Eastern Africa Alliance
On Carbon Markets And
Climate Finance

CARBON MARKET

PROFILE 2026
BURUNDI

RWANDA

DRC

LAKE TANGANYIKA

TANZANIA

CONTENTS

1 Executive Summary

Burundi has been an active participant in carbon markets since 2010 having had registered activities in the CDM. Given its negligible historic emissions, limited industrial baseline, the country has articulated an ambitious climate strategy in its NDC 3.0, that has a strong alignment with its Vision 2040-2060. There is a clear and credible demand signal anchored in NDC 3.0, which commits to a 23% reduction in GHG emissions by 2035, of which 20% is conditional on international finance for which carbon markets serve as a potential strategic source of finance in meeting the NDC.

The foundational premise is that Burundi's annual mitigation potential significantly exceeds its domestic NDC requirements, positioning the country as a potential net exporter of certified high-integrity mitigation outcomes once Article 6 systems are operational. This is not a mature market, and Burundi requires the effort to shape institutions, rules, and pipelines on high value, integrity and nationally beneficial systems.

Burundi's climate ambition is fundamentally finance-constrained as historical NDC costing in 2015 had already identified USD 1.493 billion in required investment, and the increased ambition under NDC 3.0 shows a need for cumulative financing needs of approximately USD 1.7-2.0 billion by 2035. Domestic fiscal space is limited, and grants or concessional loans alone will not close this gap.

In this context, carbon markets particularly under Article 6 of the Paris Agreement can function as a mechanism that will ensure financing on the back of the mitigation outcomes. Carbon finance will serve the purpose of cost-reduction for NDC implementation, while attracting private capital for investment across forestry, clean cooking, energy, and climate-smart agriculture.

A targeted catalytic investment in Burundi's carbon markets ecosystem would enable Article 6 readiness and establish the first transactions in the Article 6 infrastructure. Priority needs are the rapid operationalization of core market infrastructure, including work towards carbon market regulations, a fully resourced Designated National Authority, standardized authorization procedures, and a basic national registry linked to MRV and NDC accounting. In parallel, early transaction support is required to transition legacy CDM assets and authorize priority high-integrity forestry and clean cooking projects to anchor demand and establish market credibility.

These gaps are solvable with modest investment, yet addressing them unlocks disproportionate returns. The country offers an opportunity to shape a credible carbon market from first issuance, with clear additionality, strong development impact and scalable upside.

Image Source:
Xinhua/Dong Jianghui: Lake Tanganyika
https://english.news.cn/20221105/bc13c1ea0cee4a1a976a84b015b17401/c.html

Table 1: Burundi Dashboard

Dimension	Key Metric	Current Status	Comments
NDC Ambition	Total Target	23% reduction vs BAU by 2035	Fairly high ambition for Burundi
	Unconditional	3%	Positive domestic interest and commitment
	Conditional	20%	Market signal to donors and Article 6 partners
	Gases Covered	CO_2, CH_4, N_2O	Full coverage (F-Gases Unspecified)
Investment Gap	Total NDC cost	USD 8.36 Billion (to 2035)	Scaled from costed NDC baseline
	Conditional share	94%	Heavy reliance on international finance
	Mitigation	4.4 billion	Majority goes to Energy Initiatives
	Adaptation	3.9 billion	More than half of which is Water
Emissions Impact	Economy-wide Mitigation Potential	1.67 $MtCO_2e$/year	Export potential under Article 6
	Cumulative reduction 2025-2035	8-16 $MtCO_2e$	Creates sustained demand for mitigation finance
	Emissions per Capita	0.06 metric tons	Very minimal
Sector Allocation	Agriculture, Forestry & Land use (FAT)	67%	High potential not fully explored
	Energy (Renewables, cooking, transportation)	25%	High volume, fast deployment, and strong co-benefits
	Waste	7%	Town waste with pilot opportunities
	Others (Buildings)	1%	Likely to increase under Article 6
Revenue Upside	Carbon Revenue potential	USD 14-16 million per year	At conservative USD 10/tCO_2e
Development Impact	Direct Beneficiaries	2.5+ million people	Farmers, households, forest communities
Carbon Market Track Record	Registered Projects	VCM (10+), 4 elligible to transition to PACM	Primarily forestry, clean cooking
	Total Credits Issued	4.6 million units	Technically credible volume
Article 6 Readiness	Institutional Status	Early-stage (38%)	DNA designated; systems operations very minimal
	Key Gaps	Registry, LoA procedures, MRV integration, project pipeline	These could be addressed with an initial USD 500,000 (2026-2027)
Market Positioning	Regional Status	Late starter	Comparable to Rwanda pre-2020

