



American Carbon Registry Initiates Approval of Carbon Offset Methodology for the Rice Sector

ARLINGTON, Va., June 13, 2011 – [American Carbon Registry](#) (ACR), a nonprofit enterprise of [Winrock International](#), announces an open public comment period for [Emission Reductions in Rice Management Systems](#), initiating the ACR approval process for the first-of-a-kind carbon offset methodology to quantify greenhouse gas reductions from rice production. The methodology was developed by Environmental Defense Fund (EDF) in partnership with the California Rice Commission (CRC), Applied Geosolutions, LLC, and Terra Global Capital LLC.

California's cap-and-trade program is scheduled to launch in 2012, and the California Air Resources Board has expressed interest in adopting compliance offset protocols that will benefit the California agriculture sector. With this in mind, the [EDF team developed the rice methodology](#) with a specific focus on practice changes that reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) from rice production in California.

The ACR approval process for the methodology, which includes public comment and scientific peer review, is expected to be complete this summer. In parallel, through a [recently announced USDA Conservation Innovation Grant](#), EDF intends to expand the methodology for additional practice changes applicable in Arkansas and other rice producing states in the Mid-South.

"The methodology is a first step towards achieving the global mitigation potential for rice," said Belinda Morris, California regional director of EDF's Center for Conservation Incentives. "In the future, expanding the methodology to include other practices and other geographies could provide incentives for substantial GHG emissions reductions from rice production."¹

According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's national GHG inventory for 2010, the top two rice producing states, Arkansas and California, are responsible for over half of U.S. emissions from rice production. If measured, practice changes in water management, such as reduced flooding and altered drainage timing, provide a large mitigation opportunity to reduce methane emissions in rice production. However, calculating emission reductions from rice production is complex since different environmental factors such as soil type, temperature and water regime affect rice emissions.

¹ Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) estimates global GHG emissions from rice production to be between 650 million metric tons and 2.4 billion metric tons CO₂e per year. Studies estimate potential emissions reductions from practice changes to be up to 50 percent.

Like the ACR Methodology for [N₂O Emission Reductions through Changes in Fertilizer Management](#), the rice methodology responds to this challenge by incorporating the use of the Denitrification-Decomposition (DNDC) model – a peer-reviewed, tested and highly parameterized model – to produce the rigorous, science-based results necessary to create compliance-quality GHG emissions offsets.

Applied Geosolutions, LLC calibrated and validated the DNDC model for rice using field measurements. The EDF team worked together to identify measurable management practices that reduce GHG emissions without affecting yields and to assess mitigation potential in California. Terra Global Capital led the methodology development.

“Consistent with our parent Winrock’s commitment to sustainable agriculture, ACR is focused on strengthening the scientific and market infrastructure for agricultural GHG mitigation,” said Nicholas Martin, ACR chief technical officer. “Following last year’s publication of an innovative ACR fertilizer management methodology, we are excited to initiate the ACR approval process for EDF’s rice sector methodology. Once approved, we think this will provide a critical tool for rice growers in California to enhance competitiveness by producing offsets for voluntary offset buyers and hopefully the California compliance market. We’re also excited by the possibility of expanding this methodology to the Mid-South including Arkansas, Winrock’s home state and the country’s leading rice producer.”

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About the American Carbon Registry

The nonprofit **American Carbon Registry** (ACR), an enterprise of [Winrock International](#), is a leading carbon offset program recognized for its strong standards for environmental integrity. Founded in 1996 as the GHG Registry by Environmental Resources Trust, ACR has 15 years of experience in the development of rigorous, science-based carbon offset standards and methodologies as well as in carbon offset issuance, serialization and transparent online transaction and retirement reporting. As the first private voluntary GHG registry in the world, ACR has set the bar for offset quality and operational transparency and continues to lead carbon market innovation. www.americancarbonregistry.org

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