

February 19, 2024

## **Excluding poorest is not the answer to over-crediting**

Dear Colleagues,

We appreciate the critical examination of current stove carbon offset programs as presented in the paper "*Pervasive over-crediting from cookstove offset methodologies*" by Annelise Gill-Wiehl, Daniel Kammen, and Barbara Haya. We agree that there is an urgent need for improvement in approved methodologies, as many projects are currently over-crediting. It is crucial that new methodologies are based on conservative estimates of critical parameters such as the fraction of non-renewable biomass, stacking, or leakage. We also acknowledge that this issue extends beyond cookstove projects and affects the entire Verified Carbon Market (VCM) space.

However, we have serious concerns about some of the paper's recommendations. Firstly, recommending that "*VCM exclusively fund WHO-defined clean stoves*" may not align with the SE4All motto of Leave No-One Behind (LNOB) and pro-poor interventions in line with SDG 7 to create universal access, especially for the poorest populations who cannot afford the transition to cleaner technologies at market conditions. This vulnerable population is disproportionately impacted by climate change but bears the least responsibility.

Secondly, *prioritizing metered fuel switch projects* may not be applicable for collected fuel, which is most prevalent among the poorest populations and is unlikely to change significantly for many years. This approach could further exclude the bottom of the pyramid from benefiting from carbon finance, leaving behind a significant portion of rural households, such as in Malawi, where approximately 85% rely on collected firewood.

We recommend that carbon offset programs include interventions that help transition towards cleaner cooking solutions and deliberately incorporate appropriate, proven solutions that meet local needs. Many improved biomass stoves have demonstrated tangible local and environmental benefits and address populations that cannot afford or access market fuels such as LPG or electricity on a sustained basis.

Additionally, we advocate for building a localized understanding of cooking systems to move the sector towards true net zero and clean cooking. The cooking sector requires a high level of local customization in both GHG emissions calculation methodologies and health impact assessment methodologies.

Finally, we recommend the establishment of a working group comprising international researchers to suggest changes to methodologies and incorporate more localized, realistic values based on on-the-ground data from different geographical locations. This collaborative effort can bring emissions reduction calculations closer to reality.

Sincerely,



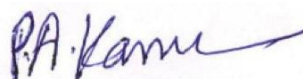
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The Cleaner Cooking Coalition(CCC) is driven by a single goal; to make sustainable cooking energy accessible for all - leaving no-one behind. Cleaner energy for cooking is essential for human wellbeing. Cooking is an integral part of daily life, community and culture. Nations of the world have committed to ensuring access to affordable, reliable, and sustainable energy for all by 2030. For more information see [www.cleanercooking.org](http://www.cleanercooking.org)