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CGSEA
CARBON GOVERNANCE IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

The Importance of Humanistic Participatory Measurement, Reporting and Verification (MRV) and Carbon Credit Literacy for Forest Carbon Projects

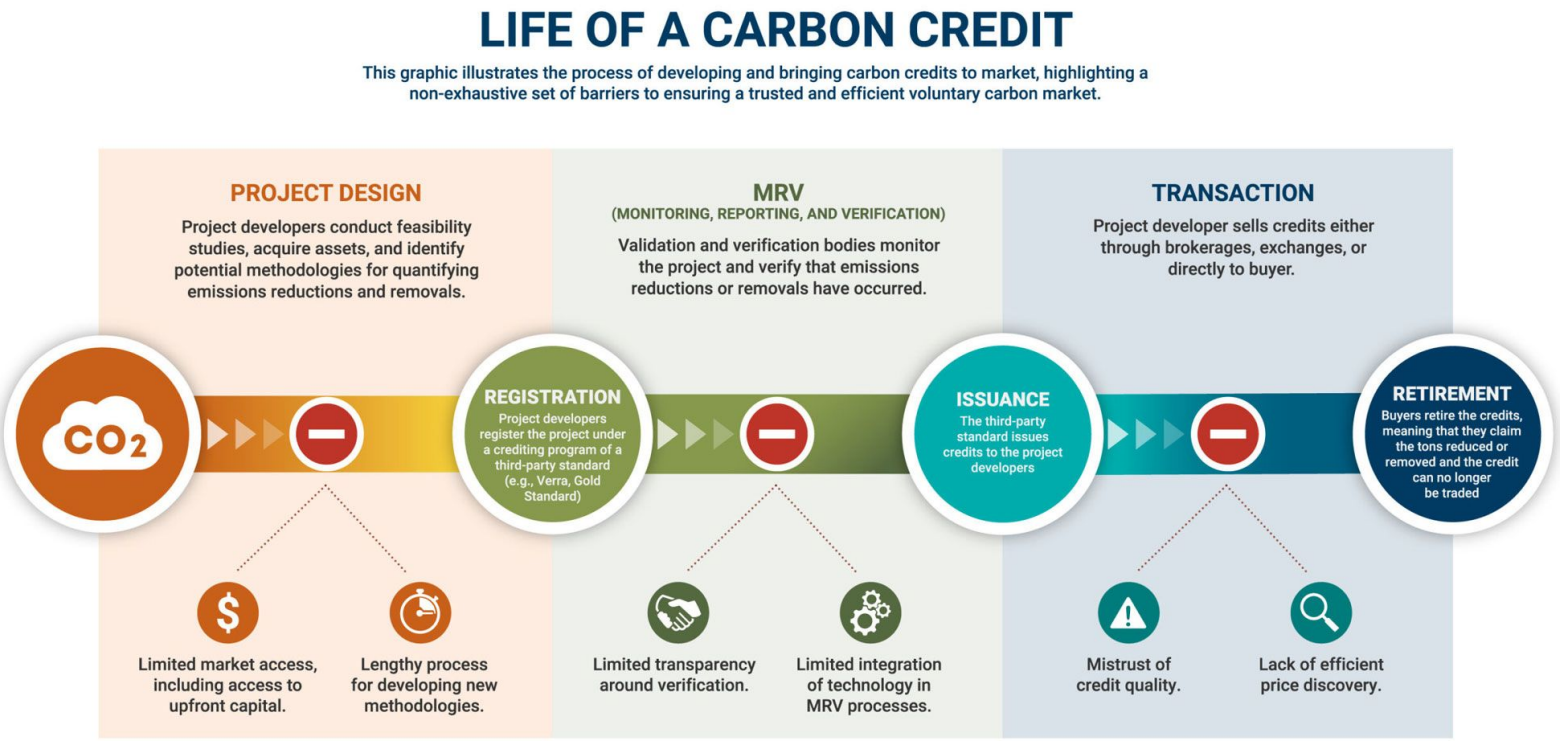
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SPERI-CODE Symposium

