

## **Minutes / Decisions taken LCF meeting at Accion Fraterna**

**Venue: Ecological Centre, Accion Fraterna**

**Date : July 20, 2010**

### **Participants**

Ram Esteves (ADATS/FCN), Malla Reddy, Kareem & Khaleel (AF), Sheila Benjamin (SCINDeA), Philomena & Manjunath (SACRED), Athiyaman (BEST), Selvam (BEST), Daniel (PWDS), Manil, Rajen, Rajkumar, Filip, Nagamani & Ramanjaneyalu (SEDS), Richie Ahuja (EDF), Deepak Srivastava (Candidate).

The following are the salient decisions / minutes of the meeting:

- EED has agreed to support this project provided this can be done within a time frame of 12 months. There are no major issues which EED has raised other than a few clarifications which were circulated to all and for which explanations have been sent and accepted
- The actual arrival of money will take about 2 weeks but since all of you has established NGOs, you can go ahead with implementation as there is no fund transfer but a reimbursement – meaning you have to spend and book the expenses in the name of AF.
- All VER at the end of this one year pilot will be bought by EED. This is to offset the emissions through their own Rhine Valley churches have roughly estimated about 25000 tons every year but could go up to 50000 Tons a year. They have committed to offsetting but that cannot be done suddenly which means emissions reductions created by pro poor projects will be purchased.
- Whatever emission reduction is generated from this coalition, there is a market for this. This is a bonus as this was not thought before. Though we went ahead without any assurance and made our costing and later on we made a budget and now it is through.
- Now there is a guarantee that these emission reductions generated by small and marginal farmers will also be bought. So things are looking far more optimistic than we hoped for.
- The whole confusion about base line data etc... that first lets answer the question of “where” are we going to work, and then with “whom” are we working and the actual discreet plots and then let us go into the question of “what” are we going to do and then finally “how much”.
- You will need to have some sort of orientation for those who are going to collect the data. Once the information is gathered and fed into the monitoring solutions then we can go into the “where” question and delineate the plots and overlay the maps but to reach there we need to answer a number of questions which includes the survey.
- This future is for a long time. You are going to work with 20000 acres and SA practices are to be used. We are not going to stop there. Next year we are going to cover more farmers though there may not be any pilot project next year. This mode of working will change the very character of the NGOs itself.

- How much will be the actual emissions. Those calculations of how much will the emissions will be reduced will be done by the LCF expert who will be recruited for the purpose.
- The project period is from cropping seasons which mostly 12 months and is from July 10 to June 11.
- Richie said that we are in for a long haul we need think about next year if we are going to expand, and then we have to find the market for the emissions. He said that he is trying to engage the European system to set aside some capital to pay for the emission reduction from small and marginal farmers. The idea is to bring this to the thinking of the top minds working in Europe in order to plant this idea in their minds, so that enough capital is allocated to this process and to locate the markets for the future scaled up emission reductions. There is so much money floating around but it is not doing what it should be doing. So we need to sow the idea and create possibilities. Right now they are discussing on this and this is the time to sow the idea so that this sort of process is adopted by the European parliament.

Ram explained in a crisp equation the definition of Low Carbon Farming which runs as follows

*Sustainable Agricultural + Carbon Revenues = Low Carbon Farming*

That acts as an incentive to scale it up beyond the level of SA practices. Carbon revenues are used to scale up the SA practices.

After this, each of the partners were asked to update what they have done for the past two months and all the five partners updated the group as to what has been done for the past two months

## **AUDACIOUS HYPOTHESIS**

What is this audacious hypothesis?

