

Forest Carbon Standards Committee Meeting
October 23-24, 2008
Meeting Summary

Opening Remarks and Committee Objectives

Opening remarks were provided by Forest Carbon Standards Committee (FCSC) Chairman Michael Goergen, Vice-Chairman Steve Ruddell, and AF&PA President and CEO Donna Harman. Neil Sampson, Coordinator for the Secretariat, provided an overview of the objectives of the Committee. The intended purpose of the FCSC is to develop and maintain consensus standards for the measurement and reporting of forest carbon offsets under national greenhouse gas emission reduction programs in the United States and Canada. The FCSC will operate under procedures approved by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) and the Standards Council of Canada (SCC). AF&PA, as an ANSI-accredited standards development organization, is serving as the Secretariat. The FCSC will build on existing voluntary and regional forest carbon standards in order to develop a bi-national approach to compliance-quality forest carbon offsets.

Standards Development Procedures

Brad Douglas of AF&PA and Marsha Cheddi of the Canadian Standards Association (an SCC-accredited standards development organization) reviewed their organizations' respective standards development procedures, including voting procedures. Key elements of standards procedures are openness, balance of interests, and due process. There is significant alignment between AF&PA and CSA procedures. One difference is in the membership categories (i.e., CSA has a separate category for aboriginal interests). One option for creating a joint standard is to move forward with a set of rules that would satisfy both AF&PA and CSA procedures; an alternative option is to create an AF&PA standard, with CSA creating a technical committee to determine whether to adopt the same standard.

Current and Emerging Efforts

A panel presented highlights of current and emerging government and private market initiatives, in order for the FCSC to learn from and build on these efforts. The panel consisted of Peter Graham, Canadian Forest Service, on efforts in Canada; Bill Hohenstein, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and Adam Daigneault, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, on efforts in the United States; Jessica Verhagen, Climate Action Secretariat, on the Western Climate Initiative; Tony Brunello, California Resources Agency, on the California Climate Action Registry; Alec Giffen, Maine Forest Service, on the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative; and Michael Walsh, Chicago Climate Exchange (CCX) on the CCX.

Other participants described additional efforts, including the State of Georgia's registry; a stakeholder process in Washington State; Duke University's Harnessing Forests and Farms effort; and the Voluntary Carbon Standard (VCS).

Discussion

Process: Several participants expressed a desire to ensure consensus, and to make sure that contrary positions are addressed. It was clarified that consensus was defined similarly within the AF&PA and CSA procedures, but that additional steps could be added. The FCSC will consider refinements to its operating procedures to ensure alignment with the CSA standards development procedures.

Committee Participation: It was noted that the FCSC lacked representation from an aboriginal organization and was under-represented by Canadian environmental interests and organizations that purchase carbon credits. It was noted that some members fit more than one category (e.g., MWV as producer and user; The Nature Conservancy as producer and general interest) and can petition to have their category changed. Category changes and new member requests should be provided to the Secretariat, and would then be voted on by the Committee according to AF&PA's ANSI-accredited procedures.

Timeline: It is expected that the FCSC would finalize a standard in approximately 12 months, given the requisite steps involved. Concerns were raised about moving fast enough to influence the forest management protocol in Canada, which is working under a fast-track process, and several regional efforts. It was suggested that since the Committee includes participants from these various efforts, our discussions and draft products would be valuable to those efforts.

Scope: There was general support for addressing forest management, with an accounting system that considers the carbon in all pools, including forest products. There was agreement that the FCSC's efforts should be directed towards a compliance system and, therefore, needs to consider accounting principles. The Committee discussed the distinction between accounting and policy, with general agreement that the standard should define the parameters of an offset credit and how to trade that credit in a carbon market. Some participants urged that the Committee not create a standard that would compete against existing standards, but most agreed that the goal is to create harmonization and to offer something to be adopted by U.S. federal and Canadian federal compliance markets. As such, the Committee needs to ensure that its efforts are aligned with federal government interests. One step towards achieving the FCSC's end goals might be to commission a technical analysis that would support the Committee's decision making.

