What's new with the HCS Approach - progress, challenges and next steps

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Why the High Carbon Stock Approach?

- Rising concern about tropical deforestation – we are facing a biodiversity and climate change crisis
- Global brands such as Nestle, Ferrero, Unilever and P&G make policy commitments to No Deforestation, & more recently the NY Declaration on Forests
- Producer companies follow GAR’s 2011 No Deforestation commitment including Wilmar, APP, Cargill, NPOL, Agropalma, and Musim Mas
- Need to know what is forest – thus HCS methodology emerged along with new multi-stakeholder collaboration
Key Question: Which areas are forest?

What is the HCS Approach

- The HCS Approach is a tool to support land use planning – it is not a carbon assessment
- Uses vegetation density, structure and composition, above ground carbon estimates, and forest patch analysis to identify viable forest areas from degraded (former forest) lands.
- Integrates with FPIC and community land use mapping, HCV and peat land assessments, and riparian zones
- pragmatically implements *No Deforestation* in the humid tropics across commodities - palm oil, pulp & paper, rubber, soya, etc
- Science-based with advice and expert reviews from international scientists – HCSA Toolkit for full details
Two phases

**Phase 1**
Vegetation stratification to identify potential HCS forest areas

**Phase 2**
HCS forest patch analysis and conservation

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**Phase 1: View from above + measurements on the ground**

A combined unsupervised and supervised analysis of satellite images using visual attributes to provisionally stratify vegetation into 6 classes

Field plots established to estimate Above Ground Biomass and calibrate with satellite data

- $A_1 = 100m^2$
- $r_1 = 5.64m$
- $A_2 = 500m^2$
- $r_2 = 12.62m$
Identifying potential HCS Forest

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>High-Density Forest (HDF/HK3)</th>
<th>Medium Density Forest (MDF/HK2)</th>
<th>Low Density Forest (LDF/HK1)</th>
<th>Young Regenerating Forest (YRF)</th>
<th>Scrub (S)</th>
<th>Cleared/Open Land (OL)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Remnant forest or advanced secondary forest close to primary condition</td>
<td>Remnant forest but more disturbed than HK3</td>
<td>Appears to be remnant forest but highly disturbed and recovering [may contain plantation/ mixed garden]</td>
<td>Mostly young regrowth forest, but with occasional patches of older forest within the stratum</td>
<td>Recently cleared areas, some woody regrowth and grass-like ground cover</td>
<td>Very recently cleared land with mostly grass or crops, few woody plants</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

MDF: Medium Density Forest
Phase 2: HCS forest patch analysis and conservation process

- Community Mapping to identify lands to exclude from analysis
- Patch core analysis and prioritisation
- Patch connectivity analysis
- Patch risk assessment
- Review presence of LDF, MDF, HDF
- Conservation of HCS forest including FPIC
- Final integrated conservation and land use planning
- HCV overlay and integration
- Ground check patches
- Rapid biodiversity assessment (if needed)
Progress with the HCS Approach

- Global multi-stakeholder HCS Approach Steering Group to oversee the methodology – membership growing...
- Over 60 HCS assessments, 5 countries, millions of ha

Steering Group Members
Progress and Challenges with HCSA

- Working Groups on key issues of:
  - Integration of HCS/HCV/FPIC
  - High Forest Cover regions
  - Quality Assurance
  - Smallholders and Communities
  - Science Advisory Committee
  - ‘Convergence’ group

- Expanding engagement with governments and manufacturer and retail companies to get their critical input and support

- Expanding engagement with other sectors and regions – rubber, soya – Africa and Latin America

HCS Approach and HCS Study ‘Convergence’ process update

- **General commitment on a goal of one methodology for No Def**

- **Common ground but different focus**: HCSA ‘No Deforestation’, whereas HCS Study GHG emission and ‘sustainable development’

- **Convergence**: biomass estimates, use of LiDAR, importance of soil carbon, protection primary and older secondary forest, HCS forest patch analysis, strong FPIC and livelihoods, and HCV integration and land use planning

- **Different**: young regenerating forest conservation, carbon neutrality

- **Next Steps**: further discussion, collaboration in Working Groups esp. to address Smallholder and forest conservation challenges, HSCA review consider convergence aspects, consider joint and/or parallel implementation trials
## Going forward with the HCS Approach

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Issue</th>
<th>How being addressed</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community rights, land use and support for HCS forest conservation</td>
<td>FPIC integration, land use planning, food security, benefits/incentives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Achieving the long-term conservation of HCS forest (and HCV areas)</td>
<td>Innovative approaches with communities, laws and regulations – government support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smallholder engagement and support</td>
<td>New working group including small-holder reps, link with other smallholder initiatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensuring the methodology is state-of-the-art, credible, practical and efficient</td>
<td>Revision - new science, field experience, trials, working group and HCS study recommendations – Toolkit v2. Also FPIC/HCV/HCS integration</td>
</tr>
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## Going forward with the HCS Approach (2)

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<th>Key Issue</th>
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<tr>
<td>Palm oil development in High Forest Cover regions</td>
<td>Working group addressing: framing question, case studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One broadly supported HCS methodology</td>
<td>‘convergence’ process with HCS Study and further science input</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HCSA being implemented through other initiatives</td>
<td>Engagement with RSPO (incl. Next), POIG, FSC, HCVRN, etc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensuring HCS Approach has government support</td>
<td>Government engagement, input and collaboration, IPOP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ensuring consistent and quality implementation</td>
<td>Rolling out Quality Assurance and transparency requirements</td>
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Thank you

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www.highcarbonstock.org