



Annual Report 2022

About HCV Network

HCV Network is a member-based organization founded in 2005 that promotes the High Conservation Value (HCV) Approach, a methodology to identify and protect ecosystems, biodiversity, and the needs of indigenous peoples and local communities where development takes place.



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Message from the Global Director

Two million hectares

At the 2022 United Nations Biodiversity Conference, world leaders adopted the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, which includes a target to 'ensure and enable that by 2030 at least 30 per cent of terrestrial and inland water areas, and of marine and coastal areas, especially areas of particular importance for biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services, are effectively conserved and managed.'

For twenty years, the HCV Approach has helped identify biodiversity, ecosystems, and areas of social and cultural importance for indigenous peoples and local communities in land-use and land-cover change frontiers. Here's an example: by the end of 2022, the Secretariat had evaluated reports from assessments covering more than 2 million hectares. These assessments identified over 700,000 hectares for protection, meaning that many HCVs were present in these productive landscapes, and could have been impacted. Unprotected areas are becoming even more critical to tackle the climate and biodiversity crises.

To ensure the HCV Approach continues to be widely adopted, in 2022 we increased our training course offering, we recruited a small team to grow our landscapes workstream, joined new partnerships and alliances, trialed new tools and continued to engage users of the HCV Approach such as financial institutions, commodity producers, and voluntary sustainability standards.

We also started revamping HCV Network governance to make it leaner and more participative. This year was the last for our Management Committee. From 2023, under a new legal setup, Network governance will evolve, and Members and the Trustees of a new charity will absorb most of the decision-making responsibilities previously held by the Management Committee. We are very grateful for the valuable support provided by the 2020-2023 Management Committee formed by Forest Peoples Programme, the World Resources Institute, WWF, Proforest, Golden Agri Resources, APRIL, the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil, Forest Stewardship Council and Olam.

In 2023, our focus will be on alignment with all users, and

wider international efforts such as upcoming science-based targets for nature and nature-related financial disclosures. Measuring the effectiveness of identification, management, and monitoring of HCVs, and clear reporting, could help many stakeholders – from growers to financial institutions – report robustly and effectively on their impacts on nature.

Paulina Villalpando, Global Director



Secretariat

Team

In 2022, the Secretariat welcomed Nev Kemp as Landscapes Lead, Rifat Aldina as Senior Quality Officer and Project Manager, and Vasco Ferreira da Costa as Intern. After several years at the Secretariat, the team said goodbye to Ellen Watson, Haryo Ajie Dewanto and Yudi Iskandarsyah.

Communications

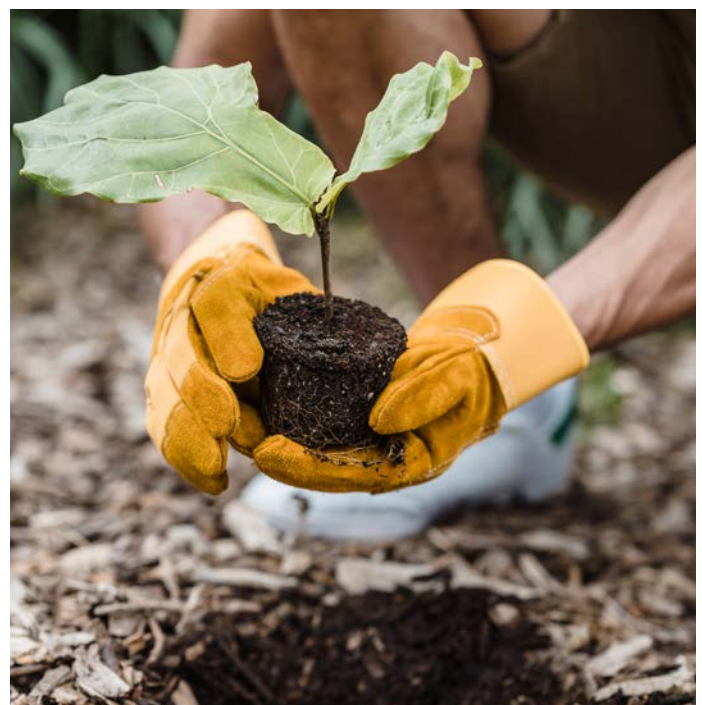
In February, a new website was launched to showcase new areas of work and new partnerships, to further increase transparency and to improve navigability. The website includes the new HCV Network logo and identity voted on by Members in 2021. Some of the new sections and improved functionalities are:

- A page for each workstream.
- Member and Management Committee logos organized by constituency.
- Improved library filters and detailed cards for each document.
- A new Q&A section.
- Report pages showcasing details on all stages of report evaluations.
- More information about our Registered Training Providers.

- Improved profiles for each Licensed Assessor, showcasing their track record and professional experience with the HCV Approach.

- A timeline showcasing the Network's 20 years of history, among other.

Throughout the year, the Secretariat produced general monthly newsletters, bi-monthly quality assurance newsletters, regular blog posts and opinion pieces, and shared frequent updates on all social media channels. Members also actively contributed with news, publications, and general updates.



