



For immediate release:

DECC Quality Assurance Scheme to end on June 30th

20th May 2011: The UK Government's Quality Assurance Scheme (QAS) for Carbon Offsetting, is closing down on the 30th June as the Government recognises that the Voluntary Carbon Market has developed and brought about great increases in Quality and Self Regulation.

In a letter to the members of the QAS Advisory Board, including ICROA, the Head of DECC's Low Carbon Economy Unit stated 'The carbon market has moved on substantially since the introduction of the QAS and we now believe it is for the market to set best practice for carbon offsetting.

International Carbon Reduction and Offset Alliance (ICROA), the leading membership body of organisations offering offsets and carbon management services has been working with DECC as part of the QAS Advisory Board and believes this is the right course of action for DECC to take.

Edward Hanrahan, Co-Chair of ICROA said, 'we agree with DECC that the market has moved on greatly over the last two or three years. Prospective purchasers of Offsets have a number of robust, verified standards to choose from, as well as being able to rely upon the ICROA Code of Best Practice; an independently audited process that our membership base follows to only sell the highest quality independently verified offsets. The Government has been working closely with the voluntary carbon market and closure of the scheme signals that quality and self regulation has been much improved in the voluntary market.

Emergence of codes of conduct for market participants and the establishment of robust voluntary standards with transparent registries now allow for reliable, transparent accounting of offset sales. We are happy that UK Government has recognised that industry has significantly advanced in the past few years and that it

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is the role of industry experts to lead the way in setting best practice in carbon offsetting.'

ICROA has advocated for rigorous standards in the industry since its inception and has a code of best practice for carbon reduction and offset providers to ensure quality and transparency. ICROA endorses standards that have gone through its strict criteria assessment to ensure that carbon credits are real, measurable, permanent, additional, independently verified and unique.

ICROA members have committed to selling VERs produced by projects developed in compliance with several leading certification standards, notably the Gold Standard and the Verified Carbon Standard. These certification protocols have been developed openly in collaboration between environmental NGOs, climate policy experts, and industry participants.

The evolution of such standards and ICROA's code of best practice to ensure quality in the market has effectively fulfilled the original objectives of the QAS and removed the need for Government intervention in the market. ICROA is pleased to see the UK government has recognised this and will continue to strive to develop Best Practice in the market at all times.

END

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The International Carbon Reduction and Offset Alliance (ICROA), is a not for profit alliance of leading carbon reduction and offset providers. It provides leadership and a unified voice advocating for rigorous industry standards. ICROA members support a “reduce and offset” approach to carbon management. Members have adopted the ICROA Code of Best Practice and must report transparently on their compliance with the Code following the end of this year.

As described by ICROA’s Code of Best Practice, carbon management is a comprehensive approach to assessing and reducing an organisation’s carbon footprint. Comprehensive carbon management requires:

- Measuring carbon footprints according to accepted international standards
- Setting emissions reduction targets based on scientific assessments
- Reducing net CO2 emissions by:
 - Achieving reductions within the organisation
 - Using real, permanent, and additional offsets

ICROA currently endorses voluntary carbon standards Carbon Fix, Gold Standard, Verified Carbon Standard and CAR.

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