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Independent Assurance Statement

To the management of:

Centre for Environmental Research and Education (CERE), S-11 Ground Floor, Jamasji Apartments,
32 Naushir Bharucha Marg (Sleater Road), Grant Road (W), Mumbai 400 007, India

Introduction

KPMG Assurance and Consulting Services LLP was engaged by Centre for Environmental Research and Education (CERE) to undertake an independent review of their carbon sequestration methodology for the Urban Afforestation Project (UAP).

Our responsibility was to provide "limited assurance" on conformance of the CERE's carbon sequestration methodology with the Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Protocol developed by World Resources Institute (WRI) and World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD).

Assurance Standards

We conducted our engagement in accordance with requirements of:

- Limited assurance procedures as per International Federation of Accountants (IFAC) International Standard for Assurance Engagements (ISAE 3410 – Assurance Engagements) on Greenhouse Gas Statement
 - A limited assurance in accordance with ISAE 3410 involves performing procedures to obtain evidence about the quantification of emission and related information in the GHG inventory calculation
 - The procedures performed in a limited assurance engagement are less in extent that for a reasonable assurance engagement

Assurance scope and level of assurance

Our scope of assurance included information on CERE's carbon sequestration methodology for the Urban Afforestation Project to suffice the requirements of Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Protocol developed by World Resources Institute (WRI) and World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD).

Specific limitations and exclusions

Our assurance process was subject to the following limitations as we have not been engaged to:

- Provide assurance on information outside the defined reporting boundary and period
- Verify CERE's financial statements & economic performance
- Verify CERE's statements that describe expression of opinion, belief, aspiration, expectation, aim or future intention and national or global socio-economic and environmental aspects provided by the CERE

Work undertaken

We planned and performed our work to obtain selected evidence, information and explanations that we considered necessary to obtain a meaningful level of assurance in relation to the above scope. The procedures we performed, which are set out in more detail below, were based on our professional judgment and included, as appropriate, inquiries, observation of processes performed, inspection of documents, evaluating the appropriateness of reporting policies and agreement or reconciliation with underlying records. We believe that the procedures we have performed and the evidence we have obtained are sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our limited assurance conclusion.

Our limited assurance procedures comprised of:

- Assessment of competency of various individuals involved in the CERE team;
- Assessment of CERE's Urban Afforestation Project manual consisting of information related to species-wise survival rate calculation vis-à-vis carbon sequestration methodology;
- Review of systems and procedures used for quantification, collation and analysis of carbon sequestration;
- Assessment of appropriateness of various assumptions, estimations and CO₂ sequestration values used by CERE for data analysis;
- Discussion with the individuals involved in the estimation of carbon sequestration; and
- Verification of backup documents on a sample basis

Conclusions

The following conclusion is based on the work performed, evidence obtained, and the scope of our assurance engagement described above.

Nothing has come to our attention to suggest that the CERE's carbon sequestration methodology for Urban Afforestation Project, is not, in all material respects, conforming to the requirements of the Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Protocol developed by World Resources Institute (WRI) and World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD).

We have provided our observations to the company in a separate management letter. These do not, however, affect our conclusions.

Independence

The assurance was conducted by a multidisciplinary team including professionals with suitable skills and experience in auditing environmental, social and economic information in line with the requirements of ISAE 3410 standard. Our work was performed in compliance with the requirements of the IFAC Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants, which requires, among other requirements, that the members of the assurance team (practitioners) as well as the assurance firm (assurance provider) be independent of the assurance client, in relation to the scope of this assurance engagement. The Code also includes detailed requirements for practitioners regarding integrity, objectivity, professional competence and due care, confidentiality and professional behaviour. We have systems and processes in place to monitor compliance with the Code and to prevent conflicts regarding independence. We apply ISQM 1 and comply with the applicable independence and other ethical requirements of the IESBA code.

Responsibilities

CERE is responsible for calculating the Carbon Sequestration of the Urban Afforestation Project. CERE is responsible for establishing and maintaining appropriate management and internal control systems and derivation of performance data reported. This statement is made solely to the Management of CERE in accordance with the terms of engagement and as per scope of assurance. Our work has been undertaken so that we might state to CERE those matters for which we have been engaged to state in this statement and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we don't accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than CERE for our work for this statement, or for the conclusions expressed in this independent assurance statement. The assurance opinion is based on the assumption that the data and information provided to us is complete and true. We expressly disclaim any liability or co-responsibility for any decision a person or entity would make based on this assurance statement. Our statement is released to CERE on the basis that it shall not be copied, referred to or disclosed, in whole or in part, without our prior written consent. By reading this assurance statement, stakeholders acknowledge and agree to the limitations and disclaimers mentioned above.



Apurba Mitra

Associate Partner

KPMG Assurance and Consulting Services LLP

27 January 2023