

## **Establishment of Programme Management Unit for Operationalization of Green Credits Programme**

### **Background:**

Environmental degradation and climate change are global phenomena where actions in one part of the world impact ecosystems and populations across the globe. It is estimated that if requisite action is not taken against the changing environment, the global economy could lose up to 18% of GDP by 2050 (Swiss Re, 2021).

The concept of 'Lifestyle for the Environment (LiFE)' was introduced by the Hon'ble Prime Minister at Glasgow in COP26 of UNFCCC, calling upon the global community of individuals and institutions to drive LiFE as an international mass movement towards "mindful and deliberate utilisation, instead of mindless and destructive consumption" to protect and preserve the environment. LiFE aims to nudge individuals and communities to practice a lifestyle that is synchronous with nature and does not harm it.

To address specific climate change concerns, India has developed a comprehensive and balanced set of actions for its Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) for the period of 2021-2030 to address climate change mitigation as well as adaptation taking into consideration the need for economic growth and development. Emphasis is laid on promoting sustainable lifestyles and clean economic development. India is the first country to include LiFE in its Nationally Determined Contributions, as a key to combating climate change.

To enable the mission of LiFE, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Govt. of India has conceptualised a Green Credits Programme (GCP) with idea to leverage a competitive market-based approach for Green Credits thereby incentivising voluntary environmental actions from a range of actors, including the private sector, industrial entities, farmer groups, forest enterprises, Urban Local Bodies and Gram Panchayats.

Operationalizing 'Green Credits' programme in the country will not only supplement India's ambitious climate change actions under the Paris Agreement but also help in improving environmental protection by deploying an incentive mechanism to drive action and stimulate greater public engagement on climate change and environmental issues. This will help to meet India's overarching climate change actions, environmental targets and sustainable development goals by resulting in improvements in resource efficiency, promoting clean energy solutions, tackling local environmental challenges and stimulating investments in sustainable infrastructure and technologies.

### **Green Credits Programme:**

The Green Credits programme will include the formation of a domestic voluntary market platform, which can provide incentives to market actors to drive the discovery of low-cost options and attract technology and finance towards environmental projects that can generate green credits. The aim is to encourage environment positive actions from individuals and

groups across India’s regions and sectors, covering a range of entities and promote a national-level approach for greening the economic activities and lifestyles. The stakeholders will be motivated to take actions that will bring a conscious change in behaviour and attitudes of people to environment protection and conservation. Thus, the Green Credits Programme will translate the vision of the LiFE movement in to action.

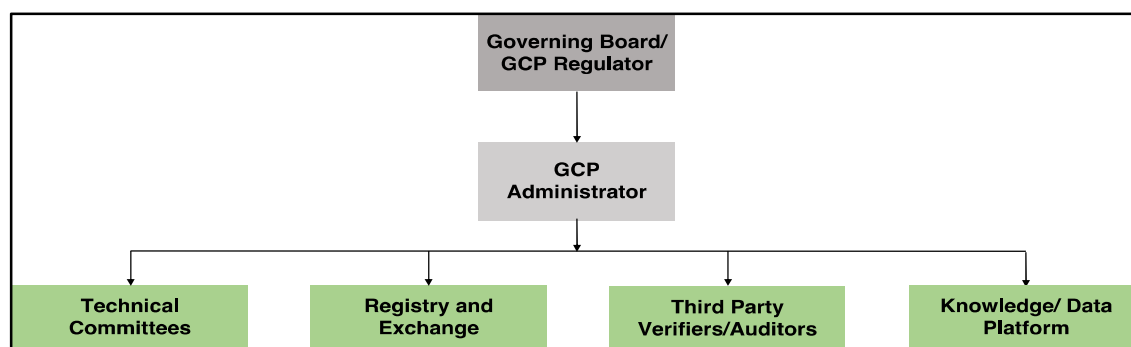
To operationalize Green Credits Programme (GCP), a phased and iterative approach for implementation is planned by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Govt. of India. Under this approach forestry, water conservation, agriculture, waste management, air pollution and mangroves conservation & restoration will be brought on board for designing and piloting the Green Credits Framework in the first phase with following objectives and potential activities:

