

HCV-HCSA Assessor Training Course Syllabus

1. Purpose and Scope

Successful completion of a High Conservation Value (HCV) Assessor Training Course and High Carbon Stock Approach (HCSA) Registered Practitioner Course are part of the requirements to become licensed under the HCV Network (HCVN) Assessor Licensing Scheme (ALS) and lead integrated HCV-HCSA Assessments. This training course counts both as the HCV Assessor Training Course and the HCSA Registered Practitioner course. The course aims to ensure that prospective licensed assessors obtain an adequate level of understanding of ALS procedures and good practice needed to competently lead an integrated HCV-HCSA assessment.

This syllabus presents the minimum content requirements that Registered Training Providers (RTPs) must follow to develop and deliver an integrated HCV-HCSA Assessor Training Course that meets ALS and High Carbon Stock Approach (HCSA) requirements.

HCV-HCSA Assessor Training Courses can be developed and delivered by any training provider, subject to being registered by the ALS, and being a Registered Training Organisation with the HCSA. Courses may vary in structure, however, RTPs must follow the core-content requirements detailed in this syllabus, and the HCSA training course syllabus of the HCSA Training Package.

2. Change History

Version number	Effective date	Description of changes
2	17/11/2021	Changed public summary to mock assessment report to reflect ALS change regarding the removal of public summary requirement. This version uses the updated template with HCVN's new logo.

3. Associated Documentation

Document Reference	Document Type	Document Name & Reference
ALS_04_A	Operations	Terms & Conditions for Training Providers
ALS_04_B	Guidance	HCV Assessor Training Course Syllabus
ALS_04_E	Template	HCV Assessment Report Template (Training Version)
ALS_04_F	Template	HCV-HCSA Assessment Report Template (Training Version)

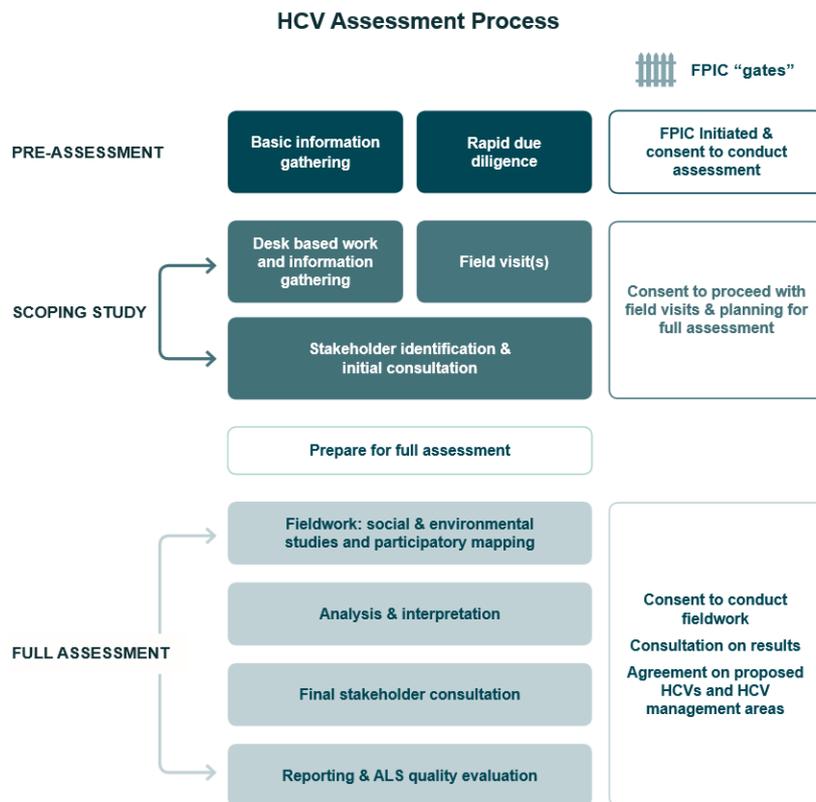
4. Course objectives

- 4.1. Provide prospective licensed assessors with in-depth knowledge of the latest guidance for integrated HCV-HCSA assessments as per the integrated HCV-HCSA Assessment Manual, the HCSA Toolkit and reporting templates, and clarity on the role and responsibility of the lead assessor.
- 4.2. Develop prospective licensed assessor expertise on HCV interpretation and identification and practical aspects of integrated HCV-HCSA assessments.
- 4.3. Develop the skills to oversee and/apply the HCSA components (remote sensing and GIS) of the HCV-HCSA assessment.

