



for a living planet[®]

(Forest) Conversion and the HCV concept / RN

Input for discussion

Gerald Steindlegger
WWF International
Manager Global Forest Programme
gerald.steindlegger@wwf.at
wwf.panda.org/forests

HCV RN SG Meeting
Oxford, February 2009





Which direction?





Trends, figures, policies..

TREND/STATUS: 13 Million ha deforestation per year → 7,3 mill ha net change (China: 4 Mill ha afforestation/a (2000-20005))

BIODIVERSITY: 50-90% (terrestrial) in (tropical) forests

CLIMATE CHANGE: approx. 20% of global GHG emissions

POLICIES:

- o **CBD:** Programme of Work on Forests, 2020 Target, 67 commitments
- o **UNFF:** “work globally, regionally and nationally to achieve progress” to reverse the loss of forests by 2015
- o **UNFCCC:** REDD mechanism, creation of a framework needed which is measurable, reportable, verifiable, additional, permanent (MRVAP).
- o **MDGs:** “Deforestation continues especially in biologically diverse regions”



How conversion is addressed in HCV RN?

CHARTER: ...to contribute to the maintenance and enhancement of critical social and environmental values of forests and other ecosystems as part of responsible land management

GUIDING PRINCIPLE: ...focus of the Resource Network on HCV and HCV areas must not lead to the devaluation of other areas, nor undermine the goal of substantially reducing and eventually reversing rates of degradation and conversion of natural ecosystems.

SAFEGUARD FRAMEWORK: A number of safeguards need to be developed to support the use of the HCV approach outside the certification context for which it was originally developed. The main issues which have been identified are:

- o Legality
- o Tenure, customary rights and consent procedures
- o **Conversion: Guidance should be developed specifically on the use of the HCV approach within the context of ecosystem conversion.**



Critical target groups re conversion?

Range of uses of the HCV concept



* Example of users



HCV within certification, roundtables..

FSC:

Principle 6: Forest conversion to plantations or non-forest land uses shall not occur, except in circumstances where conversion:

- a) entails a very limited portion of the forest management unit; and
- b) does not occur on high conservation value forest areas; and
- c) will enable clear, substantial, additional, secure, long term conservation benefits across the forest management unit.

Principle 10: Plantations established in areas converted from natural forests after November 1994 normally shall not qualify for certification.



HCV within certification, roundtables..

RSPO:

“Development of new plantations has resulted in the conversion of large areas of forests with high conservation value and has threatened the rich biodiversity in these ecosystems”. (www.rsपो.org)

Criterion 7.3: New plantings since November 2005, have not replaced primary forest or any area required to maintain or enhance one or more High Conservation Values.

Guidance:

- The HCV assessment process requires appropriate training and expertise, and must include consultation with local communities, particularly for identifying social HCVs.
- HCV assessments should be conducted according to the National Interpretation of the HCV criteria, or according to the Global HCV Toolkit if a National Interpretation is not available [see Definitions]
- Development should actively seek to utilise previously cleared and/or degraded land.



HCV within certification, roundtables..

Basel Criteria:

3.1.1 Primary vegetation and High Conservation Value Areas should not be converted to agricultural land.

- **Clearance of primary vegetation and High Conservation Value Areas to create agricultural land after 31 July 2004 is prohibited.**
- Should seek to utilise degraded and abandoned agricultural land.
- Local interpretation should refer to existing national definitions of HCVA or equivalent land-use conservation plans or consider how growers and the audit team can identify High Conservation Value Areas.

3.1.2 The farm should not be planted on land that has been deforested after 1994 unless commensurate conservation offset measures have been undertaken by the grower.



HCV within certification, roundtables..

RTRS:

4.5. Expansion for soy cultivation takes place on land cleared of native vegetation before

Option a: [date of publication of the standard]. Option b: [2008].

- **After this cut-off date clearance takes place only on land that has been designated as an agricultural expansion area by an official and participatory process (land use planning) and outside areas identified as HCVAs.**



HCV within certification, roundtables..

RSB: Vision Zero Draft

PRINCIPLE 7. Biofuel production shall avoid negative impacts on biodiversity, ecosystems, and areas of High Conservation Value.

Key guidance: HCV areas, native ecosystems, ecological corridors and public and private biological conservation areas can only be exploited as far as conservation values are left intact and can in no case be converted. Definitions of these terms and an appropriate cut-off date will be developed by the RSB.

