

GOFC-GOLD Executive Committee Teleconference – 14 September 2011

Participants: Olivier Arino, Martin Herold, Olga Krankina, Curtis Woodcock, Krishna Vadrevu, Erin Naydenov

Highlights

- SEERIN and Miombo networks plan network workshops in spring 2012
- Fire IT to discuss future RN activities and strategies at Stresa workshop
- USGS and Boston University develop training facility in support of GEO FCT task
- The need for a scientific paper on the role of fire related to REDD identified

Details

1. Remarks from the Chair

- Tony Janetos has discussed the future of the GOFC-GOLD Project Office with Canadian Forest Service (CFS) Directors, and will send the CFS a letter outlining GOFC-GOLD's request for the Secretariat to continue to be hosted by the CFS. The CFS plans to use the letter as a basis for renewing support agreements with the Canadian Space Agency and to fill the Executive Director role. The current status of the Project Office is putting pressure on START to support GOFC-GOLD activities.
- The Sloan Foundation is no longer pursuing the World Forest Observatory Initiative.

2. Regional Networks (RN)

- The Miombo Network has submitted a proposal for holding a spring 2012 workshop to rejuvenate the network. The workshop would focus on drafting a science plan, drafting a project on Miombo Carbon sequestration and dynamics, planning network activities, and electing a steering committee. Olga Krankina requested that the Fire IT provide feedback and help develop the agenda. This meeting could be discussed at the Fire IT workshop in October. The GOFC-GOLD website may expand to include Miombo in the regional network section as Miombo needs another agency to host their website.
- Planning is underway for the Volga workshop: NASA Science Conference and GOFC-GOLD Workshop on the impacts of anomalous weather and extreme events on natural, socio-economic and land use systems: drought of 2010 in European Russia. A support proposal will be submitted to GOFC-GOLD shortly.
- The LCLUC Science Team meeting at Hanoi in November will help to revitalize SEARIN. Olga Krankina and Dave Skole are helping plan the SEARIN portion of the meeting. Any suggested regional champions should be sent to Olga.
- The South Eastern European Regional Information Network (SEERIN) has submitted a proposal to NATO, for support to hold an advanced workshop at Sofia. The network champion in the region is Antoaneta Iotova in Bulgaria. SEERIN has several web pages now included on the GOFC-GOLD website: <http://www.fao.org/gtos/gofc-gold/net-SEERIN.html>.

3. Fire IT Update

- The Fire IT workshop will be held in conjunction with ESA's Fire-CCI workshop, 17-19 October, at Stresa. Emilio Chuvieco is organizing the Fire-CCI workshop, which will include global burned area products. START is providing travel support for 6 participants. Approximately 50 participants will attend the workshops. Future Regional Network

activities and strategies will be discussed at the workshop. Planning for the Fire IT workshop has been difficult due to financial constraints which has limited travel support for Regional Network participants. In the future efforts should be made to balance workshop support more evenly among IT and Regional Network meetings. An ExComm representative could act as a point person to help make/monitor decisions on how funds are allocated to RN and IT activities. Budget limitations are due in part to the current status of the Project Office. START has also undergone some changes and is now overseen by a steering committee.