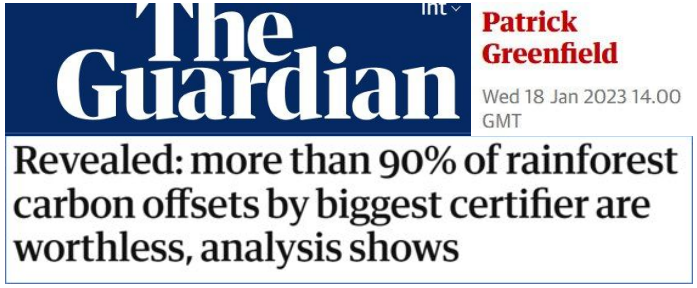
6 April 2026, Hanoi

The carbon credit life cycle



https://carbonfreezone.com/carbon-credits/what-are-carbon-credits/

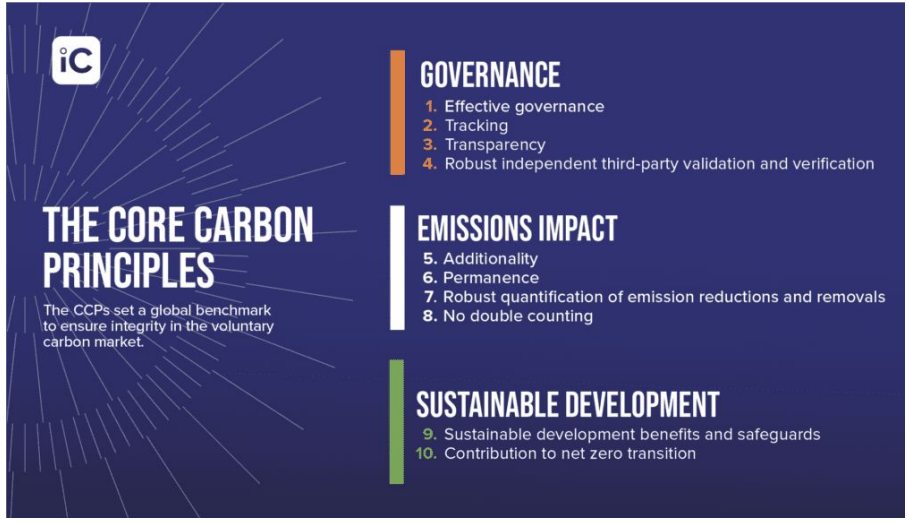
Social integrity and market demand

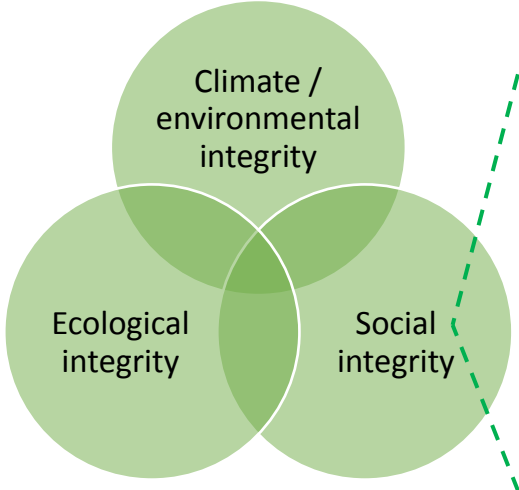

The Guardian

Patrick Greenfield

Wed 18 Jan 2023 14.00 GMT

Revealed: more than 90% of rainforest carbon offsets by biggest certifier are worthless, analysis shows





- **Free, Prior and Informed Consent / genuine engagement**
- **Equitable benefit-sharing**
- **Appropriate Grievance Redress Mechanisms**
- Fair and clear legal basis to carbon rights (who owns, who can transfer and who should benefit from carbon credits)
- Meaningfully addressing structural injustices, e.g. land tenure, IPs recognition

CGSEA interviews with Singapore/SEA-based key actors in 2025:

social integrity is foundational to climate integrity

Social integrity □□ humanistic pMRV?

