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EU Agrees on Groundbreaking Carbon Removal Certification Framework

Key policies: *European Climate Law, European Green Deal, Fit for 55 Package, Circular Economy Action Plan, Nature Restoration Law, New European Bauhaus Initiative, New European Bauhaus Initiative, EU Registry for Carbon Removals, EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030*

The European Commission has welcomed a historic political agreement between the European Parliament and the Council to establish the **first EU-wide certification framework for carbon removals**. This voluntary system, announced on February 20, 2024, aims to promote high-quality carbon removal practices and technologies, helping the EU achieve its climate neutrality goal by 2050 under the **European Climate Law**.

Key Objectives of the Certification Framework

The new certification framework is designed to:

- **Ensure Transparency and Credibility:** Certification will be based on strict criteria to guarantee accurate quantification, long-term carbon storage, and additional sustainability benefits such as biodiversity protection.
- **Encourage Carbon Farming and Innovative Technologies:** The framework supports methods like forest restoration, soil rewetting, biochar production, bioenergy with carbon capture and storage (BECCS), and direct air carbon capture and storage (DACCS).
- **Boost the EU's Climate Goals:** By integrating carbon removals into its broader decarbonization strategy, the EU can complement emissions reduction efforts and foster economic opportunities.

High Standards for Certification

The regulation outlines rigorous criteria for certified carbon removals:

- **Quantification:** Carbon removals must be precisely measured.
- **Permanence:** Stored carbon must be retained for a minimum of 35 years in products or ecosystems.
- **Innovation and Sustainability:** Practices must go beyond existing norms, contributing to climate and environmental goals like biodiversity enhancement.

Economic Opportunities

The certification system unlocks new economic avenues for stakeholders, including:

- **Carbon Farming:** Farmers and foresters can adopt sustainable practices that restore soils and ecosystems while earning from certified removals.
- **Green Construction:** Encourages the use of long-lasting bio-based building materials like wood and biochar, aligned with the **New European Bauhaus Initiative**.

- **Innovative Financing:** Supports private and public funding for result-based schemes that reward carbon removal efforts.

Implementation and Monitoring

An EU registry will be established within four years to provide transparency and ensure trust in certified removals. Existing certification schemes will serve as a foundation during this transition. A **Carbon Removal Expert Group** will guide the development of tailored methodologies for different carbon removal activities.

Supporting Broader EU Policies

The regulation builds on key EU strategies, including:

- **European Green Deal:** Reinforcing the pathway to climate neutrality by integrating carbon removals into the EU's climate framework.
- **Circular Economy Action Plan:** Encouraging practices that retain carbon in materials and products.
- **Nature Restoration Law:** Enhancing biodiversity and ecosystem resilience.

Next Steps

The European Parliament and Council must formally approve the agreement before the regulation is published in the Official Journal and comes into force. Once implemented, this framework will solidify the EU's leadership in global climate action.

Commissioner Wopke Hoekstra emphasized:
"Carbon removals and farming will be an essential part of our climate neutrality efforts. With this framework, we are unlocking innovation and creating new opportunities for farmers, foresters, and industries while ensuring environmental responsibility."

This certification scheme represents a critical step forward in achieving sustainable carbon cycles, fostering innovation, and ensuring a greener future for Europe.

For more information, visit the [European Green Deal page](#).

Source: https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_24_885