

AVOIDING DOUBLE COUNTING IN JURISDICTIONAL REDD+: A Practical Assessment Tool

Helping forest jurisdictions protect the integrity of their climate commitments

WHY DOUBLE COUNTING MATTERS

Jurisdictional REDD+ (JREDD+) programs are a central part of many countries' strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from deforestation and forest degradation. These programs can generate emission reductions and removals (ERRs) that contribute to national climate targets or can be sold in international carbon markets.

However, if the same ERR is claimed by more than one party—or counted toward more than one climate commitment—it creates double counting. This weakens program credibility, risks exclusion from markets such as CORSIA or ITMOs, and erodes confidence among investors and partners.

For jurisdictions seeking to both meet their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and participate in carbon markets, avoiding double counting is essential for environmental integrity, market access, and long-term success.

WHAT IS DOUBLE COUNTING?

Double counting occurs in one of three ways: when the same credit is counted twice towards targets (*double use*); when two or more parties claim the same ERR (*double claiming*); or where the same mitigation benefit is registered under different mechanisms or standards (*double issuance*).

THE DOUBLE-COUNTING RISK ASSESSMENT TOOL

Developed by Winrock International under Offset National Emissions through Sustainable Landscapes project (funded by the U.S. Department of State), this tool offers a structured self-assessment for jurisdictions to identify where and how double-counting risks could arise in their REDD+ programs.

THE TOOL:

- Organizes risk assessment into five key areas (see *Table 1 for indicator questions*)
 - Nesting frameworks
 - ERR tracking and registry systems
 - Corresponding adjustments & NDC alignment
 - Monitoring, reporting & verification (MRV)
 - Enabling environment (governance, legal frameworks, capacity)
- Guides users through indicator questions with simple scoring options (Yes / No / Partial / NA).
- Produces an at-a-glance dashboard to highlight areas of strength and areas needing attention.



The Double Counting Tool highlights areas of greatest risk for double counting and serves as a starting point from which to develop recommendations for improvement.

Table 1. Key Area Indicator Questions

Key Areas	Indicator Question
REDD+ Nesting Frameworks and Operating Mechanisms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have the geographical boundaries for jurisdictional and project levels been clearly defined? If so, are criteria established to prevent overlapping boundaries or claims? • Have program periods (for both project and jurisdictional levels) been clearly defined, with mechanisms in place to address overlapping periods for consistent ERR tracking? • Are there established frameworks and guidelines for nesting REDD+ projects within jurisdictional programs? • Are there clear operating mechanisms in place to ensure that project-level activities are incorporated into jurisdictional ERRs according to the nesting framework?
Corresponding Adjustments and NDC Alignment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are mechanisms in place for applying corresponding adjustments to ERRs used as ITMOs, in CORSIA, or for other international commitments? • Are policies in place to distinguish between ERRs allocated for NDC targets and those allocated for market transactions?
ERRs tracking and registry system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there a system for documenting ERR issuance, transfer, and retirement? Does the system include unique identifiers for projects and maintain comprehensive transaction logs to detail ERR ownership and movements? • Is there integration with international and national tracking systems (e.g., Article 6 databases, FCPF, and the ART TREES registry)?
ERRs Monitoring, Reporting and Verification Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have functional monitoring systems with periodic reporting protocols been established? • Have rules been set for the alignment of project and jurisdictional baselines to ensure consistency and completeness? • Have rules been set for the alignment of project and jurisdictional ERR estimation to ensure consistency and completeness? • Are ERR transaction reports publicly accessible? • Is there third-party verification of ERRs to ensure data integrity?
Enabling Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are legal ownership and transfer rights for ERRs clearly defined? • Is there institutional coordination among national, subnational, and private stakeholders? • Are clear benefit-sharing mechanisms established among REDD+ participants? • Are there trained expertise and resources within the existing institutional arrangement?

THE TOOL AND JURISDICTIONAL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Winrock uses the tool as part of a collaborative capacity-building process:

ORIENTATION & CONTEXT SETTING

We start with a short workshop explaining JREDD+ double-counting risks, the ERR lifecycle, and relevant international standards (e.g., Article 6, ART-TREES).

USING DOUBLE COUNTING TOOL FOR GUIDED SELF-ASSESSMENT

Winrock facilitators work alongside jurisdictional teams to answer the tool's questions, drawing on available policies, data, and stakeholder perspectives.

RESULTS REVIEW & DISCUSSION

Together, we analyze the dashboard results to identify priority areas for action and clarify where safeguards and systems are already strong.

STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

Winrock works with jurisdictions to develop tailored recommendations for improving registry systems, MRV processes, nesting arrangements, and governance structures to reduce double-counting risks.

BENEFITS TO JURISDICTIONS

- Clear diagnostic of potential double-counting risks
- Alignment with international standards for market eligibility and NDC integrity
- Actionable insights to strengthen mitigation strategies
- Capacity building for government and technical teams
- Greater investor and partner confidence through enhanced transparency

By combining a systematic process for risk assessment with practical capacity building, Winrock's Double-Counting Risk Assessment Tool helps jurisdictions secure the credibility of their climate actions and maximize the value of their REDD+ efforts.

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO EXPLORE WORKING WITH WINROCK ON APPLYING THE TOOL IN YOUR JURISDICTION, PLEASE CONTACT: JULIE NASH, DIRECTOR OF ECOSYSTEM SERVICES, WINROCK INTERNATIONAL: JULIE.NASH@WINROCK.ORG