# [***5 principles to secure the future of blue carbon***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66V4-FV51-JDG9-Y2JX-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Body**

Cologny: World Economic Forum has issued the following press release:

Coastal and marine ecosystems can store up to five times as much carbon per acre as tropical rainforests.***Blue carbon*** credits invest in the protection of these systems, preserving the natural world while also reducing or preventing carbon emissions.The World Economic Forum ’ s Friends of Ocean Action, Salesforce and others have produced the High-Quality ***Blue Carbon*** Principles & Guidance to ensure that ***blue carbon*** stakeholders are engaging the market effectively and with integrity.Coastal and marine ecosystems such as ***mangrove*** forests, seagrass meadows and salt marshes can store, on average, more carbon per acre than terrestrial forests — but they have only recently emerged as a resource for generating carbon credits.

Investing in ***blue carbon*** projects and credits will help protect these unique aquatic ecosystems — an end in itself — but also ensure the vast quantities of carbon they have sequestered from the atmosphere stays under water.

If the world is to meet the ambitious goals of the Paris Climate Agreement and limit global warming to 1.5 °C or achieve the UN ’ s Sustainable Development Goals, ***blue carbon*** cannot be ignored.

Have you read?What are ***blue carbon*** credits and how to maximise their impactMapping ***Blue Carbon*** Wealth Around the WorldWhy the future of carbon should be blueThe growing market for blue carbonDemand for ***blue carbon*** credits currently far outweighs supply and care must be taken to ensure that the growth of the growth of ***blue carbon*** is driven by principles and guidance that optimise outcomes for people, biodiversity and the climate.

For this reason, Salesforce, the World Economic Forum ’ s Friends of Ocean Action, the Ocean Risk and Resilience Action Alliance (ORRAA), The Nature Conservancy and Conservation International, together with the Meridian Institute, have facilitated the creation of the High-Quality ***Blue Carbon*** Principles & Guidance. This framework, developed through an open and global consultative process, builds on and codifies existing best practices and provides a roadmap to maximise the potential of ***blue carbon***.

The international carbon market consists of carbon credits and offsets that represent avoided emissions or removed carbon — or its equivalent — from the atmosphere. The global carbon market is expanding rapidly and could grow to $50 – 100 billion by 2030, but has come under scrutiny due to poor project design and allegations of greenwashing. However, the climate crisis has reached such urgency that we need all available climate action simultaneously, including carbon credits, as a ‘last, but not later ’ investment.

Companies and individuals can and should invest in high-quality carbon credits to help fulfill their net-zero ambitions. The climate crisis has reached such urgency that we need all available climate action simultaneously, including carbon credits as a ‘last, but not later ’ investment. Salesforce has outlined this important decision-making process in a recent blog underpinning its new Net Zero Marketplace.

It has taken 20 years after the 1997 Kyoto Protocol kicked off the carbon market for the very first ***blue carbon*** credits to be issued — but now ***blue carbon*** is garnering the attention it deserves.

Five principles for effective ***blue carbon*** Image: Meridian InstituteFive principles for effective blue carbonCompanies can play an important role in scaling the supply of high-quality ***blue carbon*** credits to help fulfil their net-zero and nature positive ambitions. With increased interest and investment in this market comes a timely opportunity for ***blue carbon*** stakeholders to align on a shared definition of high-quality ***blue carbon*** projects and credits and how to engage the market responsibly.

The following five principles, each of equal importance, along with the subsequent guidance are foundational to the development and deployment of high-quality ***blue carbon*** projects and credits.

1. Safeguard nature.***Blue carbon*** projects provide unique opportunities to preserve and enhance ecosystem resilience. Conversely, the destruction of ***blue carbon*** ecosystems often leads to a significant loss of biodiversity and the release of hundreds of years of emissions that had been sequestered under water.

While market demand often prefers restoration, stakeholders should also prioritize the conservation of current ecosystems.

2. Empower people.Most ***blue carbon*** projects take place where people live and work. ***Blue carbon*** stakeholders must implement social safeguards to protect and enhance community member rights, knowledge and leadership and foster equitable access to the global carbon market.

3. Employ the best information, interventions and carbon accounting practices.The integrity of the voluntary carbon market hinges, in part, on the quality of information used to design projects and communicate the resulting carbon value of the credits generated. Purchasers, investors, suppliers, project developers and governments must use the most appropriate interventions and the best available scientific knowledge, including indigenous, traditional and local knowledge.

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4. Operate locally and contextually.***Blue carbon*** ecosystems are incredibly heterogeneous with respect to their role in local customs, gender and power dynamics, resource use, management and ownership regimes and social, policy and governance structures. Project design should account for the social and ecological context as well as the local implications of international policies.

5. Mobilise high-integrity capital.High-quality ***blue carbon*** requires fair and transparent pricing and compensation that supports sustainable financing. Buyers should set science-based targets for limiting global average temperature increase to 1.5°C and compensate for any remaining emissions with high-quality carbon credits.

One example of a high-quality ***blue carbon*** project is an innovative ***mangrove*** project in Cispata, Columbia, led by Conservation International and local NGOs with funding from Apple. The “Vida Manglar” project was the first ***blue carbon*** project to enter the international carbon market with its carbon fully calculated.

The “Vida Manglar” project was the first to calculate how much carbon was stored in this Cispata ***mangrove*** forest. Image: Conservation InternationalThe future of blue carbonBlue carbon holds immense potential not only for decarbonization efforts, but also because of the wealth of co-benefits to communities and ecosystems. For example, ***mangroves*** support fish and other biodiversity which in turn support livelihoods and tourism, and provide coastal defences against floods.

As carbon markets become bluer, the world must design and invest in ***blue carbon*** projects and credits that cause a shift towards greater accountability, equity and transparency.

The High-Quality ***Blue Carbon*** Principles & Guidance is one resource that can help ***blue carbon*** stakeholders engage the market with integrity. Implementing and learning from these principles and guidance will unleash the full potential of ***blue carbon***, cutting emissions while protecting some of the earth ’ s most unique and valuable ecosystems — and the people that rely on them.

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