

# NEWS RELEASE



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## ESMC is the First US Market Program to Achieve Multiple Milestones

*The Ecosystem Service Market Consortium's (ESMC) recently launched Eco-Harvest market program is the first to reach pilot certification under the Value Change Initiative in the US. ESMC's program achieved project design certification, which means it aligns with the Value Change Initiative Guidance<sup>1</sup>. A subset of enrolled Eco-Harvest producers were also verified to show the reported soil carbon removals and greenhouse gas (GHG) reductions are materially correct, making ESMC's program the first Value Chain Intervention to reach this milestone of combined validation and verification in the US.*

*"ESMC is excited to achieve these significant milestones with our members and partners," said ESMC's Executive Director Debbie Reed. "It confirms to buyers and sellers and all stakeholders that our science-based, standards-based market program can meet the rigor and requirements of independent third-party validation and verification. These achievements are another success for ESMC and our non-profit collective engagement supply chain program. We are proud of our team and our members for their participation and contributions that led to this latest program achievement."*

Brought forward for pilot certification under the Value Change Initiative, ESMC's *Regenerative Cropland Program* is designed to enhance soil organic carbon removals and reduce GHG emissions for corn, soy, wheat, and alfalfa producers in four ESMC regions: the Midwest Corn/Soy Belt, Northern Great Plains, Southern Great Plains, and Great Lakes regions.

This certification applies to ESMC's recently launched Eco-Harvest market program. The objective of pilot certification is to first validate that the project design, protocol, and quantification approach for calculating GHG emission reductions and carbon removals are aligned to the Value Change Initiative Guidance. The reported GHG impacts from validated interventions can then undergo third-party verification, providing assurance that the project was implemented as designed and that it achieved what it intended to accomplish.

Through the process of pilot certification, ESMC has aligned its program to the Value Change Initiative Guidance. This milestone will allow ESMC to continue to grow its Eco-Harvest market program and equips the program to undergo annual verification moving forward. Annual verification is important because ESMC's Eco-Harvest program is designed to align with annual Scope 3 GHG inventory accounting cycles and corporate reporting.

Pending the finalization of the GHG Protocol's Land Sector and Removal Guidance and subsequent alignment of the Value Change Initiative Guidance, verification of ESMC's program will provide assurance that the verified GHG impacts are materially correct and can be used to show progress towards a reporting company's science-based climate mitigation targets.

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<sup>1</sup> [Value Chain \(Scope 3\) Interventions – Greenhouse Gas Accounting & Reporting Guidance \(dated Sept. 2018\)](#)

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## About the Ecosystem Services Market Consortium

ESMC/ESMRC is a non-profit public private partnership that is transforming decarbonization along the agricultural supply chain through collective action. Our 70+ member organizations spanning the agricultural supply and value chains have collaboratively invested, tested, and launched a harmonized, standardized ecosystem services market for agricultural supply chains.

Eco-Harvest, ESMC's voluntary market program, is an end-to-end digitized solution to decarbonize agriculture and to meet additional natural resource needs of corporates who are making significant investments and operational changes to achieve standards-based, reportable outcomes documenting their progress annually. The program incentivizes, quantifies and verifies (through independent third party experts) carbon, greenhouse gas (GHG) and water outcomes annually, paying farmers from the sale of scope 3 outcomes (credits) to corporates.

[www.ecosystemservesmarket.org](http://www.ecosystemservesmarket.org)

## About SustainCERT

SustainCERT is a carbon impact verification organisation developing digital verification solutions to bring credibility to climate action.

The organization is working to disrupt the verification industry to become accessible, transparent and scalable by launching the world's first software platform to enable the digital verification of impact claims across carbon markets and value chains. Founded as an independent standalone organization in 2018 by the Gold Standard, SustainCERT's approach aligns with, and contributes to, leading international frameworks including the Sustainable Development Goals, the Greenhouse Gas Protocol.

<https://sustain-cert.com/>

## About the Value Change Initiative

The Value Change Initiative is a multi-stakeholder forum co-founded by SustainCERT and Gold Standard, working to remove barriers to address and account for Scope 3 greenhouse gas emissions to drive action at scale. The Value Change Initiative creates consensus-driven guidance, tools, and resources to help companies tackle their climate impact up and down their value chains, creating value for their business, their partners and our global society.

<https://valuechangeinitiative.com/>