

HCSA Peer Reviewers

Introduction

Established in 2014, the High Carbon Stock (HCS) Approach is a methodology that distinguishes forest areas for protection from degraded lands with low carbon, social and biodiversity values that may be developed. The methodology was developed with the aim to ensure a practical, transparent, robust, and scientifically credible approach that is widely accepted to implement commitments to halt deforestation in the tropics, while ensuring the rights and livelihoods of local peoples are respected.

The HCSA Secretariat conducts peer reviews of HCSA assessments for development areas where High Conservation Value (HCV) assessment reports were completed before November 2017, meaning an integrated HCV-HCSA Assessment will not be conducted. Peer Reviews of HCSA Assessment Reports provide an independent review of an assessment's quality and alignment with the HCSA Toolkit, as well as suggestions recommendations for improvement, before the HCSA assessment report is published on the [HCSA website](#). Peer reviewers do not provide a formal approval of an assessment report.

Peer Reviews of HCSA Assessment Reports are conducted by independent Peer Reviewers that form a Peer Review Panel. The Peer Reviewers are not HCSA staff – they are individual consultants and/or work full-time for other organisations/institutions. The Peer Review Panel consists of one lead reviewer and potentially up to two additional expert Peer Reviewers (total of 1-3 Peer reviewers per assessment report). Individual reviews are organised by the HCSA secretariat, by rotation and depending on specific skills of the Reviewers, and importantly, their availability. Companies may request to change the Peer Reviewer(s) if the company perceives a conflict of interest. This request must be justified.

More information on the process can be found on the [Quality Assurance section of the HCSA website](#).

Roles and Responsibilities

HCSA Peer Reviewers thoroughly review (relevant sections of) HCSA Assessment reports and their annexes and data, and provide a summary of findings in the Peer Review Report Template (See the [HCSA Assessments](#) webpage for examples) within the stated deadlines. The findings should comment on the quality of relevant report sections in terms of their correctness, clarity, and alignment with the HCSA Toolkit, as well as provide recommendations on how to finalise or improve the HCS assessment report and process going forward. The recommendations are presented in the form of a Peer Review report that will be published on HCSA website.

Timeline and time requirements for a Peer Review

Peer Reviewers will not be contracted as a full-time staff of HCSA. The HCSA Secretariat reaches out to Peer Reviewers on an ad-hoc basis, as reports are submitted to the HCSA Secretariat. The working period is based on the timeline for each assessment which will depend on the availability of the appointed Peer Reviewer and the time needed by the company to prepare the complete documentation needed. The actual review time for each assessment submitted can vary from one (1) – three (3) months.

Depending on the topic of expertise of the Peer Reviewer, below are the estimate of maximum hours for review of the HCS assessment:

| Section of HCS assessment | Estimate of maximum hours for review |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| Initial image classification (using ArcGIS or similar), refining classification after forest inventory, and Patch Analysis Decision Tree | 6 |
| Forest inventory and statistics (carbon calculations) | 4 |
| Review of community mapping/social integration process, Social Impact Assessments, social sections of HCV assessment | 4 |
| HCV quality review, Rapid Biodiversity Assessment (if any) | 4 |
| Summary of findings of peer review panel and whether assessment followed the HCS Approach (Lead Reviewer) | 2 |

Expertise and abilities

The Peer Review Panel will consist of one lead reviewer and/or one to two additional expert reviewers (total 1-3) depending on the peer reviewers and their relevant competences available for a specific Peer Review. The Peer Review Panel must have the following expertise:

1. Forest-related Remote Sensing/GIS, inventory and statistics
2. Tropical forest ecology, forest disturbance and regeneration
3. Social values, community rights and participatory mapping

It is also recommended that the Peer Review Panel have the following expertise:

4. Conservation planning

In addition, the following are also highly desirable:

- Experience as an HCSA Registered Practitioners in conducting HCSA or HCV-HCSA assessments is particularly advantageous.
- Excellent written communication skills with experience in producing formal technical documentation (especially the Lead Reviewer)
- Language skills: Bahasa Indonesia is particularly advantageous, Spanish and French are also useful.
- Flexible and available to conduct several reviews per year.

Payment

A standard payment for each completed Peer Review is USD 2,000 (lead reviewer). Please find below table for fee that can be expected per review of each section of the HCSA assessment report. :

| No | Section of HCS Assessment | Section of Peer Review Report | *Fee (USD) |
|----|---|--|--------------|
| 1 | Lead Reviewer | Section 1 (Peer Review Summary) | 200 |
| 2 | Social | Section 2 (Social Issues) | 400 |
| 3 | HCV | Section 3 (Ecological and Conservation Values) | 400 |
| 4 | Initial Image Classification and Patch Analysis Decision Tree | Section 4 & 6 (Image Analysis & Land Use Planning) | 600 |
| 5 | Forest Inventory and Statistics (carbon calculation) | Section 5 (Forest Inventory) | 400 |
| | | Total: | 2,000 |

**This is the standard fee. Some special cases of review will change the amount of fee payment.*

HOW TO APPLY

Please apply directly to the HCSA Secretariat with your resume and cover letter, highlighting your relevant experience, via qa@highcarbonstock.org, by 30 April 2022.