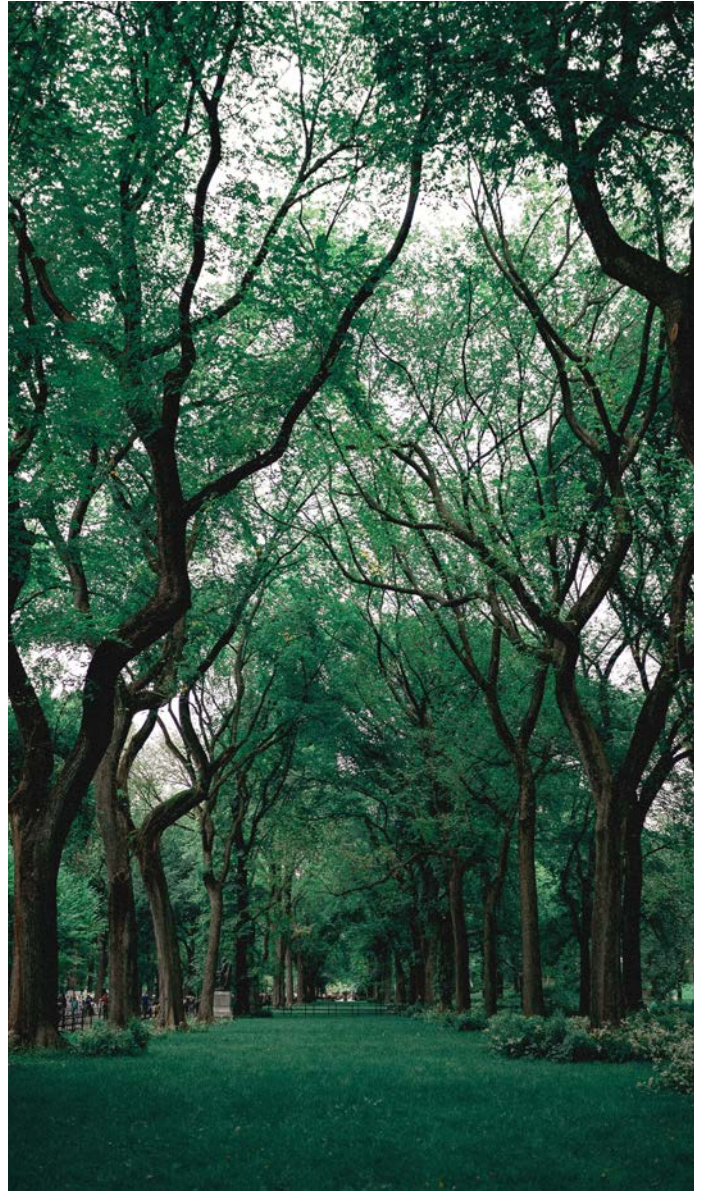
Operations

As the Secretariat team continues to grow, internal systems must be in place to ensure smooth day to day operations. In 2022, the Secretariat worked on a Human Resources package, which included updating or developing key documents, including the Human Resources Policy, the Employee Appraisal Process and Form, a Newcomer Checklist for onboarding new employees, a Company Organogram for planning employee professional growth, an Exit Interview Form for whenever employees decide to move on, Employee Information Forms, the Staff Manual (which guides daily project management and other processes), the Terms of Employment, and the Maternity and Paternity Leave Policy, among other.

Other policies, such as the Health and Safety Policy and the Travel Policy were updated too to ensure compliance with UK Government regulations and to ensure trouble free business travel for all employees. During the year, the Secretariat worked closely with external IT, accounting, legal, and travel firms to ensure efficient operations.

Legal Directors

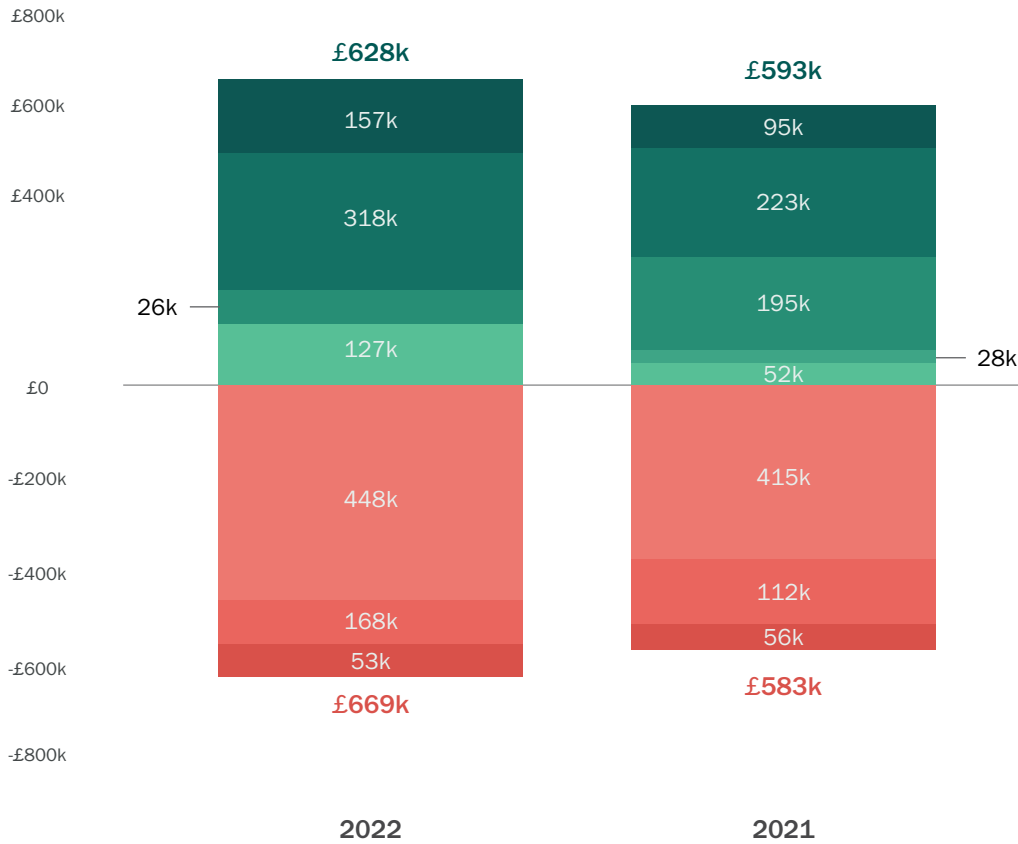
The Secretariat held quarterly calls with the Legal Directors of HCV Network Ltd., the UK-based private company limited by guarantee without share capital that hosts the Secretariat.



Financial report



Income vs Expenditure



Income

- **Membership Income**
 Annual fees paid by HCV Network Members, Supporters and Donations.
- **HCV Summit 2021**
 Ticket sales and sponsor support.
- **Grants**
 Received from partner organizations for implementation of projects.
- **Assessor Licensing Scheme Fees**
 Application fees, annual renewal fees and fees paid for HCV and HCV-HCSA assessment report evaluations.
- **Income from Services**
 Provision of training, development of tools for partners and collaborators, other.

Expenditure

- **Personnel cost**
 Personnel salaries and associated costs.
- **Direct costs**
 Contractors, partners, quality panel, translators, other.
- **Administrative cost**
 Legal, accountancy, other.

