

**October 2019**

## **Foreword**

Welcome to the first issue of the High Carbon Stock Approach (HCSA) Quality Assurance Newsletter for 2019.

As part of the HCSA secretariat and Steering Group's continued efforts to provide regular updates, we are aiming to send quarterly updates to members and registered practitioners on the following HCSA areas of interest:

- I. HCSA Methodological Developments
- II. HCSA Registered Practitioners and Training Programme
- III. Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) and HCSA
- IV. Integrated HCV-HCSA Assessments

## I. HCSA Methodological Developments – Technical Panel

The HCSA Technical Panel was created to provide technical expertise, advice and support on technical questions and guidance within HCSA to ensure clarity and standardisation of implementation of the HCSA methodology. The panel will be coordinated by the HCSA secretariat and the soon to be recruited Technical Director.

### Technical Panel Members<sup>1</sup>

Name	Organisation
Patrick Anderson	Forest Peoples Programme
Neville Kemp	Ekologika
Alex Thorpe	Ata Marie
Charlotte Opal	Earthworm Foundation
Grant Rosoman	Greenpeace

### Integrated Quality Assurance Advice Note Series

HCVRN Assessor Licensing Scheme (ALS) conducts the quality assurance of integrated HCV-HCSA assessment reports. In November 2017, the HCV-HCSA assessment manual was published and in 2018 the ALS started to receive the first integrated assessment reports for evaluation. Integrated assessments and their evaluation are still relatively new, where all parties are learning with experience. As the ALS receives more integrated reports, the ALS is working together with the HCSA Technical Panel to address practical questions and to provide clarity and interpretation guidance where needed. We have therefore started an Advice Note Series to provide clarification on interpretation of requirements in the High Conservation Value (HCV)-HCSA assessment manual or HCSA toolkit and quality assurance as it arises.

The information in this advice note represents the current HCSA interpretation of various topics related to the quality assurance of HCV-HCSA assessment reports. Assessors and report evaluators may reference and follow the advice note, where it differs from information in the HCSA Toolkit and/or ALS documents (i.e. integrated manual and reporting templates and associated guidance). Over time, the experience gained during the evaluation of integrated reports and the

<sup>1</sup> Technical Panel ToR is at final stage of finalisation and is due to be approved by the HCSA Executive Committee on 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2019.

discussions leading to new advice notes will contribute to training materials and updated guidance and requirements for integrated assessments.

The first Advice Note was published on 22 October 2019 and discusses technical questions related to food security, the number of locations of forest plots, how to use national forest inventory information, and the due diligence requirements for companies doing integrated assessments. We encourage all practitioners to read the Advice Note to help their understanding of these complex topics. The note can be downloaded [here](#).

## II. HCSA Registered Practitioners and Training Programme

The HCSA Training Provider Programme was developed in 2019 under the Quality Assurance Working Group (QAWG). The aim of this training programme is to socialise to individuals and companies as well as register HCSA training providers and qualified HCSA practitioners. This HCSA Training Provider Programme is open to HCSA practitioners or individuals (on behalf of practitioner organisation). The programme starts with an application from interested organisations. Below is the **HCSA Training Provider Process Flow**:

Interested applicant (on behalf of organisation) who would like to be recognised as training provider of HCSA Trainings shall fill and sign the **HCSA Training Provider Registration Form** and submit it to the HCSA Secretariat for processing. The form can be found on the HCSA Website.

The HCSA Secretariat to review the **HCSA Training Provider Registration Form** and submit to HCSA Executive Director and Quality Assurance Chair for approval based on completeness of information. The review and approval by the HCSA Executive Director and Quality Assurance Chair shall take approximately 2 weeks time.

**Note:** The form submission should be done at least 45 days prior to the proposed date of the requested training.

The decision of approval by the HCSA Executive Director and Quality Assurance Chair shall be communicated by the HCSA Secretariat to the applicant within 20 days upon submission by the interested applicant/organisation.

Upon approval, the applicant together with its organisation will be updated on the HCSA Website once the payment for training syllabus of USD 500 is received by the HCSA secretariat.

HCSA training providers will need to adhere to all the requirements as per the registration form and keep the HCSA secretariat updated on all trainings planned and conducted. Failure to abide by the requirements may result in the revoked status as a HCSA training provider.

