

# An Overview of Competency in Verifier Accreditation



the society of greenhouse gas professionals

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# About GHGMI

## Training

- GHG accounting/verification frameworks (ISO/GHGP)
- Programmatic reporting (e.g., TCR, CDP, CDM/JI)
- Sectoral accounting (e.g., forestry, energy efficiency, CMM)

## Infrastructure

- GHG program design infrastructure
  - Verifier accreditation systems
  - Program support and training
  - International development scheme capacity building
- Professional infrastructure for MRV practitioners
  - Professional certification
  - Code of ethics
  - Community (e.g., GHG Experts Network → GHGMI Forum)

## Research

- *Greenhouse Gas Measurement & Management* journal
- Discussion papers, joint initiatives (e.g., CORE, OQI)
- Academic collaborations on carbon management education

World's  
largest MRV  
course  
catalogue

EP (GHG)



# The Role of GHG Data

- Backbone of any process involving mitigation action
- Used for different purposes and at different levels:
  - International: to assess compliance of Parties with commitments (UNFCCC/KP)
  - Regional: to identify key sectors/gases
  - National: to design appropriate activities
  - Project: to monitor effectiveness

# Data Applications

- Scientific inquiry
- Marketing & PR
- Voluntary programs & markets
- Compliance & trading



**Policies depend on  
reliable emissions data**

# Science vs Implementation

## Data quality characteristics

- Point estimates: accounting *and* science
- Uncertainty in trend or change relative to baseline (not absolute total)
- Robustness of metrics (protection from manipulation/gaming)
- Ease of verification for compliance
- Fairness (or perceived fairness)
- Clarity of attribution



**MRV ≠  
Accounting**

# MRV Implementation Infrastructure

- Scientific knowledge/technologies
- Legal/regulatory
- Information management and decision support systems
- Standards (rules, codes, etc.)
- Human resources and educational systems

# Implementation Challenges: The Workforce

## **New discipline**

- Finite amount of experience/expertise
- Limited training opportunities
- Few tools and information resources
- Confusing, fast-changing, sometimes inconsistent program rules

## **Perceived/real barriers to entry**

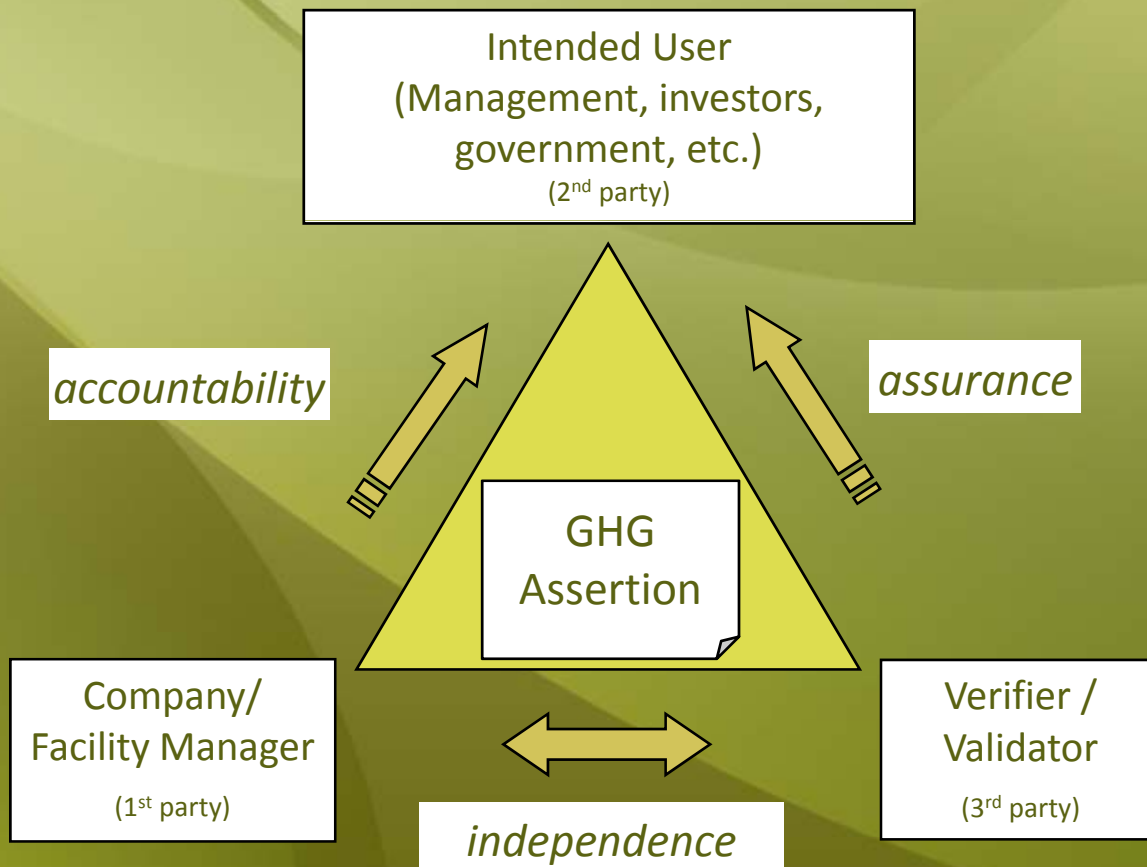
- Intangible: Invisible gas/commodity on paper
- Domain concepts/TLAs obtuse to observers
- No clear professional path
- Not integrated into formal education
- Insular community