Partnerships

Partnerships contribute to increasing exposure and impact of the HCV Approach and position the methodology in global fora about people, nature, and climate.

In 2022, the Network formalized important partnerships to advance several workstreams.



Accountability Framework Initiative (AFi)

The Accountability Framework definitions related to deforestation, conversion, and protection of ecosystems establish that minimal level (of deforestation or conversion) must not result in the loss of important biological, social, or cultural values as defined by the High Conservation Value Approach. In June, the HCV Network joined the Accountability Framework Initiative (AFi) as a Supporting Partner. Supporting Partners extend the reach and positive impact of the AFi by promoting use of the Accountability Framework by companies, industry groups, financial institutions, governments, and other sustainability initiatives, both globally and in commodity-producing countries. Throughout the year, the Secretariat participated in quarterly meetings with the AFi coalition, and in several sessions of the annual meeting that took place in Washington, DC in December.



Taskforce on Nature-Related Financial Disclosures (TNFD)

In 2022, the HCV Network joined the TNFD Forum, a global multi-disciplinary consultative group of institutions that supports taskforce members in developing and delivering a risk management and disclosure framework for organizations to report and act on evolving nature related risks, with the aim of supporting a shift in global financial flows away from nature-negative outcomes and toward nature-positive outcomes.

The TNFD has developed an implementation framework known as LEAP (Locate, Evaluate, Assess, Prepare) and is developing sector specific guidance while pilots are underway. Protection of High Conservation Values is already broadly recognized and adopted by the private sector, in particular in the Forest, Land and Agriculture (FLAG) sector; hundreds of companies across the supply chain and financial institutions have made commitments to protect HCVs. Making use of the available HCV tools from landscape screening to site-level implementation contributes to following the LEAP framework.

Science-based Targets Network (SBTN)

The HCV Network joined the SBTN Corporate Engagement Program. This means HCVN will contribute to development of science-based targets for nature through methods, tools, and guidance that build on what companies are already doing and help them transform their business. In 2020, the SBTN introduced a five-step corporate target setting framework. In parallel, it published interim science-based targets. No deforestation and no conversion are interim targets (including no conversion of areas meeting HCV criteria). Throughout 2022, the Secretariat was active in submitting inputs to SBTN consultations and encouraged HCVN Members to become active in this space.



World Benchmarking Alliance (WBA)

The HCV Network joined the World Benchmarking Alliance as an ally. HCV areas are recognized within the World Benchmarking Alliance (WBA) Nature Benchmark. The WBA, along with its allies, is building a diverse and inclusive movement of global actors committed to using benchmarks to incentivize, measure, and monitor corporate performance on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and will assess and rank the performance of 2,000 of the world's most influential companies against seven systems of transformation by 2023.

The scope of WBA's circular transformation was expanded to cover nature and biodiversity as recognition of the need for greater understanding, transparency, and accountability of business impact on our environment. The WBA Nature Benchmark was launched in April 2022 and is used to rank keystone companies on their efforts to protect our environment and its biodiversity.

Companies that publicly disclose their actions to identify and protect HCVs will contribute to the assessment of their performance against the benchmark.

FEMEXPALMA

Federación Mexicana de Palma de Aceite

Cooperation Agreement with FEMEXPALMA

For Mexican producers to be able to export to key markets such as the European Union (EU), they must meet strict requirements such as certification by the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO). To be certified by RSPO, the HCV Approach must be applied prior to the establishment of any new oil palm plantations. In April 2022, the HCV Network, and the Mexican Oil Palm Federation (FEMEXPALMA) signed a 5-year cooperation agreement to support FEMEXPALMA's members and allies to design better strategies to identify and protect HCVs and support smallholders to achieve certification and implement good agricultural practices. In 2022, the Secretariat and FEMEXPALMA co-funded for conservation projects, including a proposal to monitor HCVs using remote sensing tools and to support oil palm smallholders protect HCVs and comply with the new European Union deforestation-free regulations. In terms of communications, 15 materials on the HCV Approach were published on LinkedIn, covering topics such as HCV Screening, HCV requirements in the RSPO Standard and examples of Mexican High Conservation Values.

Outreach

The Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES).

The Secretariat participated in the second Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) Youth Workshop held in the Isle of Vilm, Germany in October 2022. The objective was for participants to understand how IPBES works and explore ways in which they can contribute to IPBES' mission through their daily work.

The Secretariat shared ways in which the HCV Approach supports international instruments to conserve biodiversity.

Governments

The Secretariat engaged with the UK Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS), and the Mexican Embassies in the UK and Brussels, to discuss upcoming regulations in the European Union and the UK that could support protection of High Conservation Values in agriculture, forestry, aquaculture, and other sectors.

Other effective area-based conservation measures (OECMs)

OECMs are areas that achieve the long term and effective in-situ conservation of biodiversity outside of protected areas. In 2022, the HCV Network Secretariat engaged with the Chair of the IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas OECM Specialist Group to discuss

a joint publication exploring the opportunities and challenges of recognizing HCV areas as OECMs.

Key Biodiversity Area (KBA) partnership

Thirteen of the world's leading nature conservation organizations launched the KBA partnership in 2016 to enhance global conservation efforts by systematically mapping internationally important sites and ensuring that scarce resources are directed to safeguarding the most important places for nature. The Secretariat engaged with the KBA Partnership to discuss scaling up our collaboration and avoid duplication of efforts, particularly in countries where parallel HCV and KBA processes are taking place. Coordinated conservation interventions present a good opportunity for joint action, particularly as the KBA partnership and the HCV Network share several stakeholders.

Nature-based Solutions (NbS)

The HCV Approach is a Nature-based Solution as it promotes actions to protect, sustainably manage, and restore natural or modified ecosystems, that address societal challenges effectively and adaptively, simultaneously providing human well-being and biodiversity benefits. In July, the Secretariat attended the Nature-based Solutions conference in Oxford. HCV Network Members WWF, Rainforest Alliance and Forest Peoples Programme hosted several sessions and provided useful examples of successful NbS around the world.

Members

New Members



Nativa Meio Ambiente

Nativa Meio Ambiente is a Brazilian environmental consultancy that specializes in environmental analyses focused on providing practical solutions for companies. It has over 10 years' experience in consultancy and project management in several fields, including mining, forestry, agriculture, and energy.

