

## Welcome to the United Nations carbon offset platform

### The platform

The UN carbon offset platform<sup>1</sup> (the platform) is a channel to offer CERs to the general public. It is promoted by the UNFCCC secretariat among a variety of stakeholders through the initiative Climate Neutral Now (<https://unfccc.int/climate-action/climate-neutral-now>), **exposing CERs to a wider group of potential buyers.**

Approximately 4.5 million CERs have been cancelled on the platform until December 2021 by organizations and individuals that want to neutralize their carbon footprint by investing in responsible carbon offsets. The platform promotes climate action emphasizing not only the positive mitigation impact of Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) projects, but also their benefits on the sustainable development of local communities in developing countries. For this reason, CERs in the platform tend to have a higher value than CERs traded for compliance purposes.

The platform reaches a broad audience globally and is available in English, French and Spanish. It was re-launched in 2018 with a new look-and-feel to give users a more appealing and friendly experience. The platform was enhanced with an annual household emissions calculator and relevant background information on climate action.

The secretariat is continuously promoting the platform through different outreach activities, including in social media and at large UNFCCC events. The platform is accessible here:

<https://offset.climateneutralnow.org/>

The platform is essentially a UN e-commerce place where project owners have shops to offer CERs as a product. The platform is not an exchange as it does not permit CERs to change hands. It only supports the voluntary cancellation of CERs, which is a terminal and irreversible transaction after which CERs can no longer be used. With the voluntary cancellation of a CER, it can be said that its environmental value (1 ton of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent abatement) has been ultimately claimed.

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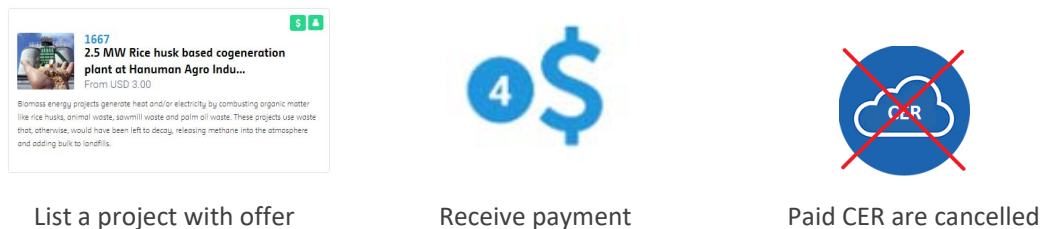
<sup>1</sup> Also known as the United Nations online platform for voluntary cancellation of certified emission reductions (CERs).

## How it works

### From a buyer's perspective



### From a seller's perspective



## Benefits from the platform

The platform is fully integrated with the CDM registry, which is the accounting transactional database that tracks all CERs until they leave the CDM registry<sup>2</sup>.

As a provider<sup>3</sup> of CERs, the platform may offer you numerous benefits, such as:

- The use of the platform is free of charge;
- You decide the amount of CERs that you want to offer for sale, either the totality or a fraction of CERs from your issuance block;
- You decide the price of your CERs. You can price different issuance blocks differently;
- You can create and modify the offers in the platform at any time;
- You receive directly the proceeds via PayPal account or bank transfer;
- You can leave the platform at any time;
- You can enhance your project's appeal by submitting a Sustainable Development report<sup>4</sup>, write up an attractive and informative description of your projects and upload appealing pictures;
- The platform has strong public recognition mechanisms – such as attestation/certificate of cancellation that a purchaser can customize and a gallery of contributors;
- There is no exclusivity in the platform, so you can offer your CERs through other channels too;
- The UN brand enjoys a level of trust with the public;

<sup>2</sup> CERs that leave the CDM registry continue to be tracked within the Kyoto Protocol system of registries until their final use.

<sup>3</sup> The CDM Executive Board prefers to avoid the term “seller” and uses “provider” instead because the platform is not an exchange. It only offers the cancellation of CERs as a service. In our communications with use “provider of CERs” and “seller” interchangeably. Same goes for “purchaser” and “buyer”.

<sup>4</sup> <https://www4.unfccc.int/sites/sdcmicrosite/Pages/SD-Tool.aspx>

- The platform's turnover doubled in 2021, with 2 million CERs cancelled compared to 1.1 million CERs cancelled in 2020;
- Truly global reach - Since September 2015, the VC platform has been visited by users from 193 countries.
- Share of proceeds (SoP) partial payment is possible in certain cases. To check if you qualify for SoP partial payment, please contact us.

