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# HCV USE WITHIN AFRICA: UPDATES FROM GHANA

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## Outline of presentation

- ❖ Forest classification and existing conservation strategies in Ghana
- ❖ Why HCVF in Ghana?
- ❖ Importance of HCVF in Ghana
- ❖ The HCVF interpretation process in Ghana
- ❖ The way forward





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# Reserve Classification

- ❖ **Forest in Ghana: On-reserve or off-reserve**
- ❖ **Within on-reserves, management is categorized**
  - protection\***
  - production\***
  - Convalescence**
  - Conversion**





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# Conservation strategies in Ghana

- ❖ **Examples of protected forest areas**
  - National parks
  - Resource reserves
  - Globally significant biodiversity areas
  - Hill sanctuaries
  - Provenance protection areas
  - Wildlife sanctuaries
- ❖ **Strictly set aside from logging**
- ❖ **But wildlife knows no borders between productive & protective forests**
- ❖ **There are still substantial conservation values within productive forest both on- & off-reserves**



# Existing conservation strategies in Ghana

- ❖ **Ghana government initiative for conservation within productive forest landscapes**
  - **For the prevention of erosion, no trees felled on slopes in excess of 30 %**
  - **to ensure maintenance of watershed and water quality, no logging within 25m of each side of a stream and 50m on either banks in the case of a river**
  - **For the maintenance of globally significant species no logging within 100m of black star species of plants**
  - **Restricted harvesting of threatened timber species**
  - **For socially acceptable forestry, no logging in sacred groves**
  - **And many more others**





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# Why HCVF in Ghana?

- ❖ Existing conservation initiatives did not provide adequate protection for wildlife in productive forest
- ❖ Respect for local communities' traditions, culture and identity is not adequately enforced
- ❖ Compliance with existing fine-grained protection measures were not adequately enforced
- ❖ In short, existing conservation strategies in productive forest do not adequately meet the requirement of certification





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# The Importance of HCVF in Ghana

- ❖ Local HCVF interpretation provides a link between existing conservation measures (GSBAs, fine-grained protection etc) and expected under certification standard
- ❖ Practical tool, integrating biodiversity conservation into forestry
- ❖ Social and environmental considerations become essential management components even at the FMU level





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# The HCVF Concept in Ghana: The Process

- ❖ Development of national interpretation
- ❖ Development of local capacity for HCVs identification and assessment
- ❖ Development of guidelines, methods & approaches for HCVs assessment & management





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## Development of Ghanaian interpretation of HCVs

- ❖ **Ghanaians HCVF interpretation was facilitated by ProForest**
- ❖ **consultation of key stakeholders in the forestry sector including MLF&M, FC, FORIG, FSC, EPA, Landowning chiefs, private sector, Universities**
- ❖ **Review of existing documentation including research papers, forest and wildlife operational documents, national and regional conservation practices etc.**
  
- ❖ **Multi-stakeholder national workshop organized by Ghana FTN/ProForest, May 2006**
  - balanced representation of stakeholders
  - presence of adequate technical expert
- ❖ **Collate views and inputs and provide guidance for interpretation**





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## Building Local capacity for HCVF Identification & Assessment

- ❖ Stakeholder forum and training workshop organized by Ghana FTN/ProForest, May 2006
- ❖ Facilitate stakeholder engagements improve understanding of the HCVF concept
- ❖ The results of these:
  - The convening of a technical working group for Ghanaian HCVF interpretation
  - The drafting of HCVF national toolkit version 1 developed
  - The final version was published in November 2006





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## HCV 1

### *Globally, regionally or nationally significant concentrations of biodiversity values*

#### ❖ *HCV 1.1 Protected Areas*

*-all the categories of protected areas in Ghana are HCVF since they are often, but not always, established to protect biodiversity*

#### • *HCV 1.2 Forest with outstanding concentration of threatened or endangered species*

*-all forest areas are HCVF if they contains concentrations of species that are threatened globally (IUCN red-list), or nationally listed as protected eg bongo, Maxwell's duiker, Diana monkey etc*

*-relates to the type of species, level of concentration and levels of threats*

*-presence of populations of at least 25% of the forest dependent, red-listed species that are naturally resident in Ghana*

*-presence of a population of at least one nationally protected species, whose survival in Ghana is critically dependent on the sustainable management of the population in question eg Chimpanzee*



