

Approaches and branding guidelines to develop GHG Protocol-based sector guidance, programs, and calculation tools

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Goal of this policy document

The GHG Protocol (a partnership between WRI and WBCSD) creates standards and tools that are applicable to multiple organizations and sectors. Additional guidance or calculation tools that build upon the more general standards are developed by the GHG Protocol in response to user needs. In some cases, other organizations develop sector guidance, calculation tools and programs that build on GHG Protocol Standards.

Until now, the GHG Protocol has not had a formalized way to recognize sector guidance, product rules, calculation tools or programs developed by others that claim conformance with GHG Protocol Standards. Without a review or confirmation from GHG Protocol, users and other stakeholders do not have the confidence that these documents and tools are in fact in conformance with a given standard unless they perform a review themselves or take the word of a third-party.

Standards provide a uniform set of methodologies for businesses, governments and organizations looking to establish a GHG accounting and reporting system. GHG Protocol Standards must be the basis for any Built on Mark approved guidance documents, calculation tools or programs.

Sector guidance provides more tailored information to help users of GHG Protocol standards implement a standard in a specific sector. Sector guidance can be created for any published GHG Protocol standard and can include information on methodological choices, calculations, and data sources or default data specific to the sector. This includes Product Rules, a specific type of guidance developed for use with the GHG Protocol Product Life Cycle Accounting and Reporting Standard.

Calculation tools help users of GHG Protocol standards implement a standard, for example, by providing equations and default emission factors. Calculation tools can be developed for one activity within a standard (e.g., one scope 3 category like business travel or employee commuting), one sector (e.g. cement), or a full GHG Protocol standard.

Programs are developed by governments, trade associations, or NGOs to help companies and other organizations implement GHG Protocol standards, set and track GHG reduction goals, and/or report emissions inventory data.

GHG Protocol Mission and Vision

The Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Protocol, led by the World Resources Institute (WRI) and the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD), provides the foundation for comprehensive measurement and management strategies to reduce emissions and drive more efficient, resilient, and profitable businesses and organizations. Our vision is to empower the world to avoid and respond to climate change through the wide use of internationally accepted greenhouse gas standards and practices. Reducing GHG emission is crucial to limiting global mean temperature increases and avoiding unpredictable and dangerous damage to people and ecosystems due to climate change. All standards and tools developed by the GHG Protocol are done so through an inclusive multi-stakeholder process and are made freely available at [\[www.ghgprotocol.org\]](http://www.ghgprotocol.org).

This document outlines three options for sector guidance, tools and programs to be recognized by the GHG Protocol:



- Use of the “Built on GHG Protocol” mark
- Review by the GHG Protocol
- Joint development

These approaches vary based on specific requirements and the level of GHG Protocol involvement.

Table 1 summarizes the difference between the three options, and the following sections outline each approach in more detail.

GHG Protocol may from time-to-time, as WRI and WBCSD see fit, reevaluate the Built on Mark program and make amendments to this document including the addition or reduction of guidelines, requirements and limitations for receiving Built on Mark approval.

Table 1: Overview of three options to recognize sector guidance, calculations tools and programs

Name	Recognition	What it means
Review by the GHG Protocol	Review Claim: “This [sector guidance, program, calculation tool] has been reviewed by the GHG Protocol and is consistent with the [specific title] Standard”	GHG Protocol performed a review for consistency with the standard, but the “built on GHG Protocol” mark is not appropriate. This guidance, tool, or program does not have access to the GHG Protocol Logo or “Built on GHG Protocol” mark.
“Built on GHG Protocol”	Built on GHG Protocol Mark: 	Tools, sector guidance, or programs have been reviewed by GHG Protocol and are in conformance with the requirements set forth in the standard. A tool, guidance, or program given the “Built on GHG Protocol Mark” does not have access to the GHG Protocol Logo.
Joint development by the GHG Protocol	GHG Protocol Logo:  GREENHOUSE GAS PROTOCOL	GHG Protocol was directly involved in the development process of this sector guidance, tool or program. ¹

¹ The GHG Protocol logo is sometimes used when WRI and WBCSD partner or participant in an initiative with other organizations. The GHG Protocol logo was developed by WRI and WBCSD and we reserve the right to affix it to documents and publications as we see fit.

Use of the “Built on GHG Protocol” mark

The “built on GHG Protocol” mark is a way for the GHG Protocol to recognize those sector guidance documents, calculation tools and programs (further referred to as “products” in this document) that have been developed in conformance with a GHG Protocol Standard. Those that acquire the mark will benefit from the GHG Protocol’s reputation. Stakeholders that see the mark will have confidence that a document, tool or program they are using is in conformance with the GHG Protocol Standards.

Tools and Sector Guidance

All tools and standards developed by GHG Protocol (either alone or jointly) are made freely available and free of charge. We strive to provide the mark to organizations that also provide freely available products, but we recognize that this may not always be feasible. Therefore, we do offer the mark to products that are available for a fee. In all cases, the principle of transparency must be followed by a mark-holding organization. So while a tool or guidance may be accessed by fee, the underlying data sources and calculation methods must be freely available. The methodology used to develop fee-for-service calculation tools and guidance must be made available for review by GHG Protocol staff. If stakeholder feedback was not sought during the development of sector guidance, the GHG Protocol review may require a public stakeholder review process. This is in keeping with a principle of the GHG Protocol to ensure open and inclusive stakeholder consultations. Tools and sector guidance that do not qualify for the mark may be eligible for the review claim described in Table 1.

GHG Programs

Programs that may apply for the use of the Built on GHG Protocol mark include voluntary GHG registries, and inventory and goal setting programs. We do offer the mark to programs that charge a membership fee; however, the underlying methodology must be freely available.

