High Conservation Values & Commodity Certification

*Strengthening the HCV Approach to Mitigate Impacts on Biodiversity in Agriculture*

Gary Paoli, PhD
gary.paoli@daemeter.org
Overview

- Background to HCV
- Examples
- Strengths & Weaknesses
- Recommendations

HCV is an extremely important tool for mitigating biodiversity impacts of agriculture, but current applications fall short of potential due to a complex of reasons (that can be overcome)
Goal of HCV Assessment

Help land managers improve social and environmental sustainability of resource production

(1) Identify areas with exceptional social, cultural or biological attributes → the HCVs

(2) Develop and implement a management plan that permits development and ensures maintenance of these values.

Stakeholder Consultation is a defining feature
History of Development

- FSC definition of HCV (1999)
- National Toolkits (2003 onward)
- Adoption by RSPO (2007)

Indonesia
Malaysia
PNG
Vietnam
China
Poland
Romania
Bulgaria
Bolivia
Ecuador
Canada
Gabon
Ghana
Cameroon
The Six High Conservation Values

HCV 1  Areas with important levels of biodiversity
HCV 2  Large intact natural landscapes
HCV 3  Areas with rare or endangered ecosystems

HCV 4  Critical environmental services of nature

HCV 5  Basic needs of local communities
HCV 6  Cultural identity of local communities
HCV Process

Identification

Is an HCV present and where is it found?

Management

What management can be applied to maintain the value?

Monitoring

Is our management successful at reducing threats to maintain the value?
Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil

Roundtable on Responsible Soy

Roundtable on Sustainable Biofuels

...but HCV in commodity certification has critics
HCV in logging versus conversion

FSC

RSPO

RTRS

RSB
Some Examples

HCV in Agriculture
HCV 3
Endangered Ecosystems

Remnant Forest Set Asides
HCV 1
Protected Areas & Threatened Species

Set asides + Riparian corridor networks
Strengths
& Weaknesses
Strengths of the HCV Approach

- Consultative process
- Surging popularity in voluntary standards
- Growing ‘HCV literacy’
- Emerging global standards
- Knowledge-based decision making
- Guide legally permitted conversion
Weakness of the HCV Approach

- Confusion
- Complexity
- Controversy surrounding Conversion
- Constraints on Capacity
- Confidentiality
- Conflict with Local Laws
Confusion, Complexity & Controversy

What is required management for a given HCV?

Option 1 or Option 2 or Option 3

???
Weakness of the HCV Approach

- Confusion
- Complexity
- Controversy surrounding Conversion
- Constraints on Capacity
- Confidentiality
- Conflict with Local Laws
Recommendations
Priority Actions

- Guidance for Required Management
- Engagement with Government
- Training & Capacity Building
- Public domain datasets
- Enhanced Transparency & Peer Review
Conclusion

HCV is an extremely important tool

Current applications are having impact but fall short of potential

Weaknesses can be overcome but require targeted, sustained commitment from diverse groups
Thank You

www.daemeter.org