



INDIGENOUS LEADERSHIP.  
NATURAL SOLUTIONS.  
SHARED PROSPERITY.

# PLANNING A PROJECT IN CANADA'S GREENHOUSE GAS OFFSET CREDIT SYSTEM

Careful planning is the foundation of every successful carbon project. These steps help ensure your project is strong, credible, and ready for registration and credit generation.



1

## DEFINE PROJECT GOALS

Clarify your objectives, community priorities, and expected outcomes.



2

## ASSESS ELIGIBILITY

Review land ownership, rights, and project type eligibility under approved protocols.



3

## IDENTIFY PROJECT BOUNDARIES

Determine the geographic boundaries and activities that will be included in the project.



4

## ESTABLISH BASELINE SCENARIO

Estimate what would have happened in the absence of your project.



5

## ESTIMATE CARBON IMPACTS

Use approved methods to estimate greenhouse gas reductions or removals.



6

## IDENTIFY RISKS & CO-BENEFITS

Assess risks and design strategies for long-term stewardship and community benefits.



7

## PREPARE PROJECT DOCUMENTATION

Compile all plans, maps, data, and supporting information for validation and registration.



BUILD STRONG  
COMMUNITY  
FOUNDATIONS



SUPPORT  
ENVIRONMENTAL  
STEWARDSHIP



CREATE LONG-TERM  
ECONOMIC  
OPPORTUNITIES



CONTRIBUTE TO  
CLIMATE ACTION  
TOGETHER

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# BIRCH CARBON PROGRAM

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## 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

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## BIRCH CARBON PROGRAM SUMMARY

# About This Summary

This summary has been prepared by the Birch Carbon Program to help Indigenous Nations better understand the key considerations involved in planning a greenhouse gas offset project under Canada's Federal Greenhouse Gas Offset Credit System.

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

**Original Publication**  
**The Essentials:**  
**Planning a Project in**  
**Canada's Greenhouse**  
**Gas Offset Credit**  
**System**

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

Canada's Greenhouse Gas Offset Credit System creates opportunities for eligible projects to generate verified carbon credits that may be sold in carbon markets.

Before beginning a project, communities should understand whether their project qualifies, what resources are required, how revenues may be generated, and what long-term commitments are involved.

## THE WHOLE POINT OF PLANNING

Planning today helps protect tomorrow's opportunities.

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# What's Inside

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SEVEN PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

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# KEY CONCEPTS EXPLAINED

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## CONSIDERATIONS 01 AND 02

# Does It Qualify, and What Will It Take?

## 1 Is the Project Eligible?

Not every environmental activity qualifies as a federal carbon project. Projects must meet both the Federal Greenhouse Gas Offset Credit System Regulations and the requirements of the approved protocol for that project type.

**Confirming eligibility early helps communities avoid unnecessary costs and focus on projects capable of generating verified credits.**

## 2 Understanding Costs and Benefits

Projects involve planning, technical assessments, registration, monitoring, reporting, verification, financing and ongoing management. Many costs occur long before credits begin generating revenue.

**Understanding financial commitments allows communities to make informed decisions while preparing for long-term success.**

## CONSIDERATIONS 03 AND 04

# What It Earns, and What It Asks in Return

## 3 Understanding Carbon Revenue

Credits only create revenue once they have been verified, issued, and sold to qualified buyers. Prices vary with market conditions, buyer demand, project quality, and negotiated agreements.

**Planning for future buyers and realistic market expectations strengthens long-term financial planning.**

## 4 Long-Term Stewardship

Projects involving forests, wetlands and other natural ecosystems require long-term monitoring and management, including preparing for wildfire, pests, and other events that may affect stored carbon.

**Responsible stewardship protects both environmental integrity and the long-term value of the project.**



## CONSIDERATION 05

# Building Financial Strength

Several approaches may improve a project's financial feasibility:

- Project aggregation

- Complementary funding programs

- Validation prior to registration

- Multiple environmental benefits

## WHY IT MATTERS TO INDIGENOUS NATIONS

Combining funding opportunities and environmental objectives may improve project economics while creating broader community benefits.

## CONSIDERATIONS 06 AND 07

# Who Leads, and Who Sits at the Table

## 6 Indigenous Leadership

The federal system recognizes the important role Indigenous communities play in protecting forests, wetlands and natural ecosystems. Traditional Knowledge and long-term stewardship may contribute to monitoring, permanence planning, and environmental integrity.

**Indigenous stewardship is increasingly recognized as an important component of successful long-term carbon projects.**

## 7 Building the Right Team

Carbon projects require technical, scientific, financial, legal and environmental expertise. Selecting experienced partners and clearly defining responsibilities helps communities make informed decisions.

**Strong partnerships improve project quality while ensuring communities remain informed and in control.**

## BEFORE YOU BEGIN

# The Planning Checklist

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Seven questions worth answering before a Nation commits time or resources:

- Does the project meet the regulations and an approved protocol?
- What will it cost, and when do those costs fall?
- How and when would revenue actually arrive?
- Who monitors the land, and for how long?
- Can funding or aggregation strengthen the economics?
- How does Traditional Knowledge shape the project?
- Who is on the team, and what is each partner responsible for?



