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INTERNATIONAL CIVIL AVIATION ORGANIZATION

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CORSIA Emissions Unit Eligibility Criteria



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CORSIA

Carbon Offsetting and Reduction Scheme for International Aviation

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CORSIA EMISSIONS UNIT ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Program Design Elements. At the program level, ICAO should ensure that eligible offset credit programs meet the following design elements:

1. ***Clear Methodologies and Protocols, and their Development Process:*** Programs should have qualification and quantification methodologies and protocols in place and available for use as well as a process for developing further methodologies and protocols. The existing methodologies and protocols as well as the process for developing further methodologies and protocols should be publicly disclosed.
2. ***Scope Considerations:*** Programs should define and publicly disclose the level at which activities are allowed under the program (e.g., project-based, program of activities, etc.) as well as the eligibility criteria for each type of offset activity (e.g., which sectors, project types, or geographic locations are covered).
3. ***Offset Credit Issuance and Retirement Procedures:*** Programs should have in place procedures for how offset credits are: (a) issued; (b) retired or cancelled; (c) subject to any discounting; and, (d) the length of the crediting period and whether that period is renewable. These procedures should be publicly disclosed.
4. ***Identification and Tracking:*** Programs should have in place procedures that ensure that: (a) units are tracked; (b) units are individually identified through serial numbers; (c) the registry is secure (i.e., robust security provisions are in place); and (d) units have clearly identified owners or holders (e.g., identification requirements of a registry). The program should also stipulate (e) to which, if any, other registries it is linked; and, (f) whether and which international data exchange standards the registry conforms with. All of the above should be publicly disclosed information.
5. ***Legal Nature and Transfer of Units:*** The program should define and ensure the underlying attributes and property aspects of a unit, and publicly disclose the process by which it does so.
6. ***Validation and Verification procedures:*** Programs should have in place validation and verification standards and procedures, as well as requirements and procedures for the accreditation of validators and verifiers. All of the above-mentioned standards, procedures, and requirements should be publicly disclosed.
7. ***Program Governance:*** Programs should publicly disclose who is responsible for administration of the program and how decisions are made.
8. ***Transparency and Public Participation Provisions:*** Programs should publicly disclose (a) what information is captured and made available to different stakeholders; and (b) its local stakeholder consultation requirements (if applicable) and (c) its public comments provisions and requirements, and how they are considered (if applicable). Conduct public comment periods and transparently disclose all approved quantification methodologies.

9. **Safeguards System:** Programs should have in place safeguards to address environmental and social risks. These safeguards should be publicly disclosed.
10. **Sustainable Development Criteria:** Programs should publicly disclose the sustainable development criteria used, for example, how this contributes to achieving a country's stated sustainable development priorities, and any provisions for monitoring, reporting and verification.
11. **Avoidance of Double Counting, Issuance and Claiming:** Programs should provide information on how they address double counting, issuance and claiming in the context of evolving national and international regimes for carbon markets and emissions trading.

Carbon Offset Credit Integrity Assessment Criteria: There are a number of generally agreed principles that have been broadly applied across both regulatory and voluntary offset credit programs to address environmental and social integrity. These principles hold that offset credit programs should deliver credits that represent emissions reductions, avoidance, or sequestration that:

1. Are additional.
2. Are based on a realistic and credible baseline.
3. Are quantified, monitored, reported, and verified.
4. Have a clear and transparent chain of custody.
5. Represent permanent emissions reductions.
6. Assess and mitigate against potential increase in emissions elsewhere.
7. Are only counted once towards a mitigation obligation.
8. Do no net harm.

Eligibility criteria should apply at the program level, as the expertise and resources needed to develop and implement ICAO emissions criteria at a methodology and project level is likely to be considerable.

