

GFOI Plenary 2017

Dates: 9 - 12 April 2017.

- Open Plenary: 11-12 April
- GFOI Component meetings: 9 and 10 April.
- REDDcompass training: 10 April (afternoon).

Venue: New World Hotel, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam.

Context

More than a quarter of the world's population – close to 1.6 billion people – rely on the world's forests for their livelihoods. These complex ecosystems are rich in carbon stocks, biodiversity and other valuable resources such as wood and non-wood forest products. Forested watersheds also supply a high proportion of the world's accessible fresh water. However, with the increased pressure of population growth and demand for forest products, the global forest estate has declined significantly in recent decades releasing large amounts of greenhouse gas emissions that contribute to climate change.

The global community is seeking solutions to help better manage forest resources. Notably, the Paris Agreement now provides a way forward for countries to show how they can reduce emissions through Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs). Article 5 of the Agreement is focused specifically on sinks and reservoirs of greenhouse gases, including forests, and encourages action to support the existing framework to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, commonly known as REDD+. Furthermore, the UN Sustainable Development Goals, aiming for a transformed world by 2030, give a context for countries to build robust and sustainable economies.

For the global community to effectively address climate change, reduce global deforestation and pursue sustainable development, action needs to be country led. To ensure confidence, countries need access to reliable information to inform the development, implementation and monitoring of their climate mitigation actions. The application of new technology-based forest monitoring systems may help to meet this growing demand for information in the forest sector.

With this growing demand for forest monitoring systems globally, the international community has been working to assist developing countries to help build their capacity in forest monitoring. However given the size and complexity of this task, there is no one organization that can meet this demand alone.

Through the work of its partners, the Global Forest Observations Initiative (GFOI) has been working to coordinate the delivery of support to countries that are seeking to reduce their emissions from deforestation, forest degradation and related activities, commonly known as REDD+ countries. In doing so, GFOI provides a more holistic, specialized and cost-effective package of support to REDD+ countries than any one partner would be able to deliver on their own.

Purpose

GFOI, together with the Forest Inventory and Planning Institute (FIPI) of Vietnam and partners, will host the annual GFOI Plenary meeting of 2017 in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam from 9 to 12 April. The open plenary sessions will be held on 11-12 April, with additional invitation only meetings being held on 9-10 April. The Plenary meetings will gather GFOI partners from around the world to discuss the latest developments in national forest monitoring issues and GFOI's efforts to deliver a globally coordinated and ultimately consistent package of support to developing countries forest monitoring.

Objectives

GFOI has been organized to support developing countries in monitoring their forests by developing methods, guidance and advice; fostering capacity building; facilitating access to space and ground data, and identifying needs and gaps that require new research and technology.

The GFOI Plenary aims to provide a forum for international partners and implementing countries to gather and discuss issues relating to improved forest monitoring techniques and MRV processes for REDD+ purposes. Specifically the GFOI Plenary 2017 aims to:

- Present and discuss GFOI activities over the past year and discuss plans for the next year
- Discuss priority issues, including monitoring and reporting needs for REDD+, SDGs, UNFCCC transparency requirements and, of course national GHG and forest data needs
- Identify key issues that REDD+ countries face in forest monitoring and explore opportunities for how GFOI can help to address these
- Identify new opportunities for coordination and collaboration in forest monitoring that benefits developing countries, and;
- Allow GFOI partners to showcase their forest monitoring activities
- Present the findings of the GFOI Review (2016) and discuss plans for the second phase of the Initiative.

Outputs

Following the completion of the meeting a detailed report will be prepared along with updated objectives, priority activities and a workplan to guide the activities of GFOI and its partners for the following year. Opportunities for new partnerships will also be confirmed and pursued.

GFOI Plenary Meetings, Ho Chi Minh City Vietnam, April 2016

Overview Agenda

Sunday 9 April 2017

Day	Agenda	Proposed Time	Contact
Sunday 9 April 2017	Space Data Coordination Group (SDCG) meeting (invitation only)	All day	Please contact: stephen@symbios.space for additional information.

