

**BELIZE:**

**CLIMATE CHANGE AND CARBON MARKET INITIATIVES  
BILL, 2025**

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**BELIZE:**

**BILL**

**for**

**AN ACT** to develop, implement, manage, and regulate mechanisms to enhance climate resilience and low emission development for the sustainable development of Belize; to respect the objectives and principles of the international climate change regime ratified in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Paris Agreement; to establish a market in Belize to trade carbon credits; and to provide for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.

*(Gazetted ....., 2025)*

**BE IT ENACTED**, by and with the advice and consent of the House of Representatives and Senate of Belize and by the authority of the same, as follows:

PART I

*Preliminary*

Short title.

**1.** This Act may be cited as the

**CLIMATE CHANGE AND CARBON MARKET INITIATIVES ACT,**  
**2025.**

Interpretation.

**2.** In this Act—

“adaptation” means the process of adjustment in natural or human systems to actual or expected climatic conditions and their effects in order to moderate harm or exploit beneficial opportunities;

“anthropogenic emissions” means emissions of greenhouse gases, precursors of greenhouse gases, and aerosols caused by human activities;

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“applicable threshold” means the quantity of carbon emission reductions prescribed by the Minister by regulations, applicable to carbon reduction or removal projects to be undertaken by an independent project developer;

“biomass” means organic material, both living and dead, located above or below ground, and includes trees, crops, grasses, tree litter, roots, and similar vegetation;

“broker” means a licensed intermediary authorised to facilitate transactions between project developers and end purchasers, acting on behalf of either developers or purchasers to match supply and demand for carbon credits and promote fair market access;

“Cancun Safeguards” means the seven safeguards for REDD+ which include—

- (a) actions that complement or are consistent with the objectives of national forest programmes and relevant international conventions and agreements;
- (b) transparent and effective national forest governance structures, taking into account national legislation and sovereignty;
- (c) respect for the knowledge and rights of indigenous peoples and members of local communities, taking into account relevant international obligations, national circumstances, and laws, and noting that the United Nations General Assembly has adopted the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples;
- (d) the full and effective participation of relevant stakeholders, in particular indigenous peoples and local communities;
- (e) actions that are consistent with the conservation of natural forests and biological diversity, ensuring that the actions are not used for the conversion of natural forests, but are instead used to incentivise the protection and conservation of natural forests and their ecosystem services, and to enhance other social and environmental benefits;
- (f) actions to address the risks of reversals; and
- (g) actions to reduce displacement of emissions;

“carbon” means—

- (a) “black carbon” which are carbon compounds present in, as well as greenhouse gas emissions emanating from, oil, coal, natural gas, petroleum products, fossil fuel combustion, and industrial manufacturing;
- (b) “blue carbon” which are the carbon compounds captured by living organisms in coastal and marine ecosystems, and stored in biomass and sediment; and
- (c) “green carbon” which are carbon compounds present in biomass on land, in fresh water and in the soil as well as greenhouse gas emissions emanating from biomass on land in fresh water and in the soil and includes such emissions originating from the decay of organic waste during solid waste disposal;

“carbon credit” means a saleable, verified emission reduction or removal credit, or an international transferred mitigation outcome or other carbon mitigation measure that has some degree of permanence or stability, is recognised under the standards of the Paris Agreement, and represents the sequestration, reduction, avoidance, or removal of greenhouse gas emissions from the atmosphere equivalent to one tonne of carbon dioxide or carbon dioxide equivalent, and which can be counted towards the greenhouse gas mitigation targets of an individual, company, country, or organisation;

“carbon credit authorisation permit” or “authorisation permit” means the authorisation issued by the Registrar for the sale of carbon credits;

“carbon dioxide equivalent” means a metric measure used to compare the emissions from other greenhouse gases on the basis of their global-warming potential by converting amounts of the other gases to the equivalent amount of carbon dioxide with the same global warming potential;

“carbon offsetting” means the process by which a greenhouse gas emitter or reducer with an approval letter can trade or sell related carbon credits on a carbon market with the government, an international third party, or another emitter;

“carbon trading” means the process of buying or selling carbon credits;

“climate change” means human-induced change in the state of the climate which is attributable to global warming and caused by significant increases in the concentration of greenhouse gases resulting directly or indirectly from human activity, and is in addition to natural climate variability observed over decadal time periods;

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“climate change project approval letter” or “approval letter” means the administrative instrument issued by the Department which grants approval and authorises the implementation of a climate reduction or removal project;

“carbon reduction or removal project” means any project, programme, or activity aimed at reducing emissions or increasing the absorption of greenhouse gases, which results in emission reductions or removals that are additional to those that would have occurred in the absence of the project;

“Carbon Reduction or Removal Project Agreement” means an agreement between the Department and the project developer or the landholder relating to a carbon reduction or removal project;

“climate finance” means local, national, or transnational financing drawn from public, private, or alternative sources of financing that seeks to support mitigation and adaptation actions that will address climate change for the purposes of reducing greenhouse gas emissions, enhancing sinks, reducing vulnerability, enhancing resilience, and addressing loss and damage;

“Council” means Belize National Climate Change Council established under section 4;