1. **Eligibility Criterion: Carbon offset programs must generate units that represent emissions reductions, avoidance, or removals that are additional.** Additionality means that the carbon offset credits represent greenhouse gas emissions reductions or carbon sequestration or removals that exceed any greenhouse gas reduction or removals required by law, regulation, or legally binding mandate, and that exceed any greenhouse gas reductions or removals that would otherwise occur in a conservative, business-as-usual scenario. Eligible offset credit programs should clearly demonstrate that the program has procedures in place to assess/test for additionality and that those procedures provide a reasonable assurance that the emissions reductions would not have occurred in the absence of the offset program. If programs pre-define certain activities as automatically additional (e.g., through a “positive list” of eligible project types), then they have to provide clear evidence on how the activity was determined to be additional. The criteria for such positive lists should be publicly disclosed and conservative. If programs do not use positive lists, then project's additionality and baseline setting should be assessed by an accredited and independent third-party verification entity and reviewed by the program.

2. **Eligibility Criterion: Carbon offset credits must be based on a realistic and credible baseline.** Offset credits should be issued against a realistic, defensible, and conservative baseline estimation of emissions. The baseline is the level of emissions that would have occurred assuming a conservative “business as usual” emissions trajectory i.e., emissions without the emissions reduction activity or offset project. Baselines and underlying assumptions must be publicly disclosed.
3. **Eligibility Criterion: Carbon offset credits must be quantified, monitored, reported and verified.** Emissions reductions should be calculated in a manner that is conservative and transparent. Offset credits should be based on accurate measurements and quantification methods/protocols. Monitoring, measuring, and reporting of both the emissions reduction activity and the actual emissions reduction from the project should, at a minimum, be conducted at specified intervals throughout the duration of the crediting period. Emissions reductions should be measured and verified by an accredited and independent third-party verification entity. Ex-post verification of the project’s emissions must be required in advance of issuance of offset credits; Programs that conduct ex-ante issuance (e.g., issuance of offset units before the emissions reductions and/or carbon sequestration have occurred and been third-party verified) should not be eligible. Transparent measurement and reporting is essential, and units from offsetting programs/projects eligible in a global MBM should only come from those that require independent, ex-post verification.
4. **Eligibility Criterion: Carbon offset credits must have a clear and transparent chain of custody within the offset program.** Offset credits should be assigned an identification number that can be tracked from when the unit is issued through to its transfer or use (cancellation or retirement) via a registry system(s).
5. **Eligibility Criterion: Permanence** – Carbon offset credits must represent emissions reductions, avoidance, or carbon sequestration that are permanent. If there is risk of reductions or removals being reversed, then either (a) such credits are not eligible or (b) mitigation measures are in place to monitor, mitigate, and compensate any material incidence of non-permanence.
6. **Eligibility Criterion: A system must have measures in place to assess and mitigate incidences of material leakage.** Offset credits should be generated from projects that do not cause emissions to materially increase elsewhere (this concept is also known as leakage). Offset credit programs should have an established process for assessing and mitigating leakage of emissions that may result from the implementation of an offset project or program.
7. **Eligibility Criterion: Are only counted once towards a mitigation obligation.** Measures must be in place to avoid:
 - a) Double issuance (which occurs if more than one unit is issued for the same emissions or emissions reduction).
 - b) Double use (which occurs when the same issued unit is used twice, for example, if a unit is duplicated in registries).
 - c) Double claiming (which occurs if the same emissions reduction is counted twice by both the buyer and the seller (i.e., counted towards the climate change mitigation effort of both

an airline and the host country of the emissions reduction activity)). In order to prevent double claiming, eligible programs should require and demonstrate that host countries of emissions reduction activities agree to account for any offset units issued as a result of those activities such that double claiming does not occur between the airline and the host country of the emissions reduction activity.

8. ***Eligibility Criterion: Carbon offset credits must represent emissions reductions, avoidance, or carbon sequestration from projects that do no net harm.*** Offset projects should not violate local, State/provincial, national or international regulations or obligations. Offset programs should show how they comply with social and environmental safeguards and should publicly disclose which institutions, processes, and procedures are used to implement, monitor, and enforce safeguards to identify, assess and manage environmental and social risks.

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