



## TFG 2011-2012 Projects and Programs

### 1. REDD+ Reference Level Policy Initiative

Reference levels in the UNFCCC are the switches that must be turned on for REDD+ to continue to evolve productively. Lack of reference levels has hindered REDD+ programs from having a benchmark for countries to receive performance-based payments, a key allure of REDD+. TFG is a leading reference level advocate within the UNFCCC process, and we have focused on the topic for 2+ years. We have built relationships and proposed ideas for a decision in Durban. No matter the final decision at COP17, reference level work will be a key way NGOs can help progress REDD+. See here (<http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2011/smsn/ngo/333.pdf>) for our most recent UNFCCC submission and here ([http://unfccc.int/methods\\_science/redd/methodologies/other/items/4542.php](http://unfccc.int/methods_science/redd/methodologies/other/items/4542.php)), the only case of freely-available forest carbon data, from 5 different carbon model results, for 61 countries, hosted at the REDD Wed Platform. Our Durban strategy is to use relationships and knowledge of negotiations and systems to achieve the best REDD+ reference levels decision. This work feeds into #3 below, the proposed University of California Certificate Course in Terrestrial Carbon Accounting.

### 2. TFG's US REDD Finance Database (USRF Dbase)

After the Copenhagen climate change talks collapsed in 2009, donors announced \$4 billion in REDD+ pledges to developing countries. These funds are now being disbursed. TFG has a two-year, \$206,000 grant from the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation to develop a database of every instance where the US government states anything quantitative about REDD+ finance or impacts (hectares saved, tons of carbon sequestered, increased enforcement). This database is the most advanced "proto REDD Registry" - another major thrust of work of the UNFCCC on REDD+. Through compiling this information, TFG has developed a strong knowledge of every program where the US government has or will spend money on REDD+ and how the US government reports impacts. In the absence of a UNFCCC REDD+ Mechanism, evaluating REDD+ finance and impacts will be a core component of post-2012 REDD+ initiatives. TFG will release the USRF Dbase at COP17.

### 3. University of California Certificate Course in Terrestrial Carbon Accounting

TFG has recognized that with a likely reference level decision in Durban, the next two years will require many developing country technical experts whom have advanced training in GIS, field measurements, forest classifications and statistics. TFG has begun to raise funds and identify potential partners (including NASA, Climate Focus, CALIT2, University of California departments and programs, interest from Norway, interest from foundations) for a 4-week graduate level certificate course to be offered every late summer/early fall to 50 REDD+ experts, at least half from developing countries. The course is a strategic initiative because:

- a) There is massive need for capacity development on technical REDD reference levels, forest monitoring and MRV issues.

- b) In the absence of an “intelligent body” coordinating REDD (given the abdication of responsibility by the UNFCCC), such a network could be a driving force in establishing, de facto best practices for REDD MRV. TFG will build on our pre-existing relationships and MOUs with organizations to recruit the best REDD+ technical people and enhance their collective skills. In other words, it will be an “advanced course”.
- c) It is also not just a question of doing the right technical work. An overarching issue is to how to plug technical work into processes that matter. TFG has invested a lot of time and energy understanding ways to make reference levels and terrestrial carbon accounting work undertaken during the course actually become useful.
- d) Various technical and policy synergies can result from such a course network. If many countries are sending their best people to California every year to develop skills and technical MRV reports on REDD, *the statistical power of sharing information on forest carbon stocks across the network makes the network stronger*. A core requirement of any REDD MRV or reference level work is a commitment to data and calculation transparency. If this transparency is structured right, the whole process can be stronger and more robust.

#### **4. Climate-Smart Agriculture, Commodity Roundtables, Food Security & REDD+**

TFG works with a consortium at the interface of REDD+, agriculture, food security, commodity roundtables, and GHG accounting. TFG co-hosted a conference on technical issues in subnational REDD+ programs and commodity roundtables with NWF and others. This was the first workshop to unpack the major commodity roundtables and leading subnational REDD+ technical details (remote sensing, field measurements, monitoring and enforcement, certification, etc). The major commodity roundtables, Brazil’s and Indonesia’s GCF country coordinators, foundations, leading academic, and policy makers attended the workshop. Presentations from the workshop are available here:

<http://www.nwf.org/Global-Warming/Policy-Solutions/Stopping-Deforestation/REDD-Workshop.aspx>. A report with 7 key recommendations, known as the “San Diego Climate-Smart Agriculture Recommendations” will be released in Durban.

#### **5. TFG’s Humanitarian Carbon Portfolio**

TFG has recognized that a key need in coming years is to have rapid examples of robust climate mitigation REDD projects that provide immediate and measurable humanitarian benefits. We have built a network of relationships and MOUs with groups that allow TFG to rapidly deploy small grants to vetted, effective existing organizations working in post-conflict areas, primarily in Africa. TFG pitched this \$1.5 million proposal to several potential funders last year. They all declined, but TFG is still “shovel ready” to deploy small grants and measure carbon and humanitarian impacts. We’ve worked with Save the Children (southern Ethiopia), Community Action Fund for Women in Africa (northern Uganda near the Lords Resistance Army refuge camps), in Aceh Sumatra, in Cross River State, Nigeria, and in Mozambique. This idea - rapidly deploying small funds to existing projects with robust MRV - is a template for how REDD+ should evolve.