## HCV 2

### *Globally, regionally or nationally significant large landscape level forests*

- ❖ Fragmented forest reserves separated by intensive agricultural landscapes
- ❖ A few are reasonably large but majority cannot be considered as contiguous block of intact forest
- ❖ According to Greenpeace, Rainforest Action Network & WRI global database of IFL, 50,000 ha un-fragmented forest is the threshold
- ❖ Global database of IFL identify no area in Ghana as meeting the criteria
- ❖ HCV 2 is not considered to be applicable in Ghana



## HCV 3

### *Forest areas that are in or contain rare threatened and endangered ecosystems*

- ❖ The criteria was forest and habitat types that:
  - are naturally rare
  - have been drastically reduced from their original size and quality due to anthropogenic activities
  - are & will be seriously threatened by existing and planned activities
- ❖ Example of types in this category in Ghana include Wet evergreen, southern marginal, dry semi-deciduous forests etc
- ❖ Habitat types include savanna gallery forest, lowland swamps etc





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## HCV 4

### *Forest areas that provide basic services of nature in critical conditions*

#### ❖ **HCV 4.1 Forest critical to water catchments**

**-regulating the flow of water critical to guarantee the availability water for drinking, irrigation etc**

**-indicators include:**

- **forest fringe communities depend exclusively on river in the catchments,**
- **fringe communities susceptible to flooding, and**
- **Fringe comm. dependent on river fish as major source of protein**

#### ❖ **HCV 4.2 Forest critical to erosion control**

**-when normal forest management practices are sufficient for erosion prevention, they will not be considered as HCVF**

**-HCVF is essential to the protection against severe erosion or terrain instability where this threat is severe.**

**Eg in Ghana include Afram, Atewa, Owabi etc**





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## HCV 4

### *Forest areas that provide basic services of nature in critical conditions*

#### ❖ **HCV 4.3 Forest providing barriers to destructive fire**

- forests that provide natural barriers to fire where uncontrolled spread could pose a serious risk to human life and property**
- forests where fire is a natural or normal part of forest ecosystem process is not HCVF**
- all shelter belt forest reserves and intact natural riparian/gallery forest in the savanna zone are potential HCVF**

#### ❖ **HCV 4.4 Forest that play a critical role in local climate regulation**

- Designated shelterbelts and areas within reserve providing climate amelioration are potential**
- In Ghana, forest in the transition zone providing protection against North East trade wind/Harmattan dry wind**





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## HCV 5

### *Forest areas fundamental to meeting basic needs of local communities*

- ❖ Forest are HCVF where the livelihood needs of the local communities are inextricably linked to whole/part of the reserve
- ❖ There are no affordable alternatives or complementary sources proving these needs
- ❖ The basic needs in these case are likely to be: bushmeat, medicinal, building, and other household materials
- ❖ Indicators of dependency include:
  - Long distance between village and nearest town
  - Absence of clinic or health post
  - Poor quality of access road to village
  - Majority of houses build without modern materials and using forest products
  - Village names indicate immigrant communities



## HCV 6

### *Forest areas critical to local communities' traditional cultural identity*

- ❖ Forest has deep spiritual and cultural significance to forest fringe communities
- ❖ Forest fringe communities cultural identity, traditional beliefs and norms associated with the existence of the forests
- ❖ Forest area is HCVF if its absence is likely to lead to cultural erosion
- ❖ Characteristics of such forests to look for include:
  - Traditional burial grounds located in the forest area
  - Ritual grounds for traditional religious worship
  - Taboo days when entry into the forest areas is forbidden
  - Forest animals hunted for traditional festival occasions
  - Forest provide the only habitat for cultural totems
  - Significance for stool or skin identity





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## Practical implementation of HCVF in Ghana

- **Pilot assessment of HCVF on selected forest reserves in Ghana**
- **Development of guidance on methods, expertise and approaches**
- **Local capacity building for HCVF assessment & management by companies.**
- **Ghana FTN/ProForest organized technical workshop in June 2007**
- **Pilot assessment planned**



## The way forward

- Education and awareness creation on HCVF targeting state institutions, NGOs, Companies etc
- Convincing policy- makers to incorporate HCVF into relevant forestry laws, develop manuals
- Convincing the target groups to adopt and use the guidelines at national and local levels
- Facilitation of HCVF assessment for FTN member companies at FMU level





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Thank you

