

HCV Resource Network events at the UN Climate Change Conference, Bali, December 07

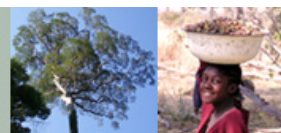
Background: Tropical deforestation accounts for about 20% of the annual global greenhouse gas emissions caused by human activities. For this reason, **Reducing Emissions for Deforestation and Degradation (REDD)** was the subject of intense debate at the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Bali in December 2007. Carbon payments for REDD could channel enormous sums of money into forest conservation projects in the tropics, but this also presents a number of risks. The High Conservation Value (HCV) framework is a potentially powerful tool for prioritising areas for REDD which maximise **environmental, social and carbon benefits**, and ensuring that critical conservation values are not damaged by REDD projects.

The HCV Resource Network (HCVRN) at the UN Climate Conference:

The HCV-RN ran two public events at the UN Conference, with the participation of a number of Steering Group members representing a wide range of interests. The purpose of the side events was to introduce the High Conservation Value concept to new audiences, and to present the case for using an HCV approach to prioritise critical forest areas when designing REDD programmes. The place of HCV methodologies in emerging 'green carbon' standards was also explored. The Network also maintained an exhibit (right) at the conference and distributed hundreds of briefing notes and information booklets to conference participants.



The first, official side event to the UN Conference, was chaired by Gerhard Dieterle (Forest Advisor, World Bank). The second event, chaired by Rod Taylor (Forests Programme Director, WWF International), was a part of the CIFOR Forest Day, parallel to the UN Conference. At each event, the HCV Secretariat (represented by Ruth Nussbaum and Christopher Stewart, Proforest) introduced HCVF and its potential use for REDD, and Martin Walter (University of Applied Sciences, Weihenstephan, jointly with WWF) presented the conceptual framework for a 'Green Carbon Standard' for REDD projects. Many of the founding members and Steering Group representatives of the HCV Resource Network (including the **FSC, World Bank, WWF, TNC, WBCSD, ITTO, Greenpeace, and Forest Peoples Programme**), were present to give an overview of their involvement with the Network and their hopes for the future. Gary Paoli (Indonesian Resource Institute) presented HCV case studies from Indonesia on Forest Day.



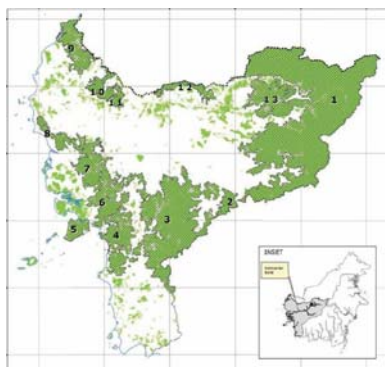
High Conservation Value Forests and Land Use Planning for REDD:

Payments for REDD will necessarily focus on carbon, but there is great potential for REDD projects to generate so-called 'co-benefits' i.e. positive impacts on biodiversity, ecosystem services, and social and cultural values of forests. There is also a risk that poorly planned REDD projects could miss these opportunities or even damage HCVs. The challenge is to maximise the co-benefits of REDD projects. Ruth Nussbaum (HCVRN secretariat) argued that the HCV framework could be used at two levels in the REDD context:

- **Risk management at the project level:** within individual forest management areas, the HCV approach requires that critical areas and values are identified and appropriately managed, and that HCVs are not damaged by forest management operations.
- **Planning and prioritisation at the regional or national level:** HCV provides a powerful and systematic framework for identifying where maximum co-benefits will be delivered, and can be used for prioritising funds and projects to these areas.

Landscape planning for conservation at different scales:

landscape-level forests in West Kalimantan (left, ©WWF) and plantations in South Africa (right, © M. Samways).

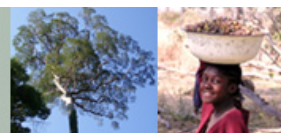


There are many advantages to using the HCV framework for REDD planning:

- HCV process is widely accepted by a range of forest stakeholders
- Already used for national planning and project certification
- Provides a common framework and process to develop outcomes
- Makes use of existing information and approaches
- Addresses both environmental and social aspects
- Requires consultation with stakeholders

The HCV approach has been successfully used to tackle difficult and controversial issues in forest management; however, it is not a stand-alone guarantee of sustainability and must be combined with adequate safeguards, particularly in the context of conversion.

Green Carbon Standards and HCV: In response to the need for safeguards and governance, Martin Walter (Weihenstephan University) argued that a 'Green Carbon Standard' for REDD projects would need to ensure both adequate project design and good operational management, establish safeguards for social and environmental values, and ensure economic viability and credible carbon accounting. It would need to be supported by an appropriate governance structure, which provides sound verification procedures and decision making processes. There is a very clear role for using the HCV toolkit in this setting, to ensure that critical conservation



values are identified, managed and monitored as a basic requirement of certified, sustainable REDD projects.

A number of existing standards fulfill different aspects of the requirements for sustainable forest carbon projects (e.g. forest management operations are covered by FSC and other standards, whilst carbon project design and verification is covered by the CDM, 'Gold Standard' or CCBA) but no single standard covers them all. Dr Walter stressed the need for a 'universal' set of standards that achieve the required goals, building on existing governance systems, and reached through a process of consultation and convergence between the key players in sustainable forestry and carbon accounting.

Support for the Network at the UN Conference:

The active participation from many of the founding members and Steering Group representatives of the HCV Resource Network was a particularly valuable feature of the side events, giving a flavour of the broad base of support for the HCV concept. Each participant gave a brief overview of their role in developing the Network and their vision for the future.



Right: Nina Haase, FSC, addresses UN Conference delegates

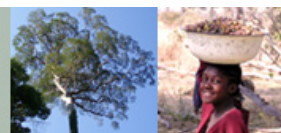
HCV Resource Network Steering Group members and founders give their views on the future of the Network and HCV concept:

Gerhard Dieterle, World Bank - Forest Advisor: "The World Bank is proud to have been a founding member of the HCV Resource Network. The High Conservation Value Framework is an excellent tool for delivering the World Bank's Safeguard Policy on Natural Habitats. HCV can help to address competing interests over the use of resources as part of a broader land use planning exercise, and there is potential for using of HCV in the context of REDD processes."

Rod Taylor, WWF International - Forest Programme Director: "WWF is committed to the HCV approach and will continue to promote the concept as a practical framework for conservation planning and management, and for helping to resolve difficult issues in land use management"

Nina Haase Forest Stewardship Council - Communications Manager: "HCVF has been developed by FSC as a cornerstone of the FSC Principles and Criteria for socially and environmentally responsible forest management. FSC welcomes the wide application and use of the HCV tool, taking it beyond forest management. But FSC also recognises the need to work urgently with the HCV Resource Network to develop safeguards for the use of HCVF outside the FSC context".

Marcus Colchester, Forest Peoples Programme - Director: "Forest Peoples Programme has been actively engaged with the HCV Resource Network since its creation, and I believe that the HCV approach, within a proper safeguard framework, can empower forest dependent communities and indigenous people to deal on a less unequal footing with the large corporations that threaten their livelihoods."



Ben Jarvis, The Nature Conservancy - Forest Alliance Programme

Manager: "The HCV framework is highly compatible with TNC's science-based, collaborative approach to conservation, and we have been steadily ramping up our efforts to support its practical use in sustainable forest management"

James Griffiths, World Business Council for Sustainable Development – Director, Sustainable Forest Products Industry: "Our members from the forestry sector are genuinely committed to sustainable production practices and HCVF is a useful tool for adapting management practices and finding a common language for constructive engagement with conservationists and local communities."

The Resource Network also thanks Dr Hwan Ok Ma (ITTO), Christoph Thies (Greenpeace Intl.), Ken Creighton (WWF Intl.), and Joji Cariño (Forest Peoples Programme) for their valuable participation, and Gary Paoli (Indonesian Resource Institute), for his presentation on Indonesian HCV case studies at the CIFOR Forest Day event.



Right: Ken Creighton, WWF, at the UN Conference

Outcome of the UN debate on REDD:

After heated talks, the UN Parties 'affirmed the urgent need to take further meaningful action' to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (REDD), and adopted a methodological work programme to answer the many technical questions arising. Parties were encouraged to support capacity building and to undertake efforts, including demonstration activities, to address the drivers of deforestation. In parallel, nine countries announced plans to put US\$165 million toward the World Bank's newly created Forest Carbon Partnership Facility, a scheme that will pilot various models for the use of carbon credits to preserve tropical forests.

However, much remains to be done before the UN REDD system is finalized, and the HCV Resource Network and its members will need to work collaboratively in order to ensure that the ideas put forward in Bali are developed and widely disseminated, so that carbon finance for forests takes High Conservation Values into account.

HCV and REDD: Presentations, Briefings, and next steps: The UN Conference event presentations and briefing notes are available to download from the HCV Resource Network website 'Meetings and Briefings' section www.hcvnetwork.org. The Network Steering Group will discuss the Bali events at their next meeting in February 2008, and Network Participants will be kept informed of any actions that the Network decides to take forward.

Acknowledgements: The HCV Resource Network presence at the UN Conference was made possible by the FSC, which offered the Network its slot in the official schedule, and by the generous support of WWF and TNC. Many thanks are also due for the invaluable logistical help provided by WWF staff in Indonesia.