### **Projects eligibility for joining the platform**

If your project<sup>5</sup> has CERs in the pending account or in a permanent holding account (PHA) of the CDM registry<sup>6</sup>, and the share of proceeds (SoP) is paid, you are eligible to use the platform to offer those CERs through a provider/seller account.

Partial payment of Share of proceeds (SoP) is possible in certain cases. To check if you qualify for SoP partial payment, please contact us.

### **Provider/seller account**

A seller account manages offers for voluntary cancellation of CERs held in CDM registry accounts (the pending account or Permanent Holding Accounts) and the representatives of the account can view their available CERs, make and change offers and track customer orders.

A seller account is not a CERs holding account. It only allows you to see your holdings and to manage your offers. It also enables you to manage the payment methods.

Payment for valid offers will trigger a transfer of the paid CER quantity from its respective location in the CDM registry to a voluntary cancellation account in the CDM registry.

### **Payment modalities**

Our platform allows you to receive the money directly from the buyers. UNFCCC is not part of the financial transaction.

To enable this direct payment modality across jurisdictions, the platform promotes the use of PayPal as a globally trusted, high-security standard payment service provider.

Our PayPal arrangement permits users to pay by log-in into their PayPal account or directly through a credit/debit card option (also supported by PayPal).

**You are requested to have a PayPal account to receive international fund transfers.** The only exception to this requirement is if PayPal is not supported in your country or you can evidence that PayPal imposes limitations on your operations.

Bank account for bank payments is also possible if you so wish. We will be sending your clients your bank account details.

From January 2022, you can directly enter and change your banking details through your account on the platform.

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<sup>5</sup> Or programme of activities (PoA).

<sup>6</sup> The CERs must be issued.

## How to open a seller account on the platform

A seller account can be opened in the name of a single entity:

- A focal point entity for scope (a) as per the CDM modalities of communication (MoC) document for CERs held in the CDM registry pending account; or
- A project participant who has a Permanent Holding Account (PHA) in the CDM registry;

and can be assigned one or two representatives (individuals) who can be different from those representing the entity as per the MoC.

Focal points for scope (a) representatives or PHA representatives should send via e-mail to [goclimateneutralnow@unfccc.int](mailto:goclimateneutralnow@unfccc.int) the CDM-VCRA-FORM and, where applicable its annexes, pictures and project descriptions, according to the specifications bellow.

1. The CDM-VCRA-FORM shall be submitted by:
  - a. A focal point for scope (a)<sup>7</sup> on behalf of the project participants of the corresponding project activity/PoA; **or**
  - b. PHA representative.
2. The CDM-VCRA-FORM Annex 1 should be completed only when there is a joint/shared focal point role for a project/PoA to determine the focal point entity for scope (a) that will operate the seller account.
3. The CDM-VCRA-FORM Annex 2 should be completed only if you want to enable bank transfer as a payment option.
4. Original pictures of the project in resolution 800x600 pixels (1-6).
5. Description of the project (max. 500 words). You can find tips to write the project description at the end of this document as well as examples in the platform.

A seller account representative(s) can be any of the representatives of a focal point scope (a) or PHA representatives, already registered with the secretariat as per the modalities of communication process or the PHA opening process.

The CDM registry team shall review your application and open the seller accounts as soon as possible.

## Tips to enhance project descriptions

- The project description should answer six basic questions: who, what, where, when, why and how;
- Include aims, outcomes, significance, implementation method and main co-benefits of the project;

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<sup>7</sup> This entity is nominated as a focal point with the authority to communicate in relation to requests for forwarding of CER.

- Cover the critical aspects that are required for the reader to understand the project and its context. For example, the firm(s) involved in the project, their business activities and how the project fits in their business strategy;
- Refer to up-to-date and relevant information only;
- Succinctness and clarity are important. Use simple and unambiguous words and sentences to describe the key points;
- Keep in mind that the project description is a marketing tool and try to catch the attention of the reader;
- Create a **Sustainable Development Co-benefits** report in the SD-Tool: <http://cdmcobenefits.unfccc.int/Pages/SD-Tool.aspx> (highly recommended to increase the attractiveness of your CERs, but **not mandatory**); and
- If you wish to update the view page of your project, you need to contact us.

#### **How to contact us**

Contact us for all matters at: [goclimateneutralnow@unfccc.int](mailto:goclimateneutralnow@unfccc.int)

#### **Other relevant materials**

Platform's terms and conditions: <https://offset.climateneutralnow.org/conditions-of-use>