



GFOI STRATEGIC PLAN

This document is a Strategic Vision & Planning Document for GFOI. The GFOI Strategic Vision captures the Goals, Objectives and Priorities for GFOI. GFOI involves partner organizations that are committed, through collaboration, to support the development of forest monitoring at the national level in developing countries. The Strategic Vision is influenced by internal factors and drivers within GFOI (e.g., partners, leads), as well as external stakeholders and dynamics in the GFOI international community. It reflects feedback and existing documentation from the entire GFOI community, in particular the GFOI leadership.

This document is intended to encourage and support dialogue within GFOI and within the larger GFOI international community (thereby improving GFOI service and value). As such, it identifies the Initiative's future-state, describes the rationale for the strategic plan, illustrates partner experiences, and explains our near- and longer-term goals.

It is envisioned that the GFOI Office manages this process.

Our role

The Global Forest Observations Initiative (GFOI) has been established to foster the supply and use of space data to countries as part of developing national forest monitoring systems. Through collaborative action the initiative seeks to foster forest monitoring and assessment that is robust, reliable, and achievable at reasonable cost and supports planning for national development priorities including, climate change mitigation and adaptation.

Our objectives

- .1. Provide a platform for coordinating observations: in order to assure the systematic, sustained and worldwide acquisition and supply of forest observations the GFOI will work with the space agencies of the Committee on Earth Observation Satellites (CEOS), commercial data providers and researchers collecting relevant ground data; and
- .2. Provide assistance and guidance on utilising observations: GFOI will collaborate with national institutions and international bodies such as the FAO, World Bank and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) to ensure that countries are able to utilize the available data; by
 - a) developing methods, guidance and advice;
 - b) fostering capacity building; and
 - c) promoting ongoing research and development as well as identifying needs, gaps, and opportunities for research.

Our priorities

GFOI operates primarily through the actions of participating organizations – actions that are funded and implemented by these organizations with their own resources. The added value from GFOI is in two key areas: Coordination and Cooperative Action.

- **Coordination and facilitation**

- .1. Providing a coordinated, effective and efficient response to requests for GFOI services from countries and supporting organisations, ensuring each element is aware of country needs through a customer relationship management system.
- .2. Maximising the efficiency and effectiveness of the efforts of all GFOI partners and components toward achieving the GFOI objective.
- .3. Establish close links between institutions that are, or could be, interested in working with GFOI members on core topics, either as resource partners or as technical agencies interested in coordinating with others in GFOI. This includes close links with FAO and World Bank to service the needs of the UNREDD and Forest Carbon Partnership Facility programmes.
- .4. The GFOI Office will facilitate cooperation between the participating parts of the GFOI members, through:
 - a) periodic coordination meetings and support of events of the initiative,
 - b) reports on GFOI Lead Team meetings,
 - c) management of the GFOI risk management strategy,
 - d) annual report summarizing GFOI coordination.

- **Promotion and Communication**

- .1. Through GFOI plenary meetings held every two years to exchange best practices and for all GFOI components to gain a deeper understanding of the capabilities of countries and their needs.
- .2. Promote the MGD as a basis for understanding data needs and underpinning planning, formulation of data requests and decisions for countries, supporting organisations. The GFOI through its participating agencies will strongly promote this to:
 - a) Countries directly, through connections with bilateral programs with GFOI partners, and at meetings where they are present such as UNFCCC and FAO meetings.
 - b) Partners with common goals and objectives engaged in capacity building, such as FAO and the World Bank.
- .3. Further development and promotion of R&D Plan to funding agencies to highlight the benefits of supporting and addressing identified areas of the plan, particularly the priority areas.

- .4. Indicate the available support and expertise of the GFOI to developing national forest monitoring and MRV systems to supporting organisations and individual countries, through a coordinated communications plan. Elements of this plan include:
 - a) Identify clear, value-driven message
 - b) Logo / Branding
 - c) Identify roles / responsibilities
 - d) Resources / budget
 - e) Relationship building strategy
 - f) Infrastructure
 - g) Video / Web / social media strategy
 - h) Conferences / schedule / milestone / workplan
 - i) Success criteria / Metrics.

- **Services and Products**

- .1. Capacity Building through coordinated activities both within GFOI, GFOI partners and with World Bank and others. The GFOI office will maintain a calendar to facilitate communication of capacity building activities (training sessions, seminars, workshops etc) being undertaken by the GFOI partners and publicise this on the GFOI website (link to capacity development work plan).
- .2. Space data services, through the CEOS Space Data Coordination Group, is a key source of space data and relevant advice and expertise: in pre-processing, data delivery and use of the data with ground data to monitor forests (link to SDCG work plan and strategies).
- .3. Methods and Guidance will be kept up-to-date, and improved with new developments in the field and responding to feedback from its use in countries (including usability and accessibility) (link to MGD work plan and strategies).
- .4. Research and development assistance by helping formulate the issues and giving inputs on other relevant R&D. (link to R&D work plan and strategies)

Our approaches

Lead

- .1. Provide sustained availability and use of wall to wall satellite data and enable its use with ground observations for national forest monitoring and MRV.
- .2. Support national efforts to reduce deforestation and forest degradation and associated greenhouse gas emissions, by providing satellite data and enabling its use, and by fostering development of MRV systems.

