

[Date]

ECOSYSTEM AND SOCIAL SAFEGUARDS COMPLIANCE LETTER FOR PROJECT CERTIFICATION UNDER THE AOCF FRAMEWORK

[Project Developer]

Projects certified under the Ases On-Chain Protocol (aOCP) framework must be a tool for real carbon sequestration and biodiversity restoration while protecting human rights, local communities, local heritage, and ecosystems.

In this regard, for the certification of the [Project name], located in [Country], and submitted through the Project Submission Form by [Project Developer] through its representative [Name of legal representative], which was listed with the unique key [Unique aOCP key] in the aOCP registry, it is required that it incorporate the following safeguards in a binding and verifiable manner.

1. LABOR AND WORKING CONDITIONS

- **Health and Safety Standards:** Project proponents must adhere to established health and safety standards to provide safe and healthy working conditions for all employees. This includes implementing appropriate safety protocols, providing necessary protective equipment, and conducting regular safety training sessions.
- **Fair Treatment and Equal Opportunities:** Fair treatment of all employees is essential to promoting a positive work environment. Project proponents must enforce policies that prohibit discrimination based on factors such as race, gender, religion, or sexual orientation. Equal opportunities for career advancement and professional development should also be provided to all employees.
- **Elimination of Forced Labor, Child Labor, and Human Trafficking:** The use of forced labor, child labor, or trafficked persons is strictly prohibited. Project proponents must implement measures to ensure that all workers are employed voluntarily and are of legal working age. Additionally, safeguards should be in place to prevent any form of human trafficking or exploitation within the project's workforce.
- **Protection of Contracted Workers:** Project proponents are responsible for ensuring that contracted workers employed by third parties receive fair treatment and are afforded the same rights and protections as direct employees. This includes adherence to labor laws, fair wages, and access to appropriate working conditions and benefits.

2. RESOURCE EFFICIENCY AND POLLUTION PREVENTION

- **Minimization of Pollutant Emissions:** Project proponents are required to implement measures that minimize pollutant emissions to the air, including but not limited to greenhouse gases, particulate matter, and volatile organic compounds. These measures should be aimed at reducing the project's operations impact on ecosystems and promoting air quality improvement.
- **Reduction of Pollutant Discharges to Water:** Project activities must aim to minimize pollutant discharges to water bodies, including rivers, lakes, and oceans. This entails implementing practices to prevent contamination from runoff, wastewater discharge, and other sources, thereby safeguarding aquatic ecosystems and water quality.

- **Mitigation of Noise and Vibration:** Project proponents are tasked with mitigating noise and vibration generated by project activities to minimize disturbances to surrounding communities and wildlife. This may involve implementing noise-reducing technologies, scheduling noisy activities during off-peak hours, and implementing vibration-dampening measures where applicable.
- **Waste Generation and Hazardous Materials Management:** The generation of waste and the release of hazardous materials must be minimized throughout the project lifecycle. Project proponents should prioritize waste reduction, reuse, and recycling initiatives, as well as adopt practices for the safe handling, storage, and disposal of hazardous materials, chemical pesticides, and fertilizers to prevent ecosystem contamination.

3. DISPLACEMENT AND RESETTLEMENT

Project proponents shall provide, in the Project Submission Form, evidence of landownership and/or a signed agreement with the landowner(s) consenting to the commitment of the land for the duration of the project's lifespan.

4. BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION

Projects must safeguard habitats crucial for rare, threatened, and endangered species, including areas essential for maintaining habitat connectivity. Projects are not allowed to convert natural forests, grasslands, wetlands, or other high-conservation-value habitats. Additionally, soil degradation and erosion, water consumption, and pressure on water resources must be minimized.

5. INDIGENOUS PEOPLES, LOCAL COMMUNITIES, AND CULTURAL HERITAGE

- **Recognition, Respect, and Promotion of Rights:**
 - ⇒ *Recognition of collective and individual rights:* The collective and individual rights of IP and LC over their lands, territories, natural resources, customs, and traditional knowledge must be recognized;
 - ⇒ *Respect for ways of life, cultures, and institutions:* The ways of life, cultures, and institutions of IP and LC must be respected;
 - ⇒ *Promotion of the protection of rights and cultural heritage:* The protection of the rights of IP and LC, and the protection of cultural heritage, must be promoted by applicable international human rights law.
- **Non-Displacement:**
 - ⇒ *Respect for territories and cultural heritage:* The territories inhabited by indigenous peoples and local communities (IP and LC) and their cultural heritage must be respected;
 - ⇒ *Respect for the right to non-displacement:* The right of IP and LC to not be displaced physically or economically must be respected;
 - ⇒ *No forced displacement:* IP and LC should not be forced to abandon their lands or territories;
 - ⇒ *No restrictions on access to natural resources:* No restrictions should be imposed on the access and use of natural resources by IP and LC;
 - ⇒ *Contribution to social and economic development:* When a project is located in a territory inhabited by IP and LC, it must contribute to its social and economic development.
- **Free, Prior, and Informed Consent:**
 - ⇒ *Obtaining consent:* The free, prior, and informed consent of IP and LC must be obtained before any activity that may affect their rights is initiated;
 - ⇒ *Transparency and participation:* The FPIC process must be transparent, participatory, and culturally appropriate;

- ⇒ **Information:** IP and LC must be provided with complete and comprehensible information about the project, its potential impacts, and its benefits. This information must be provided in their native language/dialect.

6. RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS, AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

- **Non-discrimination and human rights respect:** Projects must actively avoid any form of discrimination and demonstrate respect for the fundamental rights and dignity of all individuals involved, irrespective of race, gender, religion, ethnicity, nationality, disability, or any other characteristic.
- **Compliance with international standards:** Projects are obligated to comply with the principles outlined in the International Bill of Human Rights and other relevant international instruments endorsed by the host country. This includes respecting universally recognized human rights conventions and standards, ensuring fair labor practices, and promoting equitable treatment for all stakeholders.
- **Stakeholder engagement and responsiveness:** Recognizing the significance of local perspectives and concerns, Project proponents shall actively engage with and respond to the views and feedback of stakeholders within the Project's vicinity. This entails establishing transparent and inclusive communication channels, conducting meaningful consultations, and incorporating stakeholder input into decision-making processes.

7. GENDER EQUALITY

- **Equal Opportunities:**
 - ⇒ Guarantee equal access to employment and training opportunities, regardless of gender;
 - ⇒ Promote equal participation of women and men;
 - ⇒ Eliminate barriers that hinder women's participation in the labor market.
- **Protection against Violence:**
 - ⇒ Adopt a zero-tolerance policy against violence against women and girls;
 - ⇒ Implement prevention and response measures to violence, including harassment and discrimination.
- **Equal Pay:**
 - ⇒ Offer the same remuneration for the same work, regardless of gender;
 - ⇒ Promote transparency in salary practices.

The incorporation of these ecosystemic and social safeguards is fundamental to ensure sustainability and social justice in the certification of carbon credits, biodiversity, water, and soil under the aOCP framework.

Given the above, through this letter, [Name of legal representative], representative of [Project Developer], confirms that the [Project name] project, listed with unique key [Unique aOCP key], **complies with the Ecosystem and Social Safeguards** established by the Ases On-Chain Protocol for project certification.

[Name of legal representative]
Project Developer