<b>S. No.</b>	<b>Sector</b>	<b>Objective</b>	<b>Activities</b>
1	Forestry	To promote activities for increasing the green cover across the country through tree plantation and related activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Tree plantations in private and community lands, fields, cities, institutions, besides national and state highways and other vacant/ degraded available land, with a survival threshold criterion to be set.</li> </ul>
2	Water Conservation	To promote sectoral level water conservation, water harvesting and water use efficiency/savings, including treatment and reuse of waste water.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Water tanks, ponds, rainwater harvesting structures, digging trenches.</li> <li>▪ Waste water treatment and re-use models and technologies.</li> </ul>
3	Sustainable Agriculture	To promote natural and regenerative agricultural practices and land restoration to improve productivity, soil health and nutritional value of food produced, while reducing the harmful impact on surrounding ecosystems.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Adoption of ecological farming practices based on natural and regenerative production principles, crop rotation, vermicomposting, etc.</li> <li>▪ Crop diversification</li> </ul>
4	Waste Management	To promote sustainable and improved practices for waste management, including collection and treatment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Setting Waste to compost plants and processes</li> <li>▪ Establishing Bio CNG plants</li> <li>▪ Establishing Waste to energy plants</li> </ul>

5	Air Pollution	To promote a range of measures, to be undertaken by Municipalities, Gram Panchayats or Industrial entities, for reducing air pollution.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Switch over to clean fuels – CNG, PNG, Electricity</li> <li>▪ Control measure for reducing additional emissions</li> <li>▪ City performing beyond benchmark targets of air quality</li> </ul>
6	Mangroves	To promote a range of measures, to be undertaken by Municipalities, Gram Panchayats or community groups, for conservation and restoration of mangroves.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Create buffer zones between coastal habitats</li> <li>▪ Protect existing Mangroves through conservation and clean-up</li> <li>▪ Mangrove restoration</li> </ul>

Based on the activities proposed, suitable thresholds and benchmarks within each methodology and sectors need to be developed. Further, while developing and approving the methodologies, it is critical to keep in mind the scale and complexity of the activity types and their applicability. Technical committees/ methodology panels (sector wise) will need to be formed and engaged for this process.

The broad institutional structure and governance framework for the GCP will consist of the: i). Governing Board/ GCP Regulator (an inter-ministerial committee, to be chaired by the Secretary MoEFCC, Govt. of India) ii). GCP Administrator, iii). Technical Committees, iv). Registry and Exchange, v). Third Party Verifiers/ Auditors, and vi). Knowledge/ data platform.



**Role of ICFRE in Green Credits Programme:** ICFRE will act as a GCP Administrator and responsible for:

- Approval and development of methodologies and standards for registering green credits generating projects in various sectors
- Issuance of green credits based on MRV processes and supported by data sets & reports
- Transfer of credits and ensuring these are properly entered in the GC registry

- On-boarding of buyers and sellers on the exchange/ trading-platform
- Accreditation of third-party verifiers for conducting measurement, reporting and verification (MRV) of GCs
- Tracking the achievements of entities in relation to their reported outcomes; and
- Ensure that the trade happens with requisite sector and double-counting does not take place
- Develop knowledge and data platform

ICFRE as a GCP Administrator will also be responsible for approving the rules for GCP and modifying these as and when needed, supervising the green credits programme under the authority and guidance of the Governing Board/ GCP Regulator. The GCP Administrator will be the ultimate point of contact for Green Credits Project Participants for the registration of projects and the issuance of green credits. ICFRE has issued a notification on dated 13 September 2022 for establishment of Green Credit Cell at ICFRE for operationalization of Green Credits Programme in the Country and notification is annexed as Annexure – I.