4. Land Cover IT Update

- Boston University has received support from USGS to help the GEO FCT task. One goal is to help countries with national reporting; the other goal is to develop training material for capacity building in countries that are interested in beginning to report on Carbon issues. In the longer term the aim is to run workshops around the world as well as a training facility at Boston University which will provide training in remote sensing and GIS related to Carbon reporting. Martin Herold suggested that the new training materials could be combined with the REDD sourcebook. The training facility could be used as a part of the Data Initiative. Regional participants would travel first to EROS for data access training, then to Boston for advanced training on processing the data. Curtis Woodcock has funds to run the facility, and develop the training material.
- The USGS is preparing to produce global 30m land cover products. GOF-C-GOLD will collaborate in the area of validation. The USGS is adopting the validation strategy that GOF-C-GOLD has been developing. Digital Globe and the National Geospatial Agency (NGA) are providing very high resolution images for the land cover validation exercise. The exercise involves 500 sample sites around the world. Tom Loveland is determining which images are appropriate for each site. GOF-C-GOLD could write a letter to the NGA advocating that they make their data publicly available. There is the potential for NGA data to be made available through the USGS data portal. Curtis Woodcock will follow up with Tom Loveland on whether a GOF-C-GOLD letter would be helpful. Olga Krankina could present information on validation at the Hanoi workshop.
- ESA is negotiating with the University of Wageningen about the proposed Land Cover Project Office. A LC IT Project Officer (post doc) will be required. Once the arrangements are clarified the contract can be completed.
- The proposed Land Cover IT meeting could be held early 2012 at the University of Wageningen once the Land Cover Project Office is running. Another option is to hold it at Boston University in early January 2011, before classes resume. The meeting should initiate the Global Landsat Analysis working group, which would require participation from groups that are doing large scale global Landsat analysis (JRC, China, USGS, and University of Maryland). Curtis Woodcock and Martin Herold to determine which option is feasible.
- ESA will hold the Sentinel 2 preparatory workshop from 23-27 April 2012 at Frascati. As of 19 September, ESA will be accepting abstracts for the meeting. The workshop will likely be organized by theme, beginning with a session on non land cover topics (mangroves, water quality) then with dedicated sessions on forestry, land cover, and cartography. GOF-C-GOLD should play a role to ensure that there is synergy between Sentinel 2 and Landsat continuity discussions. The Landsat Science Team and/or GOF-C-GOLD could hold a side meeting.

Curtis Woodcock will follow up with the Landsat program to determine how many team members could participate. ESA could provide meeting space for side events.

- Olivier Arino reported that preparations for the UNFCCC COP-17 at Durban, 28 November to 9 December are proceeding. If ESA is able to get a booth, they will host GOF-C-GOLD. The ATSR World Fire Atlas reprocessing has been completed and will be open to the public by the end of September. The ESA Land Cover CCI project was successfully reviewed by the UKMET Office. The Fire CCI project will review an algorithm with the participants of the GOF-C-GOLD Fire IT meeting at Stesa in October. ESA's TropForest project had a successful milestone review at FAO with FRA, UNREDD, and JRC TREES teams in July. ESA's CultureMERIS has been up and running without discontinuity for the past 6 months and there is a plan to extend it globally. The first dedicated new land cover product for permafrost modelling, from ESA's Permafrost project, is being tested at MPI-BGC Jena.

5. Working Groups

- REDD WG: a 3-month literature study about Remote Sensing and REDD is being conducted on contract with DLR. Chris Schmullius will circulate the draft in November. A 1-year project on SAR Education Material is being conducted jointly with DLR. The project will help promote teaching radar remote sensing. There is a lot of confusion on the role of fire in REDD. A scientific paper could help to clarify the role of fire related to REDD monitoring and impacts. A similar paper was recently completed on degradation.
- Biomass WG: the working group meeting proposed for 26-27 October at FAO, Rome is pending. Chris Schmullius reported that a 3-year biomass mapping project was launched in August at Krasnoyarsk. The Marie-Curie International Training Network "GIONET" will hold a Summer School on Advanced Remote Sensing Techniques from 13-22 October at Jena. Four proposals will be submitted to the national DLR-call on Sentinel-1 and Sentinel-2 data exploitation: i) large scale biomass mapping, ii) fine scale forest characteristics for REDD, iii) data assimilation, and iv) savannah monitoring.

6. GTOS/G3OS/GEO matters

- The GEO Global Forest Observation Initiative had a meeting in August with participants from Norway, USA, Brazil, and UK. There is a new plan, which was exclusively developed by Australia. Although the plan is updated it does not have consensus, and there is a possibility that the plan will not pass plenary.
- The draft CEOS Response to the GEO Carbon Strategy for the Terrestrial Chapter is finished and under review with co-authors. Chris Schmullius will circulate the document once it is approved.
- GTOS: Erin Naydenov reported that Antonio Martucci (GTOS, FAO) has been very helpful with updating the GOF-C-GOLD webpage, including a new section for SEERIN.

7. Any other business

- The text telcon is planned for 26 October

8. List of Documents Circulated

- September 2011 update of event schedule

GOFC-GOLD Project Office