# GHG Data in Carbon Markets

- **The voluntary market**
  - Voluntary inventory programs
  - Voluntary offset schemes
- **The compliance market**
  - Obligatory GHG inventories
  - Compliance eligible offsets
- *How is GHG data assured in these schemes?*
- *Do these programs have different objectives?*
- *Does/should verification vary?*



# GHG Verification



1<sup>st</sup> (Reporter/Seller)  
2<sup>nd</sup> (Buyer/User)  
3<sup>rd</sup> (Auditor)

GHG program  
Accreditation body  
Public (watchdog)

# Diversity in Program Objectives

How does a program balance...

- Cost
- Speed
- Environmental integrity
- Control/governance
- Other ancillary considerations (e.g., local/small business workforce development)

**...what do these factors mean for verifier accreditation models?**

# Verifier Accreditation

*Who decides who gets to play?*

- Program's discretion ...but it varies:
  - **In-house model**
    - Program is accrediting body
  - **Outsourced models**
    - Relies on another program's accreditation
    - Relies on National Standard Body (NSB) accreditation

# Assessing Competency in Verifier Accreditation

Accreditation models further diverge on competency assessment:

- **Off the shelf:** Some accept outsourced NSB or other program assessments
- **With conditions:** Some require additional training/experience
- **Go it their own:** Require completion of specific training/experience as part of in-house accreditation