Project types: The Committee discussed the pros and cons of addressing various project types, including:

- Afforestation, reforestation, restoration, regeneration;
- Forest management (including forest products);
- Avoided forest conversion/deforestation/degradation;
- Forest protection/conservation;
- Urban forests (mixed opinions about whether the FCSC had the appropriate Committee composition to address this subject).

Task groups: It was proposed that task groups should be formed to look at how existing protocols address forest carbon offset elements, as follows:

- Baselines and Additionality;
- Permanence and Leakage;
- Quantification, Measurement, Monitoring, and Verification;
- Sustainability (including co-benefits).

A drafting team would then work at integrating these elements for each project type that the FCSC agrees to address.

Next Steps

It was agreed that a Subcommittee should develop a scope of work, to be brought back to the full Committee. The scope of work will define the project types that the standards will cover, the task groups, the process for achieving consensus, and other items as needed. Volunteers for the Subcommittee include:

- Ed Murphy
- Bob Fledderman
- Michael Walsh
- Sean Carney
- Edie Sonne Hall
- Chris Henschel
- Andrew Howard
- Josh Love
- Brian Kernohan
- Paul Lansbergen

Bill Hohenstein from the USDA agreed to participate in a consulting role. Other members of the Committee who were not present at the meeting will be invited to participate in the Subcommittee.

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Washington, D.C.**

Meeting Participants

Committee Members/Alternates

Mark Bettle	J.D. Irving, Limited
David Bischel	California Forestry Association
Anthony Brunello	California Resources Agency
Gary Bull*	University of British Columbia
Sean Carney	CantorCO2e
Daniel Cooley	Graphic Packaging
Adam Daigneault	U.S. EPA
Jake Donnay	National Association of State Foresters
Robert Doudrick	U.S. Forest Service
Robert Fledderman	MWV
Christopher Galik	Climate Change Policy Partnership
Alec Giffen	Maine Forest Service
Michael Goergen	Society of American Foresters
Jordan Golinkoff	The Conservation Fund
Peter Graham	Natural Resources Canada - Canadian Forest Service
John A. Helms	University of California, Berkeley, Emeritus
Chris Henschel	Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society
William Hohenstein	USDA Global Change Program Office
Andrew Howard	Cortex Consultants Inc.
Ann Ingerson	The Wilderness Society
Zoe Kant	The Nature Conservancy
Brian Kernohan	Forest Capital Partners
Paul Lansbergen	Forest Products Association of Canada
Josh Love	Georgia Forestry Commission
Edward Murphy	Sierra Pacific Industries
Rob Olszewski	Plum Creek
Timothy Pearson	Winrock International
John Pineau*	Canadian Institute of Forestry
Jim Rakestraw	International Paper
Tony Rotherham	Canadian Federation of Woodlot Owners
Steven Ruddell	World Wildlife Fund
Robert Seaton	Brinkman & Associates Reforestation Ltd
Edie Sonne Hall	Weyerhaeuser Company
David Tenny	National Alliance of Forest Owners
Eric Vance	National Council for Air and Stream Improvement
Jessica Verhagen	Climate Action Secretariat
Michael Walsh	Chicago Climate Exchange
Neil Ward	Forest Resources Association
Doug Wickizer*	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

* Participating by phone

Observers

Chuck Anderson
Linc Cannon*
Marsha Cheddi
Adrian Miller*
Rita Neznok
Allison Shapiro
Dan Spethman
Allison Welde

ImageTree Corporation
Oregon Forest Industries Council
Canadian Standards Association
Washington Forest Protection Association
American Forest Foundation
Ecosystem Marketplace
Working Lands Investment Partners, LLC
SFI, Inc.

Staff

Nadine Block
Jeff Bradley
Brad Douglas
Robert Glowinski
Rhea Hale
Donna Harman
Neil Sampson

American Forest & Paper Association
American Forest & Paper Association
American Forest & Paper Association
American Forest & Paper Association
American Forest & Paper Association
American Forest & Paper Association
Coordinator for the Secretariat

* Participating by phone