



Data Model Version 2.0

Technical Report



Acknowledgement

This **CAD Trust Data Model Version 2.0** report was prepared by Erick Chandra, Evan Kong, Elysia Tong, Ieva Steponaviciute, and Winnie Tan from the Climate Action Data Trust (CAD Trust) Secretariat.

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Glossary

AEF - Agreed Electronic Format (UNFCCC reporting template for cooperative approaches under Article 6.2 of the Paris Agreement)

API - Application Programming Interface

Article 6 - Paris Agreement provisions defining frameworks for voluntary international cooperation

Article 6.2 - Framework for bilateral cooperation between countries, including authorized transfers of carbon credits as Internationally Transferred Mitigation Outcomes (ITMOs)

Article 6.4 – Framework establishing a centralised, multilaterally negotiated carbon crediting mechanism under the Paris Agreement

Authorization - Government approval for international credit transfers

CAD Trust – the Climate Action Data Trust

Carbon Credit/Unit – a tradable certificate representing one tonne of CO₂ (or equivalent) emissions reduced, removed, or avoided

CDM - Clean Development Mechanism

CDOP – Carbon Data Open Protocol

CDSC – Climate Data Steering Committee

Chia Blockchain - Distributed ledger technology used by CAD Trust

Corresponding Adjustment – A mandatory accounting adjustment in the host country's NDC to prevent double counting of emissions reductions when participating in Article 6 transfers

CORSIA - Carbon Offsetting and Reduction Scheme for International Aviation

GUID - Globally Unique Identifier

ISO - International Organization for Standardization

ISO TC/322 - ISO Technical Committee on Sustainable Finance

Issuance - Creation of carbon credits following verification

ITMO - Internationally Transferred Mitigation Outcome

Many-to-Many Relationship - Multiple records in one table linked to multiple records in another

Mapping Table - Table connecting two other tables in many-to-many relationships

Methodology - Approved framework for measuring emission reductions

MySQL - Relational database management system

NDC - Nationally Determined Contribution

One-to-Many Relationship - Single record in one table linked to multiple records in another

PACM - Paris Agreement Crediting Mechanism

Picklist - Standardized dropdown list of predefined values

Primary Key - Unique identifier for each record in a table

Registry - Official platform tracking carbon credit creation and transfers

Relational Database - Database structure using connected tables with foreign keys

Retirement - Permanent removal of credits from circulation to claim emission reductions

tCO₂/tCO_{2e} - Tonnes of carbon dioxide (equivalent)

UNFCCC - United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

Unit Block - Sequential range of carbon credits or units with continuous serial numbers

Validation - Third-party assessment of project design and methodology

Verification - Third-party confirmation of actual emission reductions

Vintage Year - Year in which emission reductions occurred

Executive Summary

The Climate Action Data Trust (CAD Trust) was established in December 2022 as a transformative collaborative initiative, founded by the World Bank, the Singapore Government, and the International Emissions Trading Association (IETA), building upon the proven success of the World Bank's Climate Warehouse Simulation III. A not-for-profit organisation, CAD Trust links, aggregates and harmonises carbon credit data across global markets using a public, decentralised metadata infrastructure and a common data model. We foster transparency and greater interoperability to make carbon market data more accessible. In so doing, we enable market players and stakeholders from both public and private sectors to make more informed decisions and drive meaningful climate action. By September 2025, 11 major registries have connected to CAD Trust to voluntarily share their data—including 8 registries operated by independent crediting programmes (Asia Carbon Institute, Biocarbon, Cercarbono, Global Carbon Council, Gold Standard, Rainbow Registry, Tero Carbon, Verra), the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM), and 2 national registries (Bhutan, Switzerland), harmonising data on approximately 90% of all credits ever issued worldwide¹.

CAD Trust recognised the need for architectural enhancements to better reflect market needs by initiating a comprehensive data model upgrade in the first quarter of 2025. This approach featured extensive stakeholder engagement through our governance structure, a public consultation launched in June 2025, and strategic collaborations with other data standardisation initiatives including the Common Carbon Credit Data Model (CCCDM) developed by the Climate Data Steering Committee (CDSC) Secretariat as an input to the G20 Sustainable Finance Working Group, the Carbon Data Open Protocol (CDOP)², and the ISO to ensure complementarity.

CAD Trust Data Model Version 2.0 delivers comprehensive enhancements through table normalisation, creating dedicated Program, Stakeholder, Validation, Verification, and Methodology tables, enhanced geographic capabilities with robust GIS support and multiple mapping formats, complete retirement tracking with beneficiary information, robust labelling architecture for auditability, and support of Article 6.2 reporting through the addition of the

¹ Estimated in 2025 based on data on independent program and CDM issuances tracked by UNFCCC/UNEP, UC Berkeley and CarbonPlan

² Carbon Data Open Protocol. "Carbon Data Open Protocol." Accessed September 3, 2025. <https://www.cdop.info/>



UNFCCC Agreed Electronic Format (AEF) tables. While the migration to Version 2.0 will require integration with the connected registries, this effort will be comparatively simpler than the initial onboarding. CAD Trust and our technology partners will provide comprehensive support to facilitate smooth transitions and the onboarding of new registries.

This evolution positions CAD Trust, the first fully operationalised carbon credit data harmonisation platform, as essential public data infrastructure supporting the next generation of global carbon markets defined by transparency and interoperability.

This Technical Consultative note is structured as follows:

- **Section 1** introduces the Climate Action Data Trust.
- **Section 2** offers a summary of Data Model Version 1 and highlights key takeaways from three years of operations.
- **Section 3** puts the Data Model Version 2.0 in the context of the 2025 momentum for data standardization, providing an overview of its key role and strategic partnerships developed to advance common data practices in the industry
- **Section 4** details the tables of Data Model Version 2.0 and their relationships, along with the carbon credit lifecycle.
- **Section 5** explains the data fields and picklist values within each table of Data Model Version 2.0.

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1 Introduction to the Climate Action Data Trust

1.1 Organisation Background and Objectives

The Climate Action Data Trust (CAD Trust) was established in December 2022 by the World Bank, the Government of Singapore, and the International Emissions Trading Association (IETA), building upon the development of the World Bank Climate Warehouse programme³. CAD Trust is a not-for-profit organisation collaboratively governed by over 30 governments and organisations dedicated to improving access to trusted carbon market data and supporting transparent accounting toward the goals of the Paris Agreement.

Transparency and accountability are vital for efficient and trusted carbon markets that support climate action and finance. CAD Trust acts in the public interest to increase transparency, safeguard against double-counting, and build confidence in carbon markets through improving access to trusted information. We achieve this by providing and supporting a public, decentralised metadata infrastructure and a common data model that helps aggregate and harmonise data on carbon credits across compliance and voluntary markets, thereby improving interoperability between diverse registry systems. As a result, we enable stakeholders from both the public and private sectors, as well as the general public, to make more informed decisions and unlock innovation to drive meaningful climate action worldwide.

1.2 Current Platform Status and Metrics

As of August 2025, we have onboarded 8 independent crediting program (ICP) registries (Asia Carbon Institute, Biocarbon, Cercarbono, Global Carbon Council, Gold Standard, Rainbow Registry, Tero Carbon, Verra), the Clean Development Mechanism Registry, and 2 national registries (Bhutan and Switzerland). Since launch, we have harmonised data on approximately 90% of credits ever issued and have received over 3 million visits to our Data Dashboard from around the world.

