Gaïago credits against the Core Carbon Principles

The ten ICVCM Core Carbon Principles, in the Integrity Council's own order. This grid carries no pass or fail marking: it states what the programme does and where you verify it yourself.

CCP STATUS, AS THINGS STAND

Gold Standard holds **CCP-Eligible status at programme level**, granted by the ICVCM in March 2024. That status attaches to the Gold Standard Foundation's governance and programme rules. It does not transfer to an individual credit: the CCP label is awarded per methodology.

The **Gold Standard SOC Framework methodology has not been awarded the CCP label** and is at category-level assessment. Gaïago credits therefore do not carry the CCP label today. Assessment outcomes change, so check the current position directly at icvcm.org/assessment-status rather than relying on the date of this document.

Principle names and ordering below are reproduced from icvcm.org. The middle column is **Arka's own description of the programme, not an ICVCM determination**.

THE TEN PRINCIPLES

#	CORE CARBON PRINCIPLE	HOW THE GAÏAGO PROGRAMME ADDRESSES IT	WHERE TO VERIFY
1	**Effective governance** GOVERNANCE	Programme governed by the Gold Standard Foundation: published rules, grievance mechanism, periodic revision of standards.	Gold Standard Foundation standards library
2	**Tracking** GOVERNANCE	Gold Standard credits carry unique serial numbers on the Gold Standard Impact Registry, covering issuance, transfer and retirement. ISO credits are serialised on Carbonmark with blockchain traceability (Polygon).	Gold Standard Impact Registry; Carbonmark
3	**Transparency** GOVERNANCE	Project documentation, monitoring reports and verification reports are published on the registry. Farm-level detail, area and MRV documentation are published per farm on Arka.	Registry project page; arkaclimate.com/projects/gaiago
4	**Independent validation and verification** GOVERNANCE	Validation and verification by a Validation and Verification Body accredited by Gold Standard. ISO credits verified by an ISO-accredited body. Annual monitoring cycle.	Verification reports on the registry
5	**Additionality** EMISSIONS IMPACT	Investment and barrier analysis submitted under GS SOC 402.3. Gold Standard eligibility additionally requires Nutrigeo adoption inside a defined window; farms outside it are certified under ISO 14064-2 rather than Gold Standard.	Project Design Document, available on request
6	**Permanence** EMISSIONS IMPACT	20% of verified credits withheld as buffer. Under Gold Standard this is a centralised pool managed by the Foundation; under ISO, Gaïago withholds the same rate at project level. Farmers commit contractually to 20 years of post-programme monitoring after the 5-year transition, 25 years from entry.	Gold Standard buffer pool rules; farmer contract terms
7	**Robust quantification** EMISSIONS IMPACT	Soil organic carbon stock measured physically at the start and end of the crediting period, minimum 30 cm depth, under Annex 3 of the FAO 2020 SOC MRV protocol. Only the statistically significant increase is credited, after leakage and buffer. Satellite dMRV runs alongside but does not set the credited quantity.	GS SOC 402.3 module; monitoring reports
8	**No double counting** EMISSIONS IMPACT	Unique serialisation on both registries prevents double issuance. France does not currently authorise voluntary market credits under Article 6, so no corresponding adjustment applies to these vintages.	Registry serial records
9	**Sustainable development benefits and safeguards** SUSTAINABLE IMPACT	Gold Standard requires certified SDG contributions, assessed at design certification and verified at monitoring, principally SDG 2, 4 and 13. ISO credits document the same co-benefits through verification without the formal SDG framework.	SDG impact reporting on the registry
10	**Contribution toward net zero transition** SUSTAINABLE IMPACT	The practice change reduces synthetic input dependence and tillage rather than entrenching them, so it does not lock in a carbon-intensive production system.	GS SOC 402.3 eligibility conditions

Nicolas Bonnet · Founder, Arka
nicolas.bonnet@arkaclimate.com · arkaclimate.com/projects/gaiago

Questions buyers ask

Short factual answers to the questions that come up most often on soil carbon. Supporting documentation is available on request.

BUYER QUESTIONS

Is this a removal or an avoidance credit?

A removal. Carbon is sequestered in the soil after prebiotic application and measured on the parcel. There is no avoidance or avoidance-equivalent component under GS SOC 402.3.

What exactly does the 20% buffer protect against?

Post-issuance reversal only, meaning carbon released back to the atmosphere after credits have been issued. It does not cover pre-issuance delivery risk, that is credits never being generated. Delivery risk is handled contractually, see below.

Is the MRV measured or modelled?

Measured. Physical soil sampling at start and end of the crediting period, minimum 30 cm, under Annex 3 of the FAO 2020 SOC MRV protocol, analysed in a laboratory. Satellite dMRV (Regrow) runs alongside for continuous monitoring but does not determine the credited quantity.

What is the ICVCM CCP status?

Gold Standard is a CCP-Eligible programme at programme level (ICVCM, March 2024). The Gold Standard SOC Framework methodology has not been awarded the CCP label and is at category-level assessment, so these credits do not carry the label today. Current position at icvcm.org/assessment-status.

How are co-benefits documented?

Gold Standard credits carry independently verified SDG reporting, principally SDG 2, 4 and 13, assessed at design certification and verified at monitoring. ISO credits document the same co-benefits through the verification process, without the formal SDG framework.

Who is the counterparty?

Gaïago Financement, SASU, Saint-Malo. The purchase agreement is signed directly between the buyer and Gaïago. Arka acts as mandated commercial agent, non-exclusively, and is not a counterparty to the sale.

How is permanence handled?

Two mechanisms. A 20% buffer is withheld from saleable volume. And farmers commit contractually to 20 years of post-programme monitoring after the 5-year transition, so soil carbon stock is monitored for 25 years from entry.

How is additionality demonstrated?

Investment and barrier analysis under GS SOC 402.3, submitted in the Project Design Document. Gold Standard eligibility also depends on when the farm adopted Nutrigeo; farms outside that window are certified under ISO instead.

Where do these credits sit under SBTi V2?

Soil carbon is a short-lived removal. The standard opens Ongoing Emissions Responsibility to removals “whether removals are long-lived or not” (section A.9), and criterion C45.5 keeps short-lived removals eligible for the Removal Mandate across the whole share not subject to the durability requirement.

They do not serve the long-lived portion, which from 2035 covers at least 10% of covered emissions attributable to long-lived GHGs (C45.4).

What happens if a forward vintage under-delivers?

The exposure is structurally small. Arka's allocation is 21,543 tCO_2e against programme production of 267,825, around 8%. Programme output would have to fall very far before the allocation itself came up short.

Beyond that, allocation is first-committed, first-served, and remedies follow the IETA Primary ERPA v1.0 framework: delivery from a later monitoring cycle, replacement cost compensation, or pro-rata refund of advance payments.

Gold Standard or ISO 14064-2, what differs?

The same farms, the same soil sampling protocol and the same 20% buffer rate underlie both. What differs is the certification framework and registry: Gold Standard credits sit on the Impact Registry with certified SDG reporting and a centrally managed buffer pool; ISO credits sit on Carbonmark with a buffer held at project level by Gaïago.

What documentation is available for due diligence?

Project Design Document, VVB verification reports, registry issuance records, ISO verification statement, MRV protocol documentation, farm map, co-benefits documentation, terms of sale and buffer contribution details. Available from Gaïago through Arka on request.

Nicolas Bonnet · Founder, Arka
nicolas.bonnet@arkaclimate.com · arkaclimate.com/projects/gaiago