Programs may be designed to meet specific policy or membership goals and therefore may need to be more specific or more flexible than the requirements in a GHG Protocol standard. To be eligible for the mark, programs must:

- Adopt the general framework of our standards and support development of an inventory in conformance with our standards.
- Enable public reporting in full conformance with the reporting requirements of a GHG Protocol standard but does not need to require members to be in full conformance.
- Not require their participants to inventory GHGs in any way that will conflict with our accounting requirements.

Cost of Review

Applicants for the mark will be asked to reimburse GHG Protocol for the cost of the review, the terms of which will be specified and agreed to after an initial determination of review needs. There are no royalty fees associated with using the mark for products.

Applicants can apply for the mark at the beginning, middle, or end of their development process. Applying for the mark at the beginning is recommended as this will allow for GHG Protocol participation during the development and will likely result in a shorter review period and less final changes (see review process below). Applying for the mark at the end will likely result in a longer review and is more likely to require final changes to achieve consistency with the respective standard.

Product rules, a type of sector guidance specific to a product category, can be developed individually or following the guidance of a product rule program. A product rule program may apply for the mark as long



as all product rules created under the program are publically available at no cost to the user. In this case, the GHG Protocol will review the program’s specifications for creating product rules to ensure consistency with the Product Standard.

If you are interested in applying for the mark, please complete the [application form](#) for the Built on GHG Protocol Mark and submit by email to Yelena Akopian (yakopian@wri.org).

Review process

The following is an example of an illustrative review process for obtaining the mark, assuming the document, tool or program has already been developed.

- Week 1: Applicant emails their application to obtain the mark
- Week 2-3: GHG Protocol does initial check to ensure the mark is applicable to the given product, as well as an evaluation to determine the cost of review.
- Week 3: Conference call with applicant and GHG Protocol to discuss and agree to review process and associated fees.
- Week 4-10: GHG Protocol completes review. The length of time necessary to complete the review will depend on its complexity. Public comment periods last 4 weeks with 2 weeks to compile the feedback. For some tools, external technical experts may be consulted, which can also increase the review time and cost.
- Week 10: GHG Protocol presents the review results to the applicant and discusses any changes that need to occur to obtain the mark. Applicant makes the changes necessary and resubmits to GHG Protocol for final approval.

Review by the GHG Protocol

For sector guidance, calculation tools and programs that do not qualify for the mark, the GHG Protocol can review the document or tool to ensure consistency with the GHG Protocol standard. This option is available when public stakeholder feedback cannot be obtained or the mark is inappropriate for some other reason. It is still necessary to ensure a peer or external stakeholder group review. Products that are reviewed by the GHG Protocol cannot use the mark or the GHG Protocol logo; however, they can make the following review claim after meeting the process requirements set forth below: **“This [sector guidance, product rule, calculation tool or program] has been reviewed by the GHG Protocol and is consistent with the [specific title] Standard”**.

Applicants for the review claim will be asked to reimburse GHG Protocol for the cost of review, the terms of which will be specified and agreed to after an initial determination of review needs. The use of the claim itself is free of charge.

If you are interested in a review by the GHG Protocol, please complete the [application form](#) for GHG Protocol review and submit by email to Yelena Akopian (yakopian@wri.org).

Review process

The following is an example of a typical review process for obtaining the review.

- Week 1: Applicant emails their intention to obtain the review.
- Week 2-3: GHG Protocol does an initial evaluation to determine the cost of review.



- Week 3: Conference call with applicant and GHG Protocol to discuss and agree to review process and associated fees.
- Week 4-8: GHG Protocol completes review. The length of time necessary to complete the review will depend on its complexity. For some tools, external technical experts may be consulted, which can also increase the review time.
- Week 8: GHG Protocol presents the review results to the applicant and discusses any changes that need to occur to obtain the review and make the review claim. Applicant makes the changes necessary and resubmits to GHG Protocol for final approval.

Using the mark or review claim

Once the mark or review claim has been obtained, it cannot be used for any other purpose than the reviewed sector guidance, calculation tool or program. Use of the mark or claim for any unapproved purpose or in a way that is misleading to users can result in immediate removal of the mark or claim.

A list of products that bare the mark or review claim will be provided on the GHG Protocol website. This list will be reviewed on a regular basis, and any documents or tools that have become outdated or revised (without additional review or knowledge of the GHG Protocol) will be removed. WRI and WBCSD reserve the right to request that a product be updated in the event that a GHG Protocol Standard has been revised or additional accounting rules have been issued. If this request is ignored or denied, GHG Protocol has the right to remove the document or tool from this list and revoke the rights given to a user to use the mark.

Joint development

In some cases, the GHG Protocol is approached by one or more organizations to work directly with them to develop sector guidance or calculation tools. This is considered joint development because the GHG Protocol is involved from the beginning. Often documents and tools that are created through a joint development process end with a co-branded document or tool that is made freely available on the GHG Protocol's and partner's websites. Please email Yelena Akopian (yakopian@wri.org) if you are interested in jointly developing sector guidance or calculation tools and we will respond directly to you for more information: Because our staff resources are limited, we will prioritize requests for joint development based on several criteria, including the GHG impact of the sector and funding prospects.

Legal Action

WRI and WBCSD reserve the right to take legal action against any party that uses the mark, review claim, or the GHG Protocol logo without permission.

Procedures for Notification of Logo Abuse

GHG Protocol actively monitors the use of its logo in the marketplace. Reports of mark or claim abuse may be submitted online by emailing yakopian@wri.org or in writing to Yelena Akopian, World Resources Institute, 10 G St NE, Suite 800, Washington, D.C. 20002, USA.

General Inquiries

If you have any general questions pertaining to this document or the use of the mark, claim, or logo please email yakopian@wri.org.