Founded in 2007, the consultancy has rapidly become a leader in environmental licensing, biodiversity conservation, international environmental certification, and environmental monitoring in Brazil.



QIMA IBD

QIMA IBD indirectly works with the HCV Approach through auditing of the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) standard, which requires identification and protection of HCVs. IBD joined the HCV Network to better understand how the HCV Approach works in practice, and to help protect HCVs.

Increased scrutiny of how social and environmental aspects are managed by RSPO-certified companies also motivated QIMA IBD to become a Member.

“We joined the HCV Network as Members in 2022 to participate and discuss innovative methodologies to improve environmental impact analysis and propose unique solutions focused on environmental conservation. Discussions and proposals for methodologies involve professionals from all over the world with different skills. These analyses can be applied to studies in different areas of scientific knowledge”.

– Ricardo Santana, Coordenação de Projetos.

“To join the HCV Network was a natural step for IBD due to its objective to pursue optimization and excellence in decision making, assessment and monitoring of conservation and HCVs. As a certification body with presence in several continents, the challenges inherent to assess the compliance of different kinds of areas and landscapes under different sustainable standards demands the consolidated and proved knowledge, methodologies and continuous improvement that only the HCV Network can provide”.

– Leonardo Gomes, Gerente de Certificação de Sustentabilidade.

Members in 2022

Non-profit organizations



Standards



Technical Service Providers



Producer/Supply Chain Companies



Membership Fees

In 2022, after several years of not doing so, the Secretariat adjusted membership fees due to inflation.

Members were asked to provide updated turnover figures to calculate their membership fee categories for 2023.

Goodbye and thank you to our Supporters

In 2014, when membership was introduced, three categories for joining the Network were created: Members, Supporters and Advisors. Historically, Membership has always been the most popular category for joining. Therefore, in 2022, the Management Committee decided to phase out the Supporter and Advisor categories to favor a leaner governance structure. Supporters were encouraged to join as Members from January 1st, 2023. The Network would like to thank the following organizations for being Supporters throughout the years:

- Andreas Knoell Consulting
- Casa da Floresta
- Kulim Malaysia Berhard*
- Mondi*
- Nativa Meio Ambiente*
- Sime Darby*
- The Biodiversity Consultancy*
- The Wilderness Society Australia*
- UNEP-WCMC
- Wilmar International*
- Zoological Society of London*

*These organizations were Supporters until 2022, the rest are historical.



Governance

New Legal Structure

The Secretariat is currently hosted by a not for profit company that was legally registered in the United Kingdom in 2015. This legal figure allows the Secretariat to generate income from services, but also receive grants and donations. The company is limited by guarantee which means that dividends cannot be paid, and any profits must be re-invested into fulfilling the company's mission. This figure has allowed the Secretariat to access some donations and grants over the years, as well as generate income from services. However, to facilitate access to grants and donations, the Management Committee approved the Secretariat's proposal to setup a charity.

In 2022, the Secretariat started setting up a Charitable Incorporated Organization (CIO) in the UK. The CIO will be the owner of HCV Network Ltd. (the existing legal entity) and will require at least three Trustees.

In September 2022, the Management Committee (MC) agreed on the new legal structure above, maintaining the current Management Committee until the CIO is setup and transferring some of their decision-making responsibilities to Trustees and Members, increasing direct Member participation. In 2023, the Secretariat will recruit Trustees, and propose a process for Member participation.





Management Committee

The 2020-2023 Management Committee is represented by:

Non-profit organizations



Standards



Producer/Supply Chain Companies

Technical Service Providers



2030 Roadmap

A first draft 2030 Roadmap was shared with the Management Committee in early 2022. Throughout March and April, the Secretariat had one-on-one calls with HCV Network Members and Supporters to gather inputs. More than 200 comments were received during the consultation, which helped the Secretariat rework the draft. In parallel, the Secretariat developed concept notes and individual strategies for key sections of the Roadmap, which contributed to the final version.



National/Regional Interpretations

Malaysia

The National Interpretation for Management and Monitoring of High Conservation Values was launched in January 2022 thanks to joint efforts between WWF-Malaysia, the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO), and Proforest. Together with the National Interpretation for the Identification of HCVs published in 2018, resource managers, auditors and HCV professionals now have a complete package to implement the HCV Approach in their country.

Bhutan

WWF Bhutan, in collaboration with relevant government and non-government agencies implementing the Living Landscape: Securing HCVs in South-Western Bhutan project endorsed the HCV National Interpretation document in June. Bhutan's green development plans seek to balance economic growth with securing biodiversity and the livelihoods of local communities. The National Interpretation for HCV Identification was launched in August and will inform national land use planning, conservation in priority landscapes, and support holistic approaches to forest management.

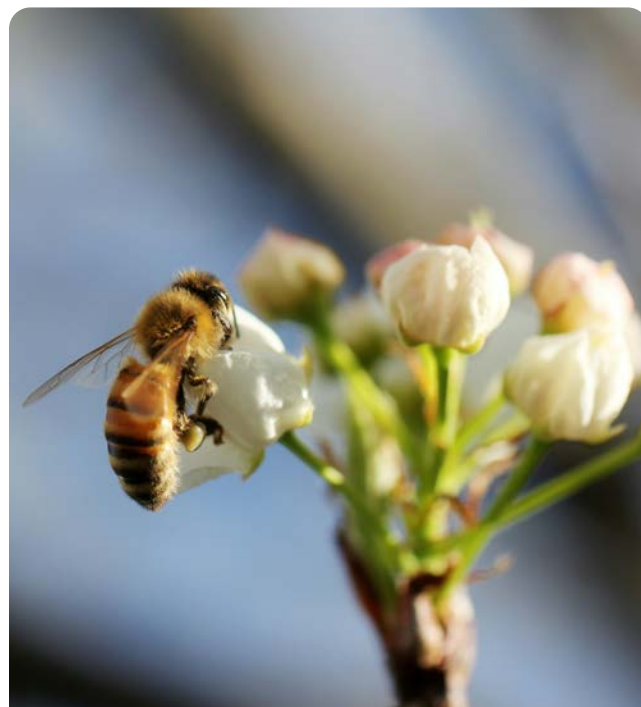
Congo Basin

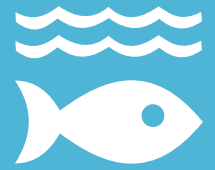
The Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) established a regional working group to develop an HCV Framework for the Congo Basin. During the final stages of development, the Secretariat provided input into the Framework, to ensure alignment with best practice on HCV interpretations and optimise its usability for forest managers. Final validation of the Framework is expected in early 2023.





