General Verification Protocol Version 3.0 (GVP):
Summary of Changes from General Certification Protocol 2.0 (GCP)
August 2008

The General Verification Protocol (GVP) provides the principles, approach, methodologies, and procedures required for conducting verification activities in the California Climate Action Registry (California Registry). It is designed to support the complete, transparent, and accurate reporting of an organization's GHG emissions inventory in a fashion that minimizes the reporting burden and maximizes the benefits associated with understanding the connection between fossil fuel consumption, electricity use, and GHG emissions in a quantifiable manner. As our GVP receives broader use, we continue to receive requests for clarification and suggestions for improving our guidance. With this feedback, we will continue to add definitions, provide additional clarifications, and identify policy changes, as needed, for Board approval. Substantive changes from GCP 2.0 (July 2003) to GVP 3.0 (August 2008) are summarized below.

Overall

- **Changed "the Registry" to "the California Registry".** With the creation of The Climate Registry, which is commonly referred to as "the Registry", the California Climate Action Registry is now referred to as "the California Registry" throughout the GVP to avoid confusion between the programs/organizations.

- **Changed "certification" and "certifier" to "verification" and "verifier".** To promote consistency with international terminology, we have changed "certification" and all of its derivations to "verification". This will be updated in all of our existing protocols.

- **Changed references to the California Energy Commission (CEC) to the State of California (State).** With the Registry's expanding suite of protocols, many State of California agencies have a role in overseeing the California Registry's program and verification process; this change reflects multi-agency participation. Policy and procedures have been updated in relation to Conflict of Interest (COI) policy to remove CEC relationship and more accurately reflect the current process.

- **Changed annual reporting deadline to June 30 and annual verification deadline to October 31.** This past year, the California Registry pilot tested a June 30 reporting deadline and October 31 verification deadline for first time reporters. Based on the success of that pilot, the experience of the reporting/verification cycle over the last 4 years, and the time needed by the California Registry to conduct its final review of verified reports, we believe it

is in our members' best interest to start verification earlier. More members will successfully complete the annual process with these updated deadlines in place.

- **Updated GHG Accounting/Reporting Principles.** Being mindful of framework principles outlined in the WBCSD/WRI "Greenhouse Gas Protocol: A Corporate Accounting and Reporting Standard", considered the international policy standard for entity-wide GHG reporting, we have removed "comparability" (which is similar to our existing principle of "consistency") and added "relevance" to address a reporter's ability to select an organizational boundary approach.

- **Updated information in relation to ARB for the standard Non-Disclosure Agreement (NDA), used to protect confidentiality for State oversight of any verification.** ARB plans to assist the California Registry with oversight of verification services that are provided by third parties to ensure the quality of the third-party verification program. As part of these oversight activities, ARB may require access to confidential documentation.

- **Updated information in relation to accreditation and approval of verifiers for the California Registry.** Update to accreditation process, whereby only firms approved by the California Registry, the State, or those involved in the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) accreditation program may provide verification services to California Registry participants (or other accreditation bodies as approved by the California Registry).