

## **Ineligible project types**

atmosfair criteria and how they relate to existing standards

## Introduction

This paper summarizes the criteria atmosfair uses to determine which climate mitigation projects are ineligible for funding from atmosfair. The paper provides a formal list of the criteria defined by atmosfair when the company formed in 2005 which have been consistently applied since then.

CDM, Gold Standard, atmosfair criteria

Since atmosfair only allows CDM and GS-registered projects, the following section describes the project types that are not allowed based on the requirements of the Gold Standard (Part I) and the CDM regulatory framework (Part II). Above and beyond these standards, there are other technologies and activities that atmosfair rejects in offsetting projects. These are described in Part III.

### I. Ineligible project technologies based on the Gold Standard (GS)<sup>1</sup>

Project type	Exclusion criterion
Hydropower	Hydropower projects in High Conservation Value (HCV) regions, e.g. on the UN list of protected areas, are not eligible. In addition, hydropower projects are not eligible if independent experts cannot rule out the potential for water resource conflicts or a significant impact to groundwater level. This is particularly problematic in the case of large-scale hydropower projects. Hydropower plants with a capacity of 20 MW or more are not eligible.
Biomass use	Any activities that make use of non-renewable biomass resources are not eligible for Gold Standard registration.
Biomass conversion	Methane avoidance can only be credited if biomass is used as a substitution for non-renewable fuels or the production of a usable product that has sustainable development benefits (e.g. composting).
Biogas	Only permitted if at least part of the biogas is used for the delivery of energy services (e.g. light, heat).
Waste incineration and gasification	Co-firing of non-renewable and renewable waste within incineration or gasification facilities is not permitted.
Waste handling	Activities planning to make use of waste materials that are already in use in the pre-project situation are not eligible unless users expressly agree to the shift of use.
All	Projects that make a positive contribution to fewer than three Sustainable Development Goals.

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<sup>1</sup>Source: Gold Standard for the Global Goals – Renewable Energy Activity Requirements, General Eligibility Criteria and Annex A

## II. Ineligible project technologies defined in the UN Clean Development Mechanism (CDM)

Nuclear power is the only ineligible technology defined in the CDM. This was stipulated at the COP7 of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) 2001: *“Parties included in Annex I are to refrain from using certified emission reductions generated from nuclear facilities to meet their commitments”*.

## III. Other ineligible project technologies and procedures for offsetting projects as defined internally by atmosfair

Project type	Exclusion criterion
Forest projects (afforestation, reforestation, forest conservation)	Reforestation or afforestation projects can help mitigate climate change, but atmosfair doesn't think that financing forest projects through voluntary carbon offsetting is the right approach and does not pursue any forest projects as a result. One reason is that a forest has to exist for at least 50 to 100 years to have a significant impact on climate change mitigation, but there is no guarantee that the forest will still exist for this entire period. Nor can the possibility be ruled out that trees are cut down elsewhere to compensate because these kinds of projects cannot solve the basic problem of high demand for resources. <sup>2</sup> There have also been many examples of projects where human rights were violated in the past. atmosfair thus rejects all types of afforestation projects including REDD <sup>3</sup> and REDD+ <sup>4</sup> .
Agriculture	atmosfair does not engage in any type of offsetting projects where carbon reductions are brought about by changes in agricultural practices like carbon sequestration in the soil. The reasons are that there is no guarantee that carbon captured in the soil will not be lost again and the savings calculations in this area are unreliable.
Wind power (with the exception of pilot projects)	atmosfair only supports pioneer wind power projects, in other words, e.g. the first project in a region where no wind power capacities previously existed or projects that utilize a new yet risky technology. Credible evidence of the additionality of wind projects cannot otherwise be provided. <sup>5</sup>
Solar energy	atmosfair does not support or pursue any projects that involve mercury lamps or lead accumulators for solar home systems.
Carbon sequestration	No geological carbon sequestration
Biomass	The biomass used must be sustainable and leakage emissions must be prevented. There must be enough biomass in the project

<sup>2</sup> Background literature: World Rainforest Movement (2015): REDD. A Collection of Conflicts, Contradictions and Lies.

<https://www.atmosfair.de/documents/10184/1960150/Redd+2/625cb99e-be27-4ca2-9b82-c8f2456a2d13>

<sup>3</sup> REDD stands for: “Reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation”

<sup>4</sup> REDD+ stands for: “Reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation and the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks in developing countries”.

<sup>5</sup> Background literature: Cames et al. (2016): How additional is the Clean Development Mechanism.

[https://ec.europa.eu/clima/sites/clima/files/ets/docs/clean\\_dev\\_mechanism\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/clima/sites/clima/files/ets/docs/clean_dev_mechanism_en.pdf)

	region: The project does not compete with other consumers in terms of use.
HFC-23, SF6	HCF-23 is used to make the coolant HCFC-22 and is a highly active greenhouse gas. It is also a chemical used in the production of Teflon. There are known cases in CDM projects where the production of HCF-23 was deliberately increased to then lower them again and credit the emissions reductions. <sup>6</sup> There are similar projects involving sulphur hexafluoride (SF6), a gas harmful to the climate.
Nitric acid, adipic acid	atmosfair also excludes projects where nitric acid and adipic acid are used. Nitric acid is usually used in the production of fertilizers and explosives as well as in electroplating, while adipic acid is used in the manufacture of nylon and as a plasticizer in PVC production. The incentives created by these projects which are disproportionately high as well as a lack of environmental integrity are among the reasons that atmosfair rejects projects of this kind.
Genetically modified organisms	atmosfair is not involved in any projects with genetically modified organisms.
Palm oil	atmosfair is not involved in any projects related to palm oil.

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<sup>6</sup> Source: <http://www.klimaretter.info/umwelt/nachricht/6276-klima-projekte-auf-dem-pruefstand>