



PRESS RELEASE

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New protocol enables local governments, others to receive emissions offsets for tree planting programs

California Registry Board of Directors approves first Urban Forest Project Reporting protocol for the U.S.

LOS ANGELES, CA – The Board of Directors for the California Climate Action Registry, a private nonprofit organization committed to solving climate change through emissions reporting and reduction, approved the Urban Forest Project Reporting Protocol at its meeting today. This is the first California Registry protocol to benefit local governments and others through offset credits for planting trees in urban settings.

The Urban Forest Project Reporting Protocol provides guidance for developing urban tree planting and stewardship projects that can be registered with the California Climate Action Registry. The protocol establishes eligibility rules, methods to calculate reductions, performance-monitoring instructions and procedures for reporting project information. The protocol applies to tree planting projects on urban landscapes within municipalities, educational campuses and utility service areas anywhere in the U.S.

“The Urban Forest Project Reporting Protocol sets the stage for significant investment in large-scale tree planting projects by utilities, cities and campuses. It will challenge urban forestry professionals to achieve higher levels of performance from their trees through planning, implementing best practices and conducting long-term monitoring,” said Greg McPherson, Director, Center for Urban Forest Research (CUFR) PSW, USDA Forest Service. CUFR led a multi-stakeholder workgroup in development of the Urban Forest Project Reporting Protocol and is widely recognized for its extensive technical expertise in quantifying environmental benefits of urban forests.

Growing trees removes CO₂ from the atmosphere and transforms it into carbon for building living matter like leaves, stems, trunks and roots. It is estimated that for every 1,000 tree sites planted under this protocol, about 60 metric tonnes of CO₂ emissions could be reduced every year. CUFR conducted an additional study of how the Urban Forest protocol could affect California. It was determined a number of benefits could be achieved with urban forest projects, which gives the protocol tremendous value in regards to reaching California’s environmental and public health goals. Benefits include mitigating the urban heat island effect, reducing energy usage and providing storm water management.

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“The Urban Forest protocol is a first-of-its-kind protocol that will give local governments a valuable tool to quantify the benefits of planting trees in our communities and schools. We are proud to support local government efforts to green their communities,” said Linda Adams, Chair of the California Climate Action Registry Board of Directors and Secretary of the California Environmental Protection Agency.

Urban tree planting projects that adhere to the protocol’s guidance will generate real, additional and credible GHG reduction projects, whose offset credits can be registered with the California Registry’s program, Climate Action Reserve. The Climate Action Reserve establishes project protocols, oversees project verification and tracks projects and their offset inventories. The offset credits are known as Climate Reserve Tonnes (CRTs). CRTs are assigned unique serial numbers and can be tracked through the Climate Action Reserve system.

“The Urban Forest protocol is the product of the hard work and dedication of numerous experts who worked through an open and transparent process, and we want to thank everyone who was involved. Their comprehensive work and thorough process are why our protocols have such a strong reputation for quality and integrity,” said Gary Gero, President of the California Climate Action Registry.

The Climate Action Reserve is a program of the California Climate Action Registry that provides accurate and transparent measurement, verification and tracking of greenhouse gas reduction projects and their inventories of Climate Reserve Tonnes (CRTs), assuring a high degree of environmental integrity in the voluntary carbon reduction market. For additional information, please visit <http://www.climateregistry.org/offsets>.

The California Climate Action Registry is a private nonprofit organization committed to solving climate change through emissions reporting and reduction. It serves as a voluntary greenhouse gas (GHG) registry for entity-wide emission inventories and also establishes protocols for GHG emission reduction (offset) projects through its Climate Action Reserve program. The protocols are created through a rigorous, transparent process and are widely regarded as among the highest quality standards for offset projects. The Climate Action Reserve also accredits and oversees independent verifiers and tracks the transactions of project offset inventories, adding confidence and credibility to the voluntary carbon market. The accuracy, transparency and integrity of all of the California Registry’s standards have earned it the reputation as a respected and internationally recognized leader in climate change issues.

The California Climate Action Registry was originally formed by the State of California in 2001 and is headquartered in Los Angeles, California. For additional information, please visit www.climateregistry.org.

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