³ Shiraishi, Gen August, Gemma Torras Vives, Lucas Gregory Belenky, Chandra Shekhar Sinha, Harikumar Gadde, and Seoyi Kim. *Climate Warehouse Simulation III—Final Report*. Washington, D.C.: World Bank Group, 2023

1.3 Governance Structure

CAD Trust is a non-profit, multi-stakeholder alliance that works with industry experts to co-develop solutions through clearly defined governance forums. The Council, comprising government representatives and major carbon registries, sets the strategic direction for the organisation and oversees a work programme operationalised by the Secretariat. The Board of Directors consists of representatives from founding partners (the World Bank, IETA, and the Government of Singapore). Supporting this governance structure, the User Forum and Technical Committee function as advisory bodies that provide specialised expertise and recommendations⁴.

The purpose of the Forum is to act as a market sounding board for the Council and the Technical Committee, offering input on technical, policy, and business matters. The Technical Committee comprises of data and technology providers as well as market practitioners to advise on technical development and new innovative features of the CAD Trust data model and platform.

The Secretariat has the mandate to draft and execute the work program while supporting the smooth operations of the CAD Trust and its governance.

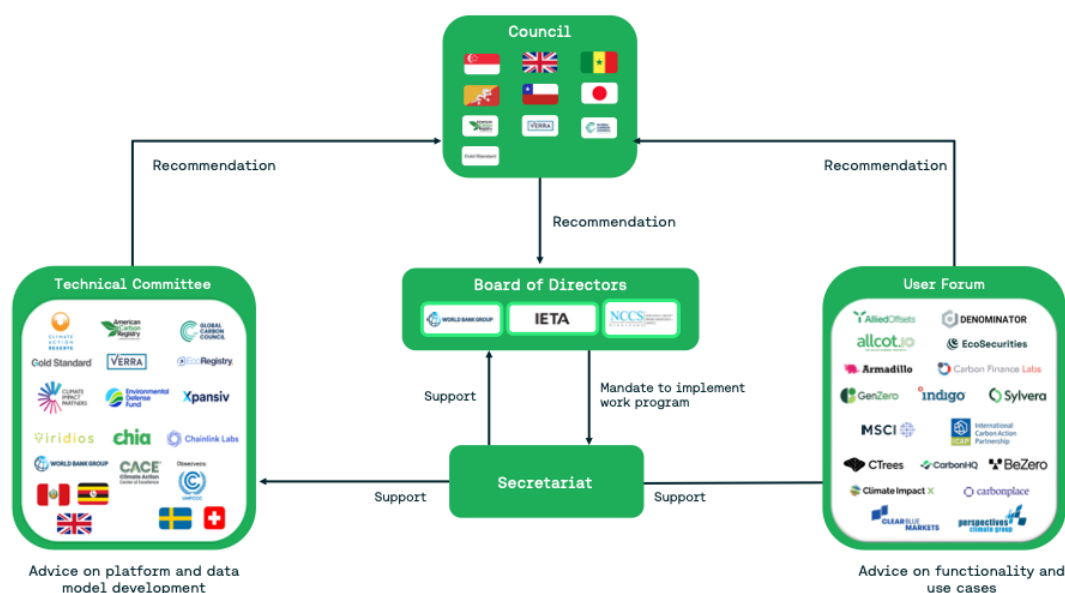


Figure 1: CAD Trust Governance Model (as of October 2025)

⁴ Climate Action Data Trust. "About." Accessed September 3, 2025. <https://climateactiondata.org/about/>.

2 Data Model Version 1

CAD Trust has operated on Data Model Version 1 since our inception, representing a foundational approach to carbon credit data standardisation. This ongoing development project is maintained in partnership with Chia Network, a Layer 1 blockchain provider capable of supporting a decentralised data layer at minimal cost and with low energy consumption.

2.1 Data Model Structure

Data Model Version 1 captures the essential elements of the carbon credit lifecycle, spanning from initial project details through to final unit status tracking. The model comprises 9 interconnected tables, namely:

- **Projects:** The central table capturing baseline project information, registry identifiers, and crediting program details.
- **Project Locations:** Geographic representation with GIS **coordinates** and country/region data.
- **Project Ratings:** Independent quality assessments and risk evaluations from rating agencies.
- **Co-Benefits:** Additional environmental and social impacts aligned with the UN Sustainable Development Goals.
- **Estimations:** Projected carbon credit units measured in tCO₂ and timelines before verification and formal credit issuance.
- **Related Projects:** Program-level groupings that connect projects within broader environmental initiatives and activities.
- **Issuances:** Verified carbon credit units formally issued by registries following successful verification processes.
- **Labels:** Regulatory classifications, certifications, and compliance designations such as CORSIA eligibility and Article 6 authorizations.
- **Units:** Individual **carbon credit blocks** with serial numbers, retirement status, ownership tracking, and lifecycle management.

These tables contain 90 distinct data fields, providing comprehensive baseline coverage of carbon credit attributes. **A key standardisation feature is the implementation of picklist values across 20 data fields.** This ensures that registries upload data in a consistent format



within their respective data fields, reducing variability and improving data quality across the platform. By establishing and maintaining this common data model, CAD Trust facilitates interoperability between carbon registries and greater comparability of carbon credits across different crediting programs. The CAD Trust Data Model Version 1 is illustrated in Appendix: **CAD Trust Data Model Version 1.**

The technical documentation and implementation details for this data model are available through our GitHub repository⁵, providing transparency and enabling technical stakeholders to understand and contribute to the platform's development.

2.2 Data Architecture and Registry Integration

Within the CAD Trust platform, each registry functions as a data owner with full control over its information uploads and periodic updates. To ensure data integrity and decentralisation, registries establish Chia observer nodes on cloud infrastructure, maintaining independent copies of the blockchain data ledger.

Figure 2 illustrates the data flow architecture where registry data flows through the internal connection (CADT API server to the Chia blockchain) from external connections (where data update hashes are distributed across the public Chia blockchain network and Data Layer files are replicated to publicly accessible cloud storage). This distributed approach enhances the overall resilience and transparency of the system, while allowing registries to maintain control over their infrastructure and data. Users can then access the MySQL database for analytics, while other CAD Trust participants receive all Data Layer files for verification and transparency purposes.

⁵ Chia Network, "CADT," GitHub repository, accessed September 7, 2025, <https://github.com/Chia-Network/cadt>.

