

Union certification framework for carbon removals

2022/0394(COD) - 03/11/2023 - Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading

The Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety adopted the report by Lídia PEREIRA (EPP, PT) on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a Union certification framework for carbon removals.

The committee responsible recommended that the European Parliament's position adopted at first reading under the ordinary legislative procedure should amend the proposal as follows:

Subject matter

The objective of this Regulation is to facilitate and encourage the deployment and enhancement of **carbon removals, carbon farming and carbon storage** in products by operators or groups of operators as a complement to the irreversible and gradual reduction of anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions across all sectors to meet the objectives and targets laid down in Regulation (EU) 2021/1119 and the goals of the Paris Agreement.

Rules on the issuance and use of units

A new article has been included on the rules on the issuance and use of units. It stated that carbon farming sequestration and emission reduction units should be issued by 31 December each year, provided that an annual monitoring check does not show any non-compliance with the requirements set out in this Regulation and does not show a reversal. The certification body should be responsible for the annual monitoring check based on reliable real-world data.

Sustainability

A carbon storage in product activity should at least have a neutral impact on each of, and should generate co-benefits for at least one of, the following sustainability objectives:

- the avoidance of the risk of carbon leakage in third countries;
- climate change adaptation;
- sustainable use and protection or improvement of water quality and marine resources;
- transition to a circular economy, including the efficient use of sustainably sourced bio-based materials;
- pollution prevention and control;
- protection and restoration of biodiversity and ecosystems.

Platform on Carbon Removal, Carbon Farming and Carbon Storage in Product Activities

Members called for the establishment of a Platform on Carbon removal and Carbon farming Activities which should, inter alia:

- advise the Commission on the technical certification methodologies, including on the minimum sustainability requirements, as well as on the possible need to update those certification methodologies;
- analyse the impact of the technical certification methodologies in terms of the potential costs and benefits of their application;
- monitor and regularly report to the Commission on trends at Union and Member State level regarding carbon removal and carbon farming.

Certification of compliance

The amended text stressed that the certification scheme should appoint a certification body which should conduct a certification audit to verify that the requested information is accurate and reliable. When multiple different carbon farming activities take place at farm level, the certification audits may be conducted on a single occasion.

Re-certification audits should take place at least every 5 years for carbon farming activities, and at least every 10 years for other activities, following a risk-based approach.

Certification bodies

Concerning the certification bodies, the report stated that these should be **remunerated** by the certification scheme in order to ensure the independence of the certification or re-certification audits. The list of accredited certification bodies shall be made publicly available in the Union registry.

Operation of certification schemes

For the purpose of handling complaints and appeals, certification schemes should put in place easily accessible complaint and appeal procedures. Those procedures should be made publicly available in the Union registry. Members suggested that a certification scheme should submit all relevant data and reporting that are required to be included in the Union registry.

Review

The Commission should assess the possible benefits and trade-offs of the inclusion of other long-lived carbon storage products based on the latest scientific evidence. By 12 months from the date of entry into force of this Regulation, the Commission should report to the European Parliament and to the Council on the establishment of Union targets for permanent carbon removals and for land-based sequestration as an integral part of the post-2030 Union climate framework.