approving GHG Protocol Standards according to the *GHG Protocol Standard Development and Revision Procedure*, appointing TWG members, and making decisions related to the content of standards.
 - iv. **GHG Protocol Secretariat:** The Secretariat manages the day-to-day activities of GHG Protocol, and in particular ensures that the development and revision of standards aligns with the GHG Protocol mission, vision, and decision-making criteria (Annex A).
 - v. **Technical Working Groups:** TWGs are the multi-stakeholder bodies that support the development of GHG Protocol Standards' technical content according to the *GHG Protocol Standard Development and Revision Procedure*. They review draft materials produced by the Secretariat, develop proposals and provide recommendations and feedback on key issues in the standards development or revision process to the Secretariat.
 - vi. **Pilot Testing Group (PTG):** If deemed necessary, a PTG is convened to trial new methods or requirements in practice and provide feedback on their usability and value.
- 2.2.2 Full details of each body's roles and responsibilities are provided in their respective ToR and the *GHG Protocol Standard Development and Revision Procedure*.
- 2.2.3 The governance structure is summarized in the graphic below.



- 2.2.4 A set of documents guide GHG Protocol's governance:
- ToRs** govern respective bodies, including SC, ISB and TWGs.
 - Procedures** describe processes.
 - Policies** define guidelines on how to handle certain topics.
- 2.2.5 The relationships between these documents are outlined in the diagram below.



Greenhouse Gas Protocol

Annex A. Decision-making criteria

Document status and version history

Version No.	Status	Date	Description of amendment
1.0		24.09.2024	

A.1. Introduction

The purpose of the decision-making criteria is to support the GHG Protocol Secretariat, Technical Working Groups, and Independent Standards Board in evaluating GHG Protocol accounting and reporting approaches to determine which option among a defined set of options best adheres to the criteria and should be pursued. The decision-making criteria in aggregate are intended to support the GHG Protocol mission and vision.

The criteria are ranked in a hierarchy to aid in decision making. When options present tradeoffs between criteria, the hierarchy should be generally followed, such that, for example, scientific integrity is not compromised at the expense of other criteria, while aiming to find solutions that meet all criteria.

A.2. Decision-making criteria and hierarchy

Summary version:



Full version (for use by TWGs and ISB, including descriptions below):



Decision-making criteria and hierarchy	Description
1A. Scientific integrity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> First, approaches should ensure scientific integrity and validity, adhere to the best applicable science and evidence (including academic literature, modeling or other research) and align with the latest climate science.
1B. GHG accounting and reporting principles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Second, approaches should meet the GHG Protocol accounting and reporting principles of accuracy, completeness, consistency, relevance, and transparency. Additional principles should be considered where relevant: conservativeness (for GHG reductions and removals), permanence (for removals), and comparability (TBD, subject to TWG and ISB discussions). Options may present tradeoffs among principles which should be evaluated. Refer to section A.3 for further details.
2A. Support decision making that drives ambitious global climate action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Third, approaches should advance the public interest by informing and supporting decision making that drives ambitious actions by private and public sector actors to reduce GHG emissions and increase removals in line with global climate goals. GHG Protocol accounting frameworks should accurately and completely measure emissions such that the resulting GHG data informs effective individual and systemwide GHG mitigation action in line with global climate goals. Accounting approaches should not support or incentivize actions that are contrary to global climate goals. Approaches should provide the necessary information to support sector-specific decarbonization in line with climate goals.
2B. Support programs based on GHG Protocol and uses of GHG data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fourth, approaches should promote interoperability with key mandatory and voluntary climate disclosure and target setting programs that are based on GHG Protocol standards, where appropriate, while ensuring policy neutrality. Refer to section A.4 for further details. Approaches should support appropriate uses of the resulting GHG data and associated information by various audiences, including GHG programs, reporting companies, stakeholders and other users of the resulting GHG information.

3. Feasibility to implement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fifth, approaches which meet the above criteria should be feasible to implement, meaning that they are accessible, adoptable, and equitable. • GHG Protocol accounting approaches should support broad adoption of GHG Protocol standards, including in voluntary and regulatory settings, and consider different users (level of capacity, resources, geography, regulatory environments, etc.). • For aspects of accounting approaches that meet the above criteria but are difficult to implement, the GHG Protocol should aim to improve feasibility, for example, by providing guidance and tools to support implementation.
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A.3. Further detail on GHG accounting and reporting principles (for criterion 1B) (Working version)

For corporate-level inventories

- A. Accuracy:** Ensure that the quantification of GHG emissions (and removals, if applicable) is systematically neither over nor under actual emissions (and removals, if applicable), and that uncertainties are reduced as far as practicable. Achieve sufficient accuracy to enable users to make decisions with reasonable assurance as to the integrity of the reported information.
- B. Completeness:** Account for and report on all GHG emissions (and removals, if applicable) from sources, sinks, and activities within the inventory boundary. Disclose and justify any specific exclusions.
- C. Consistency:** Use consistent methodologies to allow for meaningful performance tracking of GHG emissions (and removals, if applicable) over time. Transparently document any changes to the data, inventory boundary, methods, or any other relevant factors in the time series.
- D. Relevance:** Ensure the GHG inventory appropriately reflects the GHG emissions (and removals, if applicable) of the company and serves the decision-making needs of users – both internal and external to the company
- E. Transparency:** Address all relevant issues in a factual and coherent manner, based on a clear audit trail. Disclose any relevant assumptions and make appropriate references to the accounting and calculation methodologies and data sources used.

Additional principles should be considered where relevant:

- F. Conservativeness (for GHG reductions and removals):** Use conservative assumptions, values, and procedures when uncertainty is high. Conservative values and assumptions are those that are more likely to overestimate GHG emissions and underestimate GHG reductions and removals.

- G. Permanence (for removals):** Ensure mechanisms are in place to monitor the continued storage of reported removals, account for reversals, and report emissions from associated carbon pools.
- H. Comparability (TBD, subject to TWG and ISB discussion):** Apply common methodologies, data sources, assumptions, and reporting formats such that the reported GHG inventories from multiple companies can be compared.

For further details, refer to the Corporate Standard (p. 7), Scope 2 Guidance (p. 21), Scope 3 Standard (p. 23), and Land Sector and Removals Standard principles (forthcoming).

For project or intervention accounting: Refer to the Project Protocol (p. 23) and Policy and Action Standard (p. 31) for descriptions of each principle as applied to quantifying GHG impacts of projects and actions, as well as further detail on conservativeness and comparability.

A.4 Further detail on policy neutrality (related to criterion 2B)

GHG Protocol standards are scientifically sound and policy neutral, such that they support multiple policy mechanisms and programs that build on the GHG Protocol foundation. GHG Protocol standards focus primarily on GHG accounting and reporting issues while identifying relevant policy issues and target setting issues to be addressed by programs, regulators, and policymakers. Where multiple programs and policy objectives exist, GHG Protocol should support multiple types of data relevant to multiple policies or programs and provide guidance on how to use or adapt GHG Protocol standards for specific policy purposes.

GHG Protocol standards are policy relevant and intended to support the larger objective of reducing GHG emissions and increasing removals in line with global climate goals, but the standard is not designed to favor one policy mechanism over another. GHG Protocol standards provide guidance on target setting and limited requirements where needed to support the accounting and reporting approaches.