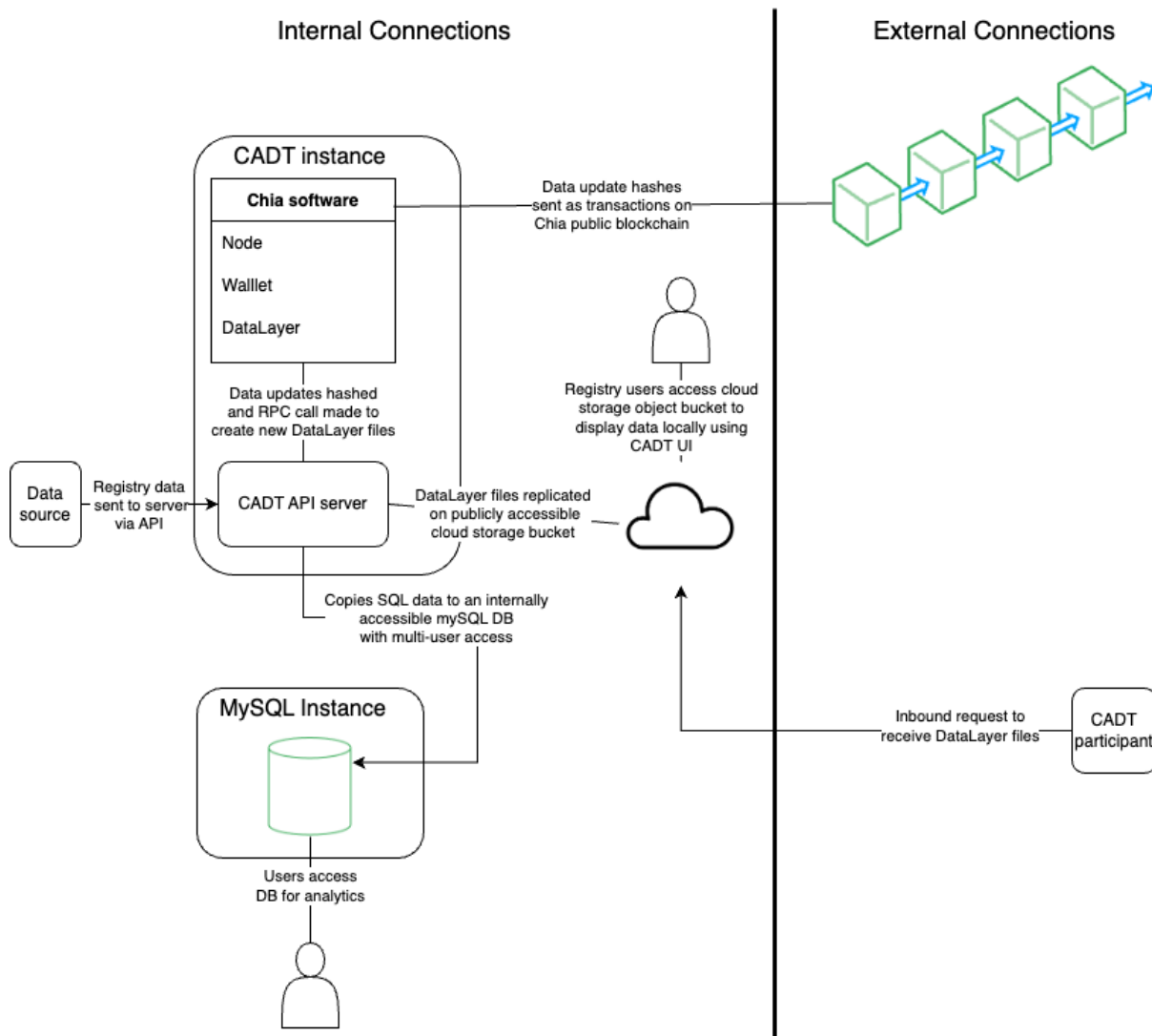


Figure 2: Chia Blockchain Data Architecture

2.3 Changes Request and Evolution

Modifications to the CAD Trust Data Model follow a rigorous approval process overseen by the Technical Committee. This governance framework ensures that changes maintain data integrity, platform stability, and alignment with broader carbon market standards while responding to evolving user needs and registry requirements.

As of October 2025, CAD Trust has processed a total of 24 change requests, with 16 implemented, 6 dropped, and 2 in progress. The approved changes have mainly consisted of additions to picklist values and field modifications. Notably, as most crediting programs use proprietary methodologies, adding their methodology values to the CAD Trust data model as picklist values is a common ask when onboarding a new registry. However, some requests



require more technical consideration as they involve fundamental modifications to the data model architecture that cannot be addressed through simple updates, such as expanding unit table data fields to capture comprehensive retirement information and establishing one-to-many relationships between verification and issuance. Some of the main learnings are summarised below and have led to the extensive upgrade of the data model to Version 2.0.

2.4 Learnings from the Data Model Version 1

Besides formal change requests from connected registries and the Technical Committee, we also received valuable feedback from the User Forum, the Double Counting Task Force we ran in 2024⁶, and engagements with potential partners and data users over the first three years of operations. This stakeholder input has helped identify key opportunities for improvement to more accurately reflect the data relationships and diverse approaches in connected registries, thereby better serving the use cases envisioned for CAD Trust. These areas include:

- The **Projects** table required refinement to better distinguish between validation and verification processes, expand the stakeholder structure beyond a single developer field, and provide greater flexibility to represent complex relationships between projects.
- The **Units** table lacked specific transaction-related data fields, including retirement dates, comprehensive transaction history, and unit beneficiary information.
- The **Methodology** structure initially accommodated a single methodology upload per project and did not capture methodology types and dates, which limited the ability to represent a project with multiple methodologies.
- The geographic representation utilised longitude and latitude coordinates, which constrained spatial analysis capabilities, valuable for carbon project assessment.

⁶ The Double Counting Taskforce comprised 30+ representatives from the CAD Trust User Forum, Technical Committee and the Council and ran over a series of meetings April-September 2024 with aim to refine the definitions of various forms of double counting risks, identify the data requirements for identifying them, and start scoping a comprehensive framework for an industry-wide solution. The learnings have informed the development of Data Model Version 2.0 and external engagements in 2025. Further materials may be published at a future date.

3 CAD Trust Data Model Version 2.0 In Context

This section elaborates on the broader context of Version 2.0 development, including the industry landscape and knowledge exchange with other ongoing data standardisation efforts, as well as the implications of these changes for connected registries and those in the pipeline.

3.1 Approach

Recognising the need for fundamental architectural improvements resulting from the learnings listed above, the CAD Trust Secretariat initiated a strategic data model upgrade in the first quarter of 2025. This effort aimed to consolidate significant enhancements into a single development cycle, improving the efficiency of deployment on the platform and across all connected registries. This collaborative approach involved extensive rounds of stakeholder engagement to establish a robust baseline that would enable us to accurately reflect the nuances between diverse registry systems within a common framework, ultimately benefiting the carbon market ecosystem. The work was led by the Technical Committee through multiple meetings from March to May 2025, with invitations extended to representatives of the User Forum, connected registries, and key programs in the pipeline.

In June 2025, we released the draft specification of the **CAD Trust Data Model Version 2.0** for public review and feedback, offering broader carbon market participants the opportunity to comment on and contribute to the proposed enhancements. Over the course of this period, we also engaged with key other stakeholders and initiatives to share our learnings and shape complementary, collaborative efforts to advance the development of common data practices in the space.

3.2 Other Efforts

The need for greater data interoperability between carbon market registries has long been recognised as a key enabler of market growth – for example, by the TSVCM⁷, IOSCO⁸, and

⁷ Institute of International Finance, "Taskforce on Scaling Voluntary Carbon Markets Report," accessed October 17, 2025, https://www.iif.com/Portals/1/Files/TSVCM_Report.pdf.

⁸ IOSCO, "Voluntary Carbon Markets: Final Report," accessed October 17, 2025, <https://www.iosco.org/library/pubdocs/pdf/IOSCOPD749.pdf>.

the World Bank⁹. CAD Trust was established to improve the landscape of fragmented information, promoting greater market transparency, integrity, and growth, including the prevention of double-counting and the accurate accounting of carbon credit impacts on a global scale, in support of the Paris Agreement's goals.

Momentum for advancing systems interoperability increased in late 2024 following the adoption of Article 6 guidance and further accelerated in 2025 under South Africa's G20 Presidency, where the G20 Sustainable Finance Working Group prioritised carbon credit data standardisation as a key enabler to unlock climate finance¹⁰. As the key public platform governing and implementing a common data model to harmonise registry data, CAD Trust was invited to contribute to several initiatives addressing these issues.

