



Blue Forests Project
2nd CSTAP Annual meeting
March 27, 2017

Meeting report
Sub-Activity 1.1.1.1.2



The 2nd CSTAP annual meeting was recorded and is [accessible at this link](#).

Participants

Project Coordination Unit (PCU):

- Barbora Adamkova (GRID-Arendal)
- Tiina Kurvits (GRID-Arendal)
- Steven Lutz (GRID-Arendal)

Carbon Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel (CSTAP):

- Steve Crooks (Silvestrum Climate Associates)
- Iginio Emmer (Silvestrum Climate Associates)
- Amber Himes-Cornell (University of Western Brittany)
- Linwood Pendleton (University of Western Brittany)
- Antoine Rivière (University of Western Brittany)

Small Scale Interventions (SSIs):

- Montse Alban (CI-Ecuador)
- Leah Glass (Blue Ventures)

Regrets:

- **CSTAP:** Miguel Cifuentes, James Gitundu Kairo, Boone Kauffman, Catherine Lovelock, Daniel Murdiyarso, Emily Pidgeon
- **SSIs:** Jane Glavan, Denise Nicolau, Novi Susetyo

Agenda

1. Review of blue forest project and status to date
2. Refresher on the role of the CSTAP and responsibilities
3. Activities by the CSTAP so far.
4. Outcomes and lessons learnt discussion
 - a. Madagascar
 - b. Mozambique
 - c. Ecuador
5. group discussion of future information needs.
6. Discussion of work plan for 2017-2018

Minutes

1. Review of blue forest project and status to date

Steven Lutz:

- Small Scale Intervention (SSI) in Indonesia: after coming up to an agreement, there will be some carbon science activities in 2017. More precisely, 2 field research trips will be planned for the year 2017.
- Blue carbon is gaining some recognition in the international arena

Tiina Kurvits:

- Charles Darwin University has a research site in Thailand, where the research team works on carbon fluxes in degraded mangroves and seagrass ecosystems. The team currently has issues on permit (travel ban) but this is in the process of being sorted out.

2. Refresher on the role of the CSTAP and responsibilities

Steven Lutz:

- There are 3 advisory panels (APs):
 - Policy AP: is currently working on the blue carbon policy assessment for each SSI. It has also worked a lot on the representation of the Blue Forest project at different international meetings, like during COP 22 in Marrakech.
 - Ecosystem Services AP: recently shared a document regarding one of its main deliverables
 - Carbon Science AP
- As a quick reminder, Advisory Panels are here to provide guidance to SSIs. (At least) CSTAP will be also providing toolkits. At the end of the project, learning from the SSIs, we will produce a global toolkit.

Steve Crooks:

- the role of the CSTAP is to provide Toolkits related to the Blue Forests carbon science that synthesizes the current state of knowledge regarding carbon accounting in order to help SSIs to develop their project.

3. Activities by the CSTAP so far

General information

Linwood Pendleton:

- On the CSTAP: most of the work was done on the ground. For instance, Igino, Steve and Boone to a lesser extent, have been visiting the SSIs over the 2 last years.
- Steve Crooks will be visiting us at the University of Western Brittany in May. One of the goals will be to talk with the Mangrove group in French Guyana (BioMango) and

maybe to bring them into our Blue Forests network. Indeed, mangrove-wise, French Guyana seems to have a similar ecosystem as Mozambique's.

Steve Crooks:

- We have been successful in including coastal wetlands in Draft 2017 US Inventory of GHG Emissions and Sinks.
 - Currently included is the soil component, not the biomass yet (next year). Seagrasses are not included due to insufficient data. Tidal wetlands (salt marshes and mangroves) are included.
 - Ability to bring wetlands into an inventory format could be very interesting for other countries
- This year, we also helped Abu Dhabi on the inclusion of mangrove to its national communication
- We were finally involved in Pemsea (Partnership Ecosystem Management for South East Asia), working on a blue carbon assessment for East Asia
 - Scope: status of stocks, trend changes, connection to climate policy, maybe to some extent link with Blue Economy, for 13 countries from China to Indonesia. Report due in the next month.

News on the conservation methodology

Igino Emmer:

- The methodology was submitted to VCS for validation.
- It is an extension of the existing modular REDD+ methodology. The methodology is dedicated to conservation and restoration of tidal wetlands. It includes mangroves, salt marshes and seagrasses.
 - SSIs were included in the building of the methodology (especially Leah Glass). The methodology can always be improved, all comments are thus always welcomed.
 - In the methodology, there are many default values to make it easy to use
 - Methodology should be validated by the European summer.
- The great news is that the methodology is deemed additional. In other words, the project of wetland conservation or restoration does not need to prove its additionality.

→ Need to send the methodology link to Steven Lutz, who will circulate it to project partners.

Note: The methodology is accessible through VCS website.

4. Outcomes and lessons learnt discussion

Madagascar (Leah Glass & Igino Emmer)

Leah Glass:

- Steve and Igino visited (May-June 2016) to provide advice, more specifically on VCS. Indeed, Madagascar Blue Carbon team is mainly composed of marine biologists so it was lacking some skills, for instance in project management.

