



# Climate

## A Global Third-Party Certification Program for Carbon Offsets

### What is a Carbon Offset?

A carbon offset is an intangible commodity representing a specific reduction in GHG emissions. It is typically sold in metric tons of carbon dioxide-equivalent (mtCO<sub>2</sub>e).

In the voluntary market, it's purchased in order to negate or diminish the impact of the recipient's own GHG emissions. Reductions occur at projects located far away from the source of emissions being offset.

### Green-e® Climate Certified Offsets Meet the Most Rigorous Quality Standards & Provide:

**Transparency** between end-use consumers, resellers, and the carbon offset project. The third-party certification program follows the chain of custody of the carbon offsets transacted. Certified offsets contain only verified reductions from projects that meet high-quality, endorsed standards.

**Accountability** for participating offset sellers who must obtain and retire correct volumes and types of eligible emissions reductions on behalf of their customers. A third-party verification audit reviews what is sold against what is delivered, preventing double-selling. Marketing Compliance Reviews ensure accurate advertising and disclosure to customers.

**Credibility** as third-party certification streamlines all of the vital elements of a credible offset into a single, consumer-facing certification. The program strengthens the voluntary carbon market and supports purchasers reducing their GHG footprints.

**“The Green-e Climate program is the first program to address retailer accountability for the voluntary market and fills an important niche for quality assurance.”**

—Stockholm Environment Institute

**“It's kind of like the Wild West out there, and that's why we're glad that there's this credible certification program.”**

—Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC)



## Benefits of Certification

1. **Verified Projects.** Only verified GHG emissions reductions that come from projects that meet high-quality project standards are permitted. We require project additionality and emissions reductions must be permanent, verified, enforceable, and real.
2. **Exclusive Ownership.** Green-e® Climate ensures that the correct type and quantity of reductions are actually and fully delivered by the retailer. An annual verification of sales prevents double selling.
3. **Accurate Disclosure.** Sellers are required to provide customers with information about the certified carbon offsets at the time of purchase. Green-e® Climate checks for false or misleading advertising.
4. **Open Program Development.** Green-e® Climate's environmental and consumer-protection standards are developed through an open stakeholder review process and overseen by an independent governance board.

## For Corporate Purchasers

Certification protects the purchaser, and reduces risk by guaranteeing that the carbon offsets are correctly delivered and exclusively owned by the purchaser. Certified offsets can be used to earn points under environmental standards like Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design (LEED) and the Living Building Challenge.

## For Carbon Offset Sellers

Green-e® Climate certifies carbon offsets and bundled offset programs, like carbon offset natural gas. Program participation requires sellers to complete an annual verification audit and semi-annual Marketing Compliance Reviews.

## Find Out More

Contact Green-e® Climate at [climate@green-e.org](mailto:climate@green-e.org) or (415) 561-2100.

To read program documents or learn where to buy Green-e® Climate certified carbon offsets, visit [www.green-e.org/climate](http://www.green-e.org/climate).

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## 2020 Key Stats

- Green-e® Climate certified just over 598,000 mtCO2e
- 22 countries sold certified offsets
- 29 projects supplied offsets to certified sales
- 91,000 residential customers bought certified offsets, up 233%
- Bundled natural gas-carbon offsets accounted for 17% of overall certified sales
- 38% of certified sales attributed to sales for LEED building certification

## Green-e® Climate Requires Project Certification Standards

All eligible emissions reductions certified by Green-e® Climate must be generated from projects certified by a project-level standard, such as the American Carbon Registry, Climate Action Reserve, Verified Carbon Standard, and Gold Standard. The project certification verifies that the offsets were generated. Green-e® Climate oversees the transaction of the offsets throughout the chain-of-custody, from project to end-user, to ensure no double selling or misleading advertising.



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