Scenario

- Project developer relies on latest remote sensing products - faster

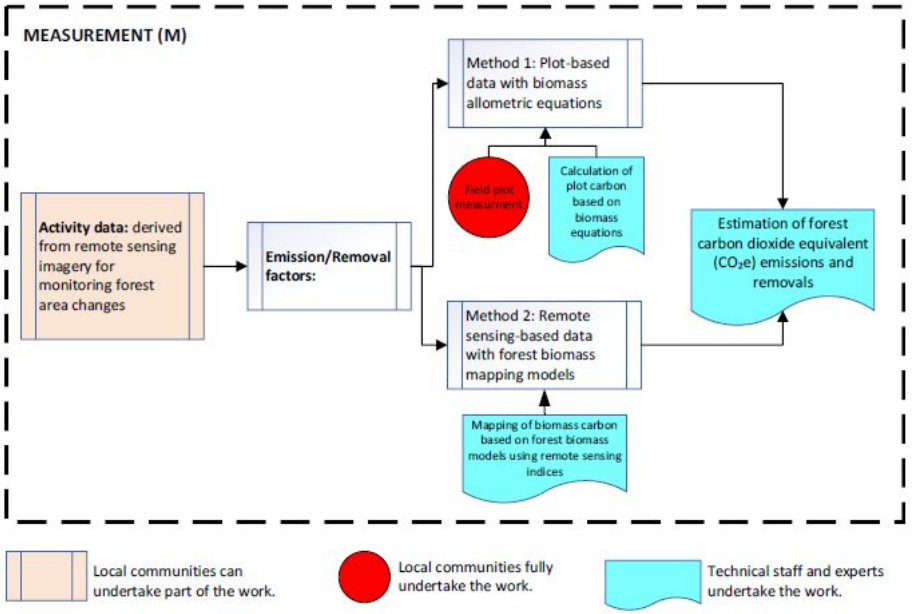
Counter-scenario

- Project developer engages local people as assistants to collect activity data and do field plot measurement
  - Project saves on MRV costs
  - A handful of trained local people get the job
- Project proponent is a provincial government, who holds the rights to sell the carbon credits; wider community perceives the distribution of carbon revenues as inequitable

□ pMRV and social integrity are not equivalent

□ pMRV can be more humanistic

pMRV



Huy, B. (2026)

HEPA – humanistic pMRV in action

- Who –
  - Can pMRV involve IPLCs of the target forest landscape, as well as invite key farmer-forest owners from the wider region to learn?
- How –
  - Can pMRV scaffold learning about the techniques of forest carbon MRV according to the IPLCs' abilities?
  - Can pMRV introduce IPLCs to other helpful resources?
- Why –
  - Can pMRV enhance IPLCs' understanding of the risks and opportunities of forest carbon trading schemes?
  - Can pMRV concurrently reaffirm the importance of forests' non-carbon values and IPLCs' traditional ecological knowledge?





Could be applied when developing national forest inventories or in IPCC Tier 2/3 methodologies?

Dang et al (2026)

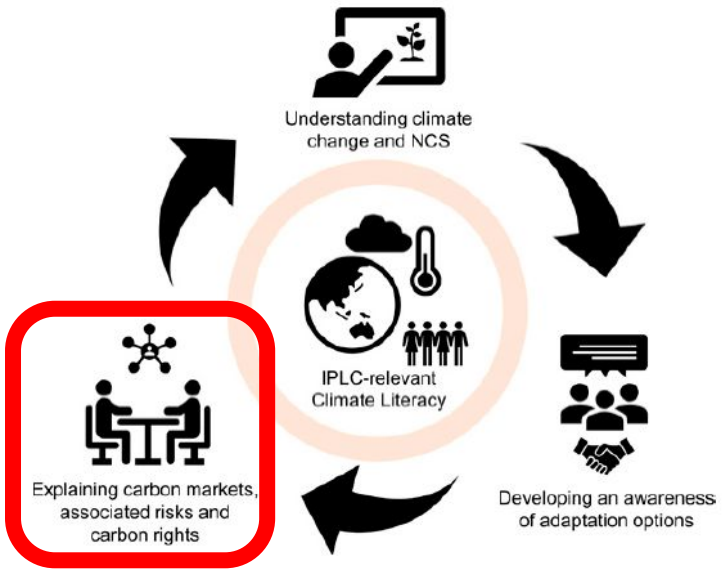
Social integrity □□ carbon credit literacy?

