



ICROA Statement on BBC Breakfast Feature 281109

ICROA supports a “reduce and offset” approach to carbon management. This approach is essential to achieve the deep emission reduction targets that we need. The use of voluntary offsets is part of an effective solution to keep the impacts of climate change manageable. Effective carbon management involves measuring greenhouse gas emissions, identifying and implementing actions to reduce one’s own emissions, and reducing unavoidable emissions by voluntarily funding other reductions that are enabled by the sale of carbon credits.

Voluntary carbon offset projects generate real, independently verified emission reductions. Voluntary offsets are very different from offsets in cap-and-trade schemes, which do not lower global emissions. Offsets in cap-and-trade schemes are simply a mechanism to meet the “cap.” They do not lower the cap. Voluntary offset projects effectively lower the cap, and so global emissions, by reducing emissions in non-capped sectors or economies below the level that would have occurred in the absence of the voluntary offsets market. Voluntary offsets are not a means to continue emitting, they are a means to reduce emissions – a useful tool for all who cannot otherwise reduce their own emissions to zero. As Forum for the Future emphasised during the BBC Breakfast feature (on 28th November 2009), voluntary offsets can provide vital co-benefits for communities in the developing world, helping them onto a development path that won’t compound our carbon problem.

ICROA promotes best practice in the voluntary carbon market with its Code of Best Practice, which the ICROA members sign up to and report against. The ICROA Code of Best Practice has specific requirements for how member companies provide their carbon footprinting, GHG reduction advice and offset services. ICROA also engages with Governments and other key NGO stakeholders on voluntary carbon market issues. The carbon offset standards that are included in the ICROA Code of Best Practice (CDM/JI, Climate Action Reserve, Gold Standard and the Voluntary Carbon Standard) ensure that the offsets that ICROA member companies use are certified as being real, additional and permanent. Using offsets certified by these offset standards also ensure that the essential co-benefits are realised.

To learn more about these issues and ICROA, please visit www.icroa.org

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