

WOODLAND AND PEATLAND CARBON CODES



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Georgina Maseli:	<p>Hello, everyone, and welcome to another episode of 'Climate Insights.' I'm your host, Georgina Maseli. Today, we're diving into the fascinating realm of voluntary carbon markets, and we're lucky to have an expert, Rachael Tattersall, part of Addleshaw Goddard's Environment and Sustainability team, with us to shed some light.</p> <p>Rachael, can you tell us how projects operate under the Woodland Carbon Code and the Peatland Carbon Code?</p>
Rachael Tattersall:	<p>Absolutely! It's a pleasure to be here. As businesses face increasing pressure to meet ESG and carbon neutrality commitments, voluntary carbon markets are becoming crucial in achieving net-zero ambitions. The Woodland Carbon Code is the voluntary quality assurance standard for woodland creation projects in the UK, outlining requirements for projects aiming to sequester carbon through woodland creation.</p>
Georgina Maseli:	<p>Interesting. So, what exactly qualifies as "woodland creation" under this code?</p>
Rachael Tattersall	<p>Good question. Woodland creation is defined as the human-induced conversion of land not under tree cover for at least 25 years. The code covers activities like planting, direct seeding, and natural regeneration, but it's essential that these activities happen on non-organic soils and the project duration must not exceed 100 years.</p>
Georgina Maseli:	<p>Got it. So what process must a project follow under the code?</p>
Rachael Tattersall	<p>The process involves meeting strict eligibility criteria followed by validation, and verification. Projects then generate independently verified woodland carbon units representing sequestered carbon, which can then be traded on the UK Woodland Carbon Registry.</p>
Georgina Maseli:	<p>Fascinating. Now, let's switch gears to the Peatland Carbon Code. Are the principles similar to the Woodland Carbon Code?</p>
Rachael Tattersall	<p>Yes, indeed. The Peatland Carbon Code is the voluntary certification standard for UK peatland restoration projects. While the peatland code doesn't prescribe specific techniques, projects must demonstrate effective restoration over a minimum duration of 30 years, adjusted based on the peat depth of the particular project location.</p>
Georgina Maseli:	<p>So, it's more about demonstrating effectiveness rather than specific methods. What's the minimum project duration under the Peatland Code?</p>
Rachael Tattersall	<p>Exactly. The minimum duration is 30 years, and it depends on the depth of peat. For instance, a project of 100 years would require a minimum peat depth of 1m, as the project's duration is governed by the particular locality.</p>
Georgina Maseli:	<p>And what steps do projects under the Peatland Carbon Code follow?</p>
Rachael Tattersall	<p>Projects must establish eligibility, create a restoration plan, register on the UK land carbon registry, and undertake a field survey. An additionality calculator and risk assessment ensure that emission reductions predicted for the scheme are truly 'additional.' Just like the Woodland Carbon Code, projects must be validated by an independent body.</p>
Georgina Maseli:	<p>So, it involves a rigorous process. Now, let's talk benefits. What do businesses gain from projects run under these codes?</p>

Rachael Tattersall	Great question. Aside from the sale of carbon units providing additional income, those purchasing the units can offset their own UK greenhouse gas emissions. Assurance is crucial. Independent validation and verification required under these codes adds credibility, ensuring that a purchased carbon unit represents a tonne of carbon sequestered from the environment.
Georgina Maseli:	And beyond offsetting, are there any other environmental and social benefits?
Rachael Tattersall	Absolutely. These projects offer benefits like habitat restoration, enhanced local landscapes, opportunities for varied recreation, and sustainable product sources such as fuel wood and timber.
Georgina Maseli:	Impressive. So, it's not just about the credits. In conclusion, Rachael, why is proper regulation of voluntary carbon markets crucial?
Rachael Tattersall	Maintaining transparency and trust in these markets is key. As voluntary carbon markets continue to evolve, appropriate regulation and verification ensure that businesses have a reliable means to work toward meeting net-zero ambitions.
Georgina Maseli	Thank you, Rachael, for this insightful discussion. If our listeners have more questions or want additional information, please get in touch. Until next time, stay tuned for more 'Climate Insights.'

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