Once approval is provided to the applicant/organisation, the HCSA Secretariat will register the individuals/organisation to provide HCSA training.

Once registered, training providers will be able to train individuals to become registered HCSA practitioners. HCSA practitioners who go through training and pass the exam can:

1. Lead HCSA assessments if they are part of a registered practitioner organisation, i.e. one with two trained people;
2. Be one of the two required HCSA-trained team members for HCSA stand-alone assessments;
3. Be the required HCSA specialist on HCV-HCSA integrated teams.

Registered Training Providers (as of October 2019)

Organisation	Registered Number of Trainers	Languages	Experience
PT. Hijau Daun	1	English	Indonesia, Malaysia, Papua New Guinea
PT. Remark Asia	9	English, Bahasa Indonesia	Indonesia, Malaysia
PT. Gagas Dinamiga Aksenta	7	Bahasa Indonesia, English	Indonesia, Malaysia
Earthworm Foundation	9	English, Bahasa Indonesia, Spanish, French	Peru, Mexico, Ivory Coast, Ghana, Liberia, Nigeria, Indonesia, Malaysia, Papua New Guinea, Cambodia, Solomon Islands
Proforest	13	Bahasa Indonesia, French, Spanish, Portuguese, Bahasa Malaysia, English	Malaysia, Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, Thailand, Uganda, Nigeria, Ghana, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Ivory Coast, Cameroon, Gabon, Peru, Ecuador, Colombia

III. Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) and HCSA

Integration of the HCSA toolkit into RSPO P&C 2018

HCSA has identified three teams to collaborate with the RSPO. All major decision points are being proposed to be consulted and approved by the HCSA EC. We have a formal collaboration with the RSPO on High Forest Cover Landscape (HFCL) within High Forest Cover Country (HFCC) through the [No Deforestation Joint Steering Group \(NDJSG\)](#) and are now seeking formal collaboration with RSPO on 7.12 outside HFCC/L

and independent smallholders to ensure our collaboration is clear, comprehensive and well planned.

HCSA-RSPO area of collaboration	Latest Update(s)
<p>The NDJSG: To support and guide the development and implementation of the procedures, methodologies and guidance for Criterion 7.12 (RSPO’s no deforestation requirement), particularly around High Forest Cover countries and landscapes (HFCC/L);</p>	<p>RSPO secretariat is planning for the next NDJSG call (between 11-15 November 2019) to reconvene and update on the progress and next steps.</p>
<p>Latest update on other engagements related to RSPO:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <u>RSPO Independent Smallholder Standard (ISS): Integration of HCSA into RSPO ISS.</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Final draft of RSPO ISS has included protection of HCS forests and is pending for RSPO Board of Governors approval during the next RSPO General Assembly 2019 in Bangkok.</li> <li>• RSPO has posted a <a href="#">call</a> for an Independent Consultant to review the RSPO HCV Approach for Smallholders and the HCSA’s Approach on HCS for Smallholders. HCSA requested to be involved in the selection of the consultancy and to have joint decision making on this consultancy work.</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. <u>HCSA RSPO Engagement Group: To support all other aspects of 7.12 implementation outside of HFCC and independent smallholders’ integration</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RSPO has published <a href="#">Interpretation of Indicator 7.12.2 and Annex 5</a> for the RSPO Principles and Criteria 2018 on 21 June 2019. The aim of this announcement is to provide clarity and guidance for the interpretation of Indicator 7.12.2 of the RSPO Principles and Criteria (P&amp;C) 2018, whereby any new land clearing after 15 November 2018 must be preceded by an HCV-HCSA assessment.</li> <li>• RSPO secretariat has shared a draft of the New Planting Procedure (NPP) for HCSA’s review. HCSA has provided feedback on the draft NPP on 30 August 2019.</li> </ul> </li> </ol>	<p>HCSA secretariat has requested for formal collaboration for other non HFCC related processes but pending for outcome from RSPO ongoing governance review process.</p>

HCSA standalone Peer Review Process: As the HCSA peer review process does not provide a pass or fail result but rather feedback to identify any weaknesses with recommendations for additional actions, RSPO has requested for HCSA to review the existing HCSA Peer Reviewer template to provide clear guidance for certification purposes. It was agreed in the Quality Assurance Working Group physical meeting in