Scenario

- A project developer engages with a forest community; this is the first time the forest community hears about carbon credits
- The project developer spends time to explain carbon credits and project activities to the people, who are gradually persuaded to enter into a contract
- This happens without access to third-party advice to assess whether the contract carries any risks or is the best deal

□ Social integrity may be achieved on-paper, but:
  - □ the project developer is a cowboy!!!
  - □ Local community may feel cheated later

Carbon credit literacy



Lau and Quevedo (2024)

Comparing legal frameworks

	Laos 	Vietnam 
Who can provide forest carbon credits?	• On state land, the *impending* granting of use rights to local communities should also mean that local communities can use forests for carbon credit income	• State forestry management units, private forestry companies, households, individuals, or community groups allocated forestland
Who can benefit from forest carbon credits?	• Those rehabilitating degraded forests may benefit from carbon trade and forest ecosystem services • Benefits should also be shared among the stakeholders (government, forest owners, project developers etc.) • Local communities should benefit form projects in public lands	• 100% of the carbon credit revenues (after paying taxes and fees) can be retained by the forest owners / project investors / project developer

Currently, there is no guidance on how revenues should be shared, and how benefit-sharing should be negotiated and enforced

Trenor et al (2025); https://thitruongcarbon.com/en/2025/08/05/vietnams-decree-on-forest-carbon-credits-everything-you-want-to-know/

- Vietnam's more advanced system of land administration offers local communities more opportunities to engage in forest carbon credit trading for additional income
  - *While exciting, this exposes local communities to risks associated with forest carbon projects*

Towards carbon credit literacy for local communities

Importance of awareness-raising

Vietnam's 06/2022/ND-CP Decree on Mitigation of Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions and Protection of Ozone Layer

Article 32. Improvement of capacity and raise of awareness

1. Ministries, ministerial agencies, the provincial People's Committees shall disseminate information on mass media, promote international cooperation to improve capacity and awareness of the community and mobilize citizens to take part in the GHG emission mitigation and ozone layer protection.

2. Measures to improve capacity and raise awareness include:

a) Improve capacity of officials for GHG emission mitigation and ozone layer protection;

b) Training and developing specialized officials in charge of GHG inventory; measuring, reporting and verifying GHG emission mitigation of facilities, sectors and localities; setting, operating, maintaining and fixing equipments containing the controlled substances by technicians;

c) Universalizing contents of GHG emission mitigation and ozone layer protection by education system at all levels and mass media;

d) Include GHG emission mitigation and ozone layer protection activities in activities of scientific and technical associations, socio-political-professional organizations, socio-professional organizations and other organizations;

What information may be helpful for local communities in Vietnam?

- How much resources do local communities need to invest to start a forest carbon project?
- Who are the key actors in the carbon credit supply chain?
- What are the signs of a reliable forest carbon project developer and a 'cowboy' forest carbon project developer?
- How should local communities negotiate benefit-sharing with a forest carbon project developer?
- What are the livelihood risks if local communities trade short-term access to forest resources for long-term carbon payments?
- What should local communities look out for to protect their own rights? What systems of redress are there?

Similar provisions in:

- *Laos Carbon Credit Decree (2025) Article 44*
- *Philippines' Roadmap 2026-2030 on Readiness in the Voluntary Forest Carbon Market (2026) page 39*

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THANK YOU





Images: SPERI

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