“Department” means the Climate Change Department established under section 8;

“double counting” means the double claiming, double issuance, or double use of a credit, whereby a single greenhouse gas emission reduction or removal, achieved through a mechanism that issues units, is counted more than once towards attaining mitigation pledges or financial commitments related to climate change mitigation;

“emissions” means the release of greenhouse gases or their precursors into the atmosphere over a specified area and period of time, which is attributable to human activities, including the combustion of fossil fuels, deforestation, land use and land use changes, livestock production, fertilisation, waste management, and industrial processes;

“emission reductions” means the anthropogenic removal or sequestration of one or more greenhouse gases from the atmosphere, or the avoidance of one or more emissions;

“free prior and informed consent” means a consultative process to obtain consent of potentially affected parties by engaging in an open and informed dialogue;

“grandfathered carbon reduction or removal project” means any duly authorised and existing carbon reduction or removal project that has a legally

binding agreement entered for the sale of carbon credits prior to the commencement of this Act;

“greenhouse gases” means the atmospheric gases responsible for causing global warming and contributing to climate change, including those gaseous constituents of the atmosphere, whether natural or anthropogenic, that absorb and re-emit infrared radiation, including but not limited to carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), methane (CH<sub>4</sub>), nitrous oxide (N<sub>2</sub>O), nitrogen trifluoride (NF<sub>3</sub>), hydrofluorocarbon (HFCs), perfluorocarbon (PFCs), sulfur hexafluoride (SF<sub>6</sub>), and indirect greenhouse gases;

“independent project developer” means an individual or entity that develops a carbon reduction or removal project, does not have a continuing registration obligation with the Department, but is required to adhere to the core standards for credit validation and verification;

“intangible commodity” means a good or service that does not have a physical form, but possesses value and can be bought or sold;

“IPCC” means the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change;

“internationally transferred mitigation outcomes” means real, additional, and verified reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, or removals of greenhouse gases from the atmosphere, measured in tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent, and representing one tonne of carbon dioxide equivalent per unit, generated by a specific mitigation activity from 2021 onwards, in accordance with methodologies approved under the Paris Agreement rules;

“Kyoto Protocol” means the Protocol to the UNFCCC adopted at the Third Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC in Kyoto, Japan, on December 11, 1997 and ratified by Belize on September 26, 2003;

“landholder” means any person who has legal ownership of a parcel of land or has a legal right or interest to occupy or use a parcel of land or have or exercise traditional or customary rights over the land;

“Measurement, Reporting and Verification” or “MRV” means a practice integrating three independent, but related, processes to provide data collection and analysis to track progress on mitigation, adaptation, and means of implementation;

“Minister” means the Minister responsible for climate change;

“Ministry” means the Ministry responsible for climate change;

“mitigation” means human intervention that seeks to prevent, slow down, or reduce current and future greenhouse gas emissions, or enhance sinks of greenhouse gases;

“Nationally Determined Contribution” or “NDC” means a set of ambitious efforts and actions that parties are to undertake and communicate to the UNFCCC Secretariat to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to the impacts of climate change as outlined in Articles 3 and 4 of the Paris Agreement;

“National Measurement, Reporting, and Verification System” or “National MRV System” means a set of methods, databases, procedures, activities and institutional arrangements platform for measuring, reporting and verifying greenhouse gas emission, mitigation, adaptation actions, and related information;

“national registry” means the official database containing all information and data related to carbon reduction or removal projects, including greenhouse gas emissions and absorptions;

“Paris Agreement” means the Agreement of the UNFCCC adopted at the Twenty-First Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC in Paris, France on December 12, 2015, and ratified by Belize on April 22, 2016;

“prescribed authority” means—

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- (a) a local authority including a city council, town council or village council;
- (b) a public statutory corporation or body; or
- (c) a body corporate or an unincorporated body established for a public purpose, which may be prescribed by the Minister by Order published in the *Gazette*;

“Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation” or “REDD+” means an international mitigation effort to create financial value for the carbon stored in forests that offers incentives for developing countries to reduce emissions from forested lands by reducing deforestation and degradation, and enhance removals through forest conservation, sustainable forest management, and enhancement of forest carbon stocks as identified by the UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement;

“Registered Project Developer” means an entity or organisation that has been formally approved and registered by the Department to develop carbon reduction or removal projects that meet or exceed the applicable threshold, with a continuing registration obligation and responsibility for implementing projects that generate carbon credits, often involving substantial infrastructure and resources, in accordance with international standards;

“removal of emissions” means the process of removing greenhouse gases from the atmosphere as a result of deliberate human activities, including enhancing biological sinks of greenhouse gases;

“reservoir” means a component of the climate system where a greenhouse gas or a precursor of a greenhouse gas is stored, and includes any man-made carbon reservoir resulting from carbon capture and storage processes;

“sink” means any process, activity, or mechanism which removes a greenhouse gas, an aerosol, or a precursor of a greenhouse gas from the atmosphere;

“source” means any process or activity which releases a greenhouse gas, an aerosol, or a precursor of a greenhouse gas into the atmosphere; and

“trader” means a licensed market participant who buys and sells carbon credits on behalf of third parties or for their own account and may engage in multiple transactions, thereby adding liquidity and facilitating price discovery in the carbon market; and

“UNFCCC” means the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

## PART II

### *Scope*

Scope of Act.

