

New partnership formed to advance sustainable and equitable carbon markets in East Africa

Voluntary Carbon Markets Integrity Initiative and Eastern Africa Alliance on Carbon Markets and Climate Finance unite to progress high-integrity carbon markets.

LONDON, UNITED KINGDOM, September 1, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The Voluntary Carbon

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Markets Integrity Initiative (VCMI) and Eastern Africa Alliance on Carbon Markets and Climate Finance (EAA) have joined forces to support the sustainable growth of carbon markets across East Africa.

The partnership will support governments in the region to access carbon markets by helping them to build the needed policies, capacity and infrastructure. This will include the development and implementation of national carbon markets strategies and authorities.

The partnership includes technical assistance for EAA

member countries via VCMI's [Access Strategies program](#), a global initiative that helps emerging markets and developing economies build high-integrity carbon markets, unlock climate finance, and design national policies. VCMI will also provide on-the-ground support through regular meetings between its Kampala-based policy expert and EAA.

The agreement builds on prior collaboration, which includes the release of Pathways for Strengthening Validation and Verification Body (VVB) Capacity in Africa. This action plan set out nine steps to improve the efficiency of the continent's carbon credit market by addressing the shortage of Africa-based VVBs and, which causes up to 50 per cent of project delays.

“East Africa is rapidly emerging as one of the most important regions globally for the supply of carbon credits, but the benefits must work both ways,” said Urbans Benywanira, policy associate at VCMI.

“Carbon markets can generate significant social and economic benefits for host countries in addition to emissions reductions, but only if governments are equipped to take the reins and

provide an attractive environment for growing demand for credits. This partnership with EAA is designed to ensure countries in East Africa can participate meaningfully in high-integrity carbon markets.”

East Africa already accounts for around [10 per cent](#) of global credits in voluntary markets. Between 2022 and 2025, projects in East Africa issued almost 115 million credits, with Kenya, Uganda, Malawi, Zimbabwe and Zambia as the biggest contributors.

Demand for high-integrity carbon credits from within Europe alone could represent a \$1 billion opportunity for East Africa by 2030, supporting 1.7 million jobs and generating some of the \$1.3-1.5 trillion that African countries will need to deliver sustainable development priorities.

However, to date, the wider African continent’s carbon credit market has tapped only [two per cent](#) of its maximum capacity.

Enabling high-integrity carbon finance flows in EAA member countries will contribute to national economic, social, climate and biodiversity prosperity.

Andrew Ocama, coordinator of the Eastern Africa Alliance, said: “While several countries in East Africa are already actively engaged in and benefitting from carbon markets, the region has still only tapped a fraction of its potential.

“EAA’s partnership with VCMI marks a new phase in East Africa’s carbon market trajectory as we work together to put in place the frameworks, policies and expertise needed to ensure carbon markets support both local communities and climate goals. We welcome VCMI’s commitment to this partnership.”

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