2 National Climate & Development Context

Burundi's economy is fundamentally tied to the health of its natural systems. Because the nation's core pillars are climate-sensitive, any environmental shock creates a "ripple effect" through the economy.

i. Agriculture & Food Security

Employs over 85% of the population, primarily smallholders. While subsistence-focused, the sector manages vital cash crops like coffee and tea. Carbon finance would enable Climate-Smart Agriculture (CSA), reducing emissions while increasing yields, financial returns and resilience for millions of rural citizens.

ii. Forestry & Biomass Energy

Biomass (wood/charcoal) supplies over 97% of household energy. This reliance drives deforestation and respiratory health risks. High-integrity clean cooking projects represent a "triple-win": protecting carbon sinks, lowering household costs, and improving public health.

iii. Renewable Energy & E-Mobility

Energy access is only at 12%, therefore, other renewables like solar and wind can reach remote areas thus maintaining this green grid while improving access to electricity for the majority of the population. Integrating E-mobility (electric two- and three-wheelers) leverages this renewable supply to reduce fossil fuel imports, lower urban pollution, and modernize the transport sector through results-based finance.

iv. Waste Management & Circular Economy

Rapid urban population growth makes increases the volume of local methane emissions. Developing circular systems including waste-to-energy, large-scale composting, and landfill gas capture can convert this climate liability into a source of organic fertilizer and energy.

Climate shocks rapidly propagate across the economy, manifesting in shocks to agricultural production, energy supply disruptions which greatly impact economic performance. This creates a context in which mitigation, adaptation, and development objectives can be mutually reinforcing.

From a carbon market perspective, Burundi's binding constraints are systemic, stemming from investment and structural deficits. Concerning finance, domestic fiscal space is severely limited, and grant-based or concessional finance alone. This is insufficient to sustain mitigation at the scale required for sustained economic progress. Results-based carbon finance therefore represents a viable mechanism to mobilize private capital at scale while maintaining alignment with national development and NDC priorities. This is particularly relevant given Burundi's mitigation profile in key sectors such as forestry, clean cooking, and climate-smart agriculture, which offer low-cost, high-integrity mitigation opportunities with strong development co-benefits. Well-designed carbon market interventions can address immediate livelihood and energy needs, generate credible emission reductions, and reduce long-term fiscal pressure on the state. In this sense, carbon markets are instruments for delivering climate action that is economically and politically viable.

Table 2: Climate and Economy Nexus

Sector	Statistics	Climate Risk	Leverage Point
Agriculture	• **90%** of population engaged in farming • **40%** of GDP, **45%** of exports. • **Key crops:** coffee, tea • Emits 6 Million tCO2e	• Longer dry seasons led to yield loss • Irregular rainfall affects planting seasons for farmers • Arable land eroded thus soil degradation.	Climate-smart agriculture, and soil carbon projects that improve yields, enhance resilience, and generate scalable mitigation outcomes.
Forestry & Land Use	• **2,796 sq. km of forest** (≈11% of land) • **Deforestation:** 1.7 kha of natural forest lost/yr	• 880 kt of CO_2 emissions in 2024 released from loss. • Droughts/rainfall patterns, and biodiversity destruction	Burundi already has a REDD+ National Strategy and Action Plan 2019 indicating a policy ready environment
Energy	• **Electrification rate:** ≈12% of total population (lowest in EAC) • **Grid capacity:** 166 MW (mostly hydro) • **95%** biomass reliance	• **Hydro vulnerability:** Frequent power cuts in dry seasons • **Deforestation due to biomass reliance** drives forest loss and Health crisis of indoor pollution causing 186 deaths per 100,000	• Renewable energy projects can stabilize supply and generate tradable mitigation outcomes • Clean cooking interventions reduce pressure on forests for biomass energy and cause significant emissions mitigations.
WASH	40% lack access to clean water at in rural Areas. Heavy reliance on spring water (24,000 spots)	• Some spring water are seasonal and 5000 dried up in last 20 years. • Cholera outbreaks linked to flood events and ease pollution of open surface water	WASH projects with proven methodologies, fast deployment potential, and strong health and gender co-benefits can improve access
Public Finance	• **GDP per capita:** $255 USD fixed and 155 adjusted. • **Poverty rate:** 75%	• **Fiscal Constraints:** Minimal space for domestic climate investment • **Shock sensitivity:** Climate disasters wipe out GDP. Limited domestic resources and high dependence on external support	Results-based carbon finance that complements grants by providing predictable, performance-linked revenue that can be blended while structuring financial instruments. Carbon markets can serve as a cost-reduction and capital-mobilization tool for NDC implementation.