**3.**—(1) The provisions of this Act are applicable to carbon credits in respect of everything done in, on, over, above, or below the land and airspace of Belize, including—

- (a) its maritime boundary; or
- (b) over any waters which Belize exercises or claims jurisdiction or sovereign rights, including the seabed and subsoil underlying such waters.

(2) Carbon credits constitute intangible commodities that are created upon registration in the national registry and belong to the project developer or landholder.

## PART III

### *Establishment, Functions, and Meetings of the Belize National Climate Change Council*

4. A body to be known as the Belize National Climate Change Council shall be and is hereby established for the purposes of this Act.

Establishment of  
the Belize  
National Climate  
Change Council.

5.—(1) The Council shall be comprised of the following members, who shall be appointed by the Minister—

Composition of  
the Council.

- (a) the Chief Executive Officer of the Ministry responsible for climate change or a duly appointed representative thereof;
- (b) the Financial Secretary of the Ministry responsible for finance or duly appointed representative thereof;
- (c) Chief Executive Officer of the Ministry responsible for economic transformation or duly appointed representative thereof;
- (d) the Chief Executive Officer of the Ministry responsible for natural resources or duly appointed representative thereof;
- (e) the Chief Executive Officer of the Ministry responsible for energy or duly appointed representative thereof;
- (f) the Chief Executive Officer of the Ministry responsible for blue economy or duly appointed representative thereof;
- (g) a representative from the private sector nominated alternately by the Belize Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Belize Business Bureau;
- (h) a representative from non-governmental organisations; and
- (i) the Chief Climate Change Officer.

(2) The Chief Climate Change Officer shall be an *ex-officio* member of the Council, without voting rights, and shall serve as the Secretary to the Council.

(3) The Chief Executive Officer of the Ministry responsible for climate change shall be the Chairperson of the Council.

(4) The representative under sub-section (1)(h) shall be nominated by the largest respective umbrella non-governmental organisation and appointed by the Minister.

(5) The representatives under sub-sections (1)(g) and (1)(h) shall serve for a period not exceeding two years and may be reappointed for one further term not exceeding two years.

Functions of the Council.

**6.**—(1) The functions and duties of the Council shall be—

- (a) to encourage and foster national inter-ministerial coordination on climate change matters in Belize;
- (b) to provide strategic direction and guidance on the development of national positions on climate change issues, the implementation of any national strategy, policy, roadmap, action, or equivalent to ensure continued sustainable development in Belize;
- (c) to advise on and facilitate the revision and approval of carbon reduction or removal projects, project concepts, and proposals for the implementation of adaptation and mitigation actions for any projects;
- (d) to establish working groups and other entities to assist with the implementation of these functions;
- (e) to advise on the eligibility criteria for carbon reduction or removal projects in consultation with the Ministry and the Department;
- (f) to determine and approve all standards, methodologies, approaches, and formulas to be used in the calculation of carbon credits upon the recommendation of the Department;
- (g) to develop a process for the approval of projects, programmes, and activities of national significance;
- (h) to monitor and evaluate outputs from the executing bodies of the National MRV System, including the sectoral MRV programmes or units, the National Authority, and any other national institutions involved in the provision of information and implementation of climate change measures;
- (i) to perform any other tasks or activities within the scope of the UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement;
- (j) to provide guidance to the Department in establishing national objectives, goals, and targets aimed at making Belize a low-emission and climate-resilient country; and
- (k) to advise the Department on other climate change related matters.

(2) The Council may establish working groups to effectively carry out its functions and duties.

7.—(1) The Council shall meet as frequently as its business requires and at such time and place as may be determined from time to time, but such meeting shall not be held less than once every three months.

Meetings of the Council.

(2) The Chairperson shall preside at all meetings of the Council and if for any reason the Chairperson is unable to preside at any meeting, the members present shall elect one of their number to preside at the meeting.

(3) The Council shall regulate its own proceedings and quorum at any meeting of the Council shall be five of the voting members of the Council.

(4) A decision of the Council shall be by majority of the members present and voting at the meeting.

(5) In the case of an equality of votes, the Chairperson of the meeting at which the vote is taken shall have a second or casting vote in addition to his original vote.

(6) The Secretary of the Council shall ensure that proper records of the Council's meetings and decisions are kept.

(7) The Council may invite ad-hoc observers to the meeting.

(8) Any member of the Council who has an interest in, or is affiliated in any way with, any project brought before the Council shall immediately declare such interest or affiliation.

(9) Where any interest or affiliation is declared by a member under sub-section (8), the remaining members of the Council shall determine whether that member should recuse themselves from the deliberations of the Council while that project is under review.

#### PART IV

##### *Establishment and Functions of the Climate Change Department*

8.—(1) For the purposes of this Act, there shall be established, under the Ministry responsible for Climate Change, a department to be known as the Climate Change Department.

Establishment of the Climate Change Department.

(2) The Department shall be headed by a public officer to be known as the Chief Climate Change Officer, who shall be appointed by the Public Service Commission in accordance with section 106 of the Belize Constitution.