Over October 2024 – May 2025, we chaired the Data and Systems Interoperability priority area under the Carbon Markets Infrastructure Working Group (CMI WG), a collaboration between over 45 key industry actors and other organisations convened by the World Bank to produce technical guidance notes on the development of safe, interoperable carbon markets infrastructure.¹¹ The areas covered included Ecosystem Governance, Information Security, Transaction Integrity, and Digital Monitoring, Reporting and Verification (dMRV). The Data and Systems Interoperability guidance note¹² produced in collaboration with the organisations working on our priority area¹³ surveyed existing efforts and resources and recommended pathways for governments, crediting programs, and others to support the development of interoperable market infrastructure, including data standardization and considerations for Article 6. Since publication, the note has informed further market efforts, including the ICVCM's Continuous Improvement Work Programs, and brought together key initiatives working on data standardization. Over the course of this year, we have worked closely with the Climate Data Steering Committee (CDSC) Secretariat, the Carbon Data Open Protocol (CDOP), and the International Standardisation Organisation (ISO) to chart a

⁹ World Bank, "Carbon Markets Infrastructure Working Group," accessed October 17, 2025, <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/099752311072410122/pdf/IDU-69d09929-fcf3-431a-aacf-336f59929cfc.pdf>.

¹⁰ G20 Sustainable Finance Working Group, "2025 G20 SFWG Note on Agenda Priorities," February 2025, <https://g20sfwg.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/2025-G20-SFWG-Note-on-Agenda-Priorities-rev.pdf>.

¹¹ World Bank; Carbon Markets Infrastructure Working Group. 2025. <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/collections/8d23e6f1-6430-4db6-a764-c25d87cfa96>

¹² World Bank; Carbon Markets Infrastructure Working Group. 2025. Technical Guidance Note on Enhancing Data and Systems Interoperability for Carbon Markets: Current Landscape and Strategic Recommendations. <http://hdl.handle.net/10986/43272>

¹³ The sub-group members included BeZero Carbon, EcoRegistry, the Global Carbon Market Utility (GCMU), the Integrity Council for the Voluntary Carbon Market (ICVCM), ISO liaisons from TC/322 (Sustainable Finance) and TC/68 (Financial Services), Sylvera, S&P Global, Xpansiv, Verra, the World Bank; the Climate Data Steering Committee (CDSC) participated as an observer.

pathway for collaboration, technical complementarity on foundational data structures, and adoption of common data practices for various applications to mature the market and improve access to information.

We have provided input to the development of the Common Carbon Credit Data Model (CCCDM), developed by the CDSC Secretariat as an input to the G20 Sustainable Finance Working Group (SFWG).¹⁴ The CCCDM aims to identify the core data fields important across the carbon credit lifecycle, produce best practice guidelines on how to standardise them, and provide a broad set of public and private sector stakeholders with a common foundation to use or build on as they develop and evolve approaches to recording and sharing carbon credit data. We support the efforts to scale adoption of common data practices to increase transparency and interoperability of carbon markets as enablers of cross-border climate finance and the leadership of the South African G20 Presidency in bringing attention to this crucial topic.

After several rounds of technical consultations over the course of 2025, the CAD Trust Data Model Version 2.0 and the CCCDM v2.0, both released in October, have sought to mutually align on technical specifications and data structures, informed by CAD Trust's learnings of cross-registry practices, and the extensive policymaker and industry feedback collected through the SFWG and public consultations conducted by the CDSC Secretariat. As the CCCDM enters the piloting phase in 2026 and we roll out Version 2.0, we will continue to exchange learnings and explore ways to collaborate on data model development and technical alignment. We will also use the piloting phase to partner on areas where a common data model could add efficiency to carbon market operations and support regulatory oversight.

CAD Trust has also participated in the development of the Carbon Data Open Protocol (CDOP)¹⁵ since its launch in 2024. The CDOP schema launched in September 2025 covers pre-issuance data fields. Our experience in building a robust baseline of data fields enabling post-issuance comparison across diverse carbon registries has informed CDOP's policy and technical work. CDOP supports our role as a global public data infrastructure and has committed to embedding the CAD Trust Data Model Version 2.0 in its initial updates, while also building on the common foundation established by the CCCDM.¹⁶ These complementary

¹⁴ <https://assets.bbhub.io/company/sites/75/2025/06/Summary-Draft-for-Consultation.pdf>

¹⁵ co-chaired by Sylvera, RMI, S&P Global and the Global Carbon Market Utility (GCMU) as of October 2025

¹⁶ CDOP, "How Data Standardization Is Ready to Unlock Carbon Markets," accessed October 17, 2025, <https://www.cdop.info/blog/how-data-standardization-is-ready-to-unlock-carbon-markets>.

efforts should help shape a robust approach for structuring and analysing carbon data over the coming years. We will continue collaborating to reduce inefficiencies and improve access to structured data on carbon credits.

In recent years, the topic of standardising carbon credit data for applications in digital assets or sustainable finance has garnered attention at the ISO. In 2024, CAD Trust supported several engagements with ISO TC/322 Sustainable Finance Ad Hoc Group 3: FinTech in Carbon Markets. Building on this work, the Singapore Standards Council (SSC) introduced a ballot to convene a new Working Group 5 – Data Model for Carbon Credit Markets¹⁷ in 2025, aiming to develop an international standard that supports common data structures in carbon credit markets and their integration with broader financial markets. Owing to our expertise, Evan Kong, our Technical Director, was invited to be one of the project leads responsible for defining the scope and preparing the technical documentation of the proposed standard. We also advised the SSC on other ongoing work, including the CAD Trust Version 2.0, the CCCDM, and CDOP, and helped ensure it was introduced to the ISO experts to share learnings and avoid duplication of efforts. 16 countries supported the ballot, and work commenced with the TC 322 plenary in October 2025, which featured representatives from all key initiatives. The scope of the draft standard will focus on developing key fields to support carbon credit transactions, with work expected to conclude in early 2027.

Through these engagements, we have helped ensure that the momentum for data standardisation proceeds in complementary ways, preventing market fragmentation and promoting connections across different platforms and systems. Early versions of the CAD Trust Data Model Version 2.0 taxonomy were shared with all efforts as our intended new baseline. This final published version also encompasses edits on several tables and picklist values to facilitate future alignment.

Collaboration is essential for addressing systemic data fragmentation in carbon markets. In that spirit, we will maintain engagements with these initiatives and other relevant stakeholders to scale the adoption of interoperable data structures and support market development.

¹⁷ International Organization for Standardization (ISO), "ISO/TC 322 - Sustainable Finance," accessed October 17, 2025, <https://www.iso.org/committee/7203746.html>.

3.3 Article 6.2 and the Agreed Electronic Format (AEF) Template

Article 6.2 of the Paris Agreement outlines the rules for voluntary bilateral cooperation between countries to implement their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs). Parties may choose to meet their NDCs through a variety of mechanisms enabling international cooperation, including the Paris Agreement Crediting Mechanism (PACM), CORSIA, independent crediting programs, or other approaches.

One of the commonly envisioned cooperative pathways under Article 6.2 is trading authorised carbon credits as Internationally Traded Mitigation Outcomes (ITMOs). When either of the mechanisms mentioned above is used as a cooperative approach under Article 6.2, the involved Parties have reporting obligations, and the transferring (selling) Party must make a corresponding adjustment in their NDC to prevent double counting of emissions reductions. The reporting obligations are supported by the **Agreed Electronic Format (AEF)** template developed for the latest Article 6.2 guidance¹⁸ to streamline the inter-Party accounting and transparency measures in the UNFCCC's Centralised Accounting and Reporting Platform (CARP).