3 Carbon Market Track Record

Burundi's carbon market engagement is limited but credible, anchored in legacy CDM experience and a small but growing voluntary portfolio. Successful CDM projects were implemented primarily in clean cooking. Activity in the voluntary carbon market includes projects under Verra (3) and Gold Standard (5), mainly in Energy demand.

Historically, household-level energy interventions, particularly improved cookstoves, were successful in delivering scale, measurable impacts, and strong development co-benefits. There remain strong prospects for AFOLU-based interventions and clean cooking, aligned with NDC priorities, high global demand, and Article 6 transition potential. The key constraint is regulatory readiness and authorization capacity, which now defines the pace of market growth.

Table 3: Historic Carbon Market Summary

Standard	Status	Project Types	No. of Projects	Credits Issued	Key Takeaways
CDM (UNFCCC)	Legacy	EE Household / stoves	1 PoA issued	265,486 CERs, NDC Eligible	Demonstrated delivery and implementation capability
Verra (VCS)	Active	Energy demand (Clean cooking)	3 registered, 2 pipelines	2.6 million VCUs issued	Alignment with current buyer demand for household energy credits
Gold Standard	Active	Energy Efficiency, Liquid biofuel (2 listed)	5 registered, 3 listed	1.7 million	2 projects Issued (1 standalone, 1 VPA), All VERs
Article 6	Potential	-	1 Approved	-	Interest and need to participate
Total	Untapped opportunities	Household Energy dominated	10+ registered	4.6 million Units (all mechanisms)	Track record exists and is scalable; foundation exists for Article 6 to benchmark on

4 Priority Sectors & Flagship Pipeline

Burundi's mitigation potential is highly concentrated in four priority sectors where emissions reduction, development impact, and market demand are closely aligned. This concentration is a strategic advantage, allowing the country to focus on scalable, high-impact interventions.

- Forestry and land use, including agroforestry, offering the largest mitigation volumes and the strongest long-term potential, delivering credits alongside biodiversity protection, watershed management, and rural livelihood benefits.
- Clean cooking represents a fast and proven mitigation pathway, with immediate emissions reductions, strong health and gender co-benefits, and established demand from buyers.
- Renewable energy, particularly small-scale hydropower and distributed solar, can support energy access in rural areas and grid stability while generating durable mitigation outcomes and providing opportunities to jurisdictional Article 6 implementation.
- Climate-smart agriculture complements these sectors by strengthening food security and climate resilience and offering growing mitigation potential as MRV systems mature.

Collectively, these four sectors would capture the majority of Burundi's mitigation potential and form a balanced portfolio combining scale, integrity, speed and development relevance.

Table 4: Priority Carbon Sectors

Sector	Mitigation ($MtCO_2e/yr$)	Priority	Investment Opportunity (≈ Million $)	Exemplary Projects	Merits
Forestry / REDD+	0.32	#3	Over 15	AFR100	Biodiversity co-benefits, high buyer demand for jurisdictional-quality credits.
Energy (Clean Cooking, Renewables, Transportation)	0.41	#1	26	Verra 2828, Improved Cooking Stove Programme in Burundi / GS1140 Improved biomass cookstoves for returnees in Burundi	• Rapid household adoption, strong health and gender co-benefits • Grid-connected, bankable structure, displaces diesel and biomass reliance
Climate-Smart Agriculture	O.81	#2	13	Scaling up Climate Resilience Solutions for Burundian Smallholders (SAP045)	High smallholder coverage, soil restoration benefits, scalable through cooperatives
Waste	0.12	#4	3.5	Better place solid waste management initiatives	Clear revenue-generating models like tipping fees, that can be topped up by carbon credit sales

5 Article 6 Readiness & Institutional Capacity

Burundi is at an early stage of Article 6 readiness and has established a designated national authority within the Geographic Institute of Burundi (IGEBU). To support DNA, capacity-building is required to enable them to transition smoothly from the role implemented under the CDM to their role in Article 6 mechanisms. The DNA commissioned the process to develop a provisional regulatory framework aligned with Articles 6.2 and 6.4. This is an ongoing process and will be linked with the overall development of Burundi's carbon markets policy framework.

