

GOFC-GOLD Executive Committee Teleconference – 14 March 2007

Participants: Michael Brady, Chris Justice, Reuben Sessa, Chris Schmallius, Jacqueline Sambale, Martin Herold, Curtis Woodcock, Erin Naydenov, Olga Krankina, Philippe Mayaux, Kathleen Landauer

Highlights and Action Items

- Land Cover Classification System to be presented at upcoming ISO meeting
- Latin America Regional Network initiation meeting planned at Bolivia in April
- GOFC-GOLD/ESA side event planned for the UNFCCC SBSTA meeting in May
- Second workshop planned for GOFC-GOLD working group on monitoring for Reducing Emissions from Deforestation in Developing Countries (REDD)
- Central Africa Regional Network launches new project to build an integrated observatory
- GOFC-GOLD plans Pan Africa symposium at Accra, Ghana in late October

Details

1. GTOS/G3OS/GEO matters

- GTOS update, meetings, requests for GOFC inputs: Michael Brady reported on meetings with Reuben Sessa, John Latham and Antonio Bombelli of FAO in early March. Reuben Sessa is organizing an ISO meeting at FAO where LCCS will be on the agenda. NASA will provide support and additional support is being sought. GOFC-GOLD's participation is undetermined. Chris Justice suggested that GOFC-GOLD provide a formal statement to indicate what improvements are required to LCCS. **Action:** Curtis Woodcock will draft the statement for the ISO and will send to Martin Herold for input. Reuben Sessa indicated that suggestions on LCCS are welcome and should be sent via Reuben Sessa and John Latham, to pass on to Antonio DeGregorio. GOFC-GOLD may be a sponsor without contributing funds. **Action:** Reuben Sessa will distribute the list of the LCCS technical group to Michael Brady. GTOS has two action items stemming from the SBSTA UNFCCC meetings. One was to prepare a framework for terrestrial observations. This is an ongoing activity. The other was to develop standards for the essential terrestrial climate variables. Martin Herold reviewed an early draft on the land cover standard. Michael Brady reviewed the draft biomass standard. **Action:** Reuben Sessa will circulate initial drafts to the ExComm by late March. GTOS would like GOFC-GOLD submissions to the SBSTA to go through GTOS in a formal manner that would involve the GTOS sponsors. GTOS should develop the process and GOFC-GOLD will try to comply. However, this topic will be discussed further at the GTOS steering committee meeting. The GTOS sponsors (FAO, UNEP, WMO, UNESCO, and ICSU) likely have their own positions on conventions. Reuben Sessa reported that the GTOS steering committee meeting dates have been postponed until 5-7 November.
- GEO work plan task update: Michael Brady reviewed the GEO task management matrix (see updated document). He attended the GEO data and architecture committee meeting in early March, and reported on the status of GOFC-GOLD's forest assessment task and the fire early warning system. There are several tasks where GOFC-GOLD is waiting for guidance from the task leads, in particular tasks that relate to work in developing countries. A meeting on the land cover task, lead by Martin Herold and Tom Loveland, will be held early April at Washington. Documents are being prepared to present at the November Ministerial Summit in South Africa. The draft table of contents for the document highlights smoke from forest

fires and land cover as issues. The fire early warning system may be showcased at the summit. The GEO Forest Observation Community of Practice is preparing a report on processes to address user interface issues and will present this to the User Interface Committee in early April. Chris Justice suggested that GOF-C-GOLD set the requirements for the CEOS constellation for land surface imaging (task DA-07-03). The IT's are interested in seeing the Landsat continuity issue and the constellation be developed. Chris Justice suggested that GOF-C-GOLD focus on what the constellation should deliver. Martin Herold indicated that Mike Wulder has been compiling ideas regarding this constellation concerning land cover. **Action:** Michael Brady will circulate the detailed task sheet for CEOS constellation to the ExComm and will follow up with Mike Wulder. Philippe Mayaux reported that the JRC has developed ideas for the constellation in collaboration with FAO. The constellation could fill in the gaps between Landsat and the mid-decadal data that likely will not be available until end 2008. The urgency of the CEOS constellation task needs to be highlighted.

2. Fire IT Update

- GFMC and UNISDR activities: Michael Brady reported on the fire early warning system proposal. He and Johann Goldammer met with the WMO Commission on Agrometeorology at Geneva, which has offered substantial support for an early warning system workshop. This will likely be incorporated in the Africa symposium discussed below.
- Upcoming IT activities: Chris Justice reported on the preparations for the Seville Wildfire 2007 conference. Kathleen Landauer is organizing the travel for the African RN attendees. This venue will help prepare for the pan African meeting later in 2007. Work is being done to ensure that funding is in place for IT members to attend events (see updated GOF-C-GOLD events and participation schedule, 2006-2007).