Guidance:

- The identification must be performed prior to any new project.
- Identification and mapping ... should be undertaken by governmental, inter-governmental, and conservation organizations, as part of larger participatory processes involving local communities and non-biofuel sectors.
- Where such mapping is occurring, the results shall be respected by producers.
- Where such maps do not exist, large-scale producers shall use existing recognized toolkits such as the HCV toolkit or the IBAT.
- Producers or cooperatives unable to perform an environmental impact assessment and/or a land management plan will need support.
- BZ must be set between production site and HCV areas/native ecosystems/ecological corridors/other public or private biological conservation areas.



HCV within national standards, toolkits and landscape planning...

How is the issue of HCV and conversion addressed in national standards, toolkits and landscape planning?

Comprehensive analysis missing ...



HCV & companies...

How is the issue of HCV and conversion addressed in national standards, toolkits and landscape planning?

Comprehensive analysis missing ...,

Just examples...




HCV & companies...

APRIL

Fact Sheet

Protecting High Conservation Value Forests (HCVF)

Supports Principles 7, 8 and 9 of the UN Global Compact



Over the continuing forest of deforestation and forest degradation caused by illegal logging and slash-and-burn farming in Riau, APRIL offers the alternative for the sustainable development and conservation of forest resources through active management intervention.

The company manages its plantation forest landscapes in such a manner that it honors commercial interests with its social commitments and environmental responsibilities.

From 2005, APRIL has publicly adopted a High Conservation Value Forests (HCVF) assessment through its Environmental, Social, Health and Safety (ESHS) Policy and Code of Best Practice (CBP). This requires the Company to "conduct third party verifiable High Conservation Value (HCV) assessment before development in all new concessions, in order to manage High Conservation Value Forests (HCVF)."

APRIL conducts HCV assessment using the International HCVF Toolkit, developed by Rainforest Alliance and Profiterum in 2002, and based on the 1992 Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) concept. The HCV assessments are then corroborated by internationally recognized institutions such as Pro Forest UK and WWF Indonesia which also conduct their respective HCV assessment with the consultation of APRIL or its partners. These HCV assessments have identified HCVFs of between 20% and 77% of the gross area of forested concessions.

Key facts:

- A third-party survey conducted by the Indonesian Institute of Science (IPR) found that Tesso Nila forest is having the highest biodiversity index in Sumatra (7.1), more than twice the index of the Sumatran National Park in North Sumatra.
- APRIL and WWF Indonesia are jointly supporting the expansion of the Tesso Nila National Park (TNP) from the existing 26,500 ha to at least 100,000 ha, with the involvement of other stakeholders including 22 villages around the Park. The proposed new land is managed by the Ministry of Forestry.
- From 2005, APRIL has been collaborating with local stakeholders and forest protection agencies to reduce forest fires and fires. These include a partnership on forest fire management and disaster preparedness in APRIL's operations in Tesso Nila, beyond a year-round inventory in the area, and implementation of a long-term fire system at APRIL's nursery, and a fire outbreak response team including government, NGO, university, and private companies like APRIL in Tesso Nila.

Conservation Areas	Cumulative area in hectares			
	2004	2006	2008	June 2007
IT1	62,092	62,822	62,810	62,843
IT/ID	n/a	112,378	130,771	131,221
IT2	n/a	4,078	4,594	5,844
Total	62,092	181,278	200,077	200,108

Following the conduct of a HCV assessment, we delineate conservation areas and design our plantation areas to protect them.

Non-HCV areas are rehabilitated into re-growing forests. Plantations which have healthy stands, plantation landscapes that provide conservation and ecotourism services.

Source: Rainforest Alliance, WWF, UNEP Champion of the Earth (UNEP) Corporate Partner, November 2007



On land that we own, lease or manage, we commit to: Proactively identifying and protecting High Conservation Value (HCV) areas and striving to maintain or enhance the critical environmental and social values of the associated ecosystems.



HCV & companies...