CAD Trust Data Model Version 2.0 is designed to support Article 6.2 reporting through the implementation of tables that replicate the AEF template. This strategic integration ensures that a government official or supporting partners can use the CAD Trust platform on a voluntary basis to aggregate data and report on authorised crediting activities within their country. This may be done either for comparison with existing registry outputs or for official AEF reporting purposes, particularly when the government does not yet have access to a functioning registry that tracks all authorised project activity. We are collaborating with major independent crediting programmes and capacity-building partners such as the World Bank Partnership for Market Implementation (PMI) and the Article 6 Implementation Partnership Centre (A6IP), with close oversight from the UNFCCC, to support this function as a complementary effort to accelerate the operationalisation of Article 6 through the enhanced provision of high-quality data into UNFCCC accounting systems and the broader market.

The AEF tables are replicated in full in our Version 2.0, following a comparable approach to that taken in the CCCDM. The linkages between them in our data model represent our

¹⁸ UNFCCC. (2023). Guidance on the implementation of Article 6.2 (Decisions 6/CMA.4 and 7/CMA.4). Retrieved from https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/cma2023_10a02E.pdf#page=2

interpretation of the guidance for the purposes of implementing it in a database or registry to produce reports aligned with the AEF template on the underlying units tracked in other registries. These provisions are subject to change based on feedback from implementing entities and the UNFCCC, represented in CAD Trust's governance as an observer.

Currently, the compliance reporting section in CAD Trust Data Model Version 2.0 is designed specifically for Article 6.2 reporting requirements. This section may be revised or extended in the future - for example, to reflect any required changes once PACM is fully operational, or to support other reporting frameworks (such as under CORSIA).

3.4 Next Steps

The transition to the CAD Trust Data Model Version 2.0 will require integration adjustments from the connected registries, who will need to remap their data to the new structure. The development effort required to adapt to the new API is anticipated to be substantially less than that involved in their initial CAD Trust integration experience. Registries may utilise their existing integration expertise and infrastructure, thereby rendering the migration process more streamlined and efficient relative to the initial onboarding. Migration of onboarded registries is expected to be completed by the first quarter of 2026.

The migration process entails minor configuration modifications to the CAD Trust environment, all of which will be meticulously documented and disseminated to registries prior to implementation. Our technical team will provide comprehensive migration instructions, API documentation updates, and technical assistance to facilitate seamless transitions with minimal disruption to ongoing operations.

Following the comprehensive migration of all associated registries to Version 2.0, CAD Trust will cease maintenance and support for Version 1 to concentrate resources on further developing the enhanced platform capabilities. Moving forward, all registries shall utilise CAD Trust Data Model Version 2.0 to establish connectivity with the CAD Trust.



4 CAD Trust Data Model Version 2.0: Data Tables Overview

This section offers a comprehensive overview of the CAD Trust Data Model Version 2.0 at the table level, showcasing how tables connect and operate together throughout the end-to-end carbon credit lifecycle described in Section 4.2. Section 4.3 further details entity-level relationships, including one-to-many and many-to-many associations between data entities.

4.1 Data Tables

The **CAD Trust Data Model Version 2.0** can be organised into two categories that reflect the different stages of carbon credit lifecycle. Each category serves a distinct functional purpose while maintaining interconnected relationships that ensure comprehensive data integrity and traceability throughout the carbon market ecosystem.

4.1.1 Baseline Data Tables

While several fundamental baseline tables remain consistent with CAD Trust Data Model Version 1, the CAD Trust Data Model Version 2.0 incorporates enhancements and supporting tables aimed at improving data granularity and tracking capabilities.

Data Tables common to both CAD Trust Data Model Version 1 and 2.0:

- Project
- Location
- Rating
- Co-benefits
- Estimations
- Issuances
- Labels
- Units

Although these tables maintain the same structure, many contain modified or additional data fields to support enhanced functionality, which will be illustrated further in Section 5: **Data Model Version 2.0: Data Field Specifications**.



CAD Trust Data Model Version 2.0 Enhancements:

- **Stakeholders:** Key project participants including developers, owners, and consultants with distinct roles and responsibilities.
- **Methodologies:** Carbon methodologies with version control and implementation tracking, supporting multiple methodologies per project.
- **Validations:** Third-party validation processes, validation body information, and credit period tracking, separated from the project table in CAD Trust Data Model Version 1.
- **Verifications:** Third-party assessment processes and verification body information, separated from issuance tables in CAD Trust Data Model Version 1 for more comprehensive lifecycle tracking.
- **Programs:** Program-level groupings that connect projects within broader environmental initiatives and frameworks

These tables establish the primary data foundation upon which all other system components depend. This category also encompasses detailed supporting information that enriches project context and ensures comprehensive documentation, including third-party validation and verification processes, credit generation estimates, ratings, sustainable development co-benefits, and credit labelling for eligibility and authorization tracking. The baseline tables are illustrated in the Appendix: **CAD Trust Data Model Version 2.0 – Baseline Tables**.

4.1.2 Article 6.2 AEF Data Tables

These tables address international compliance requirements under the Paris Agreement's Article 6.2 framework, including managing submission records, authorization tracking, action histories, **ITMO (Internationally Transferred Mitigation Outcomes)** holdings, and authorized entity registries. Further details on the AEF table structure and implementation are explained in the Deep Dive Section: **Agreed Electronic Format (AEF) Tables**.

4.2 Carbon Credit Lifecycle

The data tables are best understood in tandem with the carbon credit lifecycle. For ease of reference, this document outlines a **simplified carbon credit lifecycle in four phases – Project-level Details, Validation and Verification, Post-issuance Operations and Article 6 Compliance Reporting**. **Figure 3** illustrates how CAD Trust data tables map to these phases of the carbon credit lifecycle, demonstrating the comprehensive data structure that

supports end-to-end traceability. **Baseline data tables support Phase 1 through 3, covering project registration through post-issuance operations, while AEF tables specifically address Phase 4 of Article 6 compliance reporting requirements.**

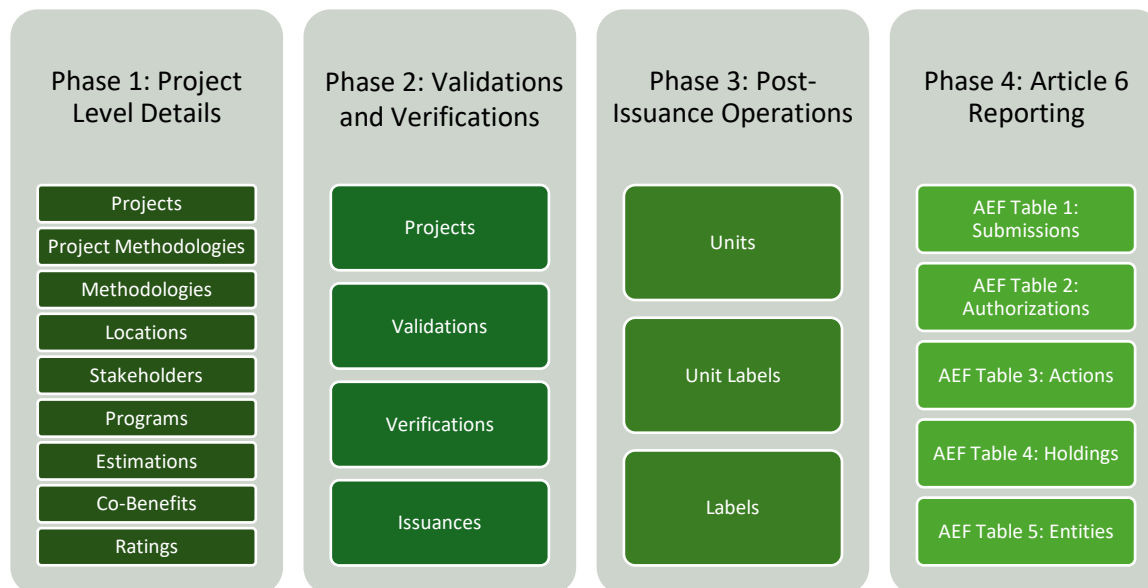


Figure 3 CAD Trust Data Model in relation to the carbon credit lifecycle

• Phase 1: Project-Level Details

The lifecycle starts with project registration, where a project developer registers their carbon crediting projects in registry systems. This stage records essential project information such as geographic locations, approved methodologies, key stakeholders, and estimated credit generation, along with optional data like co-benefits aligned with the SDGs and third-party ratings that add further project context. These core elements set the project framework and baseline parameters for later lifecycle stages.

