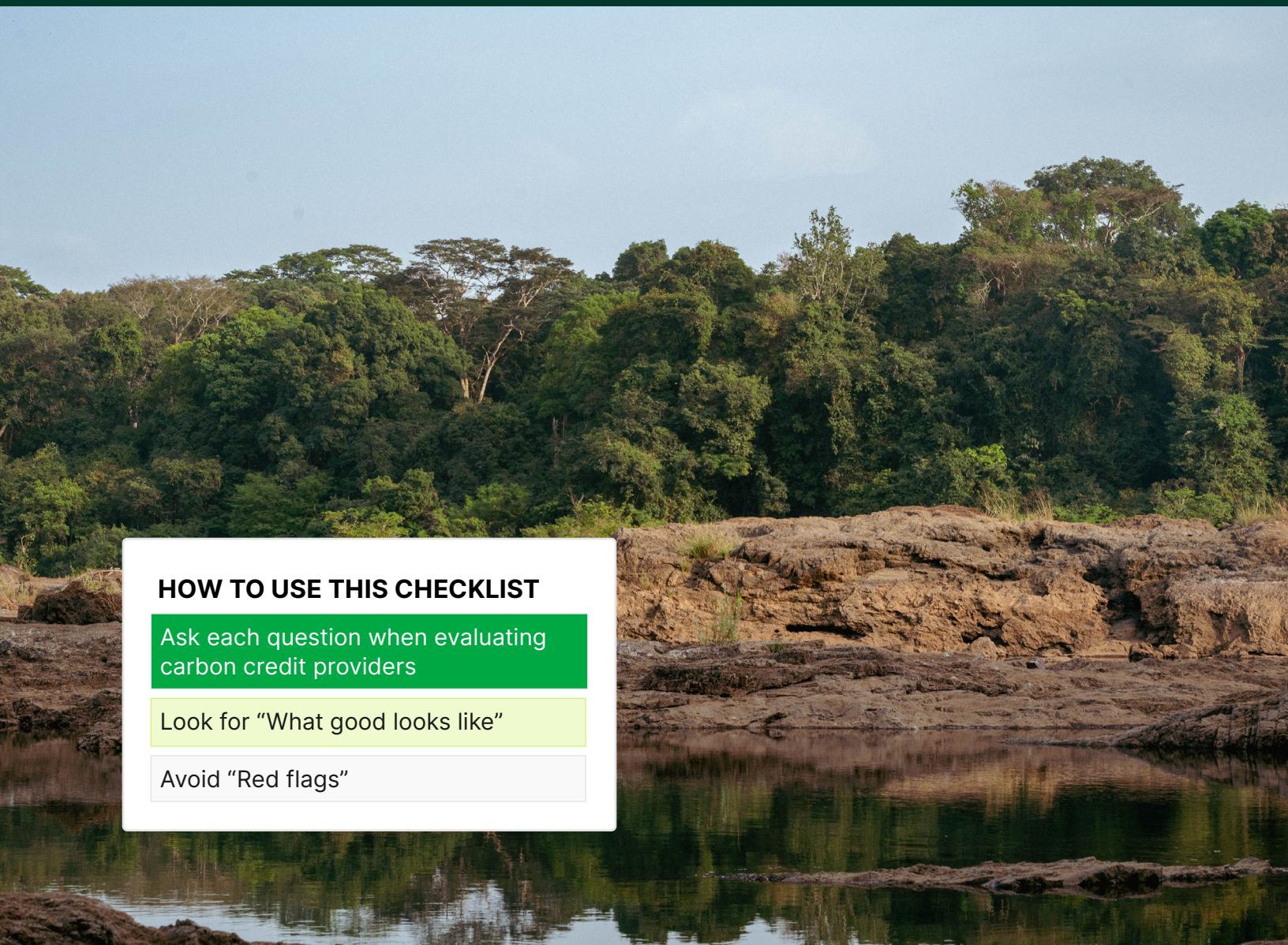
Carbon Direct

Buying credible carbon removal: 10 questions every leader should ask

Secure carbon removal credits that advance your climate and impact goals while managing budget, reputation, and delivery risks.



HOW TO USE THIS CHECKLIST

- Ask each question when evaluating carbon credit providers
- Look for “What good looks like”
- Avoid “Red flags”

Securing supply and strategic management

Focus on the fundamentals that differentiate providers: reliable supply, tailored portfolios, expert management, and balancing spot versus long-term offtake.

HIGH-QUALITY SUPPLY AND DELIVERY ASSURANCE

1. Can the provider reliably deliver high-quality carbon credits when needed, with strong protections against under-delivery?