Workstreams





The Secretariat continued engaging with stakeholders in the marine and freshwater community to promote further uptake of the HCV Approach in aquatic ecosystems.

Fundraising efforts for project in Chile

In addition to collaborating with the Aquaculture Stewardship Council (ASC), and in line with its aquatic strategy, the Secretariat and WWF Chile worked on identifying fundraising opportunities for implementing a joint project in the Chiloense Ecoregion, a seascape where kelp forests are found but where spatial planning processes must improve to ensure important biodiversity and livelihoods are not lost at the expense of salmon farming. WWF Chile is a keen supporter of the HCV Approach and has used it in the terrestrial and marine realms for certification and conservation prioritization.

Land-Sea Workshop in Costa Rica

In September 2022 the Secretariat participated in the first 'Land-Sea Golfo Dulce' workshop in Puerto Jimenez, Costa Rica, to discuss leverage points to promote healthy coastal ecosystems in Golfo Dulce, including improving management practices of terrestrial activities such as agriculture and cattle ranching. The Secretariat introduced the HCV Approach to workshop participants and shared the benefits of using it as an engagement

tool to prioritize conservation and management actions in landscapes. Follow up workshops are planned for early 2023.





An internal draft strategy for increasing engagement and coordination with voluntary sustainability standards that require protection of HCVs was developed. The Secretariat continued to work directly with standards, with the following activities during 2022.

Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO)

The Secretariat actively participated in RSPO's Independent Smallholder No-deforestation Task Force, the Assurance Standing Committee and its Standard Quality Subgroup, provided expert inputs to the 'Planet' and 'Smallholders' Technical Committees in charge of updating the Principles and Criteria (P&C) and the Independent Smallholders Standard, provided inputs to the updated Remediation and Compensation Procedure for growers, joined the Assurance Forum and submitted inputs to the consultations on the P&C updates.

During the International Oil Palm Conference held in Cartagena in September, the Secretariat met with palm oil producers and Fedepalma, the Colombian federation of palm oil producers, to discuss opportunities and challenges faced by companies in implementing the HCV Approach, largely in relation to RSPO certification. Side meetings were held with HCV Network Members BioAp, Proforest and RSPO, and FEMEXPALMA, the Mexican federation of palm oil producers, to discuss setting up a Latin American HCV Working Group.

A follow up meeting was held in November to discuss the objectives and scope of the group. Recruitment of more potential members will take place in early 2023.

In October, the Secretariat attended the Sustainable Palm Oil Dialogue (SPOD) in Amsterdam and had a booth at the RSPO RT 2022 in Kuala Lumpur in November, where information sessions were organized and meetings were held with HCV Network Members, Licensed Assessors, Quality Panel members, and many other partners in the region.

Malaysian Sustainable Palm Oil (MSPO)

The Malaysian Palm Oil Certification Council (MPOCC) is developing HCV Guidelines as part of the requirements of the revised MSPO certification scheme standards. MPOCC is also planning to create a body of assessors to conduct HCV assessments following these guidelines. The HCV Network Secretariat, alongside Network Members, submitted feedback to the second draft of the HCV Guidelines, seeking to ensure alignment with the HCV Network's Common Guidance for HCV Identification, Management and Monitoring. The Secretariat also met with several representatives in 2022 to encourage collaboration and avoid duplication, as robust benchmarks for protecting HCVs already exist for the oil palm sector in Malaysia.

Soil Association

The No Deforestation Task and Finish Group that the Secretariat participated in closed in 2022, with the Soil Association aiming to publish sourcing requirements in early 2023 to ensure palm oil ingredients in SA certified products are deforestation-free.

Forest Stewardship Council (FSC)

During the FSC General Assembly 2022, the Secretariat hosted a side session about HCV Management and Monitoring in FSC certification. The session highlighted the benefits of maintaining HCVs, presented the challenges faced, as well as strategies to address them, and provided perspectives on how to better support HCV management and monitoring within FSC certification. Panelists included representatives from HCV Network Members and Supporters (Soil Association, the Zoological Society of London, and Forest Peoples Programme).

The Secretariat also participated as a speaker in a panel about FSC regenerative rubber and met many HCV Network Member and non-member organizations during the week to discuss the challenges and opportunities of protecting High Conservation Values (HCVs) in forestry and other commodity contexts. The Secretariat was also asked to provide recommendations for improving the draft FSC HCV Framework for the Congo Basin. Perhaps the biggest highlight of the General Assembly was the passing of several motions that will strengthen the protection and restoration of HCVs in the FSC system.

Aquaculture Stewardship Council (ASC)

ASC is developing a single, globally applicable single Farm Standard to replace its species-based standards. While ASC standards consider impacts to habitats and biodiversity, the HCV concept had not yet been fully captured. The standard revision offered an opportunity to define responsible aquaculture practices that respect HCVs. In July 2022, the Secretariat worked with ASC to review draft indicators and provide technical advice to identify and mitigate risks to HCVs across aquaculture production systems.

Global Platform for Sustainable Natural Rubber (GPSNR)

In May 2022, the Secretariat participated in GPSNR meetings in Singapore to discuss an assurance model and KPIs to address deforestation using the HCV and HCS Approaches. From July 2022, the Secretariat has been facilitating the development of GPSNR's Smallholders Policy-equivalent. The project is expected to be completed in early 2023.

In the General Assembly of December 2022, the HCV Network was elected for the second time to be a member of GPSNR's Executive Committee.

Naturland

The Secretariat conducted a gap analysis of the German-based organics standard Naturland. This involved understanding risks to HCVs and providing recommendations to update the standard's requirements in line with international priorities on no conversion of natural ecosystems and protection of HCVs and outlining approaches for licensees to implement this.