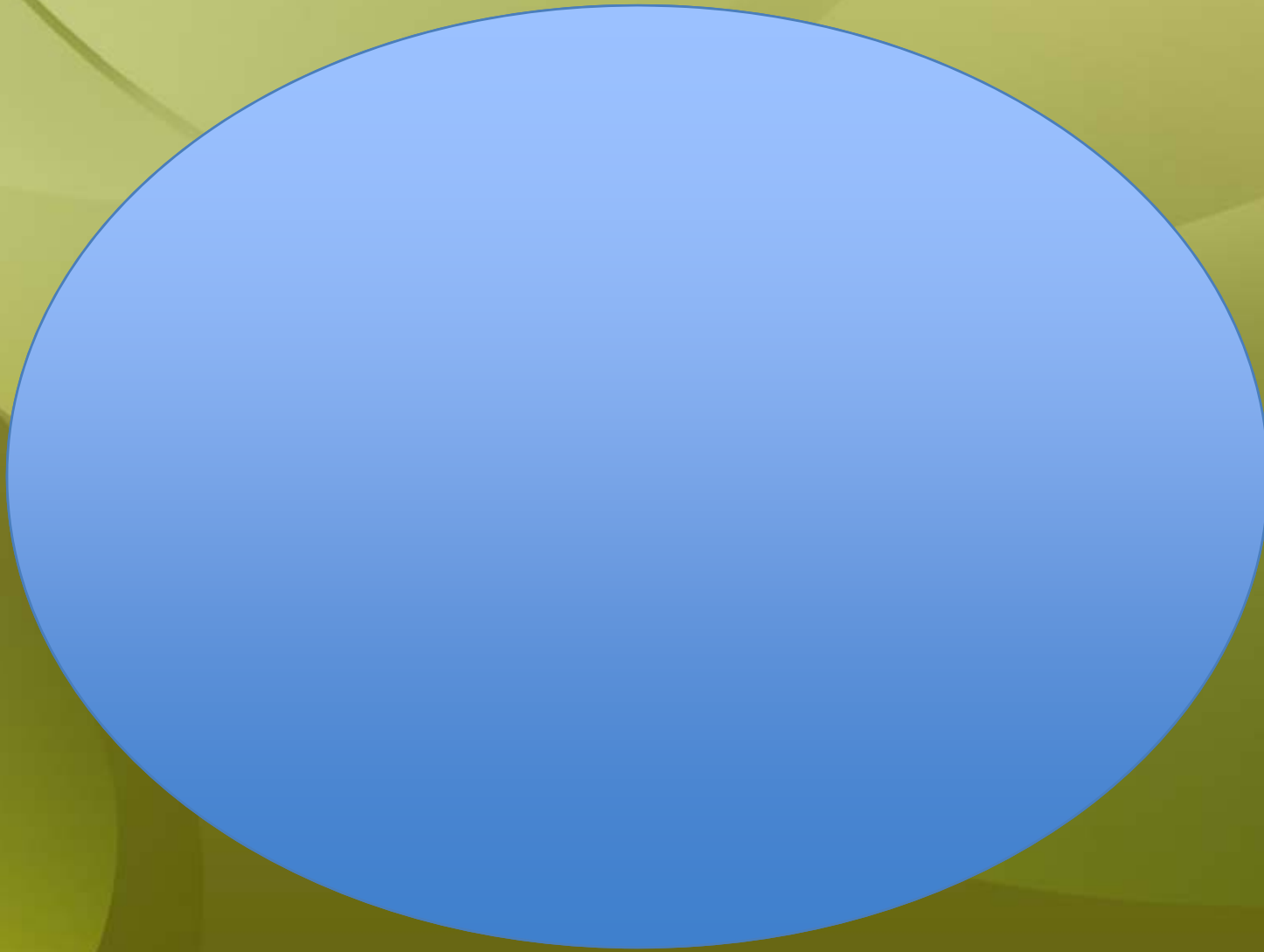
# Accreditation models: state of play

Level of accreditation	Accreditation body	Example
Entity-level accreditation	National standards bodies (NSBs)	ANSI ISO 14065* accreditation
	Program administrators	UNFCCC CDM/JI verifier (DOE/AIE) accreditation
Entity-level accreditation + individual course/exam requirement	NSBs (entity); program (individual exam)	Climate Action Reserve verifier accreditation
	Program (entity); program (individual exam)	California Air Resources Board verifier accreditation†

# What does the market look like?

	NSB	UNFCCC	In-house	Other	Additional Requirements
<b>Offset programs</b>					
American Carbon Registry	X	X			
Carbon Fix	X	X		FSC	
Climate Action Reserve	X				X
CCBS	X	X		FSC	
Gold Standard		X			X*
Panda Standard		X	X*		
Plan Vivo	X	X		FSC	
Social Carbon Methodology				n/a	
Verified Carbon Standard	X	X			
CDM/JI		X			
NSW GGAS			X		
Alberta-Based Offset Credit System			X*		
Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI)	X				
California Air Resources Board			X		X
<b>Inventory programs</b>					
European Trading System (EU ETS)	X		X		
The Climate Registry	X				
California Air Resources Board			X		X

Can improvements in verifier accreditation  
get us past the circle of blame?



# Room for improvement?

- Is it realistic to harmonize different program administrator preferences under an accreditation model?
- Will the integration of ISO 14066, which looks at team competency, into 14065 programs offer any help?
- Can a portable personnel certification provide some unity?



# More Information

GHG Management Institute

[www.ghginstitute.org](http://www.ghginstitute.org)

*GHG Measurement & Management* journal

[www.tandf.co.uk/journals/TGMM](http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals/TGMM)

EP(GHG) professional certification

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