"Emissions avoidance" and "Conservation enhancement" in the Glasgow texts on Article 6

Grégoire Baribeau

What we agreed in Glasgow

Article 6.2 decision (2/CMA.3)	Article 6.4 cover decision (3/CMA.3)
3. Requests the SBSTA to undertake the following work, on the basis of the guidance in the annex, to develop recommendations, for consideration and adoption by CMA4: (c) Consideration of whether ITMOs could include **emission avoidance**	7. Further requests the SBSTA to develop, on the basis of the RMPs contained in the annex, recommendations, for consideration and adoption by CMA4, on: (h). The consideration of whether activities could include **emission avoidance** **and conservation enhancement activities**

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Key takeways:

1. "Emissions avoidance" and "conservation enhancement" are different concepts

2. There is no question about "conservation enhancement" re: Article 6.2

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Key questions:

A. What are "emissions avoidance" and "conservation enhancement", respectively?

B. Could an "avoided emission" be an ITMO and/or an A6.4ER?

C. Could "conservation enhancement" generate A6.4ERs?

Background: Could x be an ITMO / A6.4ER?

Article 6.2 Guidance (2/CMA.3, Annex)	Article 6.4 RMPs (3/CMA.3, Annex)
3. Each {participating Party} shall ensure that its participation in the cooperative approach and the authorization, transfer and use of ITMOs is **consistent with this guidance** and relevant decisions of the CMA and that it applies this guidance to all corresponding adjustments and cooperative approaches in which it participates.	1(a): An Article 6.4 activity is an activity that **meets the requirements** of Article 6, paras. 4-6, these rules, modalities and procedures, and any further relevant decisions of the CMA 1(b): An A6.4ER is issued for mitigation achieved pursuant to Article 6, paras. 4-6, these rules, modalities and procedures, and any further relevant decisions of the CMA.

Key takeways:

3. Anything can be an ITMO / A6.4ER, so long at it meets the requirements of Article 6.2 & guidance / Art. 6.4 & RMPs

4. Anything that does <u>not</u> meet the applicable requirements can<u>not</u> be an ITMO / A6.4ER

A1. What is "emissions avoidance"?

- <u>Avoided emission</u>:

  - GHGs that have been kept in the ground / out of the atmosphere

  - *Translation:* An emission$^{(+)}$ that <u>could have happened</u> (under some scenario), but <u>ultimately did not happen</u>

B. Can an 'avoided emission' be an ITMO and/or an A6.4ER?

- <u>Baseline or reference level</u>:
  - The counterfactual against which mitigation is quantified for the ITMO/A6.4ER
    - Art. 6.2: Set in a conservative way, below BAU, taking into account uncertainty, policies, leakage
    - Art. 6.4: Approved methodology requiring a baseline-setting approach set out in para. 36/37 of the RMPs

- <u>Reduction</u>
  - When the resulting GHG emissions$^{(+)}$ are below the baseline/reference level

- <u>Removal</u>
  - When the resulting GHG sequestration$^{(-)}$ exceeds the baseline/reference level

Key takeways:

5. ITMOs and A6.4ERs are measured against baselines / reference levels

6. There are requirements in the texts for baselines / reference levels

7. If an "avoided emission" meets the requirements, it can be an ITMO / A6.4ER

KEY TAKEAWAYS re: avoidance

1. "Emissions avoidance" and "conservation enhancement" are different concepts

3. Anything can be an ITMO / A6.4ER, so long at it meets the requirements

4. Anything that does not meet the requirements cannot be an ITMO / A6.4ER

5. All ITMOs and A6.4ERs must be measured against baselines / reference levels

6. There are requirements in both texts about these baselines / reference levels

7. If it is measured against a reference level that meets the requirements in the text, then an "avoided emission" would meet the definition of an "emission reduction", and thus could potentially be an ITMO / A6.4ER

8. Otherwise, it cannot be an ITMO / A6.4ER because it does not meet the requirements

9. This is already clear in the text. No further guidance is needed.

A2. What is "conservation enhancement"

- <u>Conservation</u>
  - Protecting natural landscapes/species/ecosystems

- <u>Conservation *enhancement*</u>
  - *Increasing* protections for natural landscapes/species/ecosystems
  - *Translation: REDD+ and various other nature-based climate solutions*

Key takeway:

10."Conservation enhancement" refers to REDD+ and similar activities in other ecosystems (beyond tropical forests in developing countries)*

A2. What is "conservation enhancement"

- <u>REDD+</u>
  - **R**educing **E**missions from **D**eforestation and **F**orest **D**egradation in **D**eveloping Countries,
    + the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests, enhancement of forest carbon stocks

  - Examples of activities in a REDD+ strategy
    - Reduce deforestation / degradation *(cut down fewer trees)*
    - Conservation of forest carbon stocks *(prevent illegal logging)*
    - Enhancement of forest carbon stocks *(improve health of natural forests)**
    - Sustainable management of forests *(better logging & re-planting techniques)**
    - Afforestation and reforestation *(plant new forests)**

    * not always categorized as REDD+ activities, depending on who you ask

- <u>Similar activities in non-forest ecosystems</u>
  - e.g., grasslands, non-forested wetlands, blue carbon, etc.

Key takeways:

11· REDD is an emission reduction (that's what the 'R' stands for)

12·The '+' activities also generate reductions and/or removals

C. Can conservation enhancement generate A6.4ERs?

Article 6.4 RMPs (3/CMA.3, Annex) :

- **1(a):** 'An Article 6.4 activity is an activity that meets the requirements of Article 6.4, these RMPs, and any further relevant CMA decisions'

- **31:** The activity shall…
  - Be designed to achieve GHG mitigation that is additional
  - Reducing emissions or increasing removals (incl. mitigation co-benefits)
  - Minimize the risk of non-permanence over multiple NDC implementation periods, and, where reversals occur, ensure that these are addressed in full
  - Minimize the risk of leakage and adjust for any remaining leakage in the calculation of emission reductions or removals

Key takeway:

13. Conservation enhancement could be an A6.4 activity if it meets the A6.4 requirements

C. Can conservation enhancement generate A6.4ERs?

- Some peculiarities of forests and REDD+
    - REDD+ requires **jurisdictional implementation** to mitigate **carbon leakage**
        - 2.CP.13, Annex, para. 3-4: "Emissions reductions from national demonstration activities should be assess on the basis of national emissions… Subnational approaches, where applied, should constitute a step toward national approaches, reference levels and estimates."
        - On voluntary markets "project-level REDD" and emerging jurisdictional crediting programs

    - Long-term monitoring for **permanence** and accounting for reversals
        - CDM approach: 'Temporary credits' – banned in Article 6.4 decision
        - Newer approach: Long-term reversal mitigation/monitoring, insured by 'buffer pools'

Key takeways:

14. Addressing non-permanence / leakage in conservation enhancement activities often requires specific procedures tailored to these types of activities

15. Some reputable REDD+ crediting mechanisms already have such procedures in place

16. Article 6.4 RMPs do not currently include such procedures

C. Can conservation enhancement generate A6.4ERs?

Article 6.4 cover decision (3/CMA.3) :

- **6:** Also requests the Supervisory Body to elaborate and further develop, on the basis of the RMPS, recommendations, for consideration and adoption by CMA4 on:

- **(c):** Activities involving removals, including appropriate monitoring, reporting and accounting for removals and crediting periods, addressing reversals, avoidance of leakage, and the avoidance of other negative environmental and social impacts in addition to those in chapter V of the annex.

Key takeway:

17. The A6.4SB will need to recommend procedures to address permanent/leakage, which could include specific procedures for conservation enhancement activities (jurisdictional, buffers, etc.)

SUMMARY re: conservation enhancement

1. "Emissions avoidance" and "conservation enhancement" are different concepts

2. There is no question about "conservation enhancement" re: Article 6.2

9. "Conservation enhancement refers to REDD+ and similar activities in other ecosystems

10. REDD is an emission reduction (that's what the 'R' stands for)

11. The '+' activities also generate reductions and/or removals

12. Conservation enhancement can be an A6.4 activity if it meets the A6.4 requirements

13. The non-permanence / leakage requirements different procedures in these contexts

14. Some reputable REDD+ crediting mechanisms already have such procedures in place

15. Article 6.4 RMPs do not currently include such procedures

16. If the A6.4SB comes up with good procedures, then "conservation enhancement" should be in

17. In the absence of such procedures, I would rather trust the existing mechanisms under Article 6.2