

Greenhouse Gas Management Services - FAQ's

As one of the very few leading bodies in the field of Greenhouse Gas (GHG) verification and validation, accredited by ANSI, NSF-ISR is committed to keeping you well informed about climate change and how this may impact your business in the short and long term. To assist you in meeting your Sustainability Agenda, we've pulled together our experts in the field of GHG, to give you an insight into the most frequently asked questions today.

1. What are greenhouse gases?

Greenhouse gases are elements in the atmosphere that trap a portion of the sun's incoming heat and provide a livable climate for the planet.

2. What problem does an increase in atmospheric greenhouse gas concentrations pose?

Climate change is occurring due to increased emissions of greenhouse gases since the dawn of the industrial age. Primarily through the combustion of fossil fuels, carbon dioxide and other GHG concentrations have increased. This has resulted in global warming, which is responsible for melting glaciers, a decrease in biodiversity, and an increase in severe weather events.

3. What is a greenhouse gas project?

A greenhouse gas (GHG) project is a set of activities that result in the reduction of GHG emissions or an increase in biological carbon sequestration.

4. What does the term "additional" mean in the context of greenhouse gas projects?

Emission reductions or increased sequestration from GHG projects need to be "additional" to what would have occurred anyway. To determine "additionality," each project is assessed against a "business as usual" baseline.

5. What is third-party verification?

Third-party verification is an audit of a greenhouse gas "assertion" made by a project developer or an organization that chooses to report its GHG emissions. The verifier performs an independent check on provided GHG data and information, and reaches a conclusion based on audit evidence. The verifier expresses his opinion in a "greenhouse gas statement" that is similar in form to a financial accountant's opinion letter.

6. Can NSF-ISR help us design our greenhouse gas project?

In order to maintain the objectivity of an independent third party, NSF-ISR does not generally engage in consulting work. Project developers or organizations establishing GHG inventories that need help preparing their GHG assertion should seek the assistance of a qualified consultant. NSF-ISR does, however, have strategic partnerships with a few organizations who could assist such as Trucost Plc, experts in environmental measurement, management and reporting.

7. Do all greenhouse gas projects need to be validated?

"Validation" refers to an evaluation of a GHG project design by an independent third party to determine if the project, when implemented, will deliver the expected GHG emission reductions or increased carbon removals. In the voluntary carbon market, most projects are developed in accordance with established protocols, and do not need to be validated. Validation, therefore, typically is required only for projects that do not follow established protocols.



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8. What types of projects does NSF-ISR validate and verify?

NSF-ISR validates and verifies most project types. These include, for example, landfill gas projects, livestock manure management projects and forestry projects.

9. Why should we have our GHG inventory third-party verified?

Organizations that choose to account for their greenhouse gas emissions should consider third-party verification to ensure the accuracy of their inventory. Third-party verification is a requirement for organizations who report their emissions to voluntary registries such as the Climate Registry and the California Climate Action Registry. The California Air Resources Board also requires third-party verification for its mandatory reporting program.

Benefits for your business could include:

- identifying wasteful purchasing and introducing best energy use practices
- improving public image
- avoiding compliance issues, fines and penalties
- maintaining your competitive edge

10. What is “Cap-and-Trade”?

Cap-and-trade is a policy approach that sets an overall GHG emissions limit for specified industries in a given geographical area. Organizations subject to the cap must surrender emission allowances at the end of each compliance period. Cap-and-trade works to lower overall GHG emissions within the capped area by creating a financial incentive for organizations to reduce emissions. Trading of GHG allowances results in least-cost emissions reduction within the cap. The first cap-and-trade program for GHGs in the United States was established by ten Northeastern and Mid-Atlantic states and went into effect January 1, 2009.

11. What is ANSI accreditation and why is it important?

The American National Standards Institute (ANSI) is an oversight body that audits GHG validation and verification bodies against international standards. Accreditation by ANSI means that the validation or verification body has met all requirements of ISO 14065 and applicable program requirements, such as those of the Climate Registry. At NSF-ISR, our ANSI accreditation reassures customers that they are working with a credible, professional company, which has established consistent guidelines and is respected in world markets.

12. What is NSF-ISR's background in greenhouse gas verification?

NSF-ISR is a leader in GHG verification. We participated in the writing of the international standards ISO 14064 and ISO 14065 that define GHG inventory, project and verification requirements. Let NSF-ISR put our expertise to work for you, providing value-added verification and validation for assertions associated with greenhouse gas inventories and projects.

For more details about our Greenhouse Gas Management Services or a wider look at our comprehensive range of Sustainable Business Solutions for your business, please contact NSF-ISR.



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