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(3) There shall be appointed by the Public Services Commission such other climate change officers, inspectors, and other staff having suitable qualifications as may be necessary for carrying out the provisions of this Act.

Functions of the Department.

**9.**—(1) The Department shall—

- (a) communicate, coordinate, and mainstream climate change related issues, and implement the directives of the Council;
- (b) lead the development and implementation of the NDC by formulating goals in collaboration with other state institutions, civil society, and the private sector with advice from relevant national institutions, civil society, and Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities where necessary;
- (c) coordinate the formulation of all climate change related policies, strategies, and plans as well as any other processes and instruments related to climate change and its impacts for consideration of the Council;
- (d) develop, periodically update, publish, and make available the national inventory of anthropogenic emissions by sources and removals by sinks of all greenhouse gases as projected in accordance with international reporting practices;
- (e) formulate, implement, publish, and regularly update national mitigation and adaptation measures;
- (f) participate in the development, review, adoption, and national implementation of regional mitigation and adaptation measures;
- (g) promote and cooperate in mitigating climate change by addressing anthropogenic emissions by sources and removals by sinks of all greenhouse gases and facilitating adequate adaptation to climate change;
- (h) promote and cooperate in the development, application, and dissemination of practices and processes that control, reduce, or avoid anthropogenic emissions of greenhouse gases across all relevant regulated sectors, including the transfer of technologies;
- (i) promote sustainable management, conservation, and enhancement, as appropriate, of sinks and reservoirs of greenhouse gases, including in biomass, forests, and oceans;

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- (j) monitor the receipt of donor funding, including results-based funding, for mitigation activities and other national or international climate-compatible development programs;
  - (k) formulate, participate in, and coordinate national positions in relation to international negotiations on climate change and on national participation in the Conferences of the Parties under the UNFCCC, the Kyoto Protocol, and the Paris Agreement;
  - (l) facilitate effective participation of Belize in the UNFCCC, Kyoto Protocol, the Paris Agreement, and other related bilateral and multilateral programmes and activities;
  - (m) coordinate the implementation of obligations and commitments of Belize, voluntary or otherwise, under the UNFCCC, the Kyoto Protocol, and the Paris Agreement;
  - (n) direct and coordinate the National MRV System across all sectors and actions, including but not limited to adaptation and mitigation;
  - (o) support the preparation and implementation of all mandates of the National MRV unit or programmes;
  - (p) engage and coordinate with other departments, ministries, agencies, and other entities in the formulation of reports and data;
  - (q) develop or update a Resiliency Building Action Plan every five years, prescribing measures for all climate resiliency building activities every five years;
  - (r) promote the mainstreaming of climate resiliency into national development plans, policies, and the national budget;
  - (s) advise the government on capacity building, institutional strengthening, and other resource requirements to fully implement the climate change policies and strategies, ensuring alignment with medium-term and long-term development goals of Belize;
  - (t) coordinate with the Ministry responsible for finance to define shared benefits for carbon credits that hold monetary value via taxation pathways and strategic financial reporting requirements;

- (u) coordinate with the Ministry responsible for energy on cross-ministerial responsibilities related to greenhouse gas mitigation in mobile and stationary fuel consumption, and their incorporation into the NDC;
- (v) review carbon reduction or removal projects and issue approval letters;
- (w) monitor the implementation of this Act and take any necessary action to enforce its provisions; and
- (x) do all things that are necessary, incidental, or conducive to the attainment of its functions under this Act.

(2) Any resiliency building action plan developed or updated by the Department, in accordance with sub-section (1)(q), shall be submitted to the Council for review and shall be approved by the Cabinet.

## PART V

### *Establishment and Functions of the National Transparency Unit and National MRV System*

Establishment of the National Transparency Unit.

**10.** There shall be established, within the Department, a unit to be known as the National Transparency Unit comprising, but not limited to, the following officers—

- (a) a Mitigation Officer;
- (b) a MRV Officer;
- (c) a Quality Assurance/Quality Control Officer;
- (d) a Data Collector; and
- (e) a Data Compiler.

National MRV System.

**11.—(1)** The National Transparency Unit shall direct and coordinate the National MRV System in collaboration with the leads of all sectoral Ministries and relevant national institutions involved in the provision of information and implementation of climate change measures.

- (2) The National MRV System shall take into consideration the—
  - (a) national inventory of greenhouse gas emissions;
  - (b) adaptation actions;

- (c) verification of information; and
- (d) National Registry System.

(3) The National MRV System shall be applicable to any initiative that generates greenhouse gas emissions or removes greenhouse gases from the atmosphere.

(4) The leads of all sectoral Ministries and relevant national institutions shall report greenhouse gas emissions generated, greenhouse gas mitigation actions, adaptation actions, and all types of climate financing throughout the country to the Department and the National Transparency Unit.

**12.**—(1) The National Transparency Unit shall prepare the national inventory of greenhouse gas emissions in accordance with the guidelines and methodologies established by the UNFCCC, the Paris Agreement, and the IPCC.

National inventory of greenhouse gas emissions.

