

Registry starts accepting California CO2 offsets

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WASHINGTON, May 18 (Reuters Point Carbon) – Offset registry the Climate Action Reserve (CAR) announced Friday it will start accepting projects that will generate carbon credits for California’s cap-and-trade scheme in a bid to ensure there is an ample supply of credits before the market starts in 2013.

CAR, which is in the process of being accredited by California regulators to be one of the market’s official offset registries, said it has become the first registry to accept California-compliant project submissions.

Gary Gero, president of CAR, said he hopes the move can expedite the issuance of carbon credits for the nascent carbon market.

“By processing compliance projects at this juncture, we are helping to ensure that there will be sufficient offset supply for the market in the early going,” he said.

CAR has developed the only four offset protocols to have been adopted so far by the California Air Resources Board (ARB) for use in the state’s cap-and-trade program.

“We are excited about the opportunity to grow our respected offsets program into the regulated sector,” Gero told Reuters Point Carbon.

HEAD START

Once a project developer or owner submits project design documents to the CAR registry, CAR will review them to make sure they are eligible for compliance with the California market.

This “head start” will enable the projects to be ready once the ARB has accredited third-party project verifiers, which Gero expects to happen in July.

California is expected to issue its first allowances to emitters by this autumn and will hold its first compliance auction in November.

The market will begin trading in 2013, by which point it is expected to begin the process of linking to a similar carbon market being implemented in Quebec under the Western Climate Initiative (WCI).

WCI

The WCI on Thursday announced it is reviewing its own set of offset protocols for its regional carbon trading scheme.

It will evaluate projects that reduce emissions managing manure from cows and pigs; eliminating ozone depleting substances; capturing methane from coal mines and from small landfills.

WCI may also consider offset protocols related to municipal and industrial waste water treatment, forests, N₂O emission reductions from fertilizer application, rice cultivation, and enteric fermentation.

CAR's Gero said the WCI shortlist includes offset protocols that CAR has already written and has experience implementing.

"We will work the WCI partners as closely as we can to adapt those protocols for use in the WCI," he said.

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