Key operational elements for Article 6 implementation are not yet in place, including a legal basis being gazzeted, a national registry, standardized authorization procedures, and sufficient in-house capacity to manage MRV, corresponding adjustments, and market engagement. The binding constraint is therefore institutional depth and infrastructure.

A targeted investment of approximately USD 0.5 million over 2026–2027 would close these gaps and enable a rapid transition from readiness to first transactions. This would allow Burundi to authorize priority mitigation activities, including high-integrity forestry and clean cooking programs, thereby, unlocking results-based mitigation finance at a scale that significantly exceeds the initial public investment.

Table 5: EAA Article 6 Readiness 10-Step Framework

Step	Component	Status	Key Gap	Priority Action (2026–2027)	Initial Cost ≈(,000 USD)
1	National Article 6 Strategy	In progress	Framework not formally adopted	Finalize and publish national strategy	40-50
2	Legal / Policy Framework	Developing	No gazetted carbon market regulation	Enact carbon market regulations	40-50
3	Designated National Authority	Established	Mandate not fully operationalized	Formalize mandate and resourcing	40-50
4	Host Country Approval & LoA	Critical gap	No authorization procedures	Establish SOPs and LoA process	25 -30
5	Institutional & Human Capacity	Critical gap	Limited technical staff	Recruit and train dedicated Article 6 unit	40 -50
6	Article 6-Linked MRV System	Critical gap	Fragmented, project-based MRV	Develop standardized MRV protocols	35 -50
7	Supporting Market Structures	Partial	No local validators/ verifiers	Develop and accredit local capacity	65 -80
8	Private Sector Engagement	Partial	High perceived risk	Structured investor outreach	45-65
9	National Registry Infrastructure	Critical gap	No digital registry	Procure and operationalize registry	80 -120
10	International Cooperation	In progress	No bilateral ITMO pilots	Initiate Article 6.2 negotiations and pilots	50 -70

6 CORSIA Participation

The CORSIA readiness assessment highlights that Burundi's current engagement is foundational since submission of an Action plan to ICAO in 2016. The country has not opted into voluntary participation for Phase 2 (2027-2035) and there is an opportunity to support with the development of the procedural requirements. Voluntary carbon market projects, particularly in forestry, could be initiated in CORSIA-eligible standards and methodologies such as Gold Standard with targeted technical support. The absence of an updated formal State Action Plan is as a result of mainly capacity constraints rather than policy resistance. These constraints can be addressed in parallel with broader MRV and Article 6 readiness efforts. Overall, the strategic opportunity does exist, because Burundi can credibly position itself as a supplier of high-integrity credits to international airlines, capturing premium demand while maintaining alignment with national climate and development priorities.

Table 6: Corsia Status and Outlook

Element	Status	Actions Required
Voluntary Participation	Not Participating	Submit formal notification to ICAO Council to opt-in for Phase 2 (2027-2035)
Eligible Projects	Potential	Develop some VCM projects in CORSIA-approved standards
State Action Plan	Not updated since 2016	Develop and submit updated plan and a national aviation emissions strategy
Strategic Opportunity	Exists	Position as supplier

7 Benefit-sharing & Integrity Safeguards

Burundi accedes to the African Principles. As a result, benefit-sharing and integrity safeguards are foundational to market credibility. Burundi has prioritised the development of carbon market programs under these principles that seek to establish high integrity and social value as two of 5 key standards for carbon projects in Africa.

As an early-stage jurisdiction seeking to attract high-integrity buyers and long-term partners, the national carbon market framework will be structured to ensure that carbon revenues deliver tangible local benefits while mitigation outcomes remain real, additional, and transparently governed.

