

Advanced and Indirect Mitigation (AIM) Platform

Meeting Minutes – March 23, 2023

An initiative jointly developed by:



Gold Standard[®]

The Advanced and Indirect Mitigation (AIM) Governing Committee

March 23, 2023 | GC Meeting #1

Attendees:

Governing Committee Members*:

- Alexia Kelly
- Chris Davis
- Dan Smith
- Derik Broekhoff
- Devon Lake
- Elena Schmidt
- Kelley Kizzier
- Lisa Spetz
- Meinrad Bürer
- Pierre Bloch
- Tim Juliani

Four members were unable to attend.

*Some members are finalizing organizational approvals now.

Invited Observers:

- Brad Schallert

AIM Organizers:

- Owen Hewlett (GS)
- Verena Radulovic (C2ES)
- Kim Carnahan (GMA)
- Ash Khetpal (GMA)
- Daniel Magrath (GS)
- Edmond Yi (GMA)

Discussion Topics:

Introductions for GC Members/Observers/AIM Organizers

- **No Comments/Questions**

Governance Structure Overview

- **No Comments/Questions**

Roles of ESC, GC, and AIM Stakeholders

Comments/Questions

1. As the working groups begin to convene, how will they be structured and how will their feedback interplay with the general framework?

Answer:

- AIM Organizers are expecting to manage the working group process and coordinate feedback from the working groups.
- AIM Organizers are still finalizing the details for how the working groups will be structured. We are in discussions with existing initiatives to determine how we will interact with existing working groups to avoid duplicative work or whether standing up a new working group will be necessary.
- **Action:** Please let us know if there are strategic partner organizations we are missing in our initial contact list who you believe would be valuable to integrate in the AIM Platform

2. How are you planning to manage the cross-cutting work as part of the guidance? Will there be a subcommittee structure?

Answer:

- AIM Organizers will be synthesizing feedback from the sectoral working groups and relaying it to the GC, who will play that cross-cutting role. If cross-cutting working groups are needed, however, we won't hesitate to create them. The slides on Framework Guidance development discuss our proposed process in more detail.

Governing Committee Commitments and Member Agreements, Decision Making Process

Comments/Questions

1. Should we allow an alternate voting structure, e.g. through email? Considering time differences for GC members this may be necessary to fulfill the "75% of present and voting members" requirement.

Answer:

- We tentatively have a time that works for the availability of all GC members, so this may not be necessary but "present" is meant to indicate "not abstaining." We will accept voting by email in extreme circumstances. We can clarify these points in the governance document.

- Abstaining signals that a member is not fully comfortable with the proposed materials but does not feel strongly enough to block adoption.
2. The last page of the GC Member Agreement asks that we report conflicts of interest, can you give examples of what a conflict of interest would be?

Answer:

- Conflicts of interest can take many forms, but please disclose if you have any potential business or financial benefits that would result from the guidance's development. The obvious benefit of using the guidance to help meet your science-based emissions targets is assumed and can be excluded.

Process for Framework Guidance Development, Tasks Breakdown

Comments/Questions

1. There is a strong focus on interventions and classifying appropriate intervention approaches rather than a gap analysis of existing guidance. Is that an accurate assessment of the goals of the AIM Platform?

Answer:

- In short, yes. We believe the current gap is the lack of overarching guidance. We are not aware of any group attempting to fill this gap now, so please let us know if you learn of any.
 - As we think through the approach to filling that gap, we are looking first to intervention methods already being piloted rather than trying to develop novel approaches.
2. The Framework Guidance should have the explicit objective of being third-party assurable guidance. This should be kept at the top of mind as we develop the Framework Guidance. Having interventions being eligible to be assured by third-party standards and certifications is essential from a corporate uptake perspective.

Answer:

- Agree this is important and we will more closely consider how this objective can be met and come back to the question. To do this, we may have to expand the scope of our work to include sector-specific guidance in order to provide a full package of guidance that can be assured against.
- There are levels of variation in verification, and we will consider how we can scope the Framework Guidance to capture certain “degrees” of this variation. There may be opportunities to scope for “meta” verifiability (such as to determine with mechanisms are eligible) and/or to assure specific projects or interventions

Follow-up Question: Additionally, we should consider – Is the goal here to have every aspect of the guidance be third-party assurable, or if there will be some aspects to the guidance that are too subjective to be assured?

Answer:

- Another good question to be addressed in due time. We need to frame our scoping questions with regards to the “degrees” of variation in verifiability.

3. How is the AIM Platform looking to interact with the development of revised guidance by the GHG Protocol and SBTi?

Answer:

- Currently we believe the AIM platform is positioned as a thought leader in value chain mitigation accounting and will be a valuable input into the GHG Protocol and SBTi process.
- We are explicitly looking to build a guidance that, for value chain mitigation, provides the “how” to the “what” that will be described in the revised accounting protocols.
- Additionally, we intend to explore if, and how, different forms of emissions accounting can be supplementary to the standard inventory accounting methods.

AIM Guiding Principles

Comments/Questions

1. We should be careful as we frame the existing standards for inventory accounting as the “true and accurate” method. This is likely not realistic, as there are known problems with attributional accounting, and furthermore it indicates that the work we do with other accounting mechanisms such as market-based mechanisms are **not** “true and accurate”.

Answer:

- That is a valuable observation - the language listed in the guiding principle was not meant to imply that market-based mechanisms are not an appropriate tool to account for emissions reductions. Categorizing the appropriate applications for such mechanisms is intended to be part of the Framework Guidance.
- We are planning to respect attributional accounting as a core concept in developing inventories but do intend to add additional accounting methods as appropriate to address its shortcomings.
 - If anyone does not agree with this perspective, or would like to provide a nuanced view, please let us know.

2. We will need to create very clear definitions for the terms such as “real abatement impact” developed.

Answer:

- Agreed, we will need to create a clear set of definitions/interpretations for the terms used in all AIM Platform work products.
 - The Guiding Principles presented today are a starting point for discussion and will be defined before they are implemented through Task 3.
3. I want to flag that we'll need to be thoughtful about the characterization of the claims, particularly in light of SEC guidance and the now much higher bar for information disclosure related to GHG footprints and accounting.

Answer:

- Agreed.

Challenges in Value Chain Mitigation:

Comments/Questions

1. Do you intend to create guidance on how to convert an intervention into a revised emissions factor for inventory reporting?

Answer:

- That option is one of the methods to be considered in this process.

Example Interventions – Book-and-Claim, Project/Client-Specific Emissions Factors, Baseline-and-Credit

1. No Comments/Questions