(2) The national inventory of greenhouse gas emissions shall be designed to—

- (a) monitor the national situation in terms of greenhouse gas emissions and carbon sequestration;
- (b) prepare consistent information documents in accordance with the international commitments of Belize;
- (c) verify the evolution of the national situation and its conformity with the international commitments of Belize;
- (d) build an adequate strategy to combat climate change; and
- (e) evaluate the potential effectiveness of the planned measures to ensure their relevance and effectiveness once adopted and implemented.

(3) Greenhouse gas emissions shall be calculated annually and the national greenhouse gas inventory shall be published every two years with the methodology proposed by the IPCC for greenhouse gas inventories.

**13.**—(1) The Transparency Unit shall validate the information submitted to the National MRV System, in accordance with the standards established by the IPCC, to ensure the quality of the data provided, collected, and processed.

Validation of information.

(2) The Department shall prepare an annual report containing information necessary to track progress made in implementing and achieving

Belize's NDC and report on any support received and shall submit the report to the Council.

(3) Annual reports shall be made available and be publicly accessible as part of the National MRV System.

## PART VI

### *National Registry System*

National  
Registry System.

**14.**—(1) The National Registry System is hereby established as a registration platform for all carbon reduction or removal projects throughout Belize for the purpose of monitoring and tracking the implementation of the national contribution to climate change.

(2) The Department shall manage the National Registry System.

(3) The National Registry System shall serve as the Designated Operating Platform in accordance with Article 6 of the Paris Agreement.

(4) The Registrar of the National Registry System shall maintain a register of—

- (a) emissions reduction units generated from projects, programmes, or activities;
- (b) the approval letters and authorisation permits granted to participate in an initiative under this Act;
- (c) the number of carbon credits issued or recognised by Belize as fit for trading;
- (d) the issuance, transfer, cancellation, and addition of carbon credits issued or recognised by Belize from a national greenhouse gas registry account; and
- (e) the voluntary carbon credits issued under an approved international standard in relation to a carbon reduction or removal project in Belize.

Registrar.

**15.**—(1) The Chief Climate Change Officer shall be the Registrar of the National Registry System and shall—

- (a) comply with any obligations as is required of the Registrar in accordance with the Paris Agreement;

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- (b) issue authorisation permits for the sale, trade, or transfer of carbon credits;
  - (c) implement measures to ensure the confidentiality of the information it collects; and
  - (d) submit to the Council, periodically or as may be requested, a report of the information maintained in the registry.

(2) The Chief Climate Change Officer may, in writing, authorise any Climate Change Officer to exercise any or all of the powers, duties, and functions conferred by law on the Chief Climate Change Officer.

**16.** The Minister may make regulations for the modalities, procedures, and guidelines for the coordination and operation of the National Registry System.

Modalities, procedures, and guidelines.

## PART VII

### *Carbon Trading Market*

**17.** This Act shall reflect the fundamental principles enshrined in the UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement, including but not limited to the following—

Principles.

- (a) all transactions in carbon trading carried out under this Act shall result in the additional reduction of greenhouse gas emissions or a removal of greenhouse gases from the atmosphere;
- (b) all mitigation outcomes reported under this Act shall be accounted for in tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent;
- (c) all carbon reduction or removal projects shall ensure that emissions are kept out of the atmosphere for a reasonable duration, as determined by the Council in consultation with relevant stakeholders;
- (d) all emission reductions and removals shall be accurately recorded and documented for every offset scheme, using appropriate accounting terms, including corresponding adjustments and the location of offset as required by the UNFCCC and other recognised standard-setting bodies; and
- (e) all REDD+ projects and programmes shall adhere to the Cancun Safeguards.

Avoidance of double counting.

**18.**—(1) No person, including but not limited to a private individual, company, organisation, or country, shall double count the same emission reductions towards their emission reduction commitments generated in Belize.

(2) The Department shall ensure that corresponding adjustments are applied to ensure that there is no double counting.

(3) Any person who engages in double counting commits an offence and is liable, on summary conviction, to a fine not exceeding twenty thousand dollars or imprisonment for a term not exceeding five years, or to both such fine and imprisonment.

Application for climate change project approval letter.

**19.**—(1) Any person who intends to initiate or carry out a carbon reduction or removal project shall apply to the Department for a climate change project approval letter.

(2) An application for an approval letter shall be made in writing and shall include the following—

- (a) a cover page listing the title and location of the proposed carbon reduction or removal project, and the name, address, and telephone number of a designated contact person;
- (b) a summary of the proposed carbon reduction or removal project, accurately and adequately describing the contents and highlighting any areas of controversy or unresolved issues;
- (c) a statement on the policy, legal, and administrative framework, identifying any issues that may impact the proposed carbon reduction or removal project;
- (d) a detailed description of the proposed carbon reduction or removal project, including its nature, site, design, size, scale, applicable standards, and the methodology to be used;
- (e) where a pre-existing voluntary market scheme and methodology is to be utilised for the proposed carbon reduction or removal project, including but not limited to VERRA or the Gold Standard, all supporting documentation required for the project filing and completion;
- (f) a map clearly showing the boundaries of the area covered by the carbon reduction or removal project;
- (g) the proposed project term, which shall be of sufficient duration based on the best available science, to allow for full

implementation and completion of project management measures;

- (h) a specification of any climate compatible or green growth-related land use options related to the carbon reduction or removal project;
- (i) the anticipated sales price of the carbon credit, including the intended buyer or target market;
- (j) a stakeholder engagement and awareness plan tailored to the project area, including engagement with landholders and their representatives;
- (k) a description of rights of landholders and the benefits to be received by them, if any, including any monetary or other forms of benefits; and
- (l) provisions ensuring compliance with safeguards to verify that the project actions or activities carried out to receive benefits do not result in adverse social and environmental impacts.

