

## **GOFC-GOLD Executive Committee Teleconference – 19 January 2007**

Participants: Michael Brady, Reuben Sessa, Kathleen Landauer, Hassan Virji, Ivan Csiszar, Martin Herold, Jacqueline Sambale, Johann Goldammer, Curtis Woodcock, Philippe Mayaux, Olga Krankina, Erin Naydenov

### **Highlights and Action Items**

- Curtis Woodcock welcomed as co-lead of the Land Cover Implementation Team
- New Land Cover Implementation Team members announced
- GOFC-GOLD monitoring workshop planned for April at Santa Cruz, Bolivia
- Fire IT meeting is planned for September at Thessaloniki, Greece
- NASA provides new grant for data dissemination among regional networks
- Pan African and West Africa Regional Network meeting planned for fall 2007 at Accra, Ghana

### **Details**

#### **1. General**

- Michael Brady commented that GOFC-GOLD is undergoing unprecedented transition among its Executive Committee membership. While acknowledging the challenges of succession in the Committee, he observed that the plan for panel activities has never been as full as in 2007. He emphasized that procedures are in place to address succession and that the process is well underway. Philippe Mayaux, as Vice Chair, has stepped up as Acting Chair. Also, change is underway in the Land Cover Implementation Team (LC-IT). David Skole is completing his term as co-Lead. David will continue as a LC-IT member, while Curtis Woodcock moves into the co-lead position. Finally, five new members have been invited to join the LC-IT. With the rotational changes to the implementation teams complete, GOFC-GOLD will now focus on Chair succession.

#### **2. GTOS/G3OS/GEO matters**

- GTOS update, meetings, requests for GOFC inputs: Reuben Sessa reported that the new Chair of TOPC is Han Dolman, who is the head of the department of Hydrology and Geo-environmental Sciences at the University of Amsterdam. May 2007 is the next reporting period to the SBSTA of UNFCCC. March 7-9, 2007 are the confirmed dates for the GTOS steering meeting, which will likely be held at UNEP in Nairobi. A draft of the GTOS +10 strategic implementation plan has been submitted to the GTOS steering committee members for comment. The draft document will be finalized at the steering committee meeting. Reuben Sessa announced a major update of the GTOS website. The text has been updated to include information from the biennial report. The look and feel will be updated within the next few weeks. Several of the GOFC-GOLD web pages are out of date and should be updated as well. **Action:** comments or updates for the GOFC-GOLD website go to Erin Naydenov at the project office.
- With regard to the UNFCCC framework under the SBSTA agenda topic Systematic Observation, a draft report has been circulated on different proposals and framework scenarios. The report will be submitted to the SBSTA in May. Reuben Sessa indicated that GTOS funds are delayed until May, which will delay most Panel funding coming from

GTOS. If more immediate funding is required external sources will be sought. **Action:** The project office will provide a spreadsheet outlining funding needs to Reuben Sessa.

- GEO III plenary meeting results and new work plan tasks: Michael Brady and Martin Herold attended the GEO plenary in Bonn in November 2006. On behalf of GTOS, they provided an intervention in the plenary to endorse the new 2007-2009 GEO work plan, budget and procedures. A booth at the plenary showcased to GEO members the Forest Observation Community of Practice, in which GOF-C-GOLD is involved. GOF-C-GOLD will continue to contribute to 8 tasks in the new GEO work plan. At the plenary GOF-C-GOLD was recognized as a GEO member contributing through GTOS. The next GEO plenary (Nov 2007) will be held in South Africa. Attached to the plenary will be a one day meeting for ministers of the GEO member countries. Near term successes will be highlighted, including several tasks involving GOF-C-GOLD. The updated GEO task management matrix was circulated prior to telcon.

