

The Environment – What It All Means

The Kyoto Protocol

The Kyoto Protocol is the first, and only, binding international agreement that sets targets to reduce the greenhouse gas emissions that cause climate change.

Government programs that support the Kyoto Protocol can include things like mandatory emissions reductions for factories and power plants; requiring automobile manufacturers to improve fuel efficiency; funding to purchase carbon offsets and emission reduction credits; investing in infrastructure projects that would decrease greenhouse gas emissions.

The U.S. is not a signatory to the Kyoto Protocol, though a number of large corporations are calling for a U.S. response.

What is Carbon Neutral?

Carbon neutral is an emerging international trend to reduce the climate impacts associated with the products and services that we all consume.

The carbon emissions associated with a product are quantified and then physically reduced to the greatest possible extent.

The remaining carbon emissions are then made neutral with purchased “offsets” or “credits” that fund emission reduction projects or carbon-free energy projects such as wind farms and solar installations.

By purchasing these credits, organizations can apply them to their own emissions and reduce their net carbon impact.

The carbon-offset market allows businesses to recognize and financially support the shift from fossil fuel to renewable energy.

Verifying Carbon-Offset Credits

The Kyoto Protocol mandates that carbon offsets must be “real, verifiable and additional to what would have otherwise occurred.”

A carbon-offset credit represents one ton of greenhouse gas emission reductions or avoided emissions.

These credits can be verified through two leading organizations: the European-based “Gold Standard” and the U.S.-based Environmental Resources Trust.

The Verified Emissions Reduction credits (VERs) that Mohawk purchases are verified to meet the standards of the Environmental Resources Trust’s GHG (Greenhouse Gas) Registry.

The GHG Registry Standard is based on guidelines developed by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the international scientific body supporting the Kyoto Protocol.

Climate Change Basics

- Climate change has become one of the leading environmental challenges for industries worldwide.
- There are many types of greenhouse gases.
- Carbon dioxide (CO₂) is by far the most prevalent and therefore “carbon” is often used interchangeably with greenhouse gas.
- The leading causes of carbon dioxide emissions, which are traceable to human activity, include fossil fuel usage and deforestation.

Continued

Mohawk's VERs

Mohawk Fine Papers joined the U.S. EPA Climate Leaders program to develop formal greenhouse gas emission reduction goals. As an extension of this commitment, Mohawk augments its purchase of Green-e wind power renewable energy credits (RECs) used as electric energy offsets, with verified emissions reduction credits (VERs).

VERs offset all of the thermal energy used in the production of Strathmore Writing, Strathmore Script, Beckett Concept and Beckett Expression.

The current source of the VERs, purchased by Mohawk, is the Des Plaines Landfill and Emission Reduction Project, which is located outside of Chicago, IL. By using landfill gas to generate electricity, this facility has significantly reduced its climate impacts.

According to Tom Boucher, president & CEO, NativeEnergy (www.NativeEnergy.com), "In the carbon market, third party certification according to IPCC guidelines assures the consumer that the offsets they're purchasing are 'additional' and actually represent reductions that would not occur without the carbon offsets market."

Carbon Emission Reduction Strategies

Mohawk supports sustainable forestry through certification programs such as the Forest Stewardship Council. They maximize the use of recycled fiber and are a recognized leader in the use of emission-free, renewable energy.

Mohawk also has voluntarily capped emissions; made significant investments to reduce energy consumption; and offset fleet mileage through Native Energy's Wind Builder program.

Through the U.S. EPA Climate Leaders program, Mohawk will develop quantifiable greenhouse gas emission reduction goals, and as an extension of this commitment, will offer customers papers, which are made carbon neutral within our production processes.

Visit these sites to learn how businesses and consumers everywhere can offset greenhouse gas emissions:

www.mohawkpaper.com/carbonneutral

www.NativeEnergy.com

www.designcanchange.org

<http://sustainability.aiga.org/>

www.davidsuzuki.org

www.epa.gov/climateleaders

www.fsc.org

www.greenseal.org

www.green-e.org

www.epa.gov/climateleaders

www.us-cap.org

www.ert.net

www.cdproject.net