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Overview

For the purposes of this webpage, a registry is defined broadly, as a tool used to track data and information.

In the context of GHG emissions, a registry may take a variety of forms. At one end, a credit registry, like a bank, has assets, account holders, and maintains robust bookkeeping to issue and track credits and allowances as they are traded. This is an important part of an emission trading system which helps promote environmental integrity by reducing the risk of double counting (of credits issued, traded, and/or retired). It may also have eligibility requirements, record methods to calculate emissions and removals, and prove transparency through public reporting of such data. On the other hand, a registry (or registry-like system) may simply be a database of all relevant information on emission reduction programs. A registry can be a physical location or an electronic database and, ideally, offers transparency and accountability to activities. Trading registries also need strong security protocols and anti-fraud measures in place.

The UNFCCC does not have an official registry, per se, but Parties to the Convention are required to submit National Communications and National Inventory Reports to the UNFCCC Secretariat which are then posted online. Developed countries are required to submit such reports annually, and are subject to an in-depth review by an international team of experts. The Kyoto Protocol has additional requirements, in particular that Annex I Parties to the Protocol have in place national registries to record and track Kyoto units. Having a national registry in place is also an eligibility requirement for the Joint Implementation mechanism (JI). In addition, the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) has an electronic database (the CDM Registry) that non-Annex B countries participating in the CDM can use if they do not have a buyer from an Annex B country lined up when their project is registered. The CDM Registry ensures the accurate accounting of the issuance, holding and acquisition of Certified Emission Reductions from CDM projects before they are transferred to an Annex B party registry.

Developed countries with domestic GHG programs generally have national registries to track emission units generated and, if appropriate, traded or retired. Many developing countries are considering the development of national registries—in particular to approve and report on REDD+ programs and ensure consistency between national, jurisdictional and project level processes and

results—but have not yet developed them. Brazil provides a list of contributions to the Amazon Fund and how such funds are associated with emission reductions in designated years, which may be considered as a type of registry.

Some initiatives outsource registry functions. For example, some parts of California’s administration of its compliance offset program, including the use of Offset Project Registries to help facilitate the listing, reporting and verification of projects using approved protocols, is managed by approved third parties. Voluntary standards either have their own registry (as in the case of the American Carbon Registry (ACR)) or outsource to a third-party registry (e.g. the Verified Carbon Standard (VCS) supported by APX and Markit and SocialCarbon is supported by Markit).

The Carbon Fund’s draft Methodological Framework requires a comprehensive REDD+ Program and Projects Database to avoid having multiple entities claiming the same Emission Reduction. In addition, an Emission Reduction Transaction Registry is required to avoid double counting and to provide public transparency. Germany’s REM program requires recipients to have in place some registry management before funding is disbursed.

Finally, safeguard standards differ from carbon standards as “double counting” is less of an issue (as this does not apply to social and environmental benefits) and are more focused on transparency and stakeholder engagements. The CCB allows CCB certified projects that are also certified under the VCS to have credits issued under the VCS “tagged” as also meeting the CCB. Aside from this example, safeguard standards simply ensure access to information and post relevant documentation on their websites.

See another Design Feature

Registry ▼

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Further reading

[A Registry Approach for REDD+](#) [12]

[National REDD+ Registries. An overview of issues and design options](#) [13]

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