• Phase 2: Validation and Verification

Independent third-party bodies validate project designs and verify actual emission reductions through rigorous assessment processes. This phase separates **validation (confirming project methodology and design)** from **verification (confirming actual emission reductions occurred)**, with each process maintaining detailed records of assessment bodies, dates, and credit periods. Following successful verification, verified emission reductions are formally converted into issuance records, which serve as the foundation for creating tradable carbon credit units.



- **Phase 3: Post-Issuance Operations**

Once issued, carbon credits become tradeable units with unique serial identifiers organised into **unit blocks**. This phase represents CAD Trust's primary value proposition, where the platform **tracks unit status changes, ownership transfers, label assignments for regulatory compliance** (such as CORSIA eligibility), **and retirement information to ensure market transparency and prevent double-counting**. The granular tracking of individual unit blocks enables comprehensive lifecycle management from issuance through retirement.

- **Phase 4: Compliance Reporting under Article 6.2**

Credits may be eligible for use in international cooperative approaches under Article 6.2 of the Paris Agreement. For credits involved in international cooperative approaches under the Paris Agreement, the tables capture Article 6.2 reporting requirements. **These tables track submissions, authorizations, actions, holdings, and authorized entities, enabling seamless integration with UNFCCC reporting frameworks and supporting bilateral cooperation mechanisms between countries.**

The full credit lifecycle is relevant for both independent crediting programmes and government- or UNFCCC-run schemes, such as the CDM or the Paris Agreement Crediting Mechanism (PACM). In certain jurisdictions, credits may also be utilised within compliance schemes, such as carbon taxes or emissions trading systems, and can support international compliance frameworks, like CORSIA or bilateral agreements pursuant to Article 6. Having the compliance reporting part of the lifecycle in the CAD Trust data model will help CAD Trust users aggregate, process, and audit this data in formats relevant for these frameworks.

4.3 Data Relationships

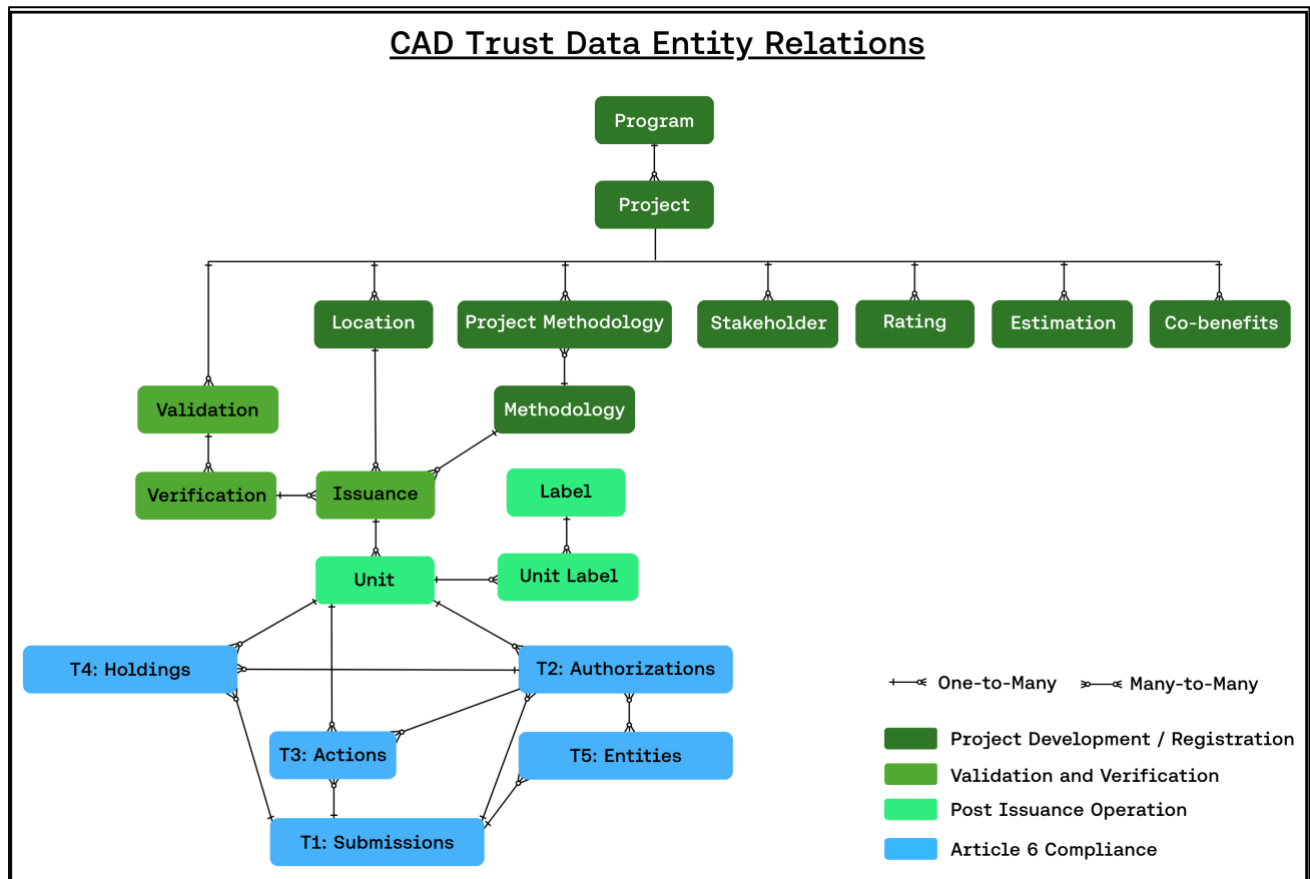


Figure 4 CAD Trust Data Entity Relations

The lifecycle of carbon credits is intricate, involving several interconnected stages, including project development, validation, verification, issuance, and retirement. These relationships range from simple one-to-many connections to complex many-to-many associations. The CAD Trust Data Model Version 2.0 features a relational structure that effectively captures these complex interdependencies. **Figure 4** depicts these relationships and their mapping within the data model architecture.

The model fundamentally defines Program as the top-level container that can include multiple projects associated with a program activity. Each project is linked to key attributes through one-to-many relationships, such as location, stakeholder, co-benefit, validation, and verification entities. The system utilises linking tables to manage situations where one item



is related to multiple others. For example, a single project may employ several different methodologies, or a unit block may have multiple labels.

