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Deforestation / Conversion

Can the HCV framework contribute to reduce (emissions from) deforestation?

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Deforestation: Trends, figures and policies

TREND/STATUS: 13 Million ha deforestation per year → 7,3 mill ha net change

BIODIVERSITY: vast majority of terrestrial biodiversity in (tropical) forests, forest biodiversity in dramatic decline

CLIMATE CHANGE: almost 20% of global GHG emissions from deforestation

(INTER)GOVERNMENTAL POLICIES : CBD, UNFF, UNFCCC, MDGs...

→ Intergovernmental processes do (so far) not refer to HCV, but many countries (producers and consumers) use the HCV framework with the aim to reduce deforestation.



Deforestation/Conversion, HCV and the Private Sector...



HCV within certification, roundtables..

FSC (Forest Stewardship Council)

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 (Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil)

“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.rspo.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:

- 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
- Development should actively seek to utilise previously cleared and/or degraded land.



HCV within certification, roundtables..

RSB (Roundtable on Sustainable Biofuels) Vision 0.6. October 2009

Criterion 7.a Conservation values within the potential or existing area of production shall be identified through a land-use planning process. Conservation values of local, regional or global importance within the potential or existing area of production maintained.

7a Minimum requirements

- o ... identifies conservation values.., the potential areas shall only be used if such values can be maintained through adequate management practices ... and not converted after the 1st of January 2009.
- o After the 1st of January 2009, very limited land conversion ... shall only happen if ... that it will produce a clear additional and demonstrable conservation and/or social benefits...



HCV within certification, roundtables..

RTRS (Roundtable on Responsible Soy)

Criteria 4.4. (field testing version)

4.4.1 Expansion for soy cultivation during field test period may not take place on land cleared of native habitat after May 2009.

Exception: Producers who want or plan to clear native habitat after the cut-off date of May 2009 must produce scientific evidence from a comprehensive and professional third-party assessment of the area concerned that identifies the absence of:

- o all primary forest
- o other High Conservation Value Areas (HCVAs)
- o local peoples' lands



HCV within certification, roundtables..

CCBA The Climate, Community and Biodiversity Alliance

- Identify projects that simultaneously address climate change, support local communities and conserve biodiversity.
- Promote excellence and innovation in project design
- Mitigate risk for investors and increase funding opportunities for project developers.

The **project proponents must provide a description of the project zone**, containing all the following information:

- **An evaluation** of whether the project zone **includes any High Conservation Values (HCVs)** and a description of the qualifying attributes.....



HCV within FINANCE Sector

Rabobank Group's proposal to RTRS members for maintaining high biodiversity areas

Even if laws allow land clearing or there are no laws in place, applicants for RTRS certification still will refrain from clearing HCVA's

HSBC Policy

....**Soy and Palm Oil.** We do not finance the conversion from HCVF to plantations...



HCV within UNFCCC?

REDD

AD HOC WORKING GROUP ON LONG-TERM COOPERATIVE ACTION UNDER THE CONVENTION; First part of the seventh session.

Bankok, 28 Sept to 9 October 2009

Policy approaches and positive incentives on issues relating to reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries.

Principle Safeguard (f):

Promote actions that are consistent with the conservation of **biological diversity** and (, including (environmental) (ecosystem) services,) complementary to the aims and objectives of relevant international conventions and agreements.



Clearly some guidance is needed





How conversion is addressed in the HCV RN?

GUIDING PRINCIPLE: ...focus of the Resource Network on HCV.. 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.

Annex 1: Principles of Application

- Areas necessary at the site and landscape scale to maintain or enhance HCVs shall not be converted.
 - The absence of HCVs, and the application of the HCV approach, shall not be used as sufficient justification for conversion of natural ecosystems.
 - Conversion of non-HCV natural ecosystems must result in net gain identified and documented through a rigorous, fair and balanced multi-stakeholder dialogue.
- **The HCV RN recommends that** where relevant, certification systems should take into account these Principles of Application



Can the HCV framework contribute to reduce (emissions from) deforestation?

The HCV framework has, if applied appropriately, a huge potential to contribute to the reduction of deforestation, particularly of critical forests.

WWF believes, the HCV RN provides a central point of reference to support consistency, comparability, appropriateness and quality control throughout all private and governmental initiatives.



Thank you !