5. Course requirements and recommendations

RTPs must follow the course requirements and consider the recommendations concerning content, participation, and evaluation. Requirements are indicated in **bold text**.

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Course content must be based on the most recent version of the integrated HCV-HCSA Assessment Manual. The assessment steps as described in this manual must be used to plan the course modules. It is mandatory that the course uses a detailed case study, in a context relevant to the country or region where the participants are likely to be conducting HCV-HCSA assessments. This will allow the participants to go through the steps involved in an HCV-HCSA assessment and apply some of the concepts and

procedures from the HCV-HCSA Assessment Manual and HCSA Toolkit V2. **HCSA training materials provided through the HCSA Training Package should be introduced into integrated materials as appropriate, ensuring that the requirements in the HCSA training syllabus relating to mandatory content and permitted modifications are met**

- **Participant profiles:** Participants must have relevant experience in one or more of the following topics: biodiversity, ecology, community livelihoods, anthropology, GIS and conservation planning, natural resource auditing and management, social and environmental impact assessment. Although not required, the participants may already be familiar with the HCV and HCSA approaches for instance as team members, or even team leaders, of HCV assessments. This previous experience amongst some participants can facilitate peer to peer learning.
- **Number of participants:** No strict requirement, but a classroom of 6-10 is an ideal size for this type of course. Lower numbers ensure each participant can ask questions and get responses to achieve a high

level of understanding. It also enables course instructors to more readily identify subject areas or participants that require greater attention. It may also be possible to run the course with a larger group – if it can be effectively divided into subgroups for working on the case study. However, a larger group size would have implications for the number of trainers needed to deliver the course, as well as the venue which should provide enough space for small groups to work effectively.

- **Number of trainers:** No formal requirement, but two trainers for a class of 6-10 participants is recommended. For larger groups, a ratio of no more than 7:1, participants to trainers, should be maintained.
- **Trainer profiles:** In addition to have proven HCV expertise to develop and deliver the training (see the [Terms and Conditions for RTPs](#)), **at least one trainer must be a HCSA Registered Practitioner** who should have some practical experience in the GIS and remote sensing components of HCS Assessments.
- **Teaching methods: Courses can be face-to-face, online or hybrid¹ and interactive.** If delivered online, RTPs must ensure sessions allow for discussion, participation and interaction. Courses may include some independent pre-course learning and web-based remote learning. **Post-course write-up is required as part of the evaluation** (see evaluation section). Trainers are encouraged to use a combination of teaching methods within modules, including presentations, group exercises, simulations, discussion and role plays.

Course duration: No strict requirement, but given the multiple steps involved in an HCV-HCSA assessment, and the intended emphasis on interactive learning, the ALS suggests **approximately seven training days**.

¹ Following the COVID-19 pandemic, the HCVN Secretariat and the HCSA Secretariat decided to allow fully remote training courses.

Module ^{2, 3}	Training objective	Detail	Reference document/materials ⁴	Suggested teaching method
Introduction to the HCV and HCS Approaches	Understand the approaches; where they came from, how they are used	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Origin and main uses of the approaches, and the integration of the assessment • Origins, aims and governance of the HCV Resource Network and HCSA SG • Local context: application of HCV/HCSA in the region/country of the training; developments, processes & organisations (e.g. HCV NIs, FSC, RSPO). • Assessment at production management unit (including multi-site) or under group certification versus landscape and independent smallholder approaches 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Common Guidance for the identification of HCVs, HCSA Toolkit • HCSA Training Materials TP1, 2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-course learning and test https://youtu.be/E6EAGm1dhZw
Social requirements and introduction to FPIC in HCV-HCSA assessments ^{5, 6}	Understand how FPIC is part of the assessment process and the social safeguards during the assessment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HCV and HCSA Social requirements • FPIC: what it is, how it is part of the assessment: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) FPIC gates, link to HCVRN Charter b) FPIC as process (role of assessor vs role of company) including assessor's verification of company meeting preconditions through triangulation c) FPIC related methods (e.g. participatory mapping) d) Documenting FPIC • FPIC context and best practices for region/country of training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HCSA Training Materials TP3 • HCSA Social Requirements Implementation Guide • HCSA Toolkit Social Requirements (Module 2) • Monitoring protocol for High Conservation Values 5 and 6 with guidelines on best practices in community engagement, Forest Peoples Programme and ZSL • Free, Prior and Informed Consent and Oil Palm Plantations: a guide for 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-course learning, Classroom revision, case-study & discussion/quiz

