

Transcript: local communities and management and monitoring of conservation areas**1**

This presentation focuses on local communities and management and monitoring of conservation areas, including the provision of community benefits and incentives for conservation. These are the subjects of HCSA Social Requirements 8 and 9. The full text of the Requirements is set out in full in module 2 of the HCSA Toolkit and more detailed guidance on these two aspects is given in Appendices 4 and 5 of the HCSA's Implementation Guide to the Social Requirements.

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We will look first at SR9, on management and monitoring of conservation areas. The HCVRN has published detailed guidance on ecological aspects of management and monitoring; this Social Requirement is about local community aspects.

SR9 states that "Where areas need to be conserved or their use restricted in order to maintain or enhance High Conservation Values and High Carbon Stocks, and these areas overlap the lands owned, occupied or otherwise used by indigenous peoples, local communities and others, these are integrated into community land use planning processes, and participatory management and monitoring plans are then adopted, subject to their Free, Prior and Informed Consent".

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Participatory management and monitoring plans are agreements with communities about local aspects of implementation of the ICLUP in the areas that concern them. For example, these PMMPs may include the arrangements for individual conservation areas on the lands of a particular community, including any related incentives and benefits. They may also include details related to cultural sites and community use zones, including restrictions on access by company staff. These local details are developed based on the overall strategic measures in the draft ICLUP, and as local measures are agreed they feed back into the draft ICLUP. In this way, modifications may be made to the ICLUP based on discussions with communities, and at the same time the details are agreed of how the ICLUP will be applied in different parts of the site. For more information on the negotiation process, see the presentation in this series on stage 3 of implementation.

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Community agreements are usually for a fixed duration, after which they will be reviewed. For each conservation area they specify its location and boundaries, land tenure and any proposed legal designations (for example, as a protected area or a community forest); roles and responsibilities of the different parties involved; the conservation objectives and management measures, including rules about what is permitted, which need to be negotiated on a case by case basis, and what the sanctions are if the rules are broken; community conservation benefits and incentives, and what happens if they don't materialise; and criteria and procedures for monitoring, reporting, and feeding the results back into adaptive management. Agreements will also need to include any additional measures relating to cultural sites and community use zones, including rules on access by company staff.

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The level of community involvement in conservation management and monitoring varies greatly. Management may be led by the company or a third party and the community may have limited involvement once the management and monitoring measures have been formally agreed, for

example simply ceding or leasing proposed conservation areas. Or they may take a more active role, either by collaborating in management and decision-making or taking full responsibility for management themselves, with technical assistance where necessary. In any of these models, community members may also be employed to carry out operational activities. More detail of the different models is given in appendix 5 of the Implementation Guide. However, what is essential in all cases is that the community's right to FPIC is respected, that management measures are designed to meet the conservation objectives, and that effective procedures are in place for monitoring and feedback into management.

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Moving on to conservation benefits and incentives, Social Requirement 8 states that "Mutually agreed, equitable incentive and benefit packages are developed for indigenous peoples, local communities and other land users in return for their consent to the establishment of HCV and HCS conservation areas, and for their ongoing support in the conservation and management of these areas, while assuring them continued access to natural resources in a sustainable manner, in line with HCV 5 identification".

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Incentives may include both cash elements, such as paid jobs or rental, lease or royalty payments, and also non-cash elements, for example related to land titling and governance, to alternative livelihoods, or to community infrastructural services. Some of these benefit individuals and others benefit the whole community, and a mixture of these two levels is often most effective as an incentive. A summary of some of the principles that have been developed elsewhere on designing effective benefits and incentives packages is provided in Appendix 5 of the implementation guide.

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In addition to agreeing what incentives and benefits will be provided, agreement needs to be reached on exactly who will receive them. Mechanisms are needed to ensure that they go direct to communities and their distribution needs to be fair, or equitable, in the eyes of community members. Administrative and institutional arrangements are needed to ensure transparency and accountability, including a timetable for disbursements and monitoring of compliance, and procedures must be agreed about what happens in cases of non-compliance. Again, Appendix 5 sets out some of the principles on equitable benefit-sharing that have been developed elsewhere.

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In conclusion, here's a summary of the steps that are needed in relation to local community involvement in conservation management and monitoring. They are structured by the four stages of implementation that are described in the implementation guide.

During the Preparation stage, The company explains the requirements for conservation areas to the community, including the need for community FPIC and the potential for incentives and benefits. If the community wish to proceed, basic participatory mapping of areas under community tenure and use is carried out as part of the land tenure and use study

During the Assessment stage, potential conservation areas are identified as part of the HCV-HCSA Assessment, which also produces recommendations for conservation management and monitoring and discusses them with affected communities. Meanwhile the company continues to engage with communities and discuss options for future community agreements, including potential incentives and benefits.

In the Negotiation stage, which starts once the HCV-HCSA Assessment report has been approved, negotiations begin on the draft ICLUP and local community agreements. Communities must validate the ICLUP and give free prior and information consent in order for implementation to proceed to the next stage.

Finally, once FPIC has been given, any remaining operational details are agreed, training is provided, conservation management measures are put in place, and monitoring begins. The level of community involvement at this stage will vary, but in all cases two-way communications continue: as a minimum, both parties continue to receive updates and monitoring reports and are able to exchange information, observations and concerns. Any changes to management at any time are subject to community FPIC.

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Finally here's a summary of key sources of further information.