This approach is central to managing reputational risk and building confidence among both communities and market participants. Benefit-sharing principles emphasize equitable value distribution, meaningful community participation, and predictable revenue flows to local beneficiaries, alongside commercially viable returns for project developers. A significant share of carbon revenues is directed to communities, particularly in forestry, clean cooking, and agriculture, where local stewardship is essential to permanence and long-term performance.

These principles are reinforced by integrity safeguards aligned with Article 6 requirements and leading voluntary standards. Key measures include conservative baselines, buffer mechanisms to manage reversal risk, standardized MRV systems linked to national reporting, and transparency in project authorization and revenue allocation. Together, these elements establish a framework that protects both buyers and communities, supports early transactions, and provides a credible foundation for responsible market scale-up as national systems mature.

Table 7: Benefit-sharing Framework

Stakeholder	% Allocation	Purpose	Integrity Function
Communities	Not set	Direct payments, livelihood support, community infrastructure (e.g. water, health, schools)	Ensures social legitimacy, permanence, and local stewardship
Developers	-	Capital recovery, project management, technical expertise	Maintains commercial viability and delivery capacity
Operations	-	Monitoring, verification, administration, field operations	Protects credit quality and standards compliance
Government	-	DNA operations, registry maintenance, MRV systems, climate funds	Supports national oversight and Article 6 compliance
Buffer pool	-	Non-permanence and reversal risk management	De-risks credits for buyers and safeguards integrity

8 Strategic Roadmap & Investment Ask

Burundi's transition to a functional and credible carbon market has to be clearly sequenced, time-bound, and commercially grounded. The country is executing a focused pathway that links institutional readiness directly to transaction delivery and market confidence. The objective is to establish viable systems, execute early high-integrity transactions, and scale selectively where market demand and national priorities align.

Phase 1 (2026-2027): Readiness and First Transactions

This phase is about decisive execution and moving irreversibly from preparation to delivery. Priority actions include finalizing and gazetting carbon market regulations, operationalizing the Designated National Authority with dedicated technical staff, and establishing standardized authorization and Letter of Authorization procedures that are compliant with Article 6 requirements. Development of a functional national registry, linked to emerging MRV systems and NDC accounting, has to be deployed to enable transparent tracking and prevent double counting.

In parallel, Burundi will transition eligible CDM activities and authorize a small number of high-integrity pilot projects in forestry and clean cooking, sectors with proven delivery capacity and immediate buyer demand. The objective of Phase 1 is credibility: first authorizations, first transfers, and demonstrated institutional performance. By the end of this phase, Burundi aims to have completed its first market transactions and established a verifiable track record with international partners.

Phase 2 (2028-2030): From Pilots to Scale

With core systems operational, the focus shifts from system design to volume, consistency, and market depth. Burundi will scale priority sectors, formalize bilateral cooperation under Article 6.2, and expand delivery channels through Article 6.4 and high-integrity voluntary standards. Institutional emphasis moves toward performance management, ensuring predictable authorization timelines, robust MRV, and transparent governance as annual issuance increases.

This phase is critical for crowding in private capital. As transaction risk declines and regulatory certainty increases, Burundi's carbon market becomes bankable, enabling larger project pipelines and longer-term offtake arrangements.

The objective is to establish viable systems, execute early high-integrity transactions, and scale selectively where market demand and national priorities align.

Phase 3 (2031-2035): Market Maturity and Integration

By this stage, carbon markets are embedded as a routine financing instrument for NDC implementation. Market operations are integrated with national planning and budgeting processes, and sectoral coverage expands incrementally as capacity allows. Carbon revenues contribute meaningfully to closing the NDC financing gap, reducing reliance on concessional finance while supporting durable climate and development outcomes. Burundi is now a reliable supplier of high-integrity mitigation outcomes within regional and international markets.

Roles and Responsibilities

- **Government of Burundi**
  Finalize and enforce the legal framework, operationalize institutions, ensure transparent authorization and accounting, and provide sustained political backing for early transactions.

- **Development Partners**
  Finance targeted readiness investments, provide technical assistance on MRV, registries, and corresponding adjustments, and support early pilot transactions to reduce initial market risk.

- **Private Sector and Project Developers**
  Deploy capital, technical expertise, and implementation capacity in priority sectors, particularly forestry, clean cooking, and renewable energy, and structure projects for scale and integrity.