(3) Upon submission of an application for an approval letter to the Department, the applicant shall pay the prescribed application and processing fee.

(4) Where an application is submitted to the Department, the Department shall transmit the application to the Council for its review and approval.

**20.**—(1) The Council shall notify the Department of its decision to approve or reject the application within sixty days of receiving the application.

Decision on application.

(2) Where the Council notifies the Department of its decision, the Department shall notify the applicant of the decision within ten days of receiving such notification.

(3) A decision by the Council to approve a carbon reduction or removal project and grant an approval letter shall be subject to the signing of a Carbon Reduction or Removal Project Agreement between the applicant and the Department.

(4) Where the Council rejects an application, the applicant may appeal to the Minister, who shall have power to grant an approval letter if satisfied that the Council made a material error or omission in its deliberations.

- Requirement for consent.
- 21.** Before undertaking any carbon reduction or removal project, the free, prior, and informed consent of all landholders whose land is proposed to be used shall be obtained in writing.
- Rights under a Carbon Reduction or Removal Project Agreement.
- 22.**—(1) Where the Department or any person enters into a Carbon Reduction or Removal Project Agreement, and depending on the type of project, programme, or activity—
- (a) subject to this Act and the terms and conditions of the Agreement, the Department or such person may assign land-user rights, excluding land ownership rights, acquired under the Agreement to one or more other persons; and
  - (b) for the purposes of exercising project rights, and in accordance with the terms of the Agreement and in consultation with any relevant agencies, the Department or such person may—
    - (i) enter on land covered by the Agreement; and
    - (ii) use roads, wharves, bridges, buildings, and other infrastructure on land covered by the Agreement
- (2) The rights of any landholder shall be fully respected in the implementation of any carbon reduction or removal project.
- Requirement for annual report.
- 23.** Any person who engages in a carbon reduction or removal project shall use all reasonable means, in accordance with approved methodologies, to quantify the forecasted gross income and shall submit an annual report, on or before March 31 of each calendar year, to the relevant landholders and the Department.
- Participation in any transaction in the sale of credits.
- 24.**—(1) Where the Government participates in any transaction involving the sale of credits related to any carbon reduction or removal related projects, including international REDD+ programmes, the Government shall be taken to have the authority to sell and transfer all carbon credits, and the proceeds of any such sale shall be deposited into the Consolidated Revenue Fund,
- provided that—
- (a) the Ministry has the free, prior, and informed consent of the landholders;
  - (b) the Government may compensate any land holder with forest carbon included in the transaction under an approved benefit-sharing plan; and

- (c) the Ministry, in consultation with and with the approval of the Ministry responsible for finance, has considered—
- (i) the market value of the emissions reductions or Belize Mitigation Outcome Units at the time of evaluating the proposed transaction;
  - (ii) the impact of the transaction on the NDC; and
  - (iii) any other necessary arrangements entered into with landholders.

(2) The Minister, in consultation with and with the approval of the Minister responsible for finance, may make regulations, ensuring a public consultation period of not less than thirty days, to define and regulate carbon benefits institutional arrangements, participation and benefit-sharing mechanisms, or the allocation of incentives for climate change actions.

(3) For the avoidance of doubt, any and all carbon benefits arising from carbon trading and accruing to the Government shall be deposited into the Consolidated Revenue Fund.

**25.**—(1) Any person who intends to sell, trade, or transfer carbon credits derived from mitigation outcomes achieved in Belize shall apply to the Registrar for a carbon credit authorisation permit.

Sale, trade, or transfer of carbon credit.

(2) Upon submission of an application for an authorisation permit to the Registrar, the applicant shall pay the prescribed application and processing fee.

(3) An application shall be submitted to the Registrar in writing in the form set out in the Schedule.

Schedule.

## PART VIII

### *Offences and Penalties*

**26.** Any person who wilfully engages in the sale, trade, or transfer of credits resulting from mitigation outcomes achieved in Belize, in contravention of section 25, commits an offence and is liable, on summary conviction, to a fine not exceeding twenty thousand dollars.

Failure to apply for authorisation permit.

**27.** Every person who interferes with, tampers with, or makes any unauthorised alteration to any approval letter commits an offence and is liable, on summary conviction, to a fine not exceeding twenty thousand dollars.

Offence of tampering.

