



Press Release

European Parliament fails to rule out carbon gambling: The Carbon Removal Certification Framework still risks undermining real climate action in the EU

The European Parliament's ENVI committee today voted overwhelmingly in favour of its proposal for the Carbon Removal Certification Framework (CRCF).

The proposal aims to define removals and provide methodologies that can be used for the certification of activities, products, or the widely discredited carbon offsets. The European Parliament's report not only extends the portfolio of false solutions, especially through the endorsement of bioenergy with carbon capture and storage (BECCS) and agriculture emission reduction credits, aggravating land concentration, based on techno-fixes such as feed additives or nitrogen inhibitors, but also fails to address the core issue of the proposal:

Despite acknowledging that any removals certified under the CRCF must be "a complement to the irreversible and gradual reduction of anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions across all sectors," the European Parliament has left the door open for the certificates to be used by polluters to offset their emissions. The proposed limitations and safeguards in the proposal do not change the fact that the CRCF promotes the dangerous sale of the false promise that someone, somewhere, might at sometime in the future remove a ton of carbon from the atmosphere.

Allowing these certificates to be used as offsets in EU climate policy would be a major setback and is a sure way to torch the planet. Last year, the [Real Zero Europe campaign](#) and more than [200 groups and organisations](#) called on the EU to "deliver real, deep, emissions cuts now," instead of generating false confidence in unproven technofixes. Campaigners warn that the EU is shifting the focus away from the essential work of phasing out fossil fuels, and towards speculative technologies and impermanent land sequestration.

The European Parliament plenary vote on the ENVI committee's report will take place on the 20th of November.

Quotes:

<p>ENGLISH Kelsey Perlman, Forest and Climate Campaigner, Fern: <i>"While trees are an essential part of addressing the climate crisis - allowing polluters to pay to plant them to "offset" continued emissions has been proved to be a failed climate policy. It has done nothing to restore forests and everything to enrich businesses and greenwash companies. Members of the European Parliament banned forest offsets for climate policy a decade ago for good reasons that haven't changed. They need to stand firm and focus on climate policies that work."</i></p>	<p>FRENCH Kelsey Perlman, chargée de campagne forêt et climat, Fern: <i>"Les arbres sont un élément essentiel de la lutte contre le dérèglement climatique. Mais le fait de permettre aux pollueurs de payer pour les planter afin de "compenser" leurs propres émissions s'est avéré être un fiasco. Là où aucune forêt n'a été restaurée, bien des entreprises expertes en greenwashing se sont enrichies.</i></p> <p><i>Il y a dix ans, le Parlement européen a banni les crédits carbone forestiers du fait de leur manque de crédibilité. Ce n'est pas le moment de remettre en cause cette décision, nous appelons les Eurodéputé.e.s à se concentrer sur des politiques climatiques fonctionnelles."</i></p>
<p>ENGLISH Sophie Scherger, Climate and Agriculture Policy Officer, Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy: <i>"The European Parliament squandered a key moment to ensure integrity and ambition in EU climate policy. The vote signals a dangerous willingness to certify all kinds of carbon credits, including those derived from technofixes that uphold the current industrial agriculture model instead of sparking a transformation of the agriculture sector. This framework must not be an excuse to avoid raising ambition in the CAP. Members of the European Parliament must not shy away from putting an end to failed offset markets and instead address the root causes of our polluting agriculture system."</i></p>	<p>GERMAN Sophie Scherger, Referentin für Klimä- und Landwirtschaftspolitik, Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy: <i>"Das Europäische Parlament hat einen entscheidenden Moment verpasst, um Integrität und Ambition der EU-Klimapolitik zu gewährleisten. Die Abstimmung signalisiert eine gefährliche Bereitschaft, alle Arten von Kohlenstoffgutschriften zu zertifizieren, einschließlich solcher, die das derzeitige industrielle Landwirtschaftsmodell aufrechterhalten, anstatt eine Transformation des Agrarsektors anzustoßen. Der Zertifizierungsrahmen darf kein Vorwand dafür sein, dass die GAP nicht ehrgeiziger wird. Die Mitglieder des Europäischen Parlaments sollten nicht davor zurückschrecken, gescheiterten Kompensationsmärkten ein Ende zu setzen und müssen stattdessen die Ursachen unseres umweltschädlichen Agrarsystems angehen."</i></p>
<p>ENGLISH Jean Thevenot, Farmer, European Coordination Via Campesina <i>"Carbon Removals are a danger for the future: by offering possible and hypothetical compensation, they will allow transnational corporations to continue their climate-killing practices, and will provide the world of speculative finance with a new market. Carbon agriculture in particular will have almost no use for the climate given the duration of CO2 storage, but will cause new pressure on land which is harmful for small and medium-sized farms and for generational renewal. This is what</i></p>	<p>FRENCH Jean Thevenot, Paysan, European Coordination Via Campesina <i>"Les Carbon Removals sont un danger pour l'avenir: en proposant d'éventuelles et hypothétiques compensations, ils permettront aux transnationales de poursuivre leurs pratiques climaticides, et fourniront au monde de la finance spéculative un nouveau marché. L'agriculture carbone en particulier n'aura presque aucune utilité pour le climat au vu de la durée de stockage du CO2, mais va provoquer une nouvelle pression sur le foncier néfaste pour</i></p>