It is proposed to establish Programme Management Unit (PMU) at ICFRE, Dehradun for operationalizing the Green Credits Programme in the country. The PMU will consist of the following:

1. **Secretariat:** The GCP Administrator will establish its Secretariat in the Directorate of International Cooperation of ICFRE Hqs. and perform the key functions pertaining to institutional and technical support to the GCP Administrator and its committees/ panels and working groups for providing recommendations regarding development and revision of standards, guidelines and clarifications for green credits project activities and for designated operational entities and applicant entities; assessing the compliance of green credits project activities; assessing compliance of designated operational entities and applicant entities with established requirements, and providing recommendations for further actions as appropriate. In addition to supporting the GCP Administrator in the conduct of its regulatory functions, the secretariat supports the GCP Administrator's broader supervisory role for the green credits processes. The secretariat will provide capacity-building services for key stakeholders on green credits programme.
2. **Committees/ Panels and Working Groups:** It is proposed to establish following committees/ panels and working groups to assist GCP Administrator in the performance of its functions:
  - **Technical Committee/ Methodologies Panel:** Technical Committee/ Methodologies Panel will be established to develop recommendations to the GCP Administrator on guidelines for methodologies for baselines and monitoring plans and prepare recommendations on submitted green credits project proposals for new baseline and

monitoring methodologies with respect to water, solid waste management, forestry, agriculture, air pollution and mangroves.

- **Accreditation Panel:** The Accreditation Panel will be established to develop recommendations and facilitate the decision making of the GCP Administrator in accordance with the standards and procedure for accrediting operational entities.
- **Registration and Issuance Panel:** The Green Credit Registration and Issuance Panel will be a group of experts that assist the GCP Administrator by assessing requests for registration of project activities as well as requests for issuance of credits.
- **Forestry Working Group:** This working group will be established to prepare recommendations on submitted proposals for new baseline and monitoring methodologies with respect to tree plantation on private, institutional and community lands. This working group will work in cooperation with the Technical Committee/ Methodologies Panel.
- **Water Conservation Working Group:** This working group will be established to prepare recommendations on submitted proposals for new baseline and monitoring methodologies with respect to water conservation and reuse. This working group will work in cooperation with the Technical Committee/ Methodologies Panel.
- **Agriculture Working Group:** This working group will be established to prepare recommendations on submitted proposals for new baseline and monitoring methodologies with respect to sustainable agriculture. This working group will work in cooperation with the Technical Committee/ Methodologies Panel.
- **Waste Management Working Group:** This working group will be established to prepare recommendations on submitted proposals for new baseline and monitoring methodologies with respect to waste management. This working group will work in cooperation with the Technical Committee/ Methodologies Panel.
- **Air Pollution Working Group:** This working group will be established to prepare recommendations on submitted proposals for new baseline and monitoring methodologies with respect to reducing air pollution. This working group will work in cooperation with the Technical Committee/ Methodologies Panel.
- **Mangrove Conservation and Restoration Working Group:** This working group will be established to prepare recommendations on submitted proposals for new baseline and monitoring methodologies with respect to conservation and restoration of mangroves. This working group will work in cooperation with the Technical Committee/ Methodologies Panel.
- **Capacity Building and Knowledge Sharing Group:** This working group will be established to develop knowledge/ data platform for sharing of the knowledge and will

build the capacity of the stakeholders for operationalization and execution of the green credits programme.

- **Registry and Exchange/ Green Credits Registry:** The GCP Administrator will establish and maintain a GC registry to ensure the accurate accounting of the issuance, holding, transfer and acquisition of green credits by the stakeholders. The GC registry will be in the form of a standardized electronic database which contains, inter alia, common data elements relevant to the issuance, holding, transfer and acquisition of GCs. The structure and data formats of the GC registry shall conform to technical standards

**Estimated Budget Requirement:** Estimated budget of Rs. 20.05 Crores will be required for initial three years for establishment of PMU at ICFRE for operationalization and execution of the green credits programme in the country as per the following details:

Head of Expenditure	Budget Estimates (Rs. in Crore)			Total (Rs. in Crore)
	First Year	Second Year	Third Year	
<b>A). Recurring Expenses</b>				
Consultancy Fee of the Experts/ Specialists and wages of the manpower to be engaged	2.00	2.00	2.00	6.00
Expenses for workshops, meetings and trainings	0.50	1.00	0.50	2.00
Development of digital platform for GC data/ knowledge sharing and capacity building, and trading	3.00	1.50	0.50	5.00
Travel expenses	0.50	0.50	0.50	1.50
M&S (Consumables)	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.30
<b>Total</b>	<b>6.10</b>	<b>5.10</b>	<b>3.60</b>	<b>14.80</b>
<b>B). Non- Recurring Expenses</b>				
Office equipment, office furniture and accessories for PMU and refurbishing of office space	1.50	0.40	0.02	1.92
<b>Total</b>	<b>7.60</b>	<b>5.50</b>	<b>3.62</b>	<b>16.72</b>
Institutional charges (10%)	0.76	0.55	0.36	1.67
Monitoring cost (5%)	0.38	0.27	0.18	0.83
Overall project escalation cost (5%)	0.38	0.27	0.18	0.83
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>9.12</b>	<b>6.59</b>	<b>4.34</b>	<b>20.05</b>

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Deepak Mishra I.F.S.