Submission of false statement or information.	<p><b>28.—(1)</b> Any person who, whether in a personal capacity or on behalf of another person—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) makes a statement or representation that is false;</li> <li>(b) furnishes any document or information that is false; or</li> <li>(c) uses or furnishes a false, falsified, invalid or unauthorised foreign permit,</li> </ul> <p>commits an offence and is liable, on summary conviction, to a fine not exceeding twenty thousand dollars.</p> <p>(2) Any approval letter or authorisation permit in respect of which an offence under sub-section (1) has been committed shall be deemed void.</p>
Offence of obstruction.	<p><b>29.</b> Any person who assaults, obstructs, or hinders an authorised officer in the execution of any duty under this Act commits an offence and is liable, on summary conviction, to a fine not exceeding twenty thousand dollars, or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding five years, or to both such fine and imprisonment.</p>
Offence by a body corporate.	<p><b>30.</b> Where any offence under this Act is committed by a body corporate, and it is proved that the offence was committed with the consent or connivance of, or was attributable to any neglect of, any director, chief executive officer, manager, secretary, or other similar officer of the body corporate, such director, chief executive officer, manager, secretary or other similar officer shall be deemed to have committed an offence and is liable to be proceeded against and punished accordingly, in addition to the liability of the body corporate.</p>
Offence of aiding and abetting.	<p><b>31.</b> Any person who aids, abets, counsels, or procures the commission of an offence under this Act commits an offence and is liable, on summary conviction, to a fine not exceeding twenty thousand dollars.</p>
General offence and penalty.	<p><b>32.</b> A person who commits an offence under this Act for which no specific penalty is provided is liable, on summary conviction, to a fine not exceeding twenty thousand dollars.</p>
Limitation period.	<p><b>33.</b> The prosecution for an offence under this Act may be commenced within two years after the commission of the offence, or within two years after the Department becomes aware of the commission of the offence, whichever is later.</p>
Leave for prosecution.	<p><b>34.</b> All offences under this Act shall be punishable, on summary conviction, upon the laying of information in writing by the Chief Climate Change Officer or any person authorised by the Chief Climate Change Officer.</p>

**35.**—(1) The Chief Climate Change Officer, the Council, any designated officer, or any person assisting or acting under a direction given by the Chief Climate Officer shall not be personally liable for any loss or damage suffered by any person, directly or indirectly, as a result of any act done in good faith in the execution of duties under this Act, including but not limited to any—

Exclusion of liability.

(a) damage, delay, or loss as a result of the revocation, suspension, or modification of an approval letter or authorisation permit, unless otherwise provided under this Act; and

(b) costs associated with any inspection, investigation, and verification of information related to an application for an climate change project approval letter or the issuance of an approval, carried out by the Department or any authorised officer, including the costs of storage during the verification period.

(2) The costs referred to in sub-section (1)(b) shall be recoverable by the Government as a civil debt.

## PART IX

### *Miscellaneous*

**36.**—(1) The Department or any authorised officer may conduct regular inspection of the premises of any person engaging in a carbon reduction or removal project, including the inspection of any books, records, or accounts.

Power to conduct inspections.

(2) The Department or any authorised officer shall not be required to give prior notice of any inspection conducted under sub-section (1).

(3) A person who refuses to provide access or otherwise obstructs or fails to facilitate an inspection by the Department or an authorised person commits an offence.

**37.**—(1) The Department may request, in writing, from any Ministry, governmental department, or prescribed authority, any document or information as may be reasonably required for the performance of any functions of the Department.

Requests for information.

(2) A request under sub-section (1) shall provide sufficient detail to enable the responsible officer of the Ministry, governmental department, or prescribed authority to identify the document or information.

(3) It shall be the duty of all Ministries, governmental departments, and prescribed authorities to assist the Department in fulfilling any request under sub-section (1).

Agreements with private bodies and other entities.

**38.** The Department may enter into data-sharing agreements and other necessary agreements with private bodies and other entities for the acquisition of information to fulfil its functions under this Act.

Regulations.

**39.**—(1) The Minister may make regulations generally to give effect to this Act, and in particular without limiting the generality of the foregoing, may make regulations providing for—

- (a) any matter that is necessary or desirable for the purpose of implementing the UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement;
- (b) the pre-conditions for the grant of approval letters and authorisation permit;
- (c) a benefit-sharing framework, upon consultation with and approval of the Minister responsible for finance;
- (d) disqualifications from obtaining approval;
- (e) the manner of appeals against decisions of the Council relating to approval;
- (f) prohibitions or restrictions, including by way of a quota system;
- (g) terms and conditions applicable to approval letters and authorisation permits;
- (h) the criteria for selection;
- (i) fees payable;
- (j) the factors to be considered by the Department or the Council in making determinations under this Act;
- (k) the requirements and procedures for registration with the Department; and
- (l) anything required to be prescribed under this Act.

(2) The Minister responsible for finance may make Regulations to provide for any taxes payable in connection with the sale, trade, or transfer of carbon credits or any carbon reduction or removal project.

(3) Any Regulations made under sub-section (1) may provide that contravention of any provision shall constitute an offence punishable, on summary conviction, to a fine not exceeding ten thousand dollars.

**40.**—(1) Any person engaged in a carbon reduction or removal project or in the sale, trade, or transfer of credits at the time of the commencement of this Act shall be deemed to be engaged in a grandfathered carbon reduction or removal project and shall register the existing project with the Department within six months of commencement of this Act.