Debate and Analyse

- .1. Testing assumptions, identifying policy options in the continued use and improvement of methods and guidance.
- .2. Providing advice and guidance based on strong and robust evidence, including science.

Collaborate and Communicate

- .1. Collaboration, co-design and co-production with countries and supporting agencies for continued improvement in national forest monitoring and MRV.
- .2. Communicating technical and policy challenges and the evidence base informing policy responses.

Deliver and Evaluate

- .1. Delivering, through GFOI partner, best practice capacity building and assistance to countries to improve environmental outcomes.
- .2. Evaluating our approaches to continually improve how we work.

Our values

- .1. Commitment – to supplying data and capacity building
- .2. Excellence – in advice and assistance
- .3. Leadership – in coordination of efforts in the MRV space
- .4. Continuous improvement – in tools, systems, data and the way we do things
- .5. Empowerment– helping countries develop the systems they need and responding to their requests by coordinating between relevant partners.
- .6. Integrity – conduct all activities transparently, honestly and ethically

Measures of success

- .1. Systematic, sustained and worldwide acquisition and supply of forest observations.
- .2. Robust forest MRV that informs national forest policy to combat deforestation and forest degradation, as this provides the basis for policies and a mechanism for monitoring their implementation.
- .3. Countries have an increased capacity to access REDD+ resources, particularly payment for results.
- .4. Fulfilling national and international carbon reporting obligations.
- .5. Governments, communities and business value our advice and guidance.
- .6. GFOI partners and stakeholders are engaged and informed on national forest monitoring and MRV.
- .7. Continued partner support.

How we operate

The GFOI consists of:

- .1. A Lead Team who has overall responsibility for the initiative including providing guidance and strategy.
- .2. An Advisory Committee with responsibility for advising the Lead Team.
- .3. A GFOI Office managed by the GFOI Coordinator
- .4. Components, each with their own leadership and management arrangements:
 - a) Satellite Data Acquisition - Managed by the Space Data Coordination Group under the umbrella of CEOS with guidance from the GFOI Leads, with three co-chairs supported by ESA, USA and Norway and a secretariat supported by Australia.
 - b) Methods and Guidance Documentation - Supported by a separate Advisory Group and specific project funding (managed by a lead supported by Australia with a scientific and technical advisory group).
 - c) Capacity Building - Managed by SilvaCarbon in close collaboration with other partners engaged in capacity building (coordination provided by the GFOI office)
 - d) Research and Development – Managed by the GFOI Office. Priority setting using inputs from all other GFOI components.

1. GFOI COMPONENTS

Links here to the work plans of each of the elements.

The work of GFOI is undertaken by four components:

- **Methods & Guidance Documentation:** The GFOI Methods and Guidance Documentation (MGD) is intended to provide options and support to countries in the use of ground observations and remotely sensed data and methodologies for the establishment of their national Forest Monitoring and Carbon Tracking systems, focused on addressing REDD+ objectives in compliance with IPCC good practice guidelines.

Visit the Methods and Guidance component page for more information.

- **Coordination of Satellite Data Supply:** Facilitation of forest observations in support of national forest monitoring systems is a fundamental objective for GFOI. The Committee on Earth Observation Satellites (CEOS) coordinates the world's civil space agencies and has taken on the leadership of this component to support supply of data to participating countries.

Visit the Satellite Data component page for more information.

- **Capacity Building:** The fundamental objective of GFOI is to help nations develop a capacity to utilise Earth Observation data to assess activity data in a credible national forest monitoring system that can provide input to national MRV systems for GHG emissions and removals in IPCC-compliant reporting to the UNFCCC, REDD+ and future carbon markets.

Visit the Capacity Building component page for more information.

- **R&D Plan:** As new sensors and related capabilities emerge, new methodologies are developed to use these in management and monitoring of forest systems. The conventional forest data products of tomorrow's MRV reports are today's areas of research and development. The GFOI is developing a R&D plan which identifies priority areas where research is required to achieve its goals. Identified priorities include: forest degradation, mapping of particular forest types (mangrove, peat forests, etc), interoperability, comparison of uncertainties associated to different forest biomass and allometrics estimation methodologies, data model integration.

Visit the R&D Plan component page for more information.