

Ninth Session of the Agriculture Subcommittee  
14 June 2011

### **Webinar Minutes**

#### **Summary**

- 1 The Global Methane Initiative (GMI) Agriculture Subcommittee conducted its ninth session via webinar on 14 June 2011. Key agenda items included:
  - Welcome
  - Review of subcommittee leadership
  - Update from the Administrative Support Group (ASG)
  - Overview of international anaerobic digestion (AD) systems database
  - Discussion of possible future subcommittee work
  - Summary of action items discussed at the meeting
- 2 The subcommittee meeting agenda is posted online on the GMI website at:  
[http://www.globalmethane.org/documents/events\\_ag\\_20110614\\_agenda.pdf](http://www.globalmethane.org/documents/events_ag_20110614_agenda.pdf).
- 3 Presentations and a recording from the Agriculture Subcommittee webinar meeting are posted online at:  
[http://www.globalmethane.org/news-events/event\\_detailsByEventId.aspx?eventId=341](http://www.globalmethane.org/news-events/event_detailsByEventId.aspx?eventId=341).

#### **Welcome**

- 4 Mr. Jorge Hilbert of the Argentine Instituto Nacional de Tecnología Agropecuaria (INTA), and Agriculture Subcommittee Co-chair, welcomed meeting participants on behalf of the Agriculture Subcommittee and asked them to each provide a brief introduction. The meeting participants included GMI Partner country delegates, Project Network members, and ASG personnel. A participant list is presented in [Annex 1](#). Mr. Hilbert shared an [introductory presentation](#) which introduced the panelists, reviewed the previous meeting's minutes, discussed the webinar goals, and outlined subcommittee leadership.
- 5 Mr. Hilbert summarized the meeting minutes from the last Agriculture Subcommittee, held in Venice, Italy in November 2011 in conjunction with the Landfills Subcommittee and Wastewater Task Force meetings. The minutes are available online at [http://www.globalmethane.org/news-events/event\\_detailsByEventId.aspx?eventId=297](http://www.globalmethane.org/news-events/event_detailsByEventId.aspx?eventId=297)
- 6 An update on the action items from the previous meeting is presented below:
  - The ASG sent an email announcing the available Subcommittee co-chair position and wrote a thank you letter to Jeremy Eppel for his years of service as co-chair.
  - Delegates agreed to continue to complete action plans and perform reporting activities.

- The United States Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) stated that it will continue to provide support for RA development, international database, and possibly an international calculator tool.
- Delegates agreed to work to identify projects to evaluate using the International Guidance.

7 Mr. Hilbert noted the goals of the webinar were to discuss the current work of the ASG and Agriculture Subcommittee and to determine the future subcommittee work.

### **Review of the Subcommittee Leadership**

8 Mr. Hilbert noted there were currently only two Agriculture Subcommittee co-chairs. Each subcommittee may have up to three co-chairs, so there is an available co-chair position. In addition, Mr. Hilbert noted that he has already discussed his willingness to leave the position in order to give other countries a chance to co-chair. Interested countries should contact the ASG. Ms. Monica Shimamura from the ASG added that it is important for more countries to be involved in the subcommittee; holding a co-chair position gives the delegate a great opportunity to highlight their country's activities.

9 Mr. Anil Dhussa from the Indian Ministry of New and Renewable Energy, and Agriculture Subcommittee Co-chair, noted it might be helpful to have a new co-chair from Poland or Canada, if those countries will be hosting upcoming events. Ms. Shimamura explained to the group that she will be presenting details about the possible events and locations in her ASG update presentation.

### **Update from ASG**

10 Ms. Shimamura provided an [update on ASG activities](#). She noted that since the meeting in Venice, two more countries have joined GMI. The Initiative now has 39 partners, including Jordan as most recent partner; a 40<sup>th</sup> partner (Sri Lanka) is pending approval.

11 At the Steering Committee Meeting in Mexico City on 1 October 2010, the Steering Committee agreed to move forward with the development of country strategic action plans. The ASG was tasked with developing guidance to assist countries with the creation of these plans. The ASG sent this guidance out to the GMI network on 23 May and requested feedback by the end of June 2011. The ASG would like to finalize the guidance at the next Steering Committee meeting.

12 Ms. Shimamura discussed the ongoing ASG activities. The ASG is currently working to revise and translate GMI fact sheets. In addition, the ASG is exploring the best method to engage the wastewater sector. Wastewater work will be included in the upcoming U.S. EPA grant solicitation in July 2011.

13 Ms. Shimamura announced upcoming events, including a partnership-wide meeting in Krakow, Poland in October 2011. This event will be three days long and will include sector-specific technical and policy sessions, subcommittee and Steering Committee meetings, and site tours. A third GMI Expo is tentatively planned for late 2012. The ASG is currently seeking host countries and delegates are encouraged to inform the ASG if their country is interested in hosting the event.

14 Mr. Dhussa thanked Ms. Shimamura for her presentation and welcomed her to the GMI team.

15 Mr. Hilbert asked how many GMI Partner countries participate in the agriculture sector. Ms. Allison Costa of the U.S. EPA replied that 25 countries have expressed interest in the agriculture sector, although not all of the countries have an official agriculture delegate.

## **International AD Database**

- 16 Ms. Costa shared the international database [AD project template](#). She explained the goal of the template is to collect information about the farm and digester. A glossary is being developed that will be distributed with the template.
- 17 Ms. Costa noted the data in the system is only as good as the information received by the ASG, so it is important for everyone to use the template when providing data to the ASG. Also, it is important to note the project's status when reporting data so GMI can determine which projects are currently active. The database will be live on the GMI website in a month or two, but it will contain only the data that has been reported to date. Ms. Costa asked participants to contact her with any comments on the template or database.
- 18 Mr. Hilbert asked if it will be possible to download the data from the database from the website. Ms. Costa replied that she was not sure if it was possible but she would check with the web developers. Mr. Hilbert asked if it would be possible to report data directly into the database on the website. Ms. Costa explained that the delegates would have to fill out the template and submit it to ASG for incorporation into the database.
- 19 Mr. Tommy Pilon from Environment Canada asked if the ASG had developed a process for updating project information. Ms. Costa noted that projects could be updated at any time and she asked for input from delegates on how often updates should be made.
- 20 Mr. Hilbert noted the template should be translated into different languages to increase submittals. Ms. Costa agreed and asked that the delegates help with the template translation.
- 21 Mr. Dhussa inquired if the U.S. database includes projects that digest only food processing waste. Ms. Costa explained the U.S. AgSTAR program only includes AD projects that include livestock manure as a portion of the digested waste. Mr. Hilbert asked if digesters without any manure would be excluded from the database. Ms. Costa clarified the international database could include systems without manure, but the U.S. AgSTAR database includes only systems that have manure.
- 22 Mr. Pilon asked if the agriculture sector had considered collaborating with the landfills database when developing the template. Ms. Costa explained the landfill sector had their own database and template and projects should be submitted to the sector-specific database that is most appropriate for the activity. Mr. Pilon explained he was involved in a project that digested organic waste that had been diverted from landfills. Ms. Costa suggested the project should be included in the agriculture database.

## **Discussion of Possible Future Subcommittee Work**

- 23 Mr. Dhussa stated there is a lack of participation in the subcommittee and that the ASG and co-chairs would like suggestions on how to improve participation. Ms. Shimamura noted there is a lot of great technical work being performed to reduce agricultural methane, but not as much participation in the subcommittee meetings as the ASG and co-chairs would like.
- 24 Ms. Christine McKiernan with Verliant Energy Partners remarked she had not heard of GMI until recently. Ms. Shimamura noted that GMI recently changed its name from Methane to Markets; Ms. McKiernan noted she had heard of Methane to Markets, but not GMI. Ms. Shimamura stated the Initiative might need to increase promotion of the new name.

- 25 Ms. McKiernan suggested GMI might work with the Intergovernmental Panel for Climate Change (IPCC) to promote the Initiative. Mr. Hilbert agreed there is a need to improve coordination with the IPCC and Ms. Shimamura noted she would ask others about IPCC involvement and get back to Ms. McKiernan. Mr. Dhussa remarked there might be opportunities for GMI to help improve IPCC methodologies to estimate methane emissions.
- 26 Mr. Pilon noted these meetings would be a good opportunity for countries to highlight active projects. He hopes to present a project in Poland that highlights international collaboration between Canada and Mexico. Mr. Dhussa agreed that while this type of participation is excellent, he would also like to increase meeting participation.
- 27 Mr. Pilon asked if the private sector was invited to participate in the meeting and what the benefits might be to the private sector. Ms. Shimamura explained Project Network (PN) members are encouraged to participate in the meetings, noting they can actively contribute but they cannot make decisions on behalf of countries about Subcommittee activities. Ms. Shimamura explained GMI is aware of potential projects and the Project Network has the potential to move the projects forward. They can also promote their companies and services or technologies at the meetings. Ms. Costa noted that country updates are typically included in the in-person Subcommittee meetings; at such meetings, PN members can hear about the business opportunities in each country and network with the country representatives who have projects to develop. Ms. Costa asked Ms. McKiernan if she had any ideas or outlets to suggest where GMI should advertise. Ms. Kiernan recommended GMI should promote itself at conferences like Biocycle and the AgSTAR National Conference.
- 28 Mr. Griff Rose from Australia remarked the costs of attending international meetings are prohibitive. Ms. Shimamura agreed the travel costs are a barrier to having more participation, which is why GMI has chosen to conduct webinars. Mr. Rose continued to say that it is very valuable to hear other country experiences.
- 29 Ms. Shimamura inquired if it would be beneficial to conduct webinars to explain GMI to the private sector. Ms. McKiernan agreed this would be beneficial and might help increase participation. Mr. Vance Haugen from the University of Wisconsin noted a benefit of the webinars is to hear about what is going on in other countries; his focus is on small-scale digesters and work in other counties is very applicable to his work. He appreciates the webinar format because travel to the meetings would be cost prohibitive. Mr. Haugen noted it would be helpful to hear not only about GMI, but about technical topics as well. Ms. Shimamura proposed that GMI conduct a webinar to discuss agriculture projects in various countries. Mr. Haugen agreed that would be very interesting and informative. Mr. Hilbert suggested webinars could also focus on subcommittee work, such as the international database or AD evaluations using the international guidance.
- 30 Ms. Costa asked the participants for suggestions how to spread the word to the PN internationally. Mr. Hilbert suggested country delegates could reach out to the private sector in their country. Mr. Dhussa recommended that a webinar could ask country delegates to highlight the best two AD projects in their country. Ms. Shimamura remarked it would be possible to conduct multiple shorter webinars throughout the year. Mr. Hilbert agreed holding multiple shorter webinars would help to keep momentum between the biannual meetings. Mr. Rose concurred shorter webinars would help to build and maintain interest. He also agreed country delegates should promote GMI to their in country private sector. Ms. Shimamura asked the group if the ASG should plan a webinar before the meeting in Poland. Mr. Hilbert suggested conducting multiple webinars to highlight projects and the subcommittee's work. Ms. Costa agreed, and noted the subcommittee could hold a webinar when the database becomes live on the website. Ms. Shimamura suggested the ASG and co-chairs meet to determine the possibilities.

## Summary of Action Items Discussed at the Meeting

- 31 Ms. Courtney Itle of the ASG summarized the action items from the meeting. The action items include the following:
- 32 Country delegates will:
- Coordinate with their governments to determine if they could fill the Agriculture Subcommittee co-chair position or host the next GMI Expo in late 2012.
  - Provide suggestions for technical topics to discuss or sites to visit during the upcoming meeting in Poland.
  - Provide input to the international database in the template available on the website (at [http://www.globalmethane.org/news-events/event\\_detailsByEventId.aspx?eventId=341](http://www.globalmethane.org/news-events/event_detailsByEventId.aspx?eventId=341)).
  - Review the draft GMI Partner Action Plan guidance and provide comments by 30 June 2011.
  - Provide any suggestions for future work to the ASG (at [asg@globalmethane.org](mailto:asg@globalmethane.org)).
  - Promote GMI to the private sector in their country.
- 33 The ASG will:
- Investigate having the database template translated into different languages.
  - Work with the co-chairs to determine if a short informational webinar should be conducted before the Poland meeting.
  - Post the webinar presentations, recordings, and minutes on the GMI website. Continue to increase the country representative(s) involvement in RA development.
- 34 Mr. Pilon thanked the ASG and co-chairs for hosting the meeting and he stated he looks forward to participating in the next meeting. Mr. Dhussa and Mr. Hilbert thanked the meeting participants for their input, expressed hope that future meetings will have increased participation, and adjourned the meeting.

**GLOBAL METHANE INITIATIVE**  
**AGRICULTURE SUBCOMMITTEE WEBINAR**  
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