Igino Emmer:

- Blue carbon project is well advanced in Madagascar. Areas are selected, they are working with communities, carbon science is underway, etc. We still identified a few things that need a bit of more focus:
 - Developing a carbon project under VCS standard needs an appropriate structure (lineup of people, documentation and procedures in place) because the project is aimed to last for decades and project owner are committed for this period of time. Here, the team is very good since it has the capacity to deliver, which is very important. Having standard operation procedures is also important because it forces to detail things to do in a specific area. For instance: detail how to establish the allowable harvesting level in mangroves (how to get the info, do the calculation, how to inform people involved, how to get feedbacks); question of surveillance (what are the responsibilities, etc.)
 - Geomorphological context (i.e. place of the project area in the wider landscape) and its implication for the project. Steve:
 - Steve Crooks: For Madagascar, there is a considerable lack of science in the geological field: how the system functions, how sediments respond to erosion, sea level rise, etc. In Madagascar, there is an important supply of sediment, which plays a big role. If you can do it in Madagascar, you can do it anywhere. The important question is: what level of precision do we need for the sediment dynamics?
 - Every carbon project needs to describe in a narrative (and quantify if possible) how the system works and how it will evolve in the future. There is a need to develop conceptual model of how mangrove restoration will progress and how the project overall will respond to sea level rise. If you cannot do it, your chances of failure are higher because it means you are not able to properly understand the project
 - Another exciting question: question of what is happening with the soils? When mangroves are cleared, in the field, there appear to be a sediment loss from the surface. It is not quantified yet, but corroborated by local communities.

Igino Emmer:

- Raising community expectations on carbon financing may not be a smart move since it changes the mindset of local communities. In Madagascar, community capacity was built on reinforcing fisheries, which was a really good decision.
- Scale of the operation: it is wise to limit the geographic scope since you are easily overwhelmed if it is too large.

Mozambique (Denise Nicolau & Igino Emmer)

Steve Crooks: we assessed the potential for developing a carbon project, but with a scale of larger activities within the Zambezi delta. Contrary to Madagascar, we are here at the very beginning of the process. We are thus just thinking about this SSI should be doing:

- On the team side: it has terrestrial forest skills but mangrove is new. There is also a need of a substantially larger team to be able to move forward. Some two aspects needed are community and carbon science.
- On the geographical scope, we noted an aspiration to take on the entire Zambezi delta. It was not clear where the project would be at that scale. We made the recommendation to start at the village scale.
- Another issue in Mozambique is about terrestrial deforestation. In some fringes of the delta, deforestation is taking place. In Mozambique, like in Indonesia or in Micronesia, you may have a fairly pristine set of mangroves that are not facing threats yet, but that could face some heavy threats in a near future. As an example, terrestrial forest are being very heavily logged: forests could be gone within the coming years. Mangroves could be then logged.
The challenge here is that these real threats are not easily addressed under the VCS standard since they are large but not immediate right now. However, we should find a way to deal with them because they could become major drivers of mangrove deforestation in a near future.

Igino:

- We looked at a few remote sensing studies on the Zambezi delta. People observe loss and gain of mangroves. Deforestation happening, etc. What we see in the map are some natural dynamics. What is really relevant for a Carbon project is deforestation that happens and against which we can do something. Unfortunately, nothing much is happening today on this. We advised the carbon project to get some more intelligence about this: who are the actors, what are the imminent threats, the long term ones, etc. In the case of imminent threat, this is easy to make a “business as usual” scenario. If this a longer threat, the BAU scenario is not that easy to draw, and this is why VCS standards are only considering imminent threats.

Ecuador (Montse Alban & Miguel Cifuentes)

Montse Alban:

- In Ecuador, Miguel and I are pushing into two specific research directions with 2 Masters student from CATIE. Students are in the field, first results can be expected by the end of the year. Research topics are:
 - Evaluation of the dynamics of land use, trying to quantify blue carbon in specific areas.
 - Participatory approach and identifying how local communities are developing strategies for adaption.

- TNC does not have experience in mangrove restoration, but some experience exist though a NGO working with shrimp farmers (whose goal is to reinforce the natural recovery process)
- More generally speaking, the aims of Ecuador are:
 - Developing a national strategy to support financially the socio-manglar initiative.
 - Conduct a blue carbon analysis in order to be able to reach carbon markets (internal or external)
 - Better work with local communities.

5. and 6. Group discussion of future information needs / Workplan for the coming year

Leah Glass:

- Recruitment of a postdoc (Jeff Caleway from Australia) who helps with nature regeneration.
- Really, the question is what a conceptual model (what is it, what it looks like). Cath helps already. understand how much we really need (geomorphic sedimentation).

→ Leah to share this concept models with the CSTAP.

→ Steve Crooks sent some reports for restoration projects a long time ago. Will post them to the basecamp (note: large files, sent by Dropbox to Leah).

Steve Crooks: how can CSTAP help SSIs:

- guidance on developing conceptual models for restoration and conservation project planning and landscape assessments. (for BV but relevant to all)
- mangrove restoration sites and shrimps ponds for Montse (CI-Ecuador)
- imminent threat question can be more investigated by Iginio and Steve
- as for Indonesia, Steven Lutz is going there in a few weeks to meet with them and help revise their work plan. Once the workplan is revised he will let the CSTAP know if there are any particular needs.

Discuss report outline while Steve Crooks is in France, in May 2015. First full draft will be done for end of 2017. Then to review and contributions by SSIs early 2018.

→ Need to have an update on Mozambique activities (Denise, WWF) about its needs and how CSTAP could help.