- **Carbon Buyers and Partner Governments**
  Engage early through pilot purchases and bilateral cooperation, anchor demand, and signal market confidence that enables scale-up.

The immediate Investment Ask (2026–2027)

The immediate ask is USD 0.5 million over 2026-2027 to close the Article 6 readiness gap. This investment will initiate finance for regulatory finalization, institutional staffing, registry and MRV infrastructure, and transaction-ready authorization processes.

This is catalytic capital. It unlocks a near-term project pipeline and positions Burundi to mobilize hundreds of millions of dollars in results-based climate finance over the following decade. The return is leverage of a relatively small public investment that enables sustained private capital flows, credible mitigation outcomes, and long-term fiscal relief.

The take home should be that Burundi has moved beyond ambition. The pipeline is real, and the mitigation economics are compelling. What is required now is early capital and market engagement to convert readiness into transactions. For investors and partners seeking high-integrity supply, clear additionality, and strong development impact, Burundi represents a time-bound opportunity to shape a market from the first transaction onward.

9 References

African Development Bank. (2022). African economic outlook 2022.
https://www.afdb.org/en/documents/african-economic-outlook-2022

Eastern Africa Alliance on Carbon Markets and Climate Finance (2022).Carbon Markets Profile Burundi. Authored by Stephan Hoch, Peris Waweru (Perspectives Climate Group), Tim Cowman, Tom Owino, Diana Imbugwa (Climate Impact Partners) as part of the Climate Finance Innovators Project. *https://easternafricaalliance.org/wp content/uploads/2025/10/Carbon-Report_-Burundi_2023.pdf*

Food and Agriculture Organization. (2022). FAOSTAT database.
https://www.fao.org/faostat/

Global Forest Watch. (2025). Burundi forest data and deforestation statistics.
https://www.globalforestwatch.org

Gold Standard. (2025). Gold Standard impact registry (Burundi project data, extracted December 2025).
https://registry.goldstandard.org

GSOL Energy. UNDP's Greening Moonshot Initiative in Bujumbura
https://www.gsolenergy.com/projects/bujumbura-burundi

International Energy Agency. (2022). Africa energy outlook 2022.
https://www.iea.org/reports/africa-energy-outlook-2022

Republic of Burundi. (2025). Nationally determined contribution (NDC 3.0). Government of Burundi.
https://ndcpartnership.org/country/bdi

TheGlobalEconomy.com. (2025). Burundi economic indicators.
https://www.theglobaleconomy.com/Burundi/

United Nations Environment Programme Copenhagen Climate Centre. (2025). Article 6 pipeline database.
https://article6pipeline.unepccc.org/

United Nations Environment Programme Copenhagen Climate Centre. (2025). CDM/JI pipeline analysis and database.
https://unepccc.org/cdm-ji-pipeline/

United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change 2025. NDC registry: Burundi.
https://www4.unfccc.int/sites/NDCStaging

Verra. (2025). Verified Carbon Standard (VCS) registry (Burundi project data, extracted December 2025).
https://registry.verra.org

World Bank. (2023). World development indicators: Burundi.
https://data.worldbank.org/country/burundi

OXFAM. From drawings to reality: boosting agricultural production in Burundi
https://www.oxfam.org/en/drawings-reality-boosting-agricultural-production-burundi

CARBON MARKET

PROFILE 2026
BURUNDI

PUBLISHED BY

Eastern Africa Alliance On Carbon Markets And Climate Finance

The Eastern Africa Alliance on Carbon Markets and Climate Finance is a regional coalition of 8 countries focused on shaping and enabling readiness to Carbon markets and international climate finance systems and mechanisms.

AUTHORS

Andrew Ocama (EAA), Vincent Munguleni (GCM), Solomon Atepo (GCM), Bridget Nimusiima (EAA), Fiona Mugambi (GCM), Ritah Rukundo (GCM)

This publication builds on the Carbon Market Profiles published in 2019 and 2022 by the Eastern African Alliance (EAA) with technical support from the Climate Finance Innovators (CFI) Project

JUNE 2026

Supported by:

On behalf of

giz Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

Federal Ministry for the Environment, Climate Action, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety

RCC East and Southern Africa
Collaboration for Climate Action