

Guarantee of Origin (GO) - Northmore Gordon

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A Guarantee of Origin (GO) is a European energy certificate that verifies electricity has been generated from a specific renewable source. GOs track and substantiate renewable electricity claims, functioning as the European equivalent of Renewable Energy Certificates (RECs). They can be traded independently of the underlying electricity, enabling organizations to document renewable electricity attributes separately from physical power flows. GOs are widely used by RE100 companies and other organizations seeking to meet renewable energy targets or support renewable electricity claims in their sustainability reporting.

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What is a Guarantee of Origin (GO)?

A Guarantee of Origin (GO) is a European energy certificate that verifies electricity has been generated from a specific renewable source. GOs track and substantiate renewable electricity claims, functioning as the European equivalent of Renewable Energy Certificates (RECs). They can be traded independently of the underlying electricity, enabling organizations to document renewable electricity attributes separately from physical power flows. GOs are widely used by RE100 companies and other organizations seeking to meet renewable energy targets or support renewable electricity claims in their sustainability reporting.

How do Guarantees of Origin differ from Australia's REGO scheme?

While both Guarantees of Origin (GOs) and REGOs (Renewable Electricity Guarantee of Origin) serve similar functions—recording renewable electricity attributes and enabling trade—they operate within different regulatory frameworks. GOs are the European certificate mechanism, whereas REGO is an Australian scheme administered by the Clean Energy Regulator. Importantly, REGO operates as a separate scheme from Australia's Renewable Energy Target and continues beyond 2030 when that target ends. The underlying principle is similar: both document environmental attributes of renewable electricity generation for claim and reporting purposes.

Can a facility create both a REGO and Large-scale Generation Certificates (LGCs) for the same electricity generation?

No. A facility cannot create both REGOs and Large-scale Generation Certificates (LGCs) for the same electricity generation. This restriction also applies to International Renewable Energy Certificates (I-RECs) for that generation. The prohibition prevents double-counting of renewable electricity attributes. A facility may participate in both REGO and the Large-scale Renewable Energy Target (LRET) schemes, but must choose which certificates to create for a given unit of electricity. This distinction is critical when planning renewable energy projects and determining which pathway best aligns with your organizational claims and commercial objectives.

How do renewable electricity attributes relate to carbon accounting and environmental claims?

Renewable electricity attributes recorded by certificates like GOs and REGOs represent rights and benefits associated with renewable electricity generation. However, purchasing a renewable certificate does not by itself establish every possible claim about a business or product. Environmental claims require specific evidence: the applicable framework, contractual instruments, ownership documentation, and retirement/cancellation evidence. Generation, consumption, and the period represented by an instrument must be handled consistently. Renewable electricity claims are governed by frameworks such as GHG Protocol Scope 2 Guidance and are distinct from carbon offsets or physical fuel consumption reductions. Our services include environmental-attribute due diligence to ensure claims are properly substantiated.

What evidence is needed to support a renewable electricity claim using certificates?

Supporting a renewable electricity claim requires several documented elements: the applicable accounting framework, contractual instruments confirming ownership of the certificate, explicit ownership evidence establishing legal rights, and registry or retirement/cancellation documentation. Generation and consumption data must align with the period covered by the certificate. The claim must distinguish between the renewable electricity attribute itself, physical electricity consumption, and any other environmental benefits. Before selecting certificates, organizations should confirm their intended claim—whether for market-based Scope 2 accounting, RE100 alignment, or voluntary commitment—and ensure the proposed instruments and their retirement treatment satisfy those requirements.

Does purchasing a renewable electricity certificate eliminate all organizational emissions?

No. A renewable electricity certificate addresses only the renewable electricity attributes and typically supports Scope 2 accounting for purchased electricity. It does not eliminate Scope 1 emissions (direct facility emissions from fuel combustion or processes) or Scope 3 emissions (value-chain and downstream emissions). Renewable electricity attributes serve a specific accounting purpose distinct from carbon offsets or physical energy reductions. Organizations must establish the inventory boundary and proposed public claim before selecting instruments. Our carbon advisory services help clarify which emissions categories are affected and how different instruments—renewable electricity certificates, energy efficiency improvements, and carbon offsets—contribute to reduction strategies.

How should renewable electricity instruments be selected for procurement?

Instrument selection involves a structured process: first establish the organization, consumption period, electricity volumes, site locations, and reporting framework. Confirm whether the purpose is a renewable electricity claim, market-based Scope 2 accounting, RE100 alignment, or another stated objective. Avoid selecting instruments solely on price before acceptance criteria are clear. A suggested procurement evidence checklist includes site consumption and reporting-period boundaries, instrument type and generation location, ownership and exclusive claim rights, registry and retirement evidence, beneficiary allocation across sites, the proposed public statement and calculation, and contract terms. Compare the complete cash-flow timing, evidence costs, and attribute consequences rather than relying on headline price comparisons.

What role does Northmore Gordon play in renewable electricity and certificate procurement?

We offer moREnewable100, a service for procuring renewable energy certificates without changing existing electricity supply contracts. The service includes multi-site coverage, procurement flexibility, RE100-aligned sourcing, and technology and due-diligence support. We also provide broader environmental certificate services spanning project registration, certificate creation and trading, alongside engineering and commercial assessment. Our carbon advisory services connect instrument selection with emissions information and investment decisions, including opportunity assessment, transition planning, and environmental-attribute due diligence. We maintain a knowledge library providing guidance on certificate mechanisms, reporting frameworks, and claim substantiation to support informed procurement decisions.