Better Cotton

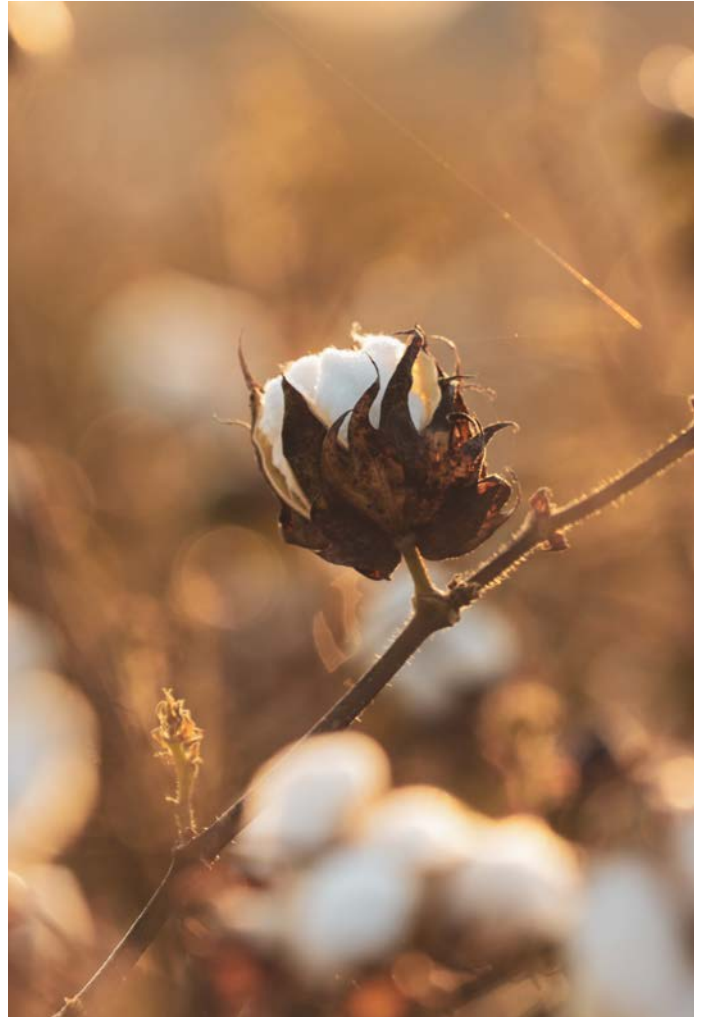
In 2022, the Secretariat was a Member of the Natural Resource Working Group for the Production Standard update. The Secretariat also supported development of an implementation framework as Better Cotton move towards adopting requirements on no conversion of natural ecosystems on top of HCV protection requirements in their Production Standard.

Bonsucro

As the revised Bonsucro production standard was approved in 2022, tailored HCV and biodiversity guidelines for on-going production and expansion contexts were developed by the Secretariat. This is now published and is accessible from their website.

Climate, Community & Biodiversity (CCB) Standard

In 2022, the Secretariat received numerous requests for guidance on how to implement requirements for HCV protection in CCB projects. The Secretariat held a call with Verra to discuss potential development of HCV guidance and capacity building.





The Secretariat engaged with three commercial banks with policies requiring HCV protection. Engagement with financial institutions has been a priority since early 2021. Opportunities include channeling investments into protection of HCV areas, exploring potential benefits of biodiversity credits for HCV protection, and using HCV data as a baseline for reporting on nature-related financial disclosures.

Exploring the potential of conservation finance

The HCV Network Secretariat joined the Strategic Advisory Board of the ‘No Trees, No Future – Unlocking the full potential of conservation finance’ project funded by The David and Lucile Packard Foundation. The Copenhagen Business School leads and administers this project. Kick-off meetings will take place in early 2023.

Measuring what matters beyond climate: Nature-related disclosures by businesses and financiers

In September 2022, in close collaboration with Deloitte, the Secretariat imparted a Masterclass on ‘Measuring

What Matters Beyond Climate: Nature related Financial Disclosures by Businesses and Financiers’ imparted during The Cooler Earth Sustainability Summit 2022 organized by CIMB Group, a leading ASEAN bank. More than 300 participants learned how the HCV Approach, as an established methodology, can support protection of nature and local people’s livelihoods.

Indonesia Sustainable Finance Initiative

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) Finance Initiative, in collaboration with the Indonesia Sustainable Finance Initiative, imparted a series of courses for Indonesian financial institutions on financial risks and opportunities related to investments in agriculture and forestry. The Secretariat imparted a session on how the HCV and High Carbon Stock (HCS) Approaches can support responsible investments.





Using our Forest Integrity Assessment (FIA) tool to measure forest carbon stocks

The HCV Network's Forest Integrity Assessment (FIA) Tool is a simple ground-based tool to measure the biodiversity condition of natural forests. It has been used to identify and monitor forests harbouring HCVs in a wide range of contexts. More recently, studies have also showed that the FIA tool accurately measures above ground forest biomass. The HCV Network is exploring the potential of FIA to be a participatory and cost-efficient tool for community-based forest conservation projects to assess and monitor both forest biodiversity and carbon stock. In collaboration with Rainforest Alliance and as part of their community-based sustainable forest management programmes, a pilot was conducted in a priority conservation landscape in southern Cameroon to develop an adapted FIA checklist to measure forest biodiversity and above ground carbon stock. Secretariat to support technical advice, training, and assessment manual updates.

Collaboration with the High Carbon Stock Approach (HCSA) Steering Group

The Secretariat continued to collaborate with the HCSA Steering Group and Secretariat for the joint implementation of the HCV and HCS Approaches. In 2022, the HCV Network Secretariat evaluated 39 HCV-HCSA assessment reports (more than double than in 2021) and delivered several HCV-HCSA Assessor Training Courses (see Learning section).

The Secretariat actively participated in several HCSA Working Groups (Social Requirements, Smallholders, Protection, Quality Assurance and Landscapes), provided technical inputs to three HCSA Advice Notes, responded to queries from the HCSA Secretariat and from many users of both approaches, and kicked off updating the HCV-HCSA Assessment Manual, which will be finalized in 2023.



