



## Building integrity into NCS project design

North American Carbon World Workshop



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Tuesday, March 19 2024

# Building Integrity into Natural Climate Solutions Project Design

## WORKSHOP GOAL

Achieve a shared understanding of the unique challenges and opportunities presented by NCS projects in the context of the ICVCM Core Carbon Principles.

## FACILITATORS

Agriculture:  
**Max DuBuisson**



Forestry:  
**Betto Ramirez**



Blue Carbon:  
**Ben Parkhurst**



## AGENDA

**4:00 – 4:10:** Opening remarks: Dee Lawrence, High Tide Foundation + Cool Effect

**4:10 – 4:30:** Breakouts – challenges & solutions for NCS project types in the context of the CCPs

**4:30 – 4:45:** Report out and discussion

**4:45 – 4:50:** Close



# THE CORE CARBON PRINCIPLES

The CCPs are a set of interlinked principles to define a threshold standard to ensure integrity in the voluntary carbon market.

## EMISSIONS IMPACT

1. Additionality
2. Permanence
3. Robust quantification of emission reductions and removals
4. No double counting

## GOVERNANCE

5. Effective governance
6. Tracking
7. Transparency
8. Robust independent third-party validation and verification

## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

9. Sustainable development benefits and safeguards
10. Contribution to net zero transition

# Breakout Exercise: NCS Project Design and the CCPs

## Breakout groups

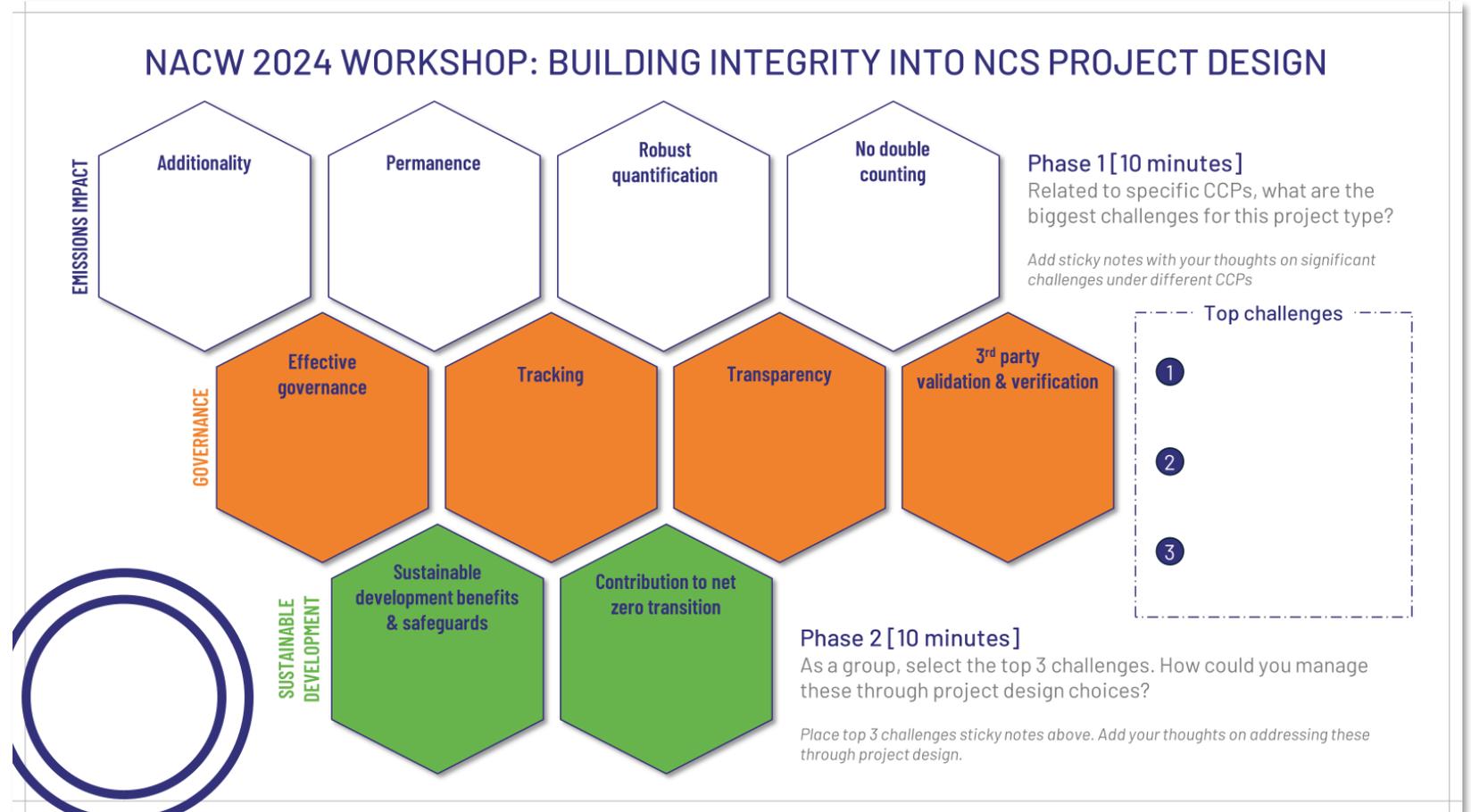