1. First we have to study what are the mainstream officially recommended emissions. Suppose 30 tons of CO<sub>2</sub> (arbitrary) is emitted through those recommendations and get the LCF expert prove the emissions if the recommended practices are followed.
2. The progressive farmers emissions – Take the progressive farmer and ask him what they actually do and study 200 farmers and study their emissions and find out that they are actually emitting say approximately 25 tons of CO<sub>2</sub>.
3. Calculate the carbon emissions of those ecological farmers emissions – What these farmers would like to do and can do? Normally they would like to emulate the progressive farmers but because they are limited by financial and other factors they could not actually copy and follow the progressive farmers.
4. Then study what are the barriers that prevent these farmers to reach up to progressive farmers level. Suppose those barriers are removed and our ecological farmers is able get somewhere nearer to the progressive farmers practices, then assuming a level which emits something around 15 tons of CO<sub>2</sub>. This can form the baseline.
5. Now coming to the actual practices of farmers adopting LCF practices. Assuming that it is 8 tons of CO<sub>2</sub>. Then we measure the emissions reductions that is the difference between 15 tons and 8 tons and that is say around 7 VERS.

But all these are studies that are to be done by the LCF expert only and with the strong backing of science. Ram said that it is not easy to say that such and such practices emit so much carbon. We cannot calculate how much we can reduce, but with this audacious hypothesis we can prove how much is emitted. The top priority now is where who and where again and finally what as well as how.

#### Post Tea Session

- Proving of the land tenure is important. Ram displayed over the PPT the various plot information and explained that to arrive to this stage will take a long time. You can generate any digitised map based on any parameter.
- Proving Land tenure through GIS, GPS and Title deed. Where, Who, where (again) What, How much, and How?
- The first part is to plant stones on the boundaries. It will be much better to take the reading literally on the stones. Wait for 7 – 8 satellites. Take all the readings in one part of the village and don't leave it in the middle.
- Ram said that ours is a VER project and not a CDM project. In spite of this be prepared for frustrations.

A lot of discussion took place around the way the formats are to be filled up. A number of clarifications were also made available to the participants.

Ram showed through a carbon contract example as to how discreet plots may fall within the larger area of the farmers. Total area of the farmer becomes the project boundary and planting area if it is smaller has to be within the project boundary.

Ram also emphasised that all the agreements have to be in three languages.

#### Next steps

- Orientation to staff (Training the staff)
- The first of the next steps is to identify the participating farmers (PF)
- Providing basic orientation about LCF
- What kind of institutional arrangements within CBOs
- Demographic survey
- GPS / GIS training

Reporting on the implementation part at the field level does not form a part of this project.

#### Post Lunch session

(Discussion was more on what kind of practices to be adopted and what will be the amount of carbon reduced with each of the practices and how much will be the amount that will be received)

Different opinions of the partners were expressed.

- Mr. Rajkumar said that when an NGO personnel goes and talks to farmers, the expectation level goes up. We need to be careful about it. Motivating the farmers should be done carefully. The idea is to be careful not to give any unrealistic promises.

The question of availability of inputs for organic agriculture for example, cow dung and cow urine etc came up for discussion.

- It was suggested that dung and urine of cattle other than cows can also be used. Ram emphasised that each of the partners should try to make an inventory of all the current practices (which are not mainstream practices). These practices need to be ready by the 20<sup>th</sup> of August and sent by all the partners.
- These practices can be loaded up in the editable webpages for the benefit of us and all.

Ram also made it very clear that this coalition should not be loaded with academicians. It should contain those who want to really act at the field level.

A final time line was suggested as follows:

1. The offer Sheet should be ready by May 2011
2. The demographic survey should be over by October 2010
3. 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of the demographic survey should be over by August
4. Field training of volunteers and staff will commence from the 15<sup>th</sup> of August onwards
5. Training will be held for 5 – 10 days depending upon the requirement
6. Training will be held at every alternative Tuesdays
7. For Tamilnadu, the training will commence from 21<sup>st</sup> September to 26<sup>th</sup> September
8. All discreet plot identification should be over by December 31

Ram also explained the details about the polygon recorders and the licence part of it.

- E tracking instruments will be purchased centrally by Accion Fraternal.
- All expenditures done at the local level has to be in the name of Accion Fraternal.
- The next meeting has been planned after the contract will be signed.
- Servers need to be configured for BEST and PWDS, Abid can come down to respective organization to configure the servers.
- All the finances of AF is being coordinated by Mr. Murli of AF
- Voucher formats will be sent by AF.