Transitional.

(2) Any person who is engaged in a grandfathered carbon reduction or removal project shall submit to the Department a detailed description of the project including the—

- (a) background and scope of trade;
- (b) area of land;
- (c) sales market and price;
- (d) number of credits sold;
- (e) methodologies used for calculation; and
- (f) supporting land tenure documents and agreements.

(3) Any person who intends to modify or change an existing project in any manner or form shall submit an application to the Department for an approval letter in accordance with section 19.

**41.**—(1) This Act shall come into force on a date appointed by the Minister by Order published in the *Gazette*.

Commencement.

(2) An Order under sub-section (1) may appoint different dates for the commencement of different provisions of this Act.

## SCHEDULE

[section 25]

**APPLICATION FOR AUTHORISATION PERMIT**

Please complete all fields in the following table (if the requested information is unavailable, please provide a brief explanation as to why this is the case).

Name of project proponent	
Date of submission request for authorisation permit	
<b>A. PROJECT DETAILS</b>	
Project name	
Submission requests:  (Please mark the relevant box with X)  <i>(Note: For requests related to the renewal of an authorisation permit, the original authorisation permit must be submitted)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Request for authorisation permit  <input type="checkbox"/> Request for renewal of authorisation permit
Has the Registrar previously rejected a request for an authorisation permit related to the same carbon reduction or removal project?  <i>If Yes, please provide the date of the first submission and the reasons for the rejection.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes  <input type="checkbox"/> No  If Yes, reasons for rejection:
Specify the volumes of carbon credits/ Internationally Transferred Mitigation Outcomes (ITMOs) (intCO <sub>2</sub> eq) for which the authorisation permit is being sought.	
<b>B. ALIGNMENT TO ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA</b>	

Please specify how the carbon reduction or removal project aligns with Belize's NDC.	
Specify the share of carbon credits that will be reserved for domestic use (i.e. that will not be authorised).	
Specify the period for which authorisation permit is being requested (start date - end date).	
Specify the type of carbon mechanism in which the carbon reduction or removal project is or will be registered.	<input type="checkbox"/> Article 6.2 <input type="checkbox"/> Article 6.4 mechanism <input type="checkbox"/> voluntary carbon market <input type="checkbox"/> other mechanisms  Registration number of carbon reduction or removal project, if applicable
Specify how the carbon reduction or removal project ensures environmental integrity in the following respects.  Please refer to the project design document and or validation report, where relevant.	
Specify how the carbon reduction or removal project is aligned with Belize's sustainable development priorities.	
<b>C. BUYER DETAILS</b>	
Has the buyer for the ITMOs/ authorised credits been identified?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes – complete section C  <input type="checkbox"/> No – skip to section D

Type of buyer	<input type="checkbox"/> national government or authorised representative  <input type="checkbox"/> other buyer
Details of buyer	Name of buyer and contact details
Specify the use of carbon credits for which an authorisation permit is being requested.  <i>(select all options that apply)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> used towards the achievement of an NDC <input type="checkbox"/> CORSIA <input type="checkbox"/> other international mitigation purposes – <i>(provide details, and if use is more than one, set out a portion carbon credits for each use type)</i>
Has the country in which the buyer is based entered into a free market cooperative agreement with Belize pursuant to Article 6.2 of the Paris Agreement?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes  <i>If Yes, specify the country's name</i>  <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>D. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND DECLARATIONS</b>	
I, <i>project proponent</i> , acknowledge that the issuance of an authorisation permit by Belize is contingent on the carbon reduction or removal project's compliance with the Climate Change and Carbon Market Initiatives Act, any regulations made under the Act, any Guidelines issued by the Department, and all other applicable laws and regulations of Belize.	
I, <i>project proponent</i> , acknowledge that the Department may request the provision of additional clarification and supporting documentation or evidence to aid in the review of this request for an authorisation permit.	
I, <i>project proponent</i> , hereby declare to adhere to Belize's existing laws and regulations on environmental and social impact assessment and environmental social safeguards specific to the carbon reduction or removal project.	

I, *project proponent*, hereby declare to refrain from double registration for the same project under two or more international carbon mechanisms that results in double counting and accept the cancellation of credits and applicable sanctions in the event of double counting.

I, *project proponent*, hereby agree to implement the carbon reduction or removal project in a timely manner and pay any fees related to the authorisation permit issued under the Climate Change and Carbon Market Initiatives Act.

I, *project proponent*, hereby acknowledge that all information submitted to the Department is accurate, thorough, and complete to the best of my knowledge.

Signature:

#### **E. PROJECT PROPONENT'S CONTACT DETAILS**

Name of project proponent's designated representative	
E-mail address	
Phone number	

#### **NOTE**

1. The following supporting documentation shall be submitted in conjunction with this request for an authorisation permit:

- (a) an approval letter;
- (b) a project design document;
- (c) a prior authorisation permit (only applicable if requesting the renewal of an authorisation); and
- (d) the agreement entered into with buyer for the authorised carbon credits (where existing).

2. The project proponent may retain information classified as confidential due to the project proponent's commercial contractual obligations to third parties.