



EKO Launches US Green Carbon Fund and Makes First Investment

New York, NY, January 25, 2011 -- EKO Asset Management Partners, LLC (EKO) today announced that it had completed the first close on an innovative fund, the EKO Green Carbon Fund (GCF), aimed at investing primarily in US carbon assets. The EKO Green Carbon Fund is the first such fund focused specifically and solely on investments in land-based carbon assets (e.g., carbon from forestry, avoided deforestation, and agriculture) for the US market. In the future, EKO expects that its GCF will also invest in carbon credits from "REDD" (Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation), as well as from reduced emissions and carbon sequestration via agricultural activities (e.g., cover cropping, reduced fertilizer use, etc.).

"We are very pleased to have been able to launch this fund at a time of great promise in North American compliance carbon markets," said Jason Scott, a partner at EKO and one of the company's founders. Ricardo Bayon, also a partner and co-founder at EKO, added: "Many people mistakenly think that the US carbon markets are dead, but to paraphrase Mark Twain, 'reports of its death have been grossly exaggerated'. While it is true that federal action to regulate carbon emissions is unlikely to be passed into law in the near future, we are nevertheless seeing important innovations and initiatives taking place at the state level and in regional partnerships. California, in particular, is laying the foundation for what we believe will become a large and robust North American carbon market."

As well as announcing the first close of the GCF, the company also announced that it had made its first investment, funding a forest conservation and management project in Arkansas. The project, which will generate carbon credits qualifying for the California market, will ensure that an area of more than 10,500 acres on the Mississippi River will be protected and managed under a conservation easement for decades to come. The area is home to tree species that include cottonwood, sugarberry, sycamore, green ash, and pecan, all of which provide habitat for threatened or significant species, including the Red-headed Woodpecker, black bears, and bald eagles.

According to Bayon, this project "highlights the potential role that carbon markets might play in the conservation of ecosystems both in the US, and across the world. Our investment will ensure that carbon is sequestered, helping to address issues of climate change. At the same time we will be protecting a highly threatened ecosystem, and at the same time generating attractive financial returns for our investors. It is the sort of win-win-

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win situation that has become increasingly rare in these times of economic and environmental crisis.” Bayon added that the GCF has been building a robust pipeline of US carbon assets for over two years. “While others have left the US carbon markets for dead,” he said, “we have continued to invest time and energy in building relationships with the managers of carbon projects across the US. Now that the carbon market in California looks set to really take hold, we believe those investments will pay off.”

Scott concluded, “What we find most exciting about the California market is that the state is also innovating by developing ways to enable emissions reductions from agriculture and international avoided deforestation projects to be part of compliance carbon markets. As rules for those types of credits emerge, EKO will also invest in projects in those areas.”

About EKO Asset Management:

EKO is a specialized investment and advisory firm focused on discovering and monetizing unrealized or unrecognized environmental assets. EKO does this by investing in projects and companies that create environmental value, as well as advising landowners, companies, investors and government agencies that can benefit from existing and emerging environmental markets. In so doing, EKO hopes to not only harness the power of the capital markets and help allocate resources to their highest and best ecological use, but also to help preserve ecosystems for future generations. EKO—whose name pays homage to the common etymological root of both ecology and economics—was born of the belief that the world is currently in the midst of a fundamental economic transformation, one where nature and nature's services are going from being essentially unappreciated and undervalued, to one where they will become central to long-term economic health. The environment, in other words, is going from being a barrier to economic growth to being an intrinsic building block of value. The company was founded in January of 2008 by a team composed of professionals experienced in environmental markets, banking, and investment management. To find out more, visit the company's web site at www.ekoamp.com.

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