



INDIGENOUS LEADERSHIP.
NATURAL SOLUTIONS.
SHARED PROSPERITY.

GREENHOUSE GAS OFFSET PROJECTS

Creating real climate impact through
nature-based solutions and Indigenous stewardship.



NATURE-BASED SOLUTIONS

Protecting and
restoring forests,
lands, and wetlands.



REDUCE. REMOVE. OFFSET.

Projects that
reduce emissions
and remove carbon
from the atmosphere.



INDIGENOUS LED. COMMUNITY OWNED.

Empowering Nations
to lead climate action
and build prosperity.



REAL IMPACT. LASTING VALUE.

Verified carbon
outcomes that create
environmental and
economic benefits.

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BIRCH CARBON PROGRAM

INDIGENOUS LEADERSHIP. NATURAL SOLUTIONS.
SHARED PROSPERITY.

BIRCH CARBON PROGRAM SUMMARY

KEY INSIGHTS. REAL IMPACT. STRONGER COMMUNITIES.

Birch Carbon Program Summaries provide Indigenous Nations with quick, easy-to-understand insights from important resources — highlighting what matters most and how it can support environmental stewardship, community priorities, and long-term prosperity.

WHAT YOU'LL FIND INSIDE



KEY TAKEAWAYS

The most important points from the original resource.



INDIGENOUS FOCUS

Why it matters to your Nation, your lands, and your future.



BIRCH CARBON PERSPECTIVE

Our insights on opportunities, benefits, and real-world impact.



COMMUNITY OPPORTUNITIES

How this information can create value for your people and territory.



ORIGINAL SOURCE

Direct links to the full document and official resources.



OUR COMMITMENT

We are committed to making complex information accessible and relevant for Indigenous Nations so you can make informed decisions, protect your lands, and build prosperity for future generations.



PROTECT
OUR LANDS



SUPPORT
OUR PEOPLE



BUILD
PROSPERITY



SECURE OUR
FUTURE

[BIRCHCARBONPROGRAM.COM](https://www.birchcarbonprogram.com)

BIRCH CARBON PROGRAM SUMMARY

About This Summary

This summary has been prepared by the Birch Carbon Program to help Indigenous Nations better understand what greenhouse gas offset projects are, how they function, and why they are becoming an increasingly important part of Canada's environmental economy.

Rather than replacing the original Government of Canada publication, this document highlights the key concepts, explains why they matter, and connects them to the opportunities available through Indigenous-led environmental stewardship.

Original Publication

The Essentials: Greenhouse Gas Offset Projects

Environment and
Climate Change Canada

This Edition

An educational
companion prepared by
the Birch Carbon
Program for Indigenous
Nations.

THE STARTING POINT

Why This Matters

For generations, Indigenous Nations have cared for lands that naturally store enormous amounts of carbon. Today, these same forests, wetlands, grasslands, and watersheds are increasingly recognized for their role in reducing climate change.

Offset projects create a structured process for measuring, verifying, and recognizing these environmental benefits. When projects satisfy approved scientific methodologies and independent verification standards, they may qualify to generate carbon credits that can be sold within recognized carbon markets.

FAR MORE THAN ENVIRONMENTAL ACCOUNTING

It represents recognition of Indigenous stewardship as a measurable environmental asset.

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KEY CONCEPTS EXPLAINED



CONCEPT 01

What is a Greenhouse Gas Offset Project?

A greenhouse gas offset project is a voluntary project that either:

- Reduces greenhouse gas emissions, or
- Removes and stores greenhouse gases from the atmosphere

Projects must follow approved offset protocols and be independently verified before offset credits can be issued.

WHY IT MATTERS TO INDIGENOUS NATIONS

Many Indigenous territories already contain ecosystems capable of storing significant amounts of carbon. Offset projects provide one pathway for recognizing these environmental benefits while supporting long-term stewardship.

CONCEPT 02

Examples of Offset Projects

Government-recognized offset project types include:

- Improved forest management
- Tree planting
- Methane capture from landfills
- Composting organic waste
- Forest conservation
- Wetland and grassland protection
- Livestock methane reduction
- Regenerative agriculture

WHY IT MATTERS TO INDIGENOUS NATIONS

Many of these project types already align with Indigenous values of caring for the land. Communities may already possess landscapes capable of supporting eligible projects, subject to approved methodologies and technical assessment.

CONCEPT 03

The Six Principles of High-Quality Offset Projects

Every credible offset project must satisfy six core principles.

1 Real

Projects must achieve measurable reductions or removals that have actually occurred.

Environmental benefits must be demonstrated, not simply estimated.

2 Additional

Projects must create improvements beyond what would have happened under normal business practices.

Credits are only generated for actions that create new environmental value.

3 Quantifiable

Reductions must be accurately measured using approved scientific methods and calculation protocols.

Reliable measurement creates confidence for buyers, governments, and investors.

CONCEPT 03, CONTINUED

The Six Principles

4 Unique

Reductions can only be registered and credited once, which prevents double counting across carbon programs.

Uniqueness protects the integrity and credibility of carbon markets.

5 Verifiable

Independent third-party experts must review project data and confirm every requirement has been met.

Independent verification builds trust between developers and buyers.

6 Permanent

Stored carbon must stay stored. Many programs require commitments extending decades, some up to 100 years, with insurance for unexpected losses.

Long-term stewardship is what gives a carbon credit lasting value.

CONCEPT 04

What Determines Whether a Project Can Participate?