### 3. Fire IT Update

- GFMC and UNISDR activities: Johann Goldammer reported that the working group of the Global Wildland Fire Early Warning System (Fire EWS) is making progress. Sub Sahara Africa has been identified as a focus area for the early warning program as a precursor to a global system. This will provide an opportunity to develop existing expertise and procedures into a regional wildland fire danger rating/forecast system. A workshop is planned for Africa to bring together stakeholders and demonstrate the system development work, and to involve local people. The working group is considering the involvement of the GOF-C-GOLD Regional Networks in Africa, START, the WMO Commission on Agrometeorology, and the GEO Secretariat. Johann Goldammer has created an assessment of capabilities on international cooperation on wildland fire management with a remote sensing section for the FAO and the ministerial meeting. One example of international cooperation is the recent agreement (MOU) between Australia and the German aerospace center to develop AUSBIRD (a follow up polar orbiting system to detect and characterize fire). Originally designed for Australia only, the goal is to gather enough interest and funding to expand the initiative into an operational global system of mini satellites for fire management and science.
- Results of Geostationary meeting: Ivan Csiszar reported that the 2<sup>nd</sup> geostationary workshop held in early December at EUMETSAT in Darmstadt, Germany was successful. **Action:** workshop reports and recommendations to be available on the web soon. Several major outcomes include plans to further link to other international activities such as GEOSS, CEOS, and CGMS. It was suggested that this become a formal CEOS constellation activity and make this a formal group in the CGMS system. **Action:** A document will be prepared for the CGMS annual meeting to establish a working group. The mutual understanding of needs and capabilities has improved greatly, especially with regards to fire characterization and emissions modeling.
- Planned activities in 2007, IT and RNs: Johann Goldammer reported that GOF-C-GOLD is invited to present at the up coming The Global Wildland Fire Conference at Seville, Spain. The conference will include a GOF-C-GOLD regional network event. Ivan Csiszar reported that the Fire IT 2007 schedule is very busy. The International Symposium on Remote Sensing of the Environment will be held in Costa Rica and will include a separate fire

session. The planned Direct Broadcast workshop held adjacent to the C-Space conference will take place in mid October in Mexico City. The Fire IT meeting is planned adjacent to the EARSel SIG meeting in Thessaloniki, Greece in September. There will be a REDLatif workshop in Argentina prior to the Fire IT meeting. A fire monitoring center is being established in Sudan, lead by Mohamed Elgamri Atta Elmanan, endorsement and support is being sought for this project. An updated activity schedule was circulated prior to telcon.

#### 4. Land Cover IT Update

- Tropical deforestation monitoring-planning update: Martin Herold reported on the November 2006 COP 12, in which GOFC-GOLD and ESA had a joint booth and side event to inform participants about the activities of the working group on monitoring tropical deforestation for emissions reduction. The process is ongoing with regular telcons. GOFC-GOLD participants include Martin Herold, Ruth DeFries, Frédéric Achard and Michael Brady. The working group will submit their technical views of the monitoring framework to the UNFCCC secretariat through GTOS by the end of February. The next UNFCCC SBSTA workshop will be in early March to discuss methodological and policy issues. The second GOFC-GOLD workshop is planned for 17-19 April at Santa Cruz, Bolivia to follow up with the 2006 Jena workshop. Recent case studies and experience related to measuring and monitoring emissions from deforestation will be synthesized to develop more detailed technical guidelines. Michael Brady indicated that there are funding needs for the Bolivia meeting. **Action:** discussions are required with GTOS and START to identify funding resources. This workshop will also provide an opportunity to start to develop a Land Cover Regional Network in South America. **Action:** Martin Herold will circulate the workshop announcement.
- Other LC activities: Martin Herold reported on the GEO tasks. The global forest monitoring task, related to the FRA 2010 process, held an expert meeting in October. An evolving activity for GOFC-GOLD in the FRA 2010 will be to provide the validation component and advocate data access. Regarding the GEO global land cover task, Martin Herold reported that the European Commission will move ahead with their global land cover monitoring plan as a part of the GMES program, which includes a global land cover monitoring service. Several meetings are planned to coordinate with the European side. A common agreement on requirements and specifications for this type of observation system is needed. The first meeting will be in April adjacent to the NASA land science team meeting in Maryland, organized by Garik Gutman and Chris Justice, to start to develop an implementation plan. The larger follow up meeting is being organized by the European Environmental Agency and will likely take place in summer 2007 in Europe. Others involved in this activity include Curtis Woodcock, Tom Loveland, Michael Brady, the LC IT project office, as well as several from GTOS. The task is identified as a GEO near term success.
- LC IT Team changes: David Skole has completed his assignment as a co-lead and Curtis Woodcock now assumes the co-lead responsibility for a three-year term. The Committee expressed its appreciation for the important contributions by David Skole to GOFC-GOLD, both before and during his term as co-lead. Martin Herold reported that Håkan Olsson, Matt Hansen, Espen Volden, and Mette Wilkie have agreed to become members of the Land Cover Implementation Team. The Executive Committee approved the new membership. Curtis Woodcock commented that he is looking forward to leading the LC IT towards more operational land cover projects. The validation of land cover products and the production of “best available” land cover map are two tasks that the team can take the lead on. The LC IT

should establish a global network of validation sites that can be used to validate land cover products, e.g., FRA 2010. These activities would move beyond past LC IT work in the areas of best practices and accuracy assessments of global land cover maps, and provide more tangible benefits to the community. Michael Brady welcomed Curtis Woodcock and indicated that he could expect support from the LC IT project office, the GOF-C-GOLD project office, as well as from the START secretariat.