Immediate access to high-quality credits; proven delivery track record; strong contractual protections covering underperformance or non-delivery and replacement credits; project assurance; active measurement, monitoring, reporting, and verification (MMRV); multi-year availability

Limited credit availability; weak or absent contractual delivery protections and replacement credits; insufficient buffer pool; unproven capacity

CUSTOM PORTFOLIO CONSTRUCTION

2. Can the portfolio be tailored to fit my budget, specific needs, and risk tolerance?

Full portfolio customization with expert guidance; access to diverse, high-quality projects across high-durability (engineered) and nature-based carbon removal pathways; availability across multiple years; diverse project geographies; access to first-of-a-kind (FOAK) projects and emerging technologies

One-size-fits-all approach; narrow set of carbon removal pathways (e.g., only biochar or improved forest management); restricted geographic coverage; late-stage or follow-on project participation

PORTFOLIO MANAGEMENT EXPERTISE

3. Does the provider deliver expert guidance with streamlined contracting and ongoing portfolio management?

Dedicated strategic support; transparent, efficient contracting; active portfolio oversight

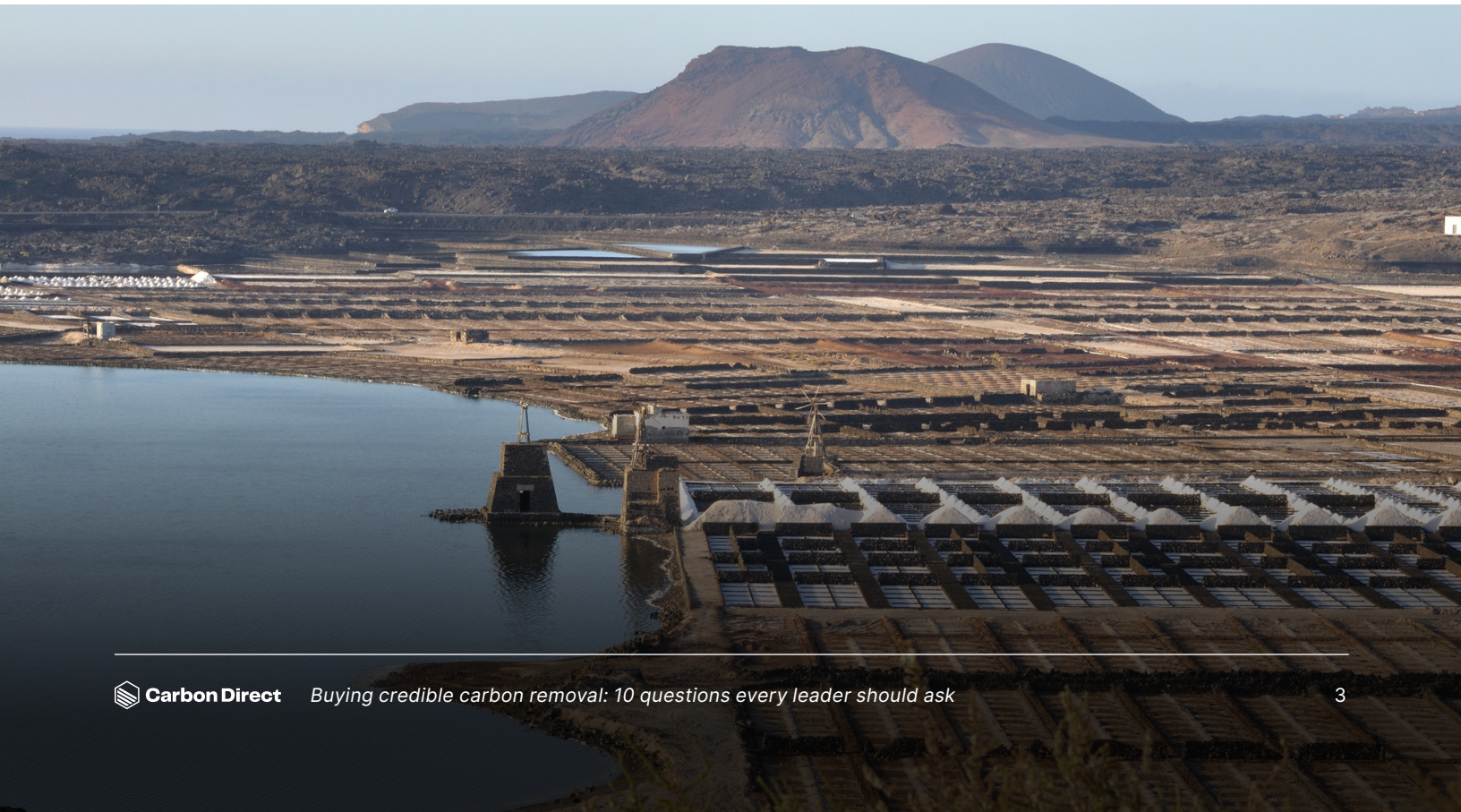
No expert support; self-serve model; complex or opaque contracting; little to no ongoing management