सचिव  
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**INDIAN COUNCIL OF FORESTRY RESEARCH AND EDUCATION**

(पर्यावरण, वन एवं जलवायु परिवर्तन मंत्रालय, भारत सरकार की एक स्वायत्त निकाय)  
(An Autonomous Body of the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Govt. of India)  
डाकघर : न्यू फॉरेस्ट, देहरादून – 248006 (उत्तराखण्ड)

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F. No. 31-17/2016-ICFRE

Dated the 13<sup>th</sup> September 2022

**NOTIFICATION**

**Sub.: Establishment of Green Credit Cell at ICFRE for Operationalization of Green Credits Programme in the country**

The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of India is planning to initiate a Green Credits Programme with the objective of incentivizing a structured effort for achieving a range of environmental targets using a 'polluter-pays approach' by involving the relevant industries, sectors and entities through establishing an efficient and effective national market-based mechanism. To operationalize Green Credits Programme in the country, the priority sectors for the first phase will be forestry, water and solid waste.

Accordingly, Director General, ICFRE is pleased to establish a Green Credits Cell at ICFRE for Operationalization of Green Credits Programme in the country.

The role and responsibilities of the proposed Green Credit Cell will be:

1. Development of standards and norms for green credits w.r.t. forestry, water and solid waste;
2. Lay down of guidelines for development of projects for green credit programme, registration of the projects and issuance of the green credits;
3. Lay down of guidelines, modalities and procedures for accreditation of verifiers/ auditors for green credits;
4. Accreditation of verifiers/ auditors for green credits;
5. Develop and maintain the registry of green credits w.r.t. forestry, water and solid waste;
6. Development of MRV system for green credits w.r.t. forestry, water and solid waste;
7. Development of modalities and procedures for establishment of National Green Credits Market;
8. Development of safeguards for implementation of green credits programme;
9. Provide technical support to MoEFCC for operationalization and implementation of Green Credits Programme in the country;
10. Capacity building of the stakeholders on different aspect of green credits programme;

*Continued...#2*

The proposed Green Credits Cell will work under the overall direction and guidance of DG, ICFRE and Director (IC), ICFRE. Initially the tasks of Green Credits Cell is assigned to the following officers and scientists of ICFRE and its institutes in addition to their assigned tasks and without any extra remuneration:

1. Dr. Rajesh Sharma, ADG (BCC), ICFRE
2. Dr. R.S. Rawat, Scientist E, BCC Division, ICFRE
3. Dr. N. Bala, Scientist G, FRI
4. Mr. Parmanand, Scientist D, FRI
5. Dr. Abhishek Kumar Verma, Scientist B, FRI

Expertise/ services of other officers and scientists from ICFRE and its institutes may also be utilized as and when required for implementing the tasks related to operationalization and implementation of Green Credits Programme.

  
13/9/22  
(Deepak Mishra)  
Secretary

Copy to:

- 1. Sh. Naresh Pal Singh, Gangwar, Additional Secretary, MoEFCC, Govt. of India for information
- 2. Ms. Rajshree Ray, Economic Advisor, MoEFCC, New Delhi for information
- 3. All DDGs at ICFRE (HQ), Dehradun for information
- 4. All Directors of ICFRE Institutes for information
5. Dr. Rajesh Sharma, ADG (BCC), ICFRE for information.
6. Concerned Scientists through Director (IC), ICFRE and Director, FRI for information and necessary action
- 7. The PPS to the Secretary, MoEFCC for kind information of the Secretary, MoEFCC, Govt. of India
8. Sr. PS to Director General, ICFRE for kind information of Director General, ICFRE
9. Guard File.