Following verification, the project can create issuance records that contain the credit issuance details, and each issuance can be mapped to many unit blocks, establishing a clear one-to-many relationship where a single bulk issuance generates multiple tradeable unit blocks.

Another key relationship is linking AEF Table 2: Authorization to a unit block. This ensures that the units can be tracked in the system and connected to the rest of the Article 6-related tables. This connected approach ensures that information remains accurate and consistent, while being flexible enough to work with different registry systems and prevent double-counting.

5 Data Model Version 2.0: Data Field Specifications

This section provides detailed technical information that complements the overview presented in the previous section. It includes standardised picklist values that ensure data consistency, examines the specific data fields within each table, describes the data types and validation rules applied to each field, and outlines the relational connections that link tables together to form the complete data model architecture. Section 5.3 and beyond provide detailed specifications for data fields in each table of CAD Trust Data Model Version 2.0.

5.1 Standardised Picklist Values

CAD Trust Version 2.0 implements standardised picklist values across 20 data fields. This standardisation approach harmonises data field values using common terminology and classifications, facilitating data uploading in an efficient manner and ensuring data consistency across all connected registries. It also reduces the potential for data entry errors, such as typos or stray spaces that commonly occur in free-form text fields, thus improving overall data quality and reliability.

Examples of these standardised picklist values include unit status (Issued, Held, Retired, Cancelled, Expired, Buffer, Inactive, Rejected), project status (Listed, Registered, Validated, Verified, Certified, Completed, Withdrawn, Inactive, Rejected), and unit type (Reduction, Removal, Avoidance). They also encompass project sector classifications, project type categories, metrics for projects and units, choices for validation and verification bodies, standards for methodology names, validation type definitions, country codes for locations, formats for location map types, stakeholder classifications, label categories, co-benefit identifiers, and rating type specifications. Additionally, comprehensive Article 6 compliance classifications are included, covering AEF authorization sectors, activity types, authorization metrics, purposes, first transfer definitions, action types, and mitigation type categories.

The standardised picklists are continuously refined and updated through the Technical Committee as carbon markets evolve, ensuring that the controlled values remain relevant to new regulatory requirements and industry best practices. By implementing this, CAD Trust eliminates data entry inconsistencies, enables meaningful data aggregation and analysis

across different registries, and supports seamless integration while maintaining compatibility with reporting frameworks. The complete list of standardised picklist values is available in the master spreadsheet in Section 6: **Link to Data Model Version 2 Spreadsheet**.

5.2 Key Data Field Design Considerations

To ensure consistency and interoperability across different carbon registries, the CAD Trust Data Model provides a standardised approach for capturing information:

Standardisation	Description
Column Name	The human-readable name of the field as it appears in the database table.
API Field Name	The exact identifier used in the API, typically written in camelCase format.
Data Type	Defines the kind of information stored in the field (e.g., String, GUID, Date, URL, Picklist), ensuring consistency and validation.
Required/Optional	Specifies whether the field must always be filled in (Required) or can be left blank depending on context (Optional).
User Input/Inferred	Indicates whether the value is provided directly by the user (e.g., project name) or automatically generated by the system (e.g., IDs, timestamps).
Description	Explains the role and purpose of the field, including how it should be interpreted or applied.
AEF Reporting	Notes whether the field is relevant for Article 6 AEF reporting requirements.
Sample Value	Provides an example entry to guide users on the expected format or type of data.



5.3 Project-Level Data Normalisation

The Project table functions as the central element of the CAD Trust data model, representing the main entry point where every carbon project begins its lifecycle. This comprehensive table includes numerous data fields that capture essential project information, such as baseline project details, registry identifiers, crediting programme specifications, project names, and descriptions, providing users who access CAD Trust data with a complete project context. The project table also features a project link data field that references the original registry sources.

Data belonging to the project level has been strategically separated into sub-project related tables to ensure optimal database modularity and performance while maintaining clear relational connections.

- **Stakeholder Table**

The Project table establishes direct parent-child relationships with the Stakeholder table, recognising that carbon projects typically involve multiple participants, including developers, owners, and consultants, each with distinct roles and responsibilities in project implementation.

- **Program Table**

The data model includes a separate Program table that provides detailed program-level information, allowing projects to be grouped and managed within larger programmatic frameworks. The Program table captures essential program data, including program names, registry information, program IDs from registries, optional program IDs, and comprehensive program descriptions that define the scope and context of broader environmental initiatives.

5.4 Project Locations

CAD Trust implements a Location table designed to provide comprehensive and flexible geographic representation capabilities. This enhanced structure extends beyond basic geographic data to offer robust spatial analysis and mapping functionality. The Location table maintains standardised country information through controlled picklists while incorporating



regional specifications and comprehensive Geographic Information System (GIS) data fields. These fields include precise latitude and longitude coordinates that enable accurate project positioning and spatial reference.

The most significant enhancement to the Location table is the addition of a location map type data field, which now supports various mapping formats. This field accommodates various industry-standard geographic data formats, including but not limited to GeoJSON, KML (Keyhole Markup Language), and Shapefile. This format flexibility is enhanced by the location map file link functionality, which provides direct access to detailed spatial data files. This capability enables users to access comprehensive geographic boundaries, detailed project site information, and advanced spatial analysis tools that were previously impossible with simple coordinate-based systems. The enhanced Location table structure transforms basic geographic reference into a powerful spatial data management system, supporting complex project mapping requirements while maintaining data accessibility and integration capabilities.

5.5 Methodologies and Project Methodologies

The Methodology table captures essential information, including methodology codes, names, versions, methodology dates, and direct links to source documentation. This centralised approach ensures consistent methodology reference and maintains robust version control across the platform, which is particularly important as methodologies are frequently updated over time to reflect evolving standards and best practices. This architectural design addresses previous system constraints where projects were limited to referencing a single methodology, now enabling projects to employ multiple methodological frameworks simultaneously.

Projects and methodologies are connected through a **many-to-many** mapping system, which is implemented via the Project Methodology table. This relational structure provides flexible methodology assignment while maintaining data integrity and detailed tracking capabilities across all methodology versions and updates. The enhanced structure offers several key advantages:

- **Multi-methodology Support:** Projects can implement various complementary methodologies as needed.



- **Dynamic Version Management:** As methodologies are updated over time, the system maintains historical versions while supporting transitions to newer standards.
- **Detailed Specification Tracking:** The specific requirements and parameters of each methodology are maintained independently across all versions.
- **Implementation Timeline Management:** The system tracks when and how each methodology version is applied throughout the project lifecycle.
- **Update Compatibility:** Projects can seamlessly adapt to methodology updates without losing historical implementation data.

5.6 Validations and Verifications

Validation and verification information are separated into two dedicated tables to reflect the complexity of these distinct processes. Previously, in Data Model Version 1, validation was included in the Project table, and verification was included in the Issuance table.

- The Validation table includes registry-provided validation IDs, validation types through standardised picklists, validation body information, validation dates, and specific credit period start and end dates for each validation event.
- The Verification table captures registry-provided verification IDs, verification start and end dates, verification body information through standardised picklists, and maintains relationships with both projects and their associated validations.

This enhanced dual-table structure supports projects with multiple validation and verification events throughout their lifecycle, provides clear differentiation between validation and verification processes, maintains detailed audit trails for compliance and transparency requirements, and enables proper tracking of the sequential relationship between validation and verification activities.

5.7 Issuances and Units

CAD Trust enables post-issuance carbon credit tracking by connecting the Issuance table and Unit table, thereby **capturing the complete journey from verified emission reductions to tradable carbon credit units**. This two-table architecture enables efficient



management of large credit volumes while maintaining granular traceability and preventing double counting across carbon markets.