*ALM / SOC* – Max DuBuisson

*Forestry* – Betto Ramirez

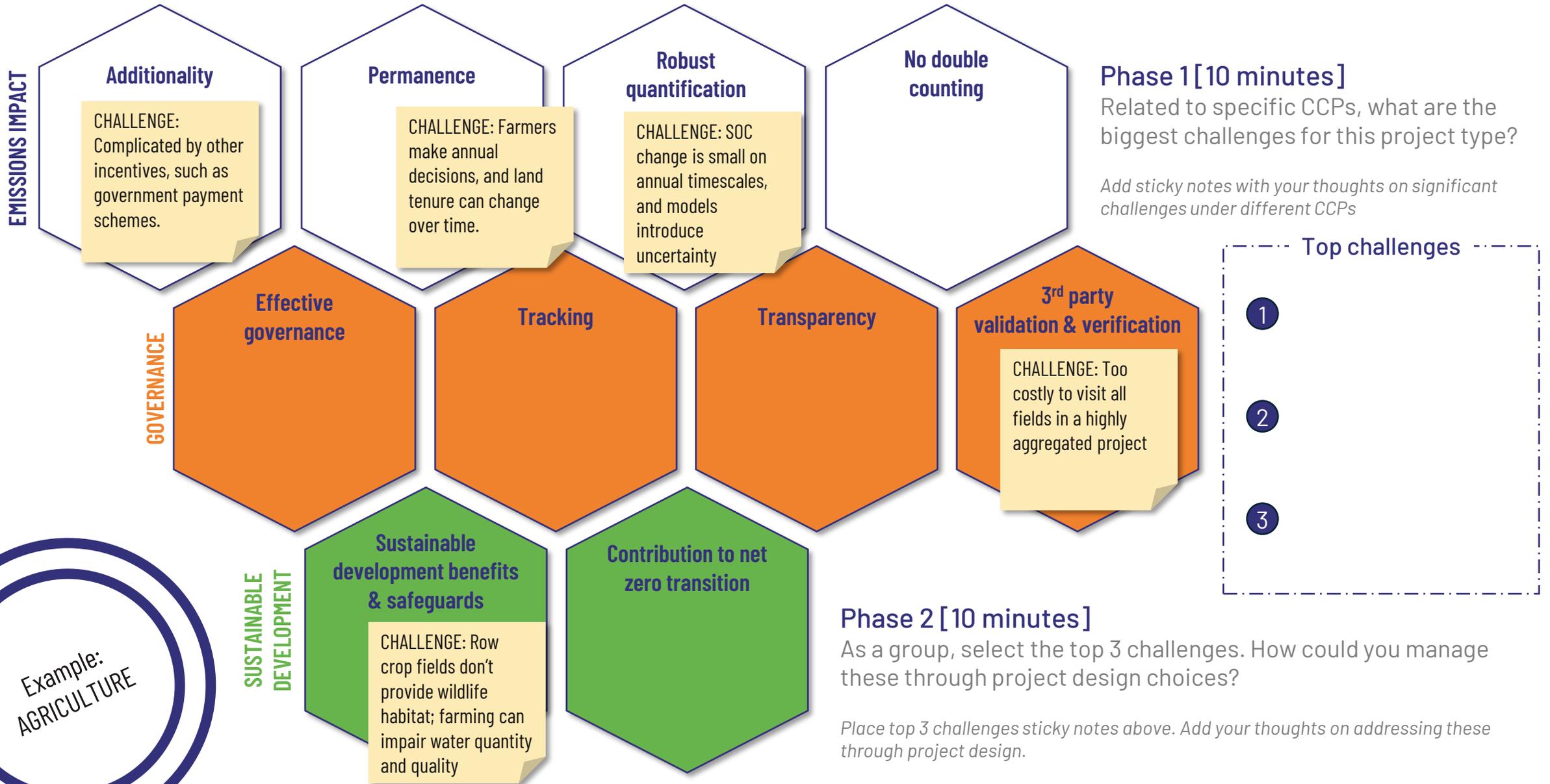
*Blue carbon* – Ben Parkhurst

## Exercise instructions

1. Select a group to join
2. Add sticky notes sharing significant challenges for that project type in different CCP categories
3. As a group, select 3 top challenges.
4. Discuss what project design choices can overcome these challenges



# NACW 2024 WORKSHOP: BUILDING INTEGRITY INTO NCS PROJECT DESIGN



# The Core Carbon Principles

## A. GOVERNANCE

### 1. Effective governance

The carbon-crediting program shall have effective program governance to ensure transparency, accountability, continuous improvement and the overall quality of carbon credits.

### 2. Tracking

The carbon-crediting program shall operate or make use of a registry to uniquely identify, record and track mitigation activities and carbon credits issued to ensure credits can be identified securely and unambiguously.

### 3. Transparency

The carbon-crediting program shall provide comprehensive and transparent information on all credited mitigation activities. The information shall be publicly available in electronic format and shall be accessible to non-specialised audiences, to enable scrutiny of mitigation activities.

### 4. Robust independent third-party validation and verification

The carbon-crediting program shall have program-level requirements for robust independent third-party validation and verification of mitigation activities.

