

## Social Carbon - Validating and certifying the sustainable development generated by a CDM project

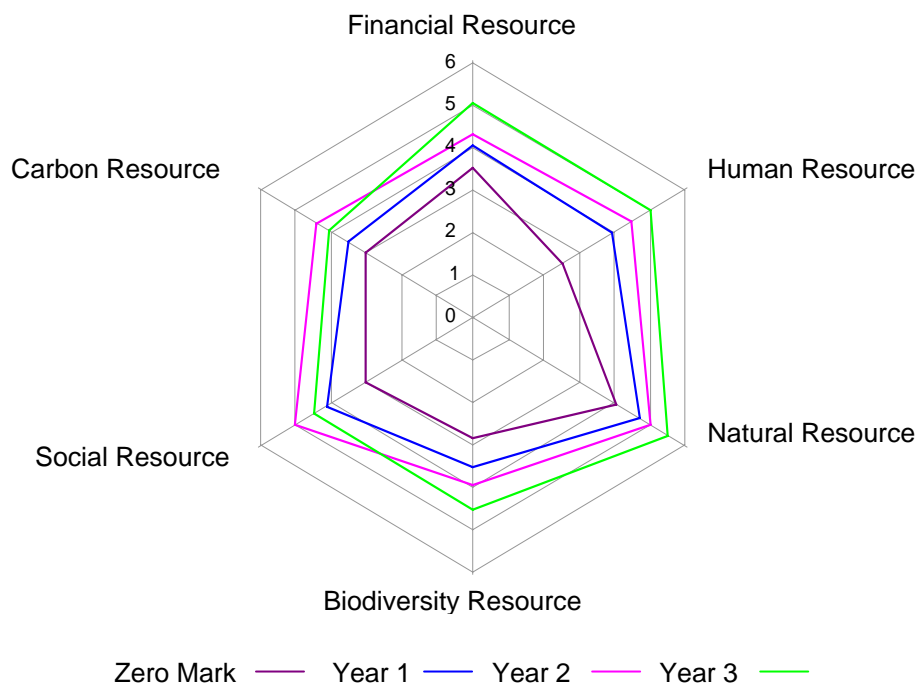
The Kyoto Protocol stipulates (article 12) that, besides helping the Annex I parties in meeting their targets cost-effectively, the CDM must help developing countries achieve sustainable development. The ultimate aim is that this process could eventually lead to sustained economic growth while facilitating the eradication of poverty. However the Protocol establishes that the assessment of sustainable development is reserved for the Designated National Authority (DNA) of each host-country, it does not establish how the DNAs will evaluate that one project is really contributing for the sustainable development of the host-country.

The parameters of sustainable development considered under the Social Carbon methodology make use of the definition of sustainable livelihoods originally developed by Robert Chambers and Gordon Conway in 1992<sup>1</sup> and slightly modified by Scoones<sup>2</sup> as an integrating concept that links equity, capability and sustainability. The methodology consists of an evaluation of the project developed, the community involved and the relationship between both through six indicators: Biodiversity Resources, Natural Resources, Financial Resources, Human Resources, Social Resources and Carbon Resources (see the table below).

In conceptualizing the Social Carbon methodology, a visual representation in hexagonal form was drawn up, showing the project development appraised in all six assessment areas with zero being the lowest score through to six representing the perfect scenario. The assessment of the indicators evolution along the years is realized through an annual diagnosis of the project's activities. When modifications occur in the company and in the community's activities due to the project, the lines move altering the polygon that was created throughout the years (see the figure below).

There is no doubt that exist a high emphasis on the environmental return of CDM projects in financial terms. The Social Carbon methodology aim is to ensure that this return is contemplated in social terms and carried through to the communities, generating a real sustainable development and consequently achieving the CDM objective.

**Graphic Illustration: Social Carbon Evolution from Zero Mark to Year 5**



<sup>1</sup> Chambers, Robert and Gordon Conway. 1992 Sustainable Rural Livelihoods: Practical Concepts for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Institute of Development Studies, Discussion Paper 296. Brighton: IDS.

<sup>2</sup> Scoones, I. 1998 Sustainable Rural Livelihoods: A framework for analysis. IDS working paper n° 72. Brighton: IDS.

### Sustainability Indicators – Social Carbon Methodology

<b>Biodiversity Resources</b>	The species, ecosystems and genes which make up the biological diversity of a given region. Relevant aspects of this component are: the integrity of natural communities, the way humans use and interact with biodiversity, the degree of conservation, the pressures and threats imposed on native species and the existence of high-priority conservation areas or conservation “hotspots”.
<b>Natural Resources</b>	The natural resource stocks (soil, water, air, etc.) and environmental services (soil protection, maintenance of hydrological cycles, pollution sinks, pollination, etc.) from which resources for livelihoods are derived.
<b>Financial Resources</b>	The basic capital (cash, credit/debt, savings and other economic assets) which is available to people and which provides them with different livelihood options.
<b>Human Resources</b>	The skills, knowledge, ability to work and good health that people have. Taken together, these become fundamental for the successful pursuit of different livelihood strategies.
<b>Social Resources</b>	The social resources (networks, social duties, social relations, relationships of trust, affiliations, community associations, etc.) upon which people draw when pursuing different livelihood strategies.
<b>Carbon Resources</b>	Refer to the type of carbon management being practiced, which may be categorized as sequestration, substitution, or conservation.

The Social Carbon concept and its applications are being described in the Climate L network. For further information and past articles please visit the Instituto Ecológica website: [www.ecologica.org.br](http://www.ecologica.org.br) or contact Maria Fernanda Gebara: [meriafernanda@ecologica.ws](mailto:meriafernanda@ecologica.ws) .