Not every environmental project automatically qualifies for carbon credits. Offset systems establish rules that define eligibility, including:

- Project scope
- Project start date
- Geographic location
- Eligible project activities
- Which greenhouse gases are being reduced or removed

WHY IT MATTERS TO INDIGENOUS NATIONS

Understanding eligibility requirements helps communities identify which opportunities may qualify before investing time and resources into project development.



Birch Carbon INSIGHTS



OUR PERSPECTIVE

Offset projects are not simply technical exercises.

They are a practical way to recognize generations of Indigenous stewardship using internationally accepted scientific standards.

Many Indigenous Nations have protected forests, wetlands, peatlands, and watersheds for centuries. Offset projects create a framework that can measure this stewardship, verify environmental outcomes, and potentially generate long-term economic opportunities while keeping the land intact.

ALWAYS IN A GOOD WAY

The greatest value is not found in changing the land. It is found in recognizing the value that healthy ecosystems already provide.

OUR ROLE

How the Birch Carbon Program Supports Communities

We work alongside Indigenous Nations throughout project development. Our role includes:

- Identifying potential offset project opportunities
- Explaining technical requirements in plain language
- Coordinating scientific assessment and quantification
- Supporting project registration and independent verification
- Connecting verified carbon credits with qualified buyers
- Helping communities decide, at every stage

OUR GOAL

To simplify a complex process while supporting Indigenous-led stewardship, informed decision-making, and long-term sustainability.

NEXT STEPS

Where a Nation Can Begin

There is no obligation at any stage, and no land use changes while questions are still being answered.

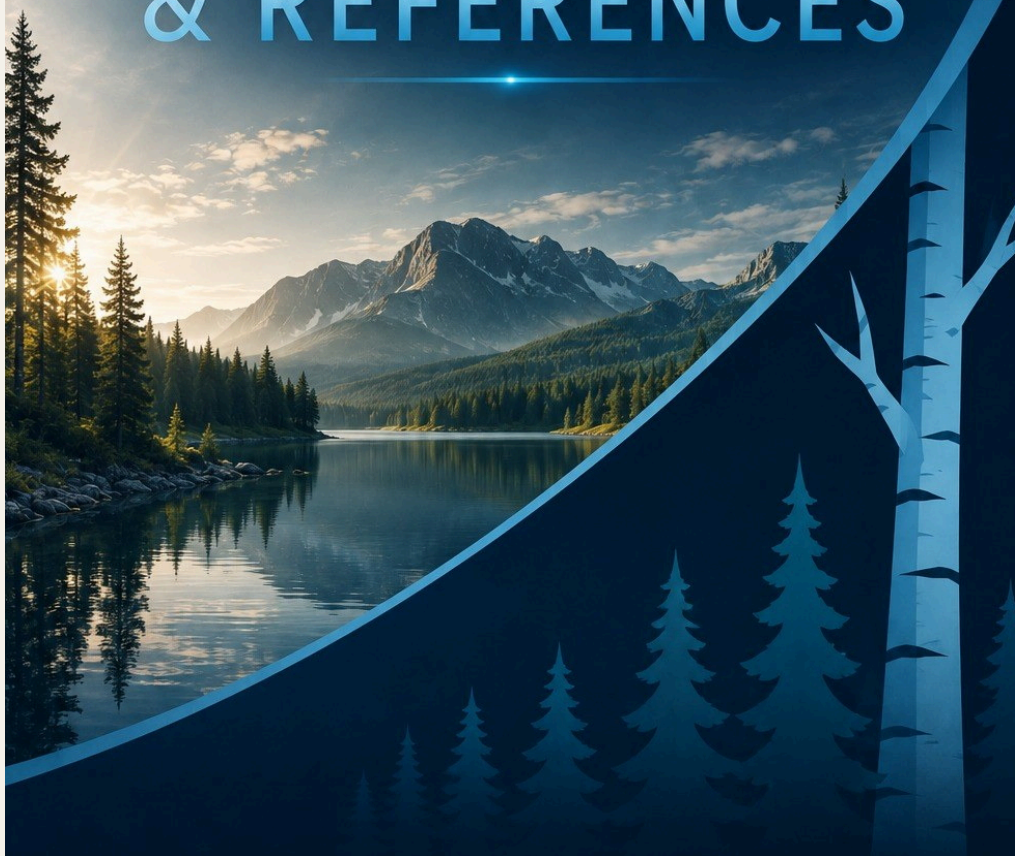
- **Understand the basics.** This summary, and the full Government of Canada publication behind it, are a starting point.
- **Talk it through.** We can meet with Chief and Council, staff, or community members and answer questions in plain language.
- **Look at the land.** A preliminary review helps identify whether territory may support an eligible project type.
- **Decide together.** Any next step is the Nation's decision, on the Nation's timeline.

TO BEGIN A CONVERSATION

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birchcarbonprogram.com



RESOURCES & REFERENCES



ORIGINAL SOURCE

Resources & References



ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE
CANADA

The Essentials: Greenhouse Gas Offset Projects

[Read the original publication ↗](#)



GOVERNMENT OF CANADA · GREENHOUSE
GAS OFFSET TOOLKIT

Section: Greenhouse gas offset projects

[Open that section of the toolkit ↗](#)

Attribution. *The Essentials: Greenhouse Gas Offset Projects* is a publication of Environment and Climate Change Canada, Government of Canada, published under the Greenhouse Gas Offset Toolkit. All rights in the original publication remain with the Government of Canada.

About this summary. This Birch Carbon Program Summary is an educational companion to the original publication. It is intended to improve accessibility and understanding while encouraging readers to consult the complete Government of Canada document for full technical guidance. It is not legal, financial, or technical advice.



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Part of the Indigenous Carbon Knowledge
Centre. Plain-language summaries of the
publications that matter most to Nations.

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