## B. EMISSIONS IMPACT

### 5. Additionality

The greenhouse gas (GHG) emission reductions or removals from the mitigation activity shall be additional, i.e., they would not have occurred in the absence of the incentive created by carbon credit revenues.

### 6. Permanence

The GHG emission reductions or removals from the mitigation activity shall be permanent or, where there is a risk of reversal, there shall be measures in place to address those risks and compensate reversals.

### 7. Robust quantification of emission reductions and removals

The GHG emission reductions or removals from the mitigation activity shall be robustly quantified, based on conservative approaches, completeness and scientific methods.

### 8. No double counting

The GHG emission reductions or removals from the mitigation activity shall not be double counted, i.e., they shall only be counted once towards achieving mitigation targets or goals. Double counting covers double issuance, double claiming, and double use.

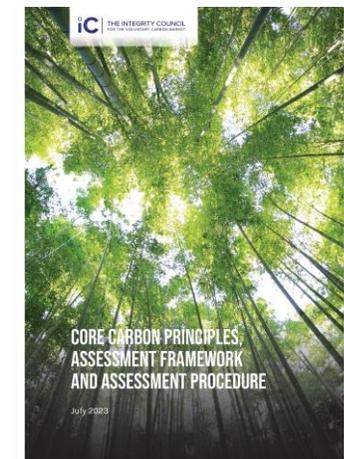
## C. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

### 9. Sustainable development benefits and safeguards

The carbon-crediting program shall have clear guidance, tools and compliance procedures to ensure mitigation activities conform with or go beyond widely established industry best practices on social and environmental safeguards while delivering positive sustainable development impacts.