- **Issuances Management**

The Issuance table serves as a critical component in the carbon credit lifecycle, capturing verified carbon units officially issued by registries after successful verification. Each issuance record contains a system-generated primary key (CAD Trust Issuance ID), along with **registry-specific issuance identifiers and optional issuance dates** that mark when units began to be issued under a single event. The table ensures strong relational integrity via foreign key links to verification, methodology, and location tables, making it possible to trace **each issuance back to its verification event, applied methodology, and geographic origin**. This detailed linking structure supports comprehensive audit trails and upholds data consistency throughout the entire carbon project ecosystem.

- **Unit Blocks Architecture**

The Unit table in CAD Trust represents **a unit block system** that organises carbon credits into **continuous start and end block ranges that correspond to unit counts, rather than individual unit records**. This block-based approach efficiently manages large volumes of carbon credits while maintaining precise tracking capabilities aligned with current registry practices. As child entities of issuance records, multiple unit blocks can be associated with a single issuance. This multi-block structure is particularly beneficial when a portion of units within an issuance undergoes transactions, retirement, or other status changes, as it allows for precise tracking of different unit block without affecting the entire issuance. Additionally, **a unit block can be broken down into smaller blocks**. For instance, when only part of a block is traded or retired, new unit blocks are created to track these smaller segments without affecting the parent issuance structure.

- **Unit Table Data Fields**

The Unit table maintains detailed unit lifecycle information through comprehensive status tracking that includes **unit type classifications** (reduction, removal, etc.), vintage years, and specific metrics used for measurement (kWh, MW, tCO₂, etc.). The system also captures ownership information (optional), providing transparency in unit custody and transfer

processes, while maintaining direct URL links to registry sources for seamless verification and additional unit details.

Version 2.0 addresses a key limitation in Version 1, where units could only be marked as "retired" without any additional context or details. With the addition of dedicated fields including unit retirement details, unit retirement beneficiary information, the structure captures more comprehensive retirement information. The system incorporates ITMO reference identification based on UNFCCC guidance outlined in Decision 6/CMA.4¹⁹, enabling full traceability of credit-related activities that are part of international cooperative approaches under Article 6 of the Paris Agreement.

5.8 Labelling and Unit Labels

The Label table captures essential label identifiers through free-form text fields that can accommodate any label name or description as uploaded by the registry, including common examples such as "CORSIA," "CCP," "Singapore Tax Eligible," or "China ETS Eligible." The table also features a label type data field that utilises a standardised picklist with predefined values such as "Certification," "Article 6 - Endorsement," "Article 6 - Letter of Qualification," "Article 6 - Authorisation," and "Article 6 - Letter of Approvals," ensuring clear categorisation to assist in tracking registry labels aligned with various regulatory frameworks and compliance requirements across international carbon markets. The label type data field picklist structure will enable future enhancements to picklist values based on market needs. The enhanced structure includes supporting documentation through label links and temporal tracking via label dates that indicate when labels become effective or expire, ensuring comprehensive lifecycle management of label validity and accessibility.

- **Connecting Labels to Units Through Unit Label Mapping Table**

The unit label mapping table creates a precise **many-to-many relationships between labels and unit blocks**, enabling granular tracking of label applications at the most detailed level of carbon credit management. This mapping system includes label unit date fields that capture when specific labels are assigned to unit blocks and label unit description fields that provide contextual information about the purpose and circumstances of each label application.

¹⁹ United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, "Decision -/CMA.4," accessed September 7, 2025, https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/cma4_auv_cma13_PA6.2.pdf



The table architecture supports multiple labels per unit block while maintaining detailed audit trails of all label assignments and modifications throughout the unit lifecycle.

- **Tracing Unit Label Back to Project**

As unit labels are directly associated with unit blocks that maintain parent-child relationships throughout the entire data hierarchy, units are connected back to projects via a clear relational pathway: units link to issuances, issuances link to verifications, and verifications link directly to projects. **This creates an unbroken chain ensuring data integrity and traceability.** This comprehensive connectivity ensures that stakeholders can trace any labelled unit back to its originating project while maintaining visibility into all regulatory classifications, certifications, and approvals that apply to specific carbon credit blocks throughout their entire lifecycle.

5.9 Optional Project Related Components

5.9.1 Ratings

The Rating table captures **evaluation scores and assessment data from various rating agencies and standards, providing project quality and performance metrics.** This table captures independent assessments towards the project. The structure captures rating type using standardised picklists, records the rating value with a free-form text field that captures ratings in their original formats, and provides direct links to detailed rating reports. This flexible approach accommodates traditional letter-grade systems (AAA, A, B, C, D), numerical scales, or hybrid methods used by different rating agencies, ensuring that ratings from different providers are accurately represented without forcing conversion to decimal equivalents that could misrepresent the original assessment methodology. Currently, CAD Trust systems will only capture values in this field if they are tracked in the underlying registry and passed through to CAD Trust.

5.9.2 Estimations

The Estimation table stores **project forecasting data representing projected carbon units before credits are verified and issued by registries.** This table captures estimation periods defined by start and end dates, expected unit counts for specific timeframes, and reference numbers from registries. These estimations serve as forward-looking projections that support project planning, investment decision-making processes, and market analysis by providing



anticipated carbon credit volumes, implementation timelines, and expected outcomes throughout the project lifecycle before actual verification and issuance occur. Currently, CAD Trust systems will only capture values in this field if they are tracked in the underlying registry and passed through to CAD Trust.

5.9.3 Co-benefits

The Co-benefit table outlines **additional environmental and social benefits** associated with carbon projects, extending beyond the reduction of carbon emissions. Specifically, it tracks alignment with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), as documented in the program registries. Currently, CAD Trust systems will only capture values in this field if they are tracked in the underlying registry and passed through to CAD Trust.

5.10 Agreed Electronic Format (AEF) Tables

The integrated AEF structure replicates five essential tables from the official AEF template: **Submission (T1), Authorizations (T2), Actions (T3), Holdings (T4), and Authorized Entities (T5)**. These tables provide comprehensive tracking capabilities for international transfers of mitigation outcomes, enabling seamless mapping between CAD Trust's unique identifiers, **Article 6.2 ITMO identifiers**, and underlying registry data, thereby ensuring **full traceability and compliance with internationally negotiated outcomes**.

The AEF Tables have hierarchical relationships in the CAD Trust Data Model Version 2.0:

- Submission table (T1) serves as the parent structure for all other AEF components
- Authorizations table (T2) acts as the central linking mechanism connecting Actions (T3), Holdings (T4), and Authorized Entities (T5)
- Projects and units link directly to all AEF tables through identifiers

These tables, and the relationships between them, are subject to change if the official guidance evolves and/or based on user feedback.



Appendix

[Link to Data Model Version 1 Spreadsheet](#)

[Link to Data Model Version 2 Spreadsheet](#)

The CAD Trust Data Model spreadsheets provide comprehensive technical specifications for implementation and integration. Each spreadsheet contains detailed information including all data field definitions with their corresponding data types and requirements, complete picklist values for standardised fields, picklist value definitions explaining the meaning and usage of each option, and entity relationship diagrams illustrating the connections between tables. These resources serve as the reference for registry data integration and ensure consistent data structure across all CAD Trust implementations.



CAD Trust Data Model Version 1





CAD Trust Data Model Version 2.0 – Baseline Tables





CAD Trust Data Model Version 2.0 – AEF Tables