Landscapes & Jurisdictions

15 LIFE ON LAND



This workstream continues to rapidly grow. In 2022 an internal strategy was developed, which highlighted four focus areas moving forward:

1) Evaluating where HCV Screening or other large-scale applications of the HCV Approach are taking place, 2) Developing complementary tools and guidance, 3) Ensuring robust implementation and 4) scaling up collaboration.

In late November, the Secretariat organized a workshop with HCV Network Members and partners in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, to discuss what tools are needed to ensure that HCV Screening results are translated into local actions for the long-term protection of HCVs in landscapes and jurisdictions. Inputs received will contribute to strengthening the Secretariat's strategy.

Other activities included:

- Publishing a series of case studies to illustrate how the HCV Approach is being used in landscapes and jurisdictions around the world. Case studies for large-scale application of the HCV Approach in Cameroon, Brazil, and Indonesia are available on the website.

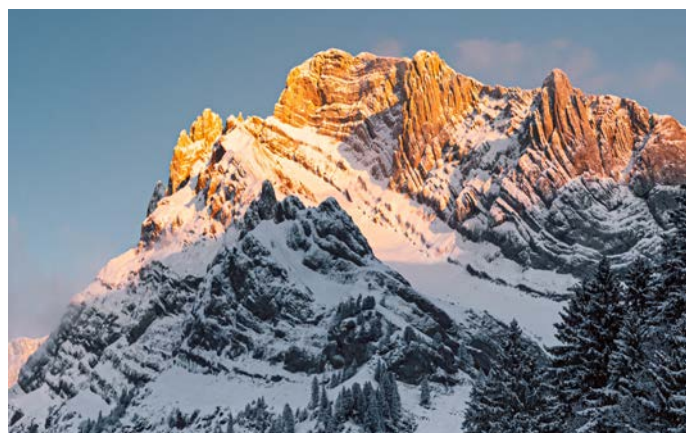
- Supporting the Zoological Society of London in implementing the HCV Screening methodology in 3 provinces in Sumatra, Indonesia to illustrate HCV risk profiles for palm oil mills and suggest follow up actions

for private sector engagement and priority landscape scale conservation.

- Participating in Proforest's Knowledge and Exchange week in Ghana, which included a visit to the Asunafo-Asutifi landscape program run by the Forestry Commission as part of Ghana's Cocoa Forest REDD+ program.

Upcoming work

The Secretariat, in collaboration with Kaleka and HCV Network Member Forest Peoples Programme (FPP), actively fundraised with the Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO) and Fondation Prince Albert II de Monaco to support HCV Screenings for jurisdictional certification in Kalimantan, Indonesia, and to produce complementary implementation guidance for local governments. Both grant proposals received confirmation at the end of 2022 and will kick off in 2023.





The Secretariat's draft management and monitoring strategy outlines key areas for improving the long-term protection of HCVs following baseline HCV or HCV-HCSA assessments:

- Capacity and consistency to implement HCV management and monitoring strategies by managers/producers at the site or farm level.
- Landscape level HCV management and monitoring and stakeholder coordination.
- Consistent reporting on impacts that aligns with international agreements and reporting frameworks.

Company Discussion Group (CDG)

The Company Discussion Group offers a space for companies who are actively using the HCV Approach to share their experiences regarding the implementation of HCV actions and to identify learning and collaboration opportunities. The CDG held meetings in March, June, and December. The calls covered:

- Challenges for companies in HCV management and monitoring.
- Range of potential solutions including the mobilisation of resources for company staff and auditors to access guidance and training.
- Receiving feedback from companies on a proposed

procedure to review company performance on HCV Management and monitoring, to support continuous improvement and for making claims.

Adaptive Management: Protecting HCVs in the long-term

The HCV identification or HCV assessment process is a relatively rapid, one-off exercise, whereas management and monitoring and protection of HCVs is a long-term process. To ensure good management and monitoring of environmental and social values, it is necessary to consider changing circumstances or new information that may come to light since an HCV assessment first took place. It can be complex to define changes in High Conservation Values and to know who has the authority to make and decide on the validity of changes. Given this challenge, the HCV Network Secretariat drafted a discussion paper with support from several growers to raise awareness about this topic and to serve as a starting point for practical solutions.

The social and cultural role of nature for local communities, São Tomé Island

Vasco Ferreira da Costa, Intern at the Secretariat, explored the importance of considering social and cultural values in efforts to protect nature in a blog inspired by his experience with the HCV Approach in São Tomé Island.



The HCV Network’s Learning Program increases uptake of the HCV Approach by improving users’ understanding of the approach and by offering a space for peer-to-peer learning.

In 2022, the Secretariat increased the course portfolio, prioritizing topics such as managing HCVs in landscapes and the role of the HCV Approach in meeting global sustainability and biodiversity targets. The Secretariat developed the syllabus for an introductory course on the HCV Approach and a course on HCV Management and Monitoring to be launched in early 2023.

Registered Training Providers (RTPs)

RTPs are organizations that are registered with the HCV Network to provide HCV and HCV-HCSA Assessment Training Courses, as well as other relevant training. These organizations have a track-record providing high quality training. In 2022, nine training providers were registered with the HCV Network:

- ASTRA Academy
- AiKnow (Asia Institution of Knowledge) by Remark Asia
- BioTerra Consultores Ambientales
- Daemeter Consulting
- HCV Network
- Proforest