## **Regional Networks**

- Network issues and plans: Philippe Mayaux reported that plans are underway for a Pan African regional network meeting, which would include the initiation of a West African regional network. David Skole and Johann Goldammer have provided comments on the science plan. The meeting will likely take place in Accra, Ghana in Fall 2007. JRC will provide some of the meeting funds. The West Africa RN will combine land cover and fire issues. Philippe Mayaux will champion the meeting, and seek additional funding. Johann Goldammer suggested that the meeting could also address the GEO task for Fire EWS (described in Fire IT section). He also indicated that as Africa is a focus, the German agency for technical cooperation has offered to co-finance some activities, one of which would be to bring together East, West and South Africa. Hassan Virji indicated that START support would likely be available for the West and Pan African meetings. Michael Brady mentioned that the WMO Commission on Agrometeorology is also considering support. **Action:** Project Office to establish a working group for the meeting. Olga Krankina reported on the November NERIN workshop on remote sensing where processes at high latitudes including permafrost melting and related land cover change processes were discussed. The workshop was also well attended by those doing monitoring of agricultural lands. Philippe Mayaux announced that the Observation of Forests project is being launched in Africa; this will secure many GOF-C-GOLD activities in Africa for the next three years. Johann Goldammer confirmed that KVS Badrinath would be funded to participate in the planned foundation meeting of the regional South Asia wildland fire network. Financial support is needed to hold this meeting prior to the Seville conference. Michael Brady suggested that a regular regional network telcon may need to be initiated to strengthen coordination of upcoming activities. An RN telcon should be held prior to the ExComm telcon. **Action:** Discuss with Olga Krankina and START.
- START fund update and new project: Kathleen Landauer reported on NASA funds. The previous grant has expired and a final report is being prepared, in which the project office will be asked for input. The contract has been received for the new NASA grant. An overall 2007 work plan is needed, including regional network activities, priorities and coordination among networks. Discussions are required to develop the suggested START coordinated activities to engage young scientists, including how much funding should be allocated and what these activities may tie into. Other priorities for network activities need to be discussed. Hassan Virji suggested that a young scientist workshop could be added on to the Pan African workshop, as well as the upcoming workshop in Bolivia. Additional support may be available for the Bolivia workshop from START. Martin Herold will provide START with the workshop description and funding needs. The new NASA grant specifies the development of web based information portals to assist in regional network activities. Hassan Virji requested the ExComm to consider this issue before the next telcon. **Action:** Michael Brady will meet with the START secretariat in February to discuss planning for 2007

activities, including regional network development. Curtis Woodcock commented that there may be an opportunity to strengthen GOFC-GOLD regional networks by linking with the FRA network, which has national representatives. Håkan Olsson may provide a link between inventory and remote sensing sectors. Further discussions are required on this issue.

## **5. Succession Planning**

- IT position changes, Chair candidates, terms of reference: Michael Brady proposed that the ExComm move onto Chair succession planning as the LC IT succession has been successfully addressed. The idea of whether a chair should be sought from the outside or from within GOFC-GOLD was discussed. There were no strong opinions on either approach. All agreed that the candidates experience and stature in the LC community were of most importance. Philippe Mayaux commented that the developing world is under represented on the Implementation Teams and the Science and Technology Board. He suggested that the Chair be sought from a high profile well known person and the Vice Chair be filled from a person from the developing world. A candidate was suggested that had been involved during the early period of GOFC-GOLD development. Several members indicated their support for the proposed candidate to be contacted. **Action:** It was agreed that Curtis Woodcock would approach the candidate to determine the level of interest.

## **6. Any other business**

- The next telcon: 14 or 16 February 2007

## **7. List of Documents Circulated**

- Updated GOFC-GOLD ExComm participation and events schedule, 2006-2007
- Updated GEO Task Management Matrix, January 2007

GOFC-GOLD Project Office