

ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA

CARBON COMPLIANCE MARKET ACT, 2025

An Act to establish a national carbon compliance market for Antigua and Barbuda; to regulate the generation, verification, and trading of carbon credits; to integrate carbon finance with the nation's climate commitments under the Paris Agreement; and to promote sustainable development and community benefit-sharing.

1. Short Title

This Act may be cited as the Carbon Compliance Market Act, 2025.

2. Interpretation

In this Act — 'Authority' means the Antigua and Barbuda Carbon Market Authority established under section 4. 'carbon credit' means a verified certificate representing one metric ton of carbon dioxide equivalent reduced, removed, or avoided. 'ITMO' means an Internationally Transferred Mitigation Outcome under Article 6.2 of the Paris Agreement. 'project developer' means any person or entity authorized to design, implement, or operate a carbon project. 'Registry' means the Antigua and Barbuda Carbon Registry established under section 11. 'Minister' means the Minister responsible for Environment.

3. Purpose and Scope

The purpose of this Act is to establish Antigua and Barbuda's national compliance carbon market; facilitate carbon credit generation, certification, and trade; integrate blue-carbon, green-carbon, and renewable-energy projects into the national climate framework; ensure equitable benefit-sharing; and promote investment and transparency.

4. Establishment of the Antigua and Barbuda Carbon Market Authority

There is hereby established the Antigua and Barbuda Carbon Market Authority (ABCMA), a body corporate with perpetual succession and a common seal under the supervision of the Minister.

5. Functions and Powers of the Authority

The Authority shall regulate, monitor, and approve all carbon projects; issue methodologies and standards; accredit verifiers and developers; maintain the Carbon Registry; liaise with international markets; and perform all functions necessary to give effect to this Act.

6. Authorized Project Developers

The Authority may license entities as Authorized Project Developers, including SwissX Sovereign Wealth Fund, farmers' cooperatives, renewable energy providers, and blue-carbon enterprises.

Developers shall prepare Project Design Documents (PDDs) and implement MRV protocols.

7. Eligible Project Categories

Projects eligible include blue-carbon (mangroves, seagrass, sargassum); green-carbon (biochar, regenerative agriculture); renewable energy (biofuel, solar, wind); waste management; and reforestation.

8. Project Design and Registration

Every project shall be registered with the Authority through a PDD specifying baseline emissions, boundaries, anticipated reductions, and monitoring plan. Approved projects receive a unique identifier.

9. Verification, Monitoring, and Reporting

Verification shall be conducted by an accredited Designated Operational Entity (DOE). Projects must undergo annual monitoring and submit verified reductions for certification.

10. Issuance and Transfer of Carbon Credits

Certified emission reductions shall be issued as carbon credits denominated in metric tons of CO₂e. Credits may be transferred domestically or internationally subject to Government authorization.

11. Antigua and Barbuda Carbon Registry

The Antigua and Barbuda Carbon Registry (ABCR) is established to record issuance, ownership, transfer, and retirement of credits. It may integrate blockchain technology for transparency.

12. Government Revenue and Benefit-Sharing

Ten percent of all international transfer proceeds shall be paid into the National Climate Resilience Fund, ten percent to community adaptation programs, and the remainder retained by the project owner.

13. Recognition of Carbon Credits as Financial Instruments

Carbon credits issued under this Act shall be deemed financial instruments for securities, taxation, and trade law within Antigua and Barbuda.

14. Digital Tokenization and Blockchain Integration

The Authority may approve digital representation of carbon credits as tokens on blockchain systems. Tokenized credits have equal legal status to paper certificates.

15. Integration with International Compliance Systems

The Authority shall coordinate with the UNFCCC Secretariat and Caribbean NDC Hub to align Antigua and Barbuda's participation in Article 6.2 and 6.4 mechanisms. Exported credits shall be correspondingly adjusted to the national greenhouse gas inventory.

16. Offences and Penalties

Any person who falsifies MRV data, issues unverified credits, or engages in fraudulent transfer commits an offence and is liable to a fine not exceeding EC\$500,000 or imprisonment not exceeding five years.

17. Transitional Provisions

Existing carbon projects must register with the Authority within six months of commencement. Voluntary credits may be converted to compliance credits subject to verification.

18. Regulations

The Minister may make regulations prescribing methodologies, MRV standards, and benefit-sharing frameworks.

19. Commencement

This Act shall come into operation on such date as the Minister may, by Order published in the Gazette, appoint.

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

This Bill establishes the legal framework for Antigua and Barbuda's participation in the international compliance carbon market. It empowers a national regulatory authority to oversee carbon projects, verify emission reductions, and issue tradeable credits. The Bill promotes innovation in sargassum-to-biochar processing, regenerative agriculture, and renewable energy while generating new revenue streams through carbon finance and climate adaptation funds.