- PT Hijau Daun
- Resource Trust Network
- Wild Asia

HCV and HCV-HCSA Assessor Training Courses

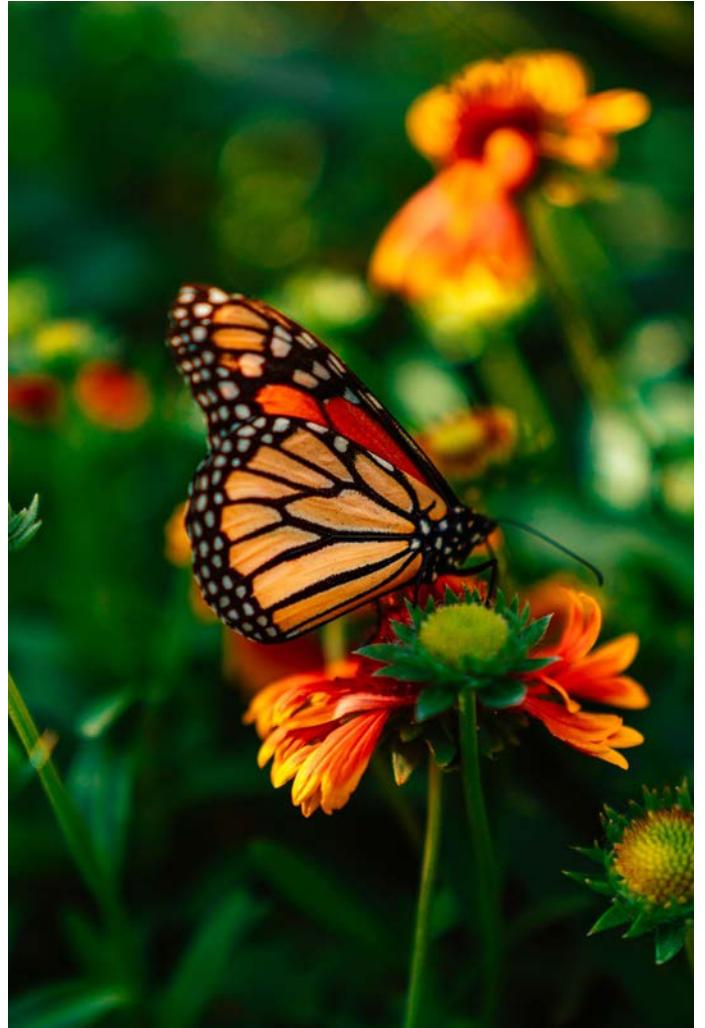
Between May and October, five HCV-HCSA Assessor Training Courses were delivered online, three by Remark Asia and two by the Secretariat. In total, 99 professionals were trained from 16 countries in Europe, Latin America, Southeast Asia, and Africa. Participants enjoyed online content, activities, and fruitful discussions with their peers. The Secretariat received positive feedback.

“I found this training very useful, and I am sure it will help me when conducting HCV-HCSA assessments, especially with data collection, data analysis and in applying the findings for management and monitoring actions.”

“The pre-training materials were very helpful, and I think these will be even more helpful for future trainees who may be entirely new to the world of HCV-HCSA assessments. The training platform was very interactive and easy to navigate and understand.”

Other activities

In early 2022, Proforest, HCV Network Member and long-time partner, asked the Secretariat for support in co-developing a training course for protecting HCVs in landscapes. The course was launched in December and explains how to implement the HCV Approach at different scales, including landscapes. This work was funded by the International Climate Initiative (IKI) of the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety and Consumer Protection (BMUV).



Quality Assurance

15 LIFE ON LAND



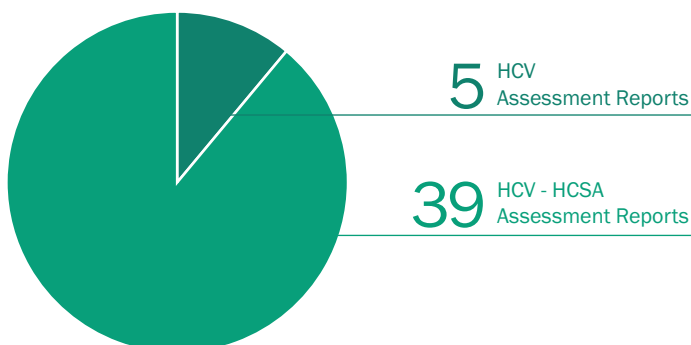
By the end of 2022, the Secretariat had evaluated assessment reports covering over 2.1 million hectares, and identified 700,000 hectares of HCV management areas.

These assessments were led by 50 Licensed Assessors from Africa, Latin America, and Asia.

Poor-quality reports covering more than 568k hectares were marked unsatisfactory, preventing development in these areas, and reducing risks for land managers and certification schemes.

The year in numbers

Reports Received



Commodities

42 reports for oil palm

1 report for rubber

1 report for pulp wood

People

11 new Quality Panel members



6 new Licensed Assessors from Thailand, the United States, Ghana, Papua New Guinea, Guatemala, and Mexico.



An Action Plan for continuous improvement of the Assessor Licensing Scheme (ALS) was approved by the Management Committee in April, and resulted in:

- Development of an internal checklist and remote sensing script to improve report evaluation consistency, incorporating all report content requirements (including HCSA Advice Notes – See Forests section).

- Publication of a Development and update of ALS controlled documents procedure, intended to further increase transparency on how documents are updated.
- An updated Appeal Procedure that now allows Licensed Assessors to choose a new panel to review their appeal, changing the appeal processing timeline and introducing a fee for rejected appeals.
- Removal of performance-based fees and the assessor rewards program.
- Update of all fees to account for inflation.
- An analysis of pros and cons of potentially removing the licensing component of the ALS, and a draft decision tree for development of quality assurance services beyond the ALS (developed for high-risk contexts) to tailor to different levels of risk to HCVs.





HCV probability maps to support RSPO ISH

In 2022, the Secretariat developed HCV probability maps for the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) for five countries: Cameroon, Costa Rica, Peru, Nigeria, and Uganda. Maps help guide independent smallholders in the responsible development of their plantations and are the result of a spatial analysis on presence of protected areas, larger areas of natural forest or other ecosystems, and other biodiversity proxies.

Nature Positive Farming (NPF)

Nature Positive Farming is a programme developed by the HCV Network to build smallholder capacity and ownership to move towards Deforestation and Conversion Free production. It is an early engagement programme for companies and landscape initiatives to support non-certified smallholder farmers protect High Conservation Values and natural ecosystems as part of responsible sourcing commitments. A workshop was held with Proforest to outline the implementation steps, coupled with a package of self-reporting and remote verification tools to provide transparency and assurance to companies using NPF with smallholder producers in their supply chain or sourcing regions.

Story from the field: Lessons from the first pilot in Siak and Pelalawan

The first NPF pilot was carried out with a priority smallholder producer village in Riau, Indonesia, as part of the Siak Pelalawan Landscape Programme. In this blog and briefing note we reflect on the lessons from the first pilot, activities around the planning and preparation, training and dialogue, and how the pilot is being used to further develop the Village Support Programme.