² Required modules

³ Module content can be dispersed into other modules

⁴ Trainers must ensure that their materials are up to date and in accordance with the current version of HCVN and HCSA documents. For HCSA training materials the HCSA syllabus states '*All of the slides in Topics 2, 4, 5, and 6 must be included in the training materials – the trainers may add additional information but they must include these basic slides. The other topics are also mandatory but the slides provided by the HCS Secretariat may be modified by the trainers as long as the same content is covered.*'

			<u>companies. 2015. RSPO and Forest Peoples Programme</u>	
Outline of process for making the indicative HCS maps ^{5, 6}	Understand how AGC is measured and estimated, how to produce HCS forest map	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introducing the HCS classes including qualitative comparison with other land cover classes) AGB estimation using 3 possible options and samples (focus on option 3) Measurement and statistical analysis Assigning land cover classes to HCSF classes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HCSA Toolkit Module 4 HCSA Training materials TP7 	
Image analysis landcover classification ^{5, 6}	Can develop the landcover map	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduction to Land cover classes (options such as country specific or custom generated land cover classes) Satellite image requirement and image processing steps Developing the preliminary landcover map 1st and 2nd Accuracy tests Using the preliminary landcover map to plan the scoping visit Ground truthing and samples Producing Final Land cover map 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HCSA Toolkit Module 4 HCSA Training materials TP5, TP7 	
Stakeholder consultation ^{5, 6}	Understand the objective of stakeholder consultations, how to conduct them, and keeping records	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local stakeholders vs. various experts/NGOs: levels and nature of information available; How to approach different stakeholders for which purpose, group consultation vs. individual interviews; When to use consultation (scoping, assessment, final consultation of findings); Which information to share; transparency vs. confidentiality Requirements for documenting the consultation process. 	HCV-HCSA Assessment Manual Annex 4	
The following modules are arranged according to phases in the HCV-HCSA assessment process (Figure 1)				
1) Pre-assessment phase ⁵	Know how to assess the context and potential impacts of a project, and the company's readiness and commitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Informing the company commissioning the assessment Review of HCV National Interpretation (if available): what information do they contain and what are their methodological requirements. Basic information gathering 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HCV-HCSA Assessment Manual Annex 3 HCSA Training Materials TP 2 HCSA Social Requirements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Class-room revision, introduce case-study, reporting role-play & discussion

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of company meeting preconditions (due diligence) and having completed required previous studies. FPIC gate and decision to proceed 	<p>Implementation Guide</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> HCV National Interpretation 	
2) Scoping study ⁵	Can plan and conduct a scoping study, with the objective of assessing whether a full assessment can be done and what would be required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Objective of the Scoping Study Define and justify the Area of Interest and consideration of the social and environmental landscape Desk-based preparations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> information needs checklist, collating and using maps and geographical data guidance (Common Guidance, National Interpretations if available, HCV Manual, reporting templates), and how to use them Field component <ul style="list-style-type: none"> verify due diligence output objective of stakeholder consultations and choosing communities to consult with validate preliminary LCC scope environmental HCV indicators presenting findings in the assessment report FPIC gates and decision to proceed Assembling the team Expected outcomes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HCV Assessment Manual HCV-HCSA Assessment Manual Annex 1 Common Guidance for the identification of HCVs Guidance for using the HCV-HCSA assessment report template HCSA Training materials TP4 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Class-room revision, case-study, role-play & discussion
3) Full Assessment				
Preparing for a full assessment ⁵	Based on the scoping study, can identify data gaps and needs for a full assessment. Can propose field surveys and the necessary resources, summarised and clearly explained to the client	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define and justify the Area of Interest; HCS options and consideration of the social and environmental landscape The Assessment Manual checklists and how to use them Using the scoping study results to recognise data gaps that will require field surveys, which surveys will address these, and the assessment team composition and skills Recognise and address potential difficulties with the site (access, topography, etc.) Budget time and resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HCV-HCSA Assessment Manual Annex 2 Guidance for using the HCV-HCSA assessment report template HCSA Training materials TP5 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presentations, case-study & discussion
Social components; methods and results ⁵	Can conduct social studies and participatory mapping as necessary for identifying social HCVs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of HCV NIs guidance on methods Review and use of secondary data Objectives of the social components Survey design, choice of methods, sampling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Common Guidance for the identification of HCVs HCV Assessment Manual Annex 4 	Presentations, case-study & discussion

