



Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The EU Carbon Removal Certification Framework: a necessary milestone lacking clarity on definitions

Brussels - Bellona welcomes the much-awaited carbon removal certification framework [regulation](#) (CRCF) published today while having many reservations about its current content.

The CRCF aims to pave the way for a coherent deployment of carbon dioxide removal (CDR). Earlier this year, the [IPCC highlighted the 'essential' role of CDR](#) to keep global temperatures increases to below 1.5C and 2C.

Missing from the EU's climate policy architecture are clear definitions, such as an unequivocal differentiation between removals and reductions. Also missing are the monitoring, reporting, and verification systems for various CDR methods as well as a robust policy framework to ensure permanence of storage and the liability surrounding it.

These key elements are not sufficiently addressed in the proposal despite the essential role of CDR in long-term climate goals.

Getting the framework right is crucial so that removal certificates do not promote offsetting claims that provide no climate benefit and undermine the deployment of robust removals.

While CRCF seeks to provide clarity on criteria and rules for certification, it still leaves far too many open questions. This framework takes the much-needed first steps to recognise the role of CDR in the EU's climate goals but still has a long way to go to achieve any real climate benefits.

Nevertheless, Bellona supports the Commission's plan to slowly but surely build a reliable mechanism for the quantification of carbon removal. However, we urge the Commission to not give in to pressure pushing towards weakening and blurring central concepts that are necessary to make CDR the climate tool it needs to be.

What CRCF gets right: acknowledging environmental co-benefits of certain CDR measures.

CDR measures such as carbon farming can bring plenty of co-benefits. Removals in the land sink can have negative impacts on the environment or can bring about biodiversity restoration. The framework acknowledges this and asserts that carbon farming activities must have positive co-benefits.

Where CRCF needs work: clarity in the definition of carbon dioxide removal.

There is a lack of robust definition of what constitutes to a carbon dioxide removal. Carbon removal is in fact defined as including reductions of carbon release from a biogenic carbon pool to the atmosphere. However, **a reduction or avoided emission can never be considered equivalent to a removal**, which involves permanently **removing** CO₂ from the atmosphere. Moreover, three different types of removals are mentioned, but not sufficiently defined, especially missing the mark on how different sinks, or removals, can be used as credits.

The clarity in definitions would ensure confluence of climate mitigation activities is avoided (as in the case for carbon farming), ensuring climate benefits are appropriately evaluated. It would also help stakeholders such as industry to appropriately set up CDR pathways.

Dr Samantha Tanzer, CDR Research & Technology Manager *“The maths behind removals is pretty straightforward: only the net flow of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere to storage measures the decrease in atmospheric greenhouse gases. Getting the definition right in this framework helps with this and more, making sure things like avoidance, reductions and removals are counted for separately.”*

Mark Preston Aragonès, Policy Manager: *“The CRCF is a much-needed first step in understanding CDR. Despite having a long way to go, the EU will need time to get this framework right. In the short-term, the CRCF needs to provide more clarity on defining removals, treat removals separately from reductions and manage removals based on their permanence.”*

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