



“Stop gambling with our future”

Real Zero Europe denounces the European Parliament approved Carbon Removal Certification Framework

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Today the [Real Zero Europe campaign](#) (RZE) - a group of climate justice, environmental, food and farm groups - denounced the European Parliament approved EU Carbon Removal Certification Framework (CRCF). The campaigners made it clear that [by giving credibility to false solutions, the legislation will delay ambitious climate action at a time when the EU is not on track to meet its 2030 climate target.](#)

In an [open letter](#) on 8 April, RZE urged Members of the European Parliament to reject the CRCF. The letter outlined how the CRCF legitimises the fallacy that emissions can be “offset” by projects that claim to remove carbon from the atmosphere.

The latest Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change ([IPCC](#)) [report](#) emphasised that “[Carbon Dioxide Removals] cannot serve as a substitute for deep emissions reductions.” Despite acknowledging that removals certified under the CRCF should only “complement sustained emission reduction,” the legislation lends credibility to offsetting - which delays emissions reductions. The failure to reject the CRCF enables greenwashing and undermines real emissions cuts.

The framework proposes to certify fossil-economy-prolonging technologies such as Bioenergy with Carbon Capture and Storage (BECCS) and Direct Air Carbon Capture and Storage (DACCS), as well as land-based activities dubbed “carbon farming” which cannot guarantee permanent carbon storage. There is a real danger that the EU is shifting the focus away from the essential work of phasing out fossil fuels, instead giving undue credibility to speculative technologies and impermanent land sequestration.

At the 28th United Nations Climate Conference (COP28), the EU supported calls for a global phase out of fossil fuels. But the CRCF and reliance on speculative industrial removals in draft EU 2040 climate targets [put real climate action on the backburner](#). Already in 2022, [more than 200 climate justice and environment organisations, food and farm movements, development and faith-based groups](#) called on the EU policymakers to scrap the CRCF.

Now that the CRCF has been approved, the Commission will define the scope of use and accounting methodologies for removals certificates. Emerging discussions about [integrating CRCF credits into the EU Emissions Trading System](#) (ETS), creating a new [agriculture ETS](#), and endorsing voluntary net-zero claims in the [Green Claims Directive](#) are dangerous harbingers of what is to come.

Lili Fuhr, *Fossil Economy Program Director at the Center for International Environmental Law (CIEL)*, said:

“By endorsing the Carbon Removal Certification Framework, the European Parliament has regrettably chosen to support a path towards more climate disaster and corporate profits over people. Relying on speculative carbon dioxide removal technologies undermines the EU’s climate leadership and risks perpetuating the environmental and social injustices tied to our fossil fuel dependence. The EU must urgently realign its policies to support real climate action, not false solutions.”

Jean Thevenot, *French farmer from Confederation Paysanne*, said:

“With credits related to land, the CRCF will increase land prices, making it more and more difficult for young farmers and new entrants to access land. The CRCF is an first step to the process of financialisation of nature that serves financial interest, but neither farmers nor citizens.”

Sara Shaw, *Climate Justice & Energy Program Coordinator at Friends of the Earth International* said:

“Communities around the world are looking on in dismay as European policy makers approve the EU Carbon Removal Certification Framework: this is not just a European issue but a global one. This Framework will accelerate development of land-based and technological Carbon Dioxide Removal offset projects including in global South countries, fuelling land grabbing, food insecurity and human rights violations whilst delaying urgent climate action to reduce emissions at source.”

Sydney Vennin, *European forest Campaigner at Fern*, said:

“The claim that we could compensate for fossil fuel emissions with forest sequestration is fraudulent. We have also consistently seen that equating trees to simple carbon pumps results in forestry practices that actually destroy forests. We need to both reduce emissions and restore forests. The CRCF will help us do neither, and yet it sails through the decision making process, ahead of positive policies like the Nature Restoration Law.”

Joanna Cabello, *Senior Researcher at the the Centre for Research on Multinational Corporations (SOMO)*, said:

“Carbon offsets have no place in any real climate policy. By design, the offset industry’s main objective is to maintain business-as-usual, which already creates terrible consequences, mainly on forest-dependent populations, small farmer communities and Indigenous Peoples. It is an industry that fundamentally relies on and amplifies inequality and does nothing to solve the climate crisis; as such, it must be stopped.”

Sophie Scherger, *Policy Officer for Climate and Agriculture at the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy*, said:

“The CRCF makes a dangerous step towards allowing polluters in the agriculture sector to hide their emissions behind temporary carbon storage in soils and focus narrowly on technical efficiency gains to reduce emissions. It falls short in adapting a systemic approach to building resilience in the agriculture sector, which is critical to ensuring food sovereignty in Europe and beyond.”

Almuth Ernsting, *Co-director at Biofuelwatch*, said:

“We expect the Carbon Removal Certification Framework to lead to more investments in and subsidies for unproven and highly risky projects, including in bioenergy with carbon capture and storage (BECCS). Although nobody has ever demonstrated that they can reliably capture carbon dioxide from burning biomass, we are already seeing companies such as RWE in the Netherlands dangle the prospect of future BECCS in front of policymakers in order to extract new subsidies for keeping high-carbon power plants running at the expense of forests and the climate.”

Belén Balanyá, *climate justice researcher and campaigner, Corporate Europe Observatory*, said:

“MEPs chose to keep the talk about reducing emissions just that... talk. They sided with Big Polluters, including the fossil fuel industry, who are using the carbon removal agenda to get yet more support for carbon capture, utilisation and storage. CCS is a key component of the pie-in-the-sky carbon removal technologies. But more support for the staggeringly costly, failed technology of CCS not only means more fossil fuel extractivism, it is also a dangerous distraction from real solutions.”

Notes to editors:

The Real Zero Europe campaign brings together climate, environmental, economic justice, human rights, and food sovereignty organisations and networks, including Fern, the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy, Forests of the World, Friends of the Earth International, the Center for International Environmental Law, the European Coordination Via Campesina, Corporate Europe Observatory, SOMO and more. Learn more about RZE and its members are listed [here](#).

Press contact

For further comments and information and to be connected to one of our spokespeople, please contact Tiziano Biagi, Communications Officer at Real Zero Europe: tiziano@fern.org / Sophie Scherger, Policy Officer at the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy: sscherger@iatp.org.

Additional materials:

- The Real Zero Europe campaign has compiled a comprehensive summary of the problems with the CRCF in three briefings:
 - [Direct Air Carbon Capture and Storage & Bioenergy with Carbon Capture and Storage: The proposed EU Carbon Removal Certification Framework promotes risky, unproven technofixes](#)
 - [Carbon Farming: A dangerous gamble the proposed EU Carbon Removal Certification Framework](#)
 - [Carbon Offsetting: EU Carbon Removal Certification Framework proposal lends legitimacy to a discredited carbon offsetting approach](#)
- Fern published an assessment of BECCS methodologies in March 2024: [An analysis of BECCS industries' methodology for certifying industrial carbon removals](#)
- The Center for International Environmental Law published a brief on the dangers of Direct Air Capture in November 2023: [Direct Air Capture: Big Oil's Latest Smokescreen](#)
- Friends of the Earth International published a bank of evidence and explanatory materials on false climate solutions, including offsets in November 2023: [Toolkit for fighting climate false solutions](#)
- The Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy published an analysis of the European Commission's proposal in March 2023, with most of the points of criticism remaining valid: [Twelve problems with the European Commission's proposal for a Carbon Removal Certification Framework](#)