	<p>and future people's land needs. Can synthesize all the data to draw conclusions on the presence and location of social HCVs and livelihood security Can identify threats to social HCVs and people's lands and propose management measures Can translate the social outcomes into maps of HCV Areas and HCV Management Areas, and people's lands</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participatory mapping best practices • Community representation • Documenting interviews, and consultation • Robustness and credibility of the conclusions drawn • What HCV results and local peoples lands maps are required • Key outputs • FPIC gates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HCSA Social Requirements Implementation Guide 	
Environmental components; methods and results⁵	<p>Can design and deploy a field study and conduct analyses for environmental HCVs, and HCS forests Can synthesize all the data to draw conclusions on the presence and location of environmental HCVs Can identify threats to environmental HCVs and HCS forests and propose management measures Can translate the environmental/HCS outcomes into maps of HCV Areas and HCV Management Areas, and HCS forests and peatlands</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of HCV NI guidance on methods. • Image processing • Use of landcover map to inform the survey design • HCS inventory sample design and survey plots (according to the 3 options) • Survey design and choice of methods for other environmental features (HCV, peat?), and coordinating and optimising survey effort • Statistical relevance/robustness of the expected results, representativeness, recording and presenting data (including as maps) • HCV Common Guidance and/or NIs definitions and interpretation. • Robustness and credibility of the conclusions drawn • What HCV results maps are required • Analyses of HCS plot data • Stakeholder consultation and key outputs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Common Guidance for the identification of HCVs • HCV National Interpretations • HCSA Training materials TP6, 7 • BMP guidance from relevant certification schemes 	<p>Presentations, case-study & discussion</p>
Patch analysis⁵	<p>Can complete the patch</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information required to start and complete patch analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HCSA Toolkit module 5 	

	analysis according to the decision tree	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Principles of the patch analysis Following the patch analysis steps (Step 1 to step 13) “Give and take” principles Final map(s) (Proposed development, Proposed conservation, and community land use areas) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HCSA Training package TP 8-9 	
Management and Monitoring recommendations⁵	Can provide preliminary management and monitoring recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responsibilities of the assessor Definition of HCV Management Areas, consistency with identification and threat assessment Threat assessment Drafting Management and Monitoring recommendations Community co-management options How M&M recommendations will be used in the Integrated Conservation Land Use Plan (ICLUP) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HCV Assessment Manual Common Guidance for the identification of HCVs, and Management and Monitoring of HCVs HCSA Training package TP 10 	Presentations, case-study & discussion
Final stakeholder consultation⁵	Understands how to conduct the final consultation with communities and other stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Who should be consulted What should be presented How should the consultation be organised and documented How should the outcomes be used Identifying information or consultation gaps and required next steps for the company 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HCV-HCSA Assessment Manual 	Case-study, role-play & discussion
Full assessment reporting⁵	Is familiar with the reporting requirements and templates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessment outputs Report templates (full report and public summaries) Key issues and minimum requirements to pass Overview of the ALS-QA procedure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guidance for using the HCV-HCSA assessment report template HCV Assessment Manual Procedure for combined HCV or HCV-HCSA assessment reports and associated assessment report template 	
Post Assessment				
ICLUP	Familiar with the ICLUP step	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When is the ICLUP conducted Objectives of the ICLUP, and who is responsