



## NETWORK STRATEGY OUTLINE

(Proposal discussed and amended with HCV RN Steering Group,  
February 2009)

### 1. Overview of HCV Resource Network aims

The HCV Resource Network is three years old, and in this time has established itself as the de facto global reference point for HCV. This is a timely opportunity to plan the Network's strategy over the next 3 years to meet its Charter commitments (Annex 1). The first three years have been spent in establishing and consolidating a Network structure, a membership base, and information resources. Increasing needs for HCV Network services now arise from the focus on HCV within forestry and from the massive expansion in its use for plantation commodities (Annex 2).

In order to meet the needs of stakeholders, the Network needs to move from being a mostly reactive organisation to being more proactive, better resourced, and better balanced. The Network should focus on four key strategic aims:

1. **To provide a credible central point of reference** on the HCV concept and a networking hub for anyone with a stake in HCV.
2. **To support the development and implementation of the HCV concept** across all its current land management applications, promoting consistency, comparability and appropriate local level approaches.
3. **To provide a governance and quality control function** for HCV assessment and management, supporting good practice within natural resource certification and safeguarding the integrity of the HCV approach outside certification.
4. **To promote the use of HCV in emerging and potential applications** and ensure consistency with existing approaches.

### 2. Progress needed to meet strategic aims

#### *2.1. Central point of reference for HCV*

##### **Current activities:**

Gathering and disseminating HCV information has been the core activity of the secretariat to date. Activities include maintaining the HCV website and Network participant databases, collating information e.g. national Interpretations, projects, country profiles, news and events, updating participants on key events via regular email briefings, and responding to queries with advice and helpful contacts.

**Future objectives:**

The Network needs a communication strategy to meet its aims and a more proactive approach to awareness-raising, including better 'marketing' of the Network and its services. Additional activities should include:

- A routine presence at key international events where HCV issues are involved
- A programme of HCV Network awareness raising events in each of the key regions, with a focus on regional priorities.
- Regional representation by trusted partners (e.g. TP members, national working groups, other Regional Partners) to extend the outreach capacity of the Network.

## ***2.2. Development and implementation of HCV concept***

**Current activities:**

Network activities to date have been carried out on a project by project basis, developed through the Secretariat, and with ad hoc Project Review Sub-Committee oversight. This includes regional and technical meetings (eg: Brazil, South Africa, 2007; Oxford 2008), on an opportunistic or reactive basis.

**Future objectives:**

There is a need to demonstrate the practical value and measurable benefits of using the HCV approach, and of the services provided by the HCV Network (in particular the added value of the Technical Panel (TP) and TP Peer review service).

The Network should consider targeted programmes of sector-specific support for HCV within forestry, palm oil, soy and other commodities, and develop tools and methodologies to meet the needs of different users (e.g. from within and outside of certification; financial institutions and investors; governments and land use planners). Key elements of such programmes should involve:

- Training and capacity building for assessors, auditors, managers
- Development of sector specific HCV tools, maps and guidance
- Refinement of methodologies for HCVs 5 and 6
- Involvement in/ coordination of large-scale case studies
- Extension of HCV concept to other ecosystems

Sector-specific programmes will need the support of cross-cutting activities including:

- Building partnerships with key industry players and NGOs
- Proactive engagement of commodity Round Tables (RSPO, RTRS etc)
- Engaging with land use planners at a national and sub-national level

## ***2.3. Governance and quality control***

### **Existing initiatives:**

The Network's capacity for quality control of HCV initiatives has been substantially increased by the formation of the Technical Panel (2008). The Network has established but not capitalised on Steering Group subcommittees to strengthen the governance of the HCV concept through approved benchmark documentation or implemented projects.

### **Future objectives:**

The Network should explore ways of strengthening the operational role of Technical Panel and determine how to tackle priorities including:

- Developing an explicit safeguard framework for use of HCV in conversion and outside certification.
- Establishing a formal HCV Network technical/policy role in commodity standards

## ***2.4. Promoting the use of HCV in new applications***

### **Current activities:**

Network activities in this area have been mostly reactive e.g. ad hoc participation in events such as Bali COP (2007), IUCN World Conservation Congress (2008). The Secretariat has also provided feedback on demand e.g. for proposed uses of HCV within carbon projects and standards, or biodiversity offsets.

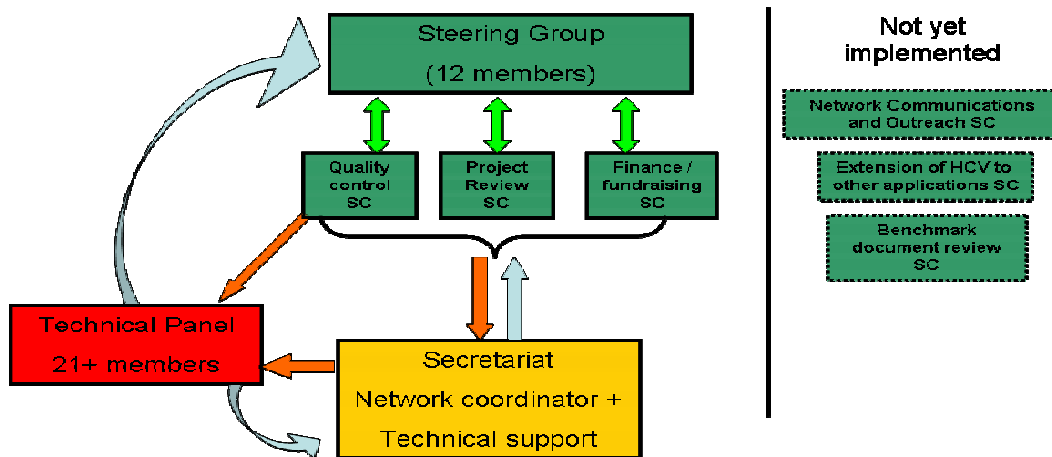
### **Future objectives:**

The Network needs to decide whether it should become proactive in engagement with potential users of the HCV concept and what this means in terms of projects and resources. Priorities might include:

- Support for HCV in Carbon/REDD policy development
- Programme of technical support for HCV in voluntary carbon projects (c.f. CCBA)
- Engagement with other potential users e.g. mining industry, marine conservation and fisheries.

## **3. HCV Network organisation**

Currently Network activities are carried out on a project by project basis, consistently requiring more Secretariat staff time on pro-rata basis than budget allows, and workload is growing. The organisation of the Network should be reviewed to meet these challenges.



*Figure 1: Current HCV Network organisation*

### ***3.1. Strengthening Steering Group role***

The Steering Group is the key to the credibility of Network. The balance of the SG should be reviewed as agreed in Feb. 2008 to consider key stakeholder groups e.g. certification bodies, key commodity standards and rights holders.

The SG needs to establish specific roles and responsibilities for the various subcommittees formed, which have not been used to full potential, and review the oversight of agreed Network strategy implementation and work programmes.

### ***3.2. Strengthening HCV Network Secretariat role***

The Secretariat's capacity to carry out the Network's aims should be strengthened by appointing a dedicated Network manager, with the following roles:

- Programme development and project management
- Fund-raising
- Representing the Network

The SG should re-visit the proposal to establish the Secretariat as a stand-alone entity.

### ***3.3. Strengthening TP role and regional partnerships***

The Network needs to capitalise on the expertise and enthusiasm of the TP by promoting the TP review service and employing the TP to advise on key issues.

The Network should consider a strategy for establishing a regional presence in key areas, in order to facilitate outreach and promote locally appropriate initiatives.

## 4. HCV Network budget

The HCV Network budget needs to cover fees for the Network coordinator and proposed Network manager, and expenses for the following core activities:

- Coordination of the Steering Group and one annual SG meeting
- Coordination of the Technical Panel and one annual TP meeting
- Maintenance of the website
- Information gathering and updates to participants
- HCV Network project development, fund raising and project management
- A travel budget to allow the Network to be represented at key events

Further core funding needs to be sought from 2009 onwards, with the support of the SG members. All other specific activities will need to be covered by further fund-raising, with projects undertaken by a range of different organisations. An overhead could be charged on projects to contribute to core costs.

## **Annex 1: HCV RN Charter Mission:**

The mission of the HCV Resource Network is to contribute to the maintenance and enhancement of critical social and environmental values of forests and other ecosystems as part of responsible land management, and to advance locally adaptable management strategies through the development and use of the high conservation value (HCV) approach.

To achieve its mission the Network will seek to promote:

- cooperation between organisations, individuals and institutions using the HCV approach;
- cooperation between the HCV approach and other conservation approaches and processes;
- best practice in the use of the HCV approach to maintain the credibility of the concept;
- local level and pluralistic approaches to the implementation of the HCV approach;
- comparability between different types of HCV assessments;
- initiatives to further develop and improve the HCV approach.

## **Annex 2: Current and emerging applications of HCV approach**

### **Active Commodity Certification Schemes**

- FSC certification (timber and wood products);
- MTCC (Malaysian Timber Certification Council (direct copy of FSC)
- Round-table on Sustainable Palm Oil (**RSPO**)

### **Other sustainability standards:**

- **Basel Criteria** on responsible Soy (and hence *probably* in Round Table on Responsible Soy **RTRS** standard)
- UK biofuels sustainability standard - Renewable Transport Fuel Obligation (**RTFO**)
- Netherlands biofuels sustainability standard - **Cramer Commission** for Sustainable Production of Biomass.
- Roundtable on Sustainable Biofuels (**RSB**) – Lausanne.
- Climate, Communities and Biodiversity Alliance - **CCBA**

### **Sourcing and purchasing policies:**

- Private sector responsible purchase policies: (*Wood products* – Epson, Ikea, Tetra Pak and others; *Biofuels*: Cargill, BP Biofuels and others)
- By extension of RSPO: major retailers (Carrefour, Asda (Walmart UK), Tesco, Sainsbury's, Morrisons), various manufacturers

### **Investment policies:**

- HSBC, ABN AMRO, JPMorgan Chase and Bank of America.
- Other international lenders?

### **National or regional land use planning frameworks:**

- National guidelines: Bulgaria, Romania, China, Russian autonomous republics (Komi, Archangelsk)
- Provincial endorsement: Indonesia - West Kalimantan

### **Major international funding initiatives:**

- IFC BACP (Biodiversity and Agricultural Commodities Programme)

### **Emerging applications:**

- Voluntary carbon markets, forest carbon projects (Reduced Emissions from Deforestation/Degradation - **REDD**);
- Biodiversity offsets (BBOP programme)
- Marine/coastal conservation and fisheries