# Birch Carbon INSIGHTS





## OUR PERSPECTIVE

# Planning is often the most important stage of any carbon project.

Projects built on careful planning, strong partnerships, realistic financial expectations, and responsible stewardship are far more likely to succeed over the long term.

Indigenous Nations have managed these lands for generations. Thoughtful project planning provides another opportunity to transform that stewardship into measurable environmental and economic value.

**ALWAYS IN A GOOD WAY**

The work done before anything is signed is the work that decides how the next twenty-five years go.

## OUR ROLE

# How the Birch Carbon Program Supports Communities

We work alongside Indigenous Nations from the earliest planning stages, helping communities:

- Evaluate project eligibility and identify carbon opportunities
- Estimate potential carbon value
- Coordinate technical assessments
- Navigate federal carbon requirements
- Develop long-term project strategies
- Identify qualified buyers

## OUR GOAL

To simplify the planning process while ensuring communities retain leadership throughout every stage of project development.

## NEXT STEPS

# Where a Nation Can Begin

Planning is the stage with the least risk and the most influence. There is no obligation at any point.

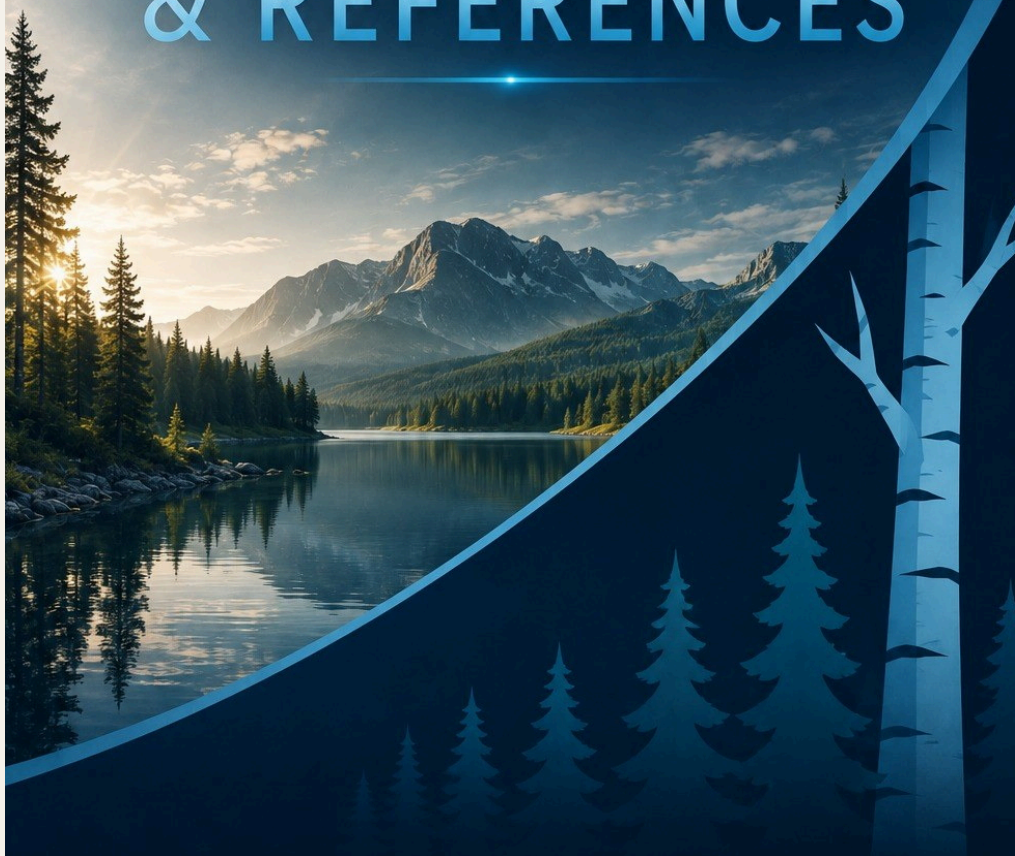
- **Ask the eligibility question first.** It is the cheapest question to answer and it shapes everything after it.
- **Talk it through.** We can meet with Chief and Council, staff, or community members and answer questions in plain language.
- **Look at the land.** A preliminary review helps identify 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

**info@michaelbirch.ca**  
birchcarbonprogram.com



# RESOURCES & REFERENCES



## ORIGINAL SOURCE

# Resources & References



ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE  
CANADA

## The Essentials: Planning a Project in Canada's Greenhouse Gas Offset Credit System

[Read the original publication ↗](#)



GOVERNMENT OF CANADA · GREENHOUSE  
GAS OFFSET TOOLKIT

## Section: Planning a project in Canada's Greenhouse Gas Offset Credit System

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

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**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 detailed 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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