SPOT PURCHASES VS. MULTI-YEAR PROCUREMENT

4. Does the provider give access and strategic guidance on balancing spot and long-term offtake to manage pricing and secure future supply?

Access to high-quality spot credits and forward offtake deals; strategic support to lock in supply and pricing in a competitive market; alignment with long-term company goals

Exclusive reliance on spot purchases, exposing buyers to scarcity and rising prices; offtake commitments made without strategy or risk management



Principles of credible carbon removal projects

Grounded in the *Criteria for High-Quality Carbon Dioxide Removal*, these questions assess social and environmental safeguards, additionality, robust monitoring, storage durability, and leakage risk.

SOCIAL IMPACT AND COMMUNITY BENEFITS

5. Do projects prevent harm to communities while delivering meaningful social benefits?

Rigorous community engagement plans with a transparent process to prevent new social harms, reduce existing harms, and provide meaningful community benefits such as direct payments, inclusive hiring practices, infrastructure investments, or capacity building

No mention of social safeguards, community impact assessment, or tangible local benefit distribution

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT AND CO-BENEFITS

6. Do projects minimize environmental risks while creating positive environmental outcomes?

Clear mitigation of environmental harms with benefits such as biodiversity protection, watershed protection, soil health improvement, habitat restoration, or other measurable ecosystem services

Narrow focus only on carbon metrics with no environmental risk assessment or ecosystem benefits

ADDITIONALITY AND PROJECT BASELINES

7. Would this carbon removal happen anyway without your purchase?

Conservative, science-backed baselines proving the project's carbon removal wouldn't occur without carbon finance

Lack of evidence supporting the carbon removal estimations or vague claims that purchases make a difference

MEASUREMENT AND LONG-TERM MONITORING

8. How is carbon removal tracked and verified over time?

Robust MMRV with rigorous project diligence above baseline protocols used in registries and rating agencies; repeatable and verifiable methodologies; regular monitoring and reporting throughout the project lifecycle

Opaque scoring; lack of repeatable and verifiable measurement; registry or rating-only evaluation; no ongoing monitoring and reporting

CARBON STORAGE DURABILITY

9. How long will the carbon stay stored, and are durability claims credibly assessed?

Science-backed durability assessments using transparent, conservative crediting methodologies with clear reversal risk evaluation; ongoing MMRV; risk mitigation plans

Overstated durability claims without transparent, conservative, science-backed assessment methodologies or reversal risk mitigation plans

LEAKAGE POTENTIAL & RISK MITIGATION

10. Could these projects cause unintended emissions increases elsewhere?

Thorough evaluation of potential emission increases elsewhere with clear mitigation strategies

No mention of a leakage mitigation plan or narrow evaluation of market demand for the emitting activity

Why act now?

- **Climate and impact goals:** Reduce the risk of missed targets while delivering broader community and environmental benefits
- **Supply constraints:** High-quality carbon credits are limited and competitive
- **Regulatory momentum:** Emerging requirements favor early movers
- **Stakeholder expectations:** Credible, impact-oriented climate action
- **Technology development:** Support the scaling of emerging solutions
- **Global alignment:** Support international climate goals and reduce exposure to mounting scrutiny

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Next steps

- **Evaluate providers:** Use this checklist to benchmark both current and potential partners against science-based quality criteria.
- **Identify and mitigate risks:** Flag gaps in durability, additionality, monitoring, or safeguards, and build delivery protections into contracts.
- **Align with company goals:** Apply the "good answers" as your baseline to ensure purchases advance your climate commitments, reputational priorities, and risk tolerance.
- **Plan for scale:** Combine near-term and emerging projects, secure multi-year procurement, and prepare to grow alongside the carbon removal market.
- **Work with expert partners:** Choose providers who offer in-house scientific rigor, transparent contracting, and advisory support, not just marketplace access, to structure deals that deliver real, durable impact.

Ready to secure a high-quality portfolio with delivery protections and durable impact?

Contact us to learn how leading companies build a portfolio of high-quality carbon credits with delivery protections, transparent contracting, and science-backed project selection →