3. Land Cover IT Update

- Tropical deforestation monitoring – submission and workshop: Martin Herold reported that the GOF-C-GOLD working group on REDD issues prepared a submission to the UNFCCC (see SBSTA submission document). 25-30 people will attend the Bolivia workshop including GOF-C-GOLD members, experts and participants from Latin American countries. START and CFS are providing meeting support. There will be a GOF-C-GOLD/ESA side event at the next SBSTA meeting in May, to present the outcomes of the Bolivia workshop. **Action:** Martin Herold will circulate updated agenda.
- Other LC activities: Chris Schmillius reported that they have made a large coordination proposal regarding the 7th framework program to support Northern Eurasian activities. The potential funding is up to (150K EURO) per year for 3-4 years, and would support meetings, exchanging scientists and fieldwork. GOF-C-GOLD has announced its support for Geoland. GOF-C-GOLD actions and the tasks of the ESA project office also support Geoland 2, which is being defined. Philippe Mayaux reported that Geoland 2 would focus mainly on Europe and Africa. Land cover mapping will mainly be based on Europe, while land cover monitoring will likely be systematic with final sampling in Europe and Africa. Regular monitoring use VGT for Africa, and there will not be a large Eurasian component. Chris Schmillius provided an update of the LC IT's role in the FRA 2010. The Terrasar X satellite launch is expected mid to late April, resulting in no data availability until 2008. The ground truthing plans of FAO related to the FRA 2010 are delayed. Philippe Mayaux reviewed the FRA 2010 discussions from a meeting with Mette Wilke and Antonio DeGregorio of FAO

and the JRC teams (Africa, South East Asia, South America, and Europe). The technical meeting focused on the segmentation, labeling, and validation to be done by partner countries. FAO is evaluating the technical options and the design should be complete by July. This meeting was important for FAO in preparation for the COFO meeting in late March. The endorsement of COFO is critical for the global assessment to be part of FRA 2010, with the timely availability of a mid-decadal data set a major issue. Alternative data should be sought from a constellation to fill the potential gap. Chris Justice suggested that the constellation system should be made of currently available assets and making those available for areas where there are problems with data, rather than the design of future systems. The GEO constellation tasks require a concrete system available in the very near term. Michael Brady suggested that GOFC-GOLD should engage with the GEO task addressing this issue. **Action:** Michael Brady to contact GEO task co-lead. Philippe Mayaux suggested that Alan Belward and John Townshend be involved in this activity. Curtis Woodcock reported that there was a discussion at the Annapolis NASA meeting in early March about the products that may come from the mid-decadal global survey, which was in line with the GEO land cover task. There was also action discussed to get the data for the validation exercise collected as soon as possible in order to keep it close to the mid-decadal dataset. Data collection will begin this summer. Martin Herold reported on the planned GEO land cover task meeting in early April that relates to this topic. Unfortunately, the EEA will not participate. Martin Herold reported on Globcover, which is producing a global land cover map based on MERIS data. The data release will be for the late April ESA symposium. As GOFC-GOLD is a partner, an early version of the data will be circulated among the LC IT.

4. Regional Networks

Network plans; Ghana & Bolivia workshops: Michael Brady reported that there will be a side meeting to discuss initiation of a Latin America Regional Network at the REDD workshop at Bolivia. Carlos De Souza is championing the effort to create the RN. Ivan Csiszar will present NERIN, Carlos Di Bella will present RedLatif, and Carlos De Souza will present his proposal on the Amazon Basin Remote Sensing Network. Philippe Mayaux reported on the recently expanded activities of the Central Africa Regional Network (OSFAC), with a new project to be launched on 26 March. The U.S. sponsored project will focus on building an integrated observatory with a new project funded by the EU. Satellite data will be included in a broader focus with the in-situ data for the Congo basin forest. The observatory will play a key role in validation efforts for the FRA 2010. This will be the link between GLOBOS project and OSFAC. Michael Brady suggested that this project be a topic at the Ghana workshop. Olga Krankina reported that NERIN is planning several workshops in late 2007-early 2008. She will follow up with individuals and START for support. Michael Brady reviewed the concept document for the GOFC-GOLD Africa symposium (see concept document). There is a lot of interest and offers of support, including the WMO. The WMO would like to focus on operational fire weather systems, including the early warning system proposal. To accommodate many interests, the meeting will be a 5-day symposium, consisting of several meetings and workshops. Philippe Mayaux suggested that at the end of the parallel workshops a common session be held so that both workshops can come together. Curtis Woodcock suggested that there be another day added to work with a small group of regional experts/interpreters on focused interpretation activities. **Action:** Both ITs to lead planning for the thematic workshops.

- START work plan: Kathleen Landauer reported that for 2007 the IT meetings, Bolivia workshops and the Ghana workshop would be funded. Funds will be available for 2-3 additional meetings. The funding scheme is being finalized. The START 2007/2008 work plan will address ways to improve data dissemination by the ITs and RNs, and the development of a strategy to incorporate more young-scientist participation. Kathleen Landauer requested input from the IT's on these two issues. START is interested in following up on Garik Gutman's suggestion on promoting cooperating with the Monsoon Asia Integrated Regional Studies (MAIRS) program. **Action:** Land Cover IT to outline funding needs for 2007/2008.

5. Succession planning

- Michael Brady reported on the chair candidate status. The ExComm should be prepared to make a decision shortly. GTOS has indicated that they will handle the chair succession issue promptly. **Action:** Michael Brady will update the ExComm with the Chair candidate response once received.

6. Any other business

- Michael Brady discussed the matter of requests to GOFC-GOLD for endorsement letters for proposals in which team members are involved. Chris Justice suggested that if proposals contribute to GOFC-GOLD principles, then endorsement letters should be written. Curtis Woodcock suggested that the objectives should be endorsed rather than the proposal itself. Chris Schmullius reported that proposals submitted to the European Commission with endorsement letters have a better acceptance rate. It was agreed this should be dealt with on a case-by-case basis by the ExComm.
- Next telcon: 25 April, 2007

7. List of Documents Circulated

- Updated GOFC-GOLD events and participation schedule, 2006-2007
- Updated GEO task management matrix
- Concept document for GOFC-GOLD Africa Symposium
- Minutes of 14 February telcon
- SBSTA submission document on REDD

GOFC-GOLD Project Office