### 10. Contribution toward net zero transition

The mitigation activity shall avoid locking-in levels of GHG emissions, technologies or carbon-intensive practices that are incompatible with the objective of achieving net zero GHG emissions by mid-century.



# Thank You

For further reading on this topic, please see this commentary in Carbon Pulse



The screenshot shows the Carbon Pulse website interface. At the top, there are navigation links: ABOUT US | STAFF | CONTACT US on the left, and WHAT WE OFFER | REGISTER | LOG IN on the right. The main header features the Carbon Pulse logo on the left and a banner for 'Carbon Pulse at COP28' with the text 'Read our coverage' on the right. Below the header, there is a sub-header: 'News and intelligence on carbon markets, greenhouse gas pricing, and climate policy'. A secondary navigation bar includes links for EMEA, AMERICAS, ASIA PACIFIC, INTERNATIONAL, VOLUNTARY, CO2 TAXES, BIODIVERSITY, BAVARDAGE, OTHER CONTENT, RESOURCES, ADVERTISING, and CARBON FORWARD. The main content area displays a 'Contributed Content' article with the title 'COMMENT: We can't afford to get this wrong – Ensuring high integrity in agricultural carbon credits is imperative for fighting climate change'. Below the title, it shows the publication date and time: 'Published 16:15 on November 6, 2023 / Last updated at 05:53 on November 7, 2023 / Contributed Content, Nature-based, Other Content, Voluntary'. The author is identified as 'By Max DuBuisson, VP Sustainability Policy and Engagement at Indigo Ag'. The article text begins with 'Your great grandfather and grandmother knew that age-old farming practices that had been handed down through generations, such as planting cover crops and using diverse crop rotations, resulted in healthy soils, resilient crops, and a sustainable farm business. What they didn't know, or certainly weren't as concerned about 100+ years ago, was how these sustainable practices are also critical in sequestering carbon from the atmosphere and making farms more resilient to the impacts of climate changes and extreme weather. Through the 20th Century the global agricultural system went through a massive transformation and many of these practices were reduced or abandoned. To solve climate change we now recognize that



<https://carbon-pulse.com/234339/>



# Key CCPs in the context of agriculture



## Agricultural Context



## Considerations for Assessment

<b>Additionality</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Management decisions &amp; risk assessment are complicated, hyper-local, and very personal / emotional</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Assess whether change is occurring in aggregate, over both time and space</li> </ul>
<b>Permanence</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carbon is constantly cycling in and out of the soil pools, especially organic matter</li> <li>• Some fields will have negative results in a given period despite good management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Aggregate the net change in stored carbon across the entire population</li> <li>✓ Remotely monitor land use &amp; management after crediting</li> </ul>
<b>Robust Quantification</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Soil carbon changes are small and difficult to measure</li> <li>• Models (including RS) must demonstrate robustness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Assess the robustness of the requirements for soil testing &amp; modeling, including calibration, validation, &amp; uncertainty</li> </ul>
<b>No Double Counting</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aggregated projects include hundreds or thousands of individual fields and farmers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Ensure farmer communications are clear on the rules</li> <li>✓ When available, projects should use land tracking registries</li> </ul>
<b>Robust Independent 3<sup>rd</sup>-Party Validation &amp; Verification</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Robust quantification requires specialized knowledge of soil sampling, modeling, or both</li> <li>• Aggregated projects include hundreds or thousands of individual fields and farmers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Independent, expert assessment of model calibration &amp; validation</li> <li>✓ Sample-based &amp; systems approaches to verification</li> </ul>
<b>Sustainable Development Benefits &amp; Safeguards</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revenue share with farmers is crucial for long term success</li> <li>• Multi-year participation will build farm resilience</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Majority of carbon revenues should flow back to farmers</li> <li>✓ Projects must keep farmers engaged through the initial transition</li> </ul>