climate cleanup

Construction Stored Carbon: transition finance for climate-positive construction
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Climate Cleanup is a Dutch non-profit foundation that enacts systemic interventions to reverse climate change. These interventions primarily focus on enabling and supporting **carbon removal and storage with nature-based solutions**. These nature-based solutions, such as agroforestry, enhanced rock weathering, mangrove restoration and seaweed farming, create natural and social value by storing carbon. The built environment and construction sector are often overlooked as a reliable, nature-based carbon sink. Through the use of biobased construction materials we not only create a healthier living environment; we have the potential to store **1 gigaton CO2** in our buildings by the end of this century.

To accomplish this task, the transition towards biobased construction must be accelerated. Awaiting effective government regulation to this end, **carbon removal credits** provide a market-based solution. Sold on the voluntary carbon market (VCM), these credits allow organisations to offset their unavoidable or historic carbon emissions with **measurable and long-lasting carbon storage**. To prevent greenwashing, Climate Cleanup insists that VCM-organisations employ the Oxford Offsetting Principles. Among others, these principles demand that buyers first verifiably reduce their own emissions. All principles that Climate Cleanup propagates to safeguard VCM integrity are recorded in the ONCRA Framework.

Carbon removal credits can serve as **transition finance** for the construction industry. To generate credits for carbon stored in the built environment, transparent certification must first be developed compliant to the proposed EU regulation on carbon removal certification, and in line with demands set by organisations such as ICROA and ICVCM. Only construction projects with verified certificates can sell **Construction Stored Carbon** (CSC) credits. In 2023, Climate Cleanup is developing a certification method for carbon storage in biobased construction materials and projects. This project is funded by Built by Nature and Good Energies Foundation, and executed in collaboration with the Dutch ASN Bank, Gideon Building Transition Tribes, Ballast Nedam Development and a broad network of (40+) Dutch and international pioneers in biobased construction. The certification method is being tested in practice in Q3-Q4 2023 on 5-10 pioneering construction projects. By taking part in the certification and financing of these pioneers, organisations can deliver a **powerful signal** to the VCM.

The certification method builds upon the CSC metric developed by Climate Cleanup, ASN Bank and Gideon Building Transition Tribes in 2021. The method describes the demands – e.g., for quantification, verification, sustainability, long-term storage (beyond the 100-year horizon proposed by the IPCC), etc. – that operators of CSC-class removal activities need to adhere to. The method and all learnings in the development process will be publicly available to ensure CSC is certified by multiple organisations. Starting Q3 2024, CSC-certificates will be issued by the independent ONCRA platform. Given their many co-benefits and high reliability due to existing data requirements in the construction industry, CSC credits are a **high-integrity, high-quality** alternative to other carbon removal credits currently in development.

If you have any questions about this one-pager, contact Sacha Brons, Head of Construction Stored Carbon at Climate Cleanup: sacha@climatecleanup.org. Also see: climatecleanup.org/constructionstoredcarbon.