<p><i>EU agriculture has. What is needed is an ambitious and fair transition policy towards peasant agroecology!"</i></p>	<p><i>les petites & moyennes fermes et pour le renouvellement générationnel. Ce dont l'agriculture de l'UE a besoin c'est d'une politique ambitieuse et juste de transition vers l'agroécologie paysanne!"</i></p>
<p>ENGLISH Gry Bossen, Forests of the World "The climate crisis calls for strong emission reductions now. We don't have time for dead ends where countries or companies buy offsets for their emissions instead of ensuring real reductions. It is therefore problematic that the European Parliament's Environment Committee today paves the way for certified carbon offsets to be sold as compensation for emissions elsewhere.</p> <p>We are also deeply concerned that this blueprint for carbon offsetting through tree planting will mean a far greater focus on production forestry than on the wild forest nature that benefits both climate and biodiversity."</p>	<p>DANISH Gry Bossen, Verdens Skove "Klimakrisen kalder på kraftige reduktioner nu. Vi har ikke tid til blindgyder, hvor lande eller selskaber køber aflad for deres udledninger i stedet for at sikre reelle reduktioner. Det er derfor problematisk, at Europa-Parlamentets miljøkomite i dag baner vejen for, at certificerede CO₂-optag kan blive solgt som kompensation for udledninger andre steder.</p> <p>Vi er desuden dybt bekymrede for, at denne blåstempling af optag gennem træplantning, vil betyde langt større fokus på produktionsskov end på den urørte skovnatur som både gavner klima og biodiversiteten."</p>
<p>ENGLISH Lise Masson, Friends of the Earth International: "Ambitious and adequate climate action should leave no space for offsets, be it via so-called 'nature-based solutions' or ludicrous technofixes. These projects have been proven time and again to harm communities and fail to deliver emission reductions. By voting in favour of the CRCF, the EU is showing its lack of climate ambition and putting the profit of big polluters above people."</p>	<p>FRENCH Lise Masson, Friends of the Earth International: "Une action climatique ambitieuse et adéquate ne laisse aucune place aux compensations, que ce soit par le biais de soi-disant "solutions basées sur la nature" ou de technofixes ridicules. Il a été prouvé à maintes reprises que ces projets nuisent aux communautés et ne permettent pas de réduire les émissions. En votant en faveur de la CRCF, l'UE montre son manque d'ambition climatique et place les profits des grands pollueurs au-dessus de l'intérêt collectif."</p>
<p>ENGLISH Lisa Tostado, Agrochemicals and Fossil Fuel Campaigner at the Center for International Environmental Law, said: <i>"Technologies to remove carbon from the atmosphere, most notably Direct Air Capture (DAC) and Bioenergy with Carbon Capture and Storage (BECCS), are not proven at scale, are extremely expensive, and present major risks to human rights, ecosystems and health. They risk locking in fossil fuel reliance and the associated environmental injustices as well as diverting away resources from far more effective and proven climate solutions like renewable energies, energy efficiency and changing production and consumption systems, including through agroecological food systems. With COP28 climate talks around the corner under a</i></p>	

Presidency hyping technofixes like DAC and BECCS, the EU's proposed framework contributes a veneer of undeserved legitimacy to those speculative technologies."