

# Clearing the Air

## WHY FORESTS ARE ESSENTIAL TO GLOBAL AVIATION'S RESPONSE TO CLIMATE CHANGE

**If the aviation sector were a country, it would be one of the top 10 emitters of carbon dioxide on Earth. To help deliver its promise of carbon-neutral growth from 2020, international aviation will have to look, in part, to carbon offsets — which can be delivered through REDD+.**

### **What is REDD+?**

Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation, and sustainable management of forests, conservation of forest carbon stocks and enhancement of forest carbon stocks (collectively referred to as REDD+) is a [framework](#) developed under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to address deforestation by supporting the protection of forests for their carbon sequestration, storage and other services.

### **Does REDD+ work?**

REDD+ has a long track record of delivering high-quality emission reductions while also providing significant social, economic and biodiversity co-benefits. REDD+ has also garnered support from over 70 countries around the world, including REDD+ donors and implementing countries.

### **Can REDD+ work for the aviation industry?**

The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) can depend on REDD+ to provide a significant volume of robust offsets to help meet its emission reduction targets as well as a multitude of additional benefits in developing

countries — including sustainable development, biodiversity conservation and improved human well-being — and to do so with environmental integrity.

### **How can the aviation sector and the environment benefit?**

Including REDD+ as an eligible offset option under ICAO's Carbon Offsetting and Reduction Scheme for International Aviation (CORSIA), provides a triple benefit: a secure supply of high-quality offsets that can help aviation meet its climate goals, a significant support for investment in forest protection, and benefits to local communities and developing countries.

Experts [estimate](#) that nearly three fourths of the anticipated increase in international aviation emissions above 2020 levels could be covered by the market-based measure, CORSIA. This could generate demand for up to 3 billion metric tons of carbon credits over CORSIA'S 15-year span. If REDD+ credits meet 30 percent of this demand at US\$ 5 per metric ton of carbon dioxide, international aviation could generate up to US\$ 5 billion of investments in REDD+ over this period.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT REDD+

### Q: Are REDD+ units “additional”?

A: Yes. Baselines for REDD+ programs are developed in line with rigorous UN guidance that considers historical deforestation rates and business as usual projections from which to measure results and demonstrate additionality. All countries engaging REDD+ must also develop a national REDD+ strategy and action plan to communicate their approach for implementing REDD+ and delivering results. This national strategy considers the country’s national context and identifies the drivers of deforestation that would have led to an increase in emissions if the REDD+ activities had not occurred.

### Q: Are REDD+ units “permanent”?

A: Yes. The scale of REDD+ implementation, in line with national strategies, promotes the long-term sustainability and permanence of REDD+ emission reductions. REDD+ programs have years of experience and guidance on mitigation measures to address any potential risk of reversals. For example, some REDD+ programs employ a buffer system (i.e., reserves of reductions which are not transferred but which can be accessed to compensate for any reversals).

### Q: Can REDD+ programs do harm without consequences?

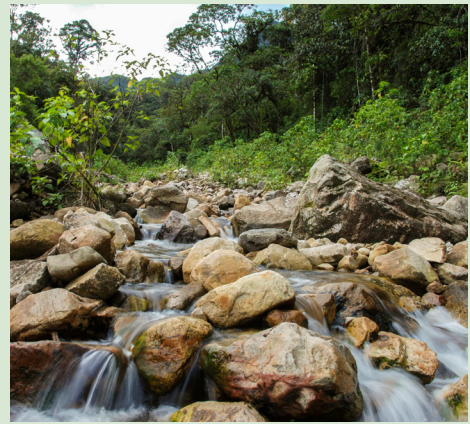
A: No. All REDD+ programs must follow local laws and regulations as well as guidelines under the UN Framework Conference for Climate Change (UNFCCC) and in many cases, additional operational rules and regulations from the World Bank, other UN agencies or relevant verification standards. Most REDD+ programs include grievance redress mechanisms for any individuals or communities who feel their rights have been violated. Finally, the REDD+ program must report on the implementation of their safeguards against rights violations in order to receive credit for reduced deforestation results.

### Q: Do REDD+ units have “environmental integrity” and how so?

A: Definitely. The additionality and permanence of REDD+, as described above, is guaranteed by the UN rules known as the [Warsaw Framework for REDD+](#). The environmental integrity of REDD+ is further guaranteed when the implementation of REDD+ activities and any buying or selling of resulting emission reductions is done in accordance with best practices, including coordination with host country governments to ensure no double counting, which is a requirement for all offsets under CORSIA.

### Q: Does REDD+ generate additional benefits?

A: Yes. REDD+ credits have significant “co-benefits” already built in because of forest conservation and participation by indigenous peoples and local communities. Social benefits from REDD+ programs could include titling of their territories, economic development for sustainable livelihoods, and support to increase crop production on the same amount of land. Significant biodiversity benefits and ecological services such as water production are part of any REDD+ emission reduction because of forest conservation.



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## HOW ONE AIRLINE IS ALREADY SUPPORTING FOREST CONSERVATION

As part of [United Airlines’](#) carbon reduction portfolio, the company has been investing in forest conservation through the Eco-Skies CarbonChoice program. United offers customers the opportunity to support a forest carbon initiative in Peru that establishes conservation agreements with local farmers, who receive services such as technical training in return for not cutting down the forest.

**Through this REDD+ initiative, more than 5.5 million metric tons of carbon dioxide have stayed out of the atmosphere — the equivalent of taking more than 1 million cars off of the road for a year.**