Monday 10 April 2017

Day	Agenda	Proposed Time	Contact
Monday 10 April 2017	GFOI Component Meetings (invitation only): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capacity Building (CB) Methods and Guidance Documentation (MGD) Space Data Coordination Group (SDCG) R&D Coordination 	TBC TBC All day Afternoon	Further additional information please contact: snwilson@usgs.gov & inge.jonckheere@fao.org carly.green@enviroaccounts.com stephen@symbios.space martin.herold@wur.nl
	GFOI Leads Meeting (invitation only)	All day	
	REDDcompass training session <i>Open training session for REDD+ country participants in the MGD's online portal REDDcompass. Other partners are also welcome.</i>	15:00 – 17:00	Presenters: Carly Green and Jenny Hewson (TBC)

Tuesday 11 April 2017

Tuesday 11 April 2017	Registration	8:30	
	Welcome <i>Ministry of Agriculture, Vietnam Training and International cooperation Division Forest Inventory and Planning Institute (FIPI), Vietnam GFOI Leads Group (inc overview of GFOI presentation)</i>	9:00-9:30	TBC Anthony Bennie (Chair)
	Tour de table <i>Introductions of all participants</i>	9:30 – 10:00	All
	REDD+ update <i>An update on REDD+ policy, practice and progress globally. Followed by 10mins Q&A.</i>	10:00 – 10:30	TBC (possibly Maria Sanz Sanchez)
	Morning Coffee Break	10:30 – 10:45	
	Panel: country perspectives <i>Panel of country representatives discuss their views on REDD+, priorities, progress and challenges.</i>	10:45-11:45	4 x REDD+ country representative (TBC) Facilitator (TBC)
	GFOI Review (2016) and Phase 2 <i>A presentation on the findings of the GFOI Review. Followed by Q&A (15mins).</i>	11:45 – 12:30	Jim Baker (GFOI Reviewer)
	Lunch	12:30 – 13:30	
	GFOI's Methods and Guidance Documentation (MGD) Component <i>A presentation on recent and planned activities for the MGD component. *Q&A to follow during panel session.</i>	13:30-13:45	Carly Green (Component Manager)
	GFOI's Capacity Building Component <i>Presentations on recent and planned activities for the Capacity Building component (2 x 15mins).</i>	13:45-14:15	Sylvia Wilson (SilvaCarbon) and Inge Jonckheere (UNREDD) – Component Managers

Tuesday 11 April 2017	GFOI's Space Data Component <i>A presentation on recent & planned activities for the Space Data component.</i>	14:15-14:30	Stephen Ward (Component Manager)
	GFOI's R&D Coordination Component <i>A presentation on recent & planned activities for the R&D Coordination component.</i>	14:30 – 14:45	Martin Herold (Component Manager)
	Q&A panel with GFOI Component Managers	14:45-15:15	Carly Green, Inge Jonckheere, Martin Herold, Stephen Ward & Sylvia Wilson.
	Coffee break	15:15 – 15:30	
	MRV gaps analysis <i>Presentation on the MRV gaps analysis study. Followed by Q&A discussion (30mins).</i> <i>Followed by country presentation on their national Roadmap and any remaining gaps.</i>	15:30-16:00	Marco van der Linden (World Bank) – TBC Country representative - TBC
	Breakout Groups: key themes from REDDcompass. <i>Group 1: Institutional Arrangements</i> <i>Group 2: Design Decisions</i> <i>Group 3: Measurement and Estimation</i> <i>Group 4: Reporting and Verification</i> <i>Groups to discuss the key issues that countries face in addressing each theme and possible solutions for how GFOI and partners can help address these.</i>	16:00 – 17:00	Facilitators TBC
	Reports from break out groups <i>Rapporteur from each group reports back on findings, followed by open discussion.</i>	17:00 – 17:30	
	Meeting closed for the day	17:30	
	Plenary Dinner	19:00 onwards	All

Wednesday 12 April 2017

Wednesday 12 April 2017	Recap from Day 1	8:30-9:00	Moderator
	Country FREL presentations <i>Presentations by countries who have submitted their FRELs: policy settings, assumptions, definitions, methodology and results.</i>	9:00 – 10:30	Countries from different regions (TBC).
	Morning Coffee Break	10.30 – 10.45	
	Panel discussion: forest monitoring needs of REDD+ countries <i>Panel of country representatives outline their needs for support from the international community, followed by Q&A and open discussion</i>	10.45 – 11.30	Several countries from different regions (TBC).
	Information stations: rolling demonstrations on GFOI and partners' products <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • REDDcompass • OpenForis and SEPAL • SilvaCarbon supported tools • Data cube • GOFC-GOLD training materials 	11:30-12:30	Carly Green Anssi Pekkarinen, Inge J & Erik Lindquist Sylvia Wilson and colleagues SDCG colleagues Martin Herold & Sarah Carter
	Lunch	12:30 – 13:30	
	Information stations: repeated <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • REDDcompass • OpenForis and SEPAL • SilvaCarbon supported tools • Data cube • GOFC-GOLD training materials 	13:30-15:00	Carly Green Anssi Pekkarinen, Inge J & Erik Lindquist Sylvia Wilson and colleagues SDCG colleagues Martin Herold & Sarah Carter
	Afternoon Coffee Break	15:00 – 15:15	