BP, London, Sept. 2007: Sustainability: fundamental to an enduring industry is the avoidance of harmful environmental and social impacts:

Issues (not exhaustive) include:

- Placing stress on the world's limited water resources
- Biodiversity
- **Deforestation – the destruction of High Conservation Value Forest (HCVF)***
- Child and forced labour and other employment abuses
- Planting on peat soils
- Community conflict issues
- Land rights, including economic and physical displacement
- Effects of monoculture on local food production and local economies
- Pollution and environmental damage (water / soil / air), including related socio-economic impacts
- Net greenhouse gas balances resulting from land use change

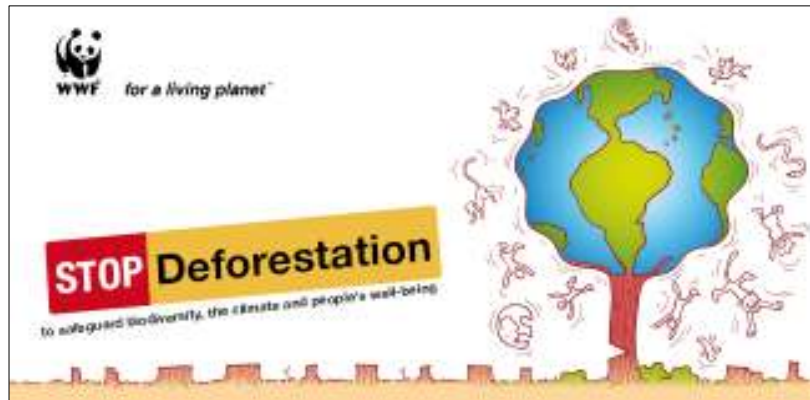


* HCVF is technically defined according to principles defined by the WWF



How does WWF address this issue?

Example 1: Zero Net Deforestation by 2020



Ministers of 67 countries attending the CBD COP9 signed on to WWF's postcard calling for zero net deforestation by 2020

Example 2: European Paper Vision

- o We, the undersigned NGOs, call upon...end the use of fibre that comes from conversion of natural forest or other high conservation value ecosystems into plantations for paper fibre. (Some conversion may be allowed when it has been agreed within a comprehensive HCVF process with transparent stakeholder involvement.)



What does Zero Net Deforestation by 2020 mean?

- acknowledges that some forest loss could be offset by forest restoration
- not synonymous with a total prohibition on forest clearing
- leaves room for change in the configuration of the land-use mosaic, provided the net quantity, quality and carbon density of forests is maintained recognizes that, in some circumstances, conversion of forests in one site may contribute to the sustainable development and conservation of the wider landscape
- **however, not achieved through the conversion of primary or natural forests into fast growing plantations (1)**
- **such conversion would count as deforestation in assessing progress against the target.**

[1] Plantations, particularly intensively-managed, industrial plantations can contribute disproportionately to future demands. .. are controversial; key elements of sustainability in fastwood plantation can be found at http://www.panda.org/about_wwf/what_we_do/forests/publications/position_papers/index.cfm?uNewsID=6003.



Technical Panel Voices

Credibility of Process

- Who endorses the process?
- Is it required by law?
- What's the difference with the EIA (AMDAL)?

Governance

- There is no institution regulating HCV assessments
- Non-certification use
- Transparency
- Who can do HCV assessment?

Misconception of HCV which leads to opposition

- Definition of the word “conservation” makes the HCV concept not acceptable
- Green-washing
- Accelerating big capital flow
- Legitimizing conversion of natural forests

Managing and monitoring HCV area

- Who guarantee the implementation?– APRIL?–Banks’ environmental screening adopting HCV concept?
- For companies/management units, how to do it?



Technical Panel Voices

- **Use of HCVF outside of SFM and forest certification**
- Convincing large scale logging companies to use HCVF
- Require strong political will to pursue forest certification at all levels
- Understanding the use of HCVF in REDD & other climate change initiatives
- **CBs with different understanding of requirements**
- Mostly focused on identification
- Tackling HCVF in community settings
- HCVF in plantations
- **HCVF for REDD?**
- Lack of information on many of the forested areas
- Minimalist interpretation of certain types of HCV
- Lack of accepted principles of management of HCV
- Legislation creates problems



For discussion...

- What role can the HCV concept (RN) play related to conversion at the technical (TP, QCG), policy (SG) and communication level ?
- What are the options for the HCV RN regarding forests/ecosystems which are NOT required to maintain or enhance HCV?
- What's the process on developing environmental safeguards as outlined in the charter? Why, How, Who, When?
- Is the HCV RN Charter strong enough? Do we need to add a section where it is indicated how the charter should NOT be interpreted? Who signed the charter and what does this mean?
- What is the role of the HCV RN for quality control of HCV applications? (certification, certification bodies, accreditation, peer reviews, voluntary assessments such as gold/silver/xx rankings?)
- Risks for HCV concept (RN) related to conversion?
- How to reach out/communicate to various actors/sectors?
- Do you see any alternatives?
- Within/outside of forest certification? Within/outside of other standards/certification? Within governmental lead landscape planning and standard/National Toolkit development?



www.panda.org