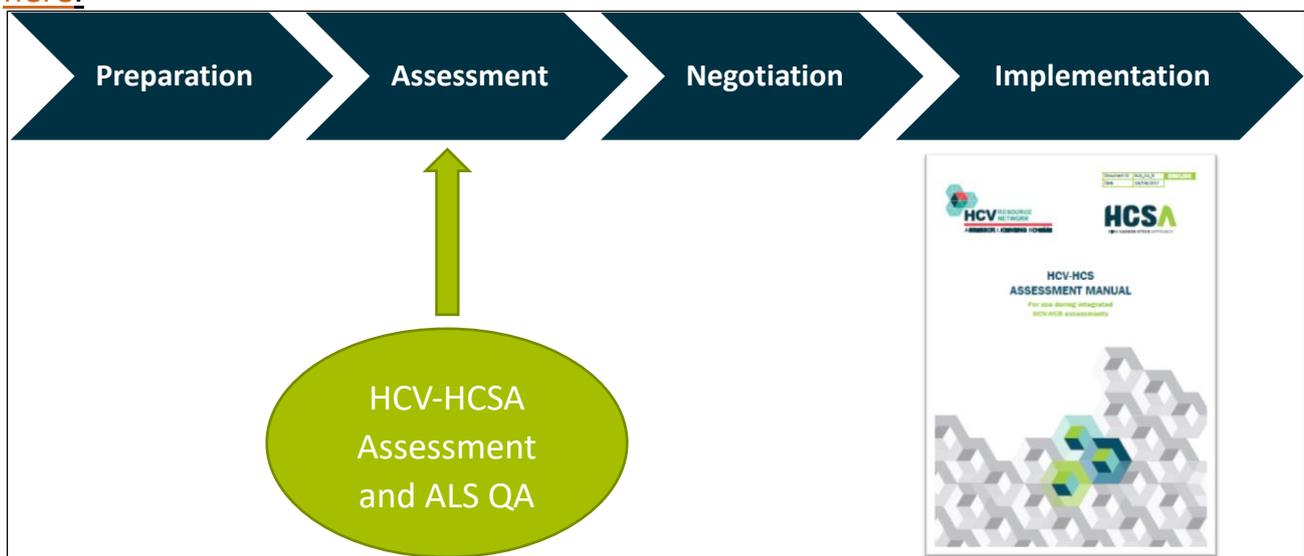
Yogyakarta in April 2019, to include a pass/fail recommendation for the High Carbon Stock (HCS) forest identification sections of the HCSA assessment. RSPO has proposed to engage an expert to lead on revising the HCSA Peer Review template to include the pass/fail mechanism for the HCS forest identification sections and clear recommendations in the Peer Review Report to allow RSPO to determine compliance for their certification process. RSPO is finalising a ToR for this consultancy work.

#### IV. Integrated HCV-HCSA Assessment- High Conservation Value Resource Network

The HCSA Steering Group together with HCVRN developed a manual for the integrated HCV-HCSA assessments to support the identification of High Carbon Stock (HCS) forests alongside High Conservation Values (HCVs). A detailed technical HCV-HCSA assessment manual was prepared by the HCVRN and the HCS Approach and published in November 2017. All joint HCV-HCSA assessments will need to follow this manual and new quality assurance procedures via the HCV Assessor Licensing Scheme (ALS). This integration is applicable to companies who have commitments to no deforestation of HCS forests and protection of HCV areas.

##### The HCV-HCSA Assessment Process

All relevant updates on HCV-HCSA assessments are available from HCVRN website [here](#).



An HCV-HCSA assessment must be led by an assessor with an ALS license. At least two assessment team members (including the lead assessor) must be registered HCS approach practitioners. At least one member of the assessment team must be a Geographic Information System (GIS) and remote sensing expert. In addition, there must be at least one team member with social expertise, including community facilitation and participatory mapping. Team members must be able to communicate

appropriately (i.e. respectful of local cultures, using appropriate methods, using language interpreters) and effectively with a range of stakeholders. For the full HCV-HCSA Assessment Manual, view [here](#).

Licensed Assessors: Qualified and Leading HCV-HCSA Assessments by Region