Wednesday 12 April 2017	Discussion: GFOI mechanisms for coordination and collaboration <i>Brief presentation on proposed mechanism for coordination, followed by open discussion and additional suggestions.</i>	15:15 – 16:15	Tom Harvey
	Wrap up	16:15-16:45	Anthony Bennie (Chair, GFOI Leads)
	Closing remarks	16:45 – 17:00	<i>Ministry of Agriculture, Vietnam Training and International cooperation Division Forest Inventory and Planning Institute (FIPI), Vietnam</i>
	Plenary closed	17:00.	

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Background

The GFOI is not its own institution, it is instead a product of the actions of its partners. The Initiative is currently led by the Governments of Australia, Norway and the USA as well as the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and CEOS. It is supported by an extensive community of international experts and stakeholders, including from the UNFCCC Secretariat, Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), World Bank Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF), REDD+ countries, GOFC-GOLD, universities and other specialist international organizations and experts.

GFOI is guided by a Leads Group, with representatives from all the major contributors. The GFOI Office is responsible for the overall coordination and administration of the Initiative. The Office is based at the FAO's headquarters in Rome.

GFOI is open to new partners, either through the alignment of existing activities or the contribution of new resources.

GFOI was founded under the Group on Earth Observations (GEO) partnership. [GEO](#) is a voluntary partnership of governments and organizations that envision 'a future wherein decisions and actions for the benefit of humankind are informed by coordinated, comprehensive and sustained Earth observations and information'.

GFOI Components

GFOI partners work across four key components: capacity building, methods and guidance, space data and R&D coordination. These components interact with one another and the individual activities of GFOI partners to provide holistic and specialized support to countries with an ambition to reduce emissions from land use and land use change. The components conduct the following core functions:

Capacity Building: provides the interface between GFOI and REDD+ countries. It works directly with countries to help build their national forest monitoring capabilities. This component is jointly managed by the [US SilvaCarbon](#) and [UN-REDD-FAO](#) programmes. These programmes facilitate hands-on training and in-country support through a combination of different methods, including training in the use of tools and methods that have been developed by GFOI partners to support key tasks such as data acquisition, analysis and reporting.

Methods & Guidance Documentation (MGD): provides methodological advice on forest monitoring and MRV for REDD+. The [MGD](#) provides a systematic workflow approach to guide countries through the otherwise complex process of developing forest monitoring and MRV systems. It provides direct links between UNFCCC decisions and reporting requirements, with the good practice guidance provided by the IPCC. It is not biased towards any particular method or approach, instead it provides overarching guidance on operational methods and approaches to MRV.

The MGD has been developed into a web application, called [REDDcompass](#), to improve user accessibility to methods, guidance and tools. REDDcompass provides a systematic workflow approach to guide countries through the otherwise complex process of system design and development. The MGD is written and comprehensively reviewed by a team of internationally renowned experts and stakeholders. The coordination of the MGD Component is led by the Australian Government.

Space Data Coordination Group (SDCG): facilitates the availability and accessibility of satellite data for countries to use in monitoring their forests. The SDCG coordinates space agencies to influence satellite acquisition to ensure data coverage and continuity that meets REDD+ country needs. It works with both data users and producers to facilitate improved accessibility and usability of satellite data. This component is led by the Committee on Earth Observation Satellite ([CEOS](#)), with contributions from its member space agencies.

R&D Coordination: ensures that new technologies, datasets and methods for forest monitoring are developed and provided to countries in a manner that best meets their needs. In return, the R&D Coordination component works to ensure that country needs and continued knowledge gaps are communicated back to the research community to help guide future research and development tasks. The component also coordinates priority research topics such as monitoring forest degradation, mapping forest types, interoperability of different datasets, uncertainty analysis and model integration. This component is led by the [GOF-C-GOLD](#) Land Cover Office at Wageningen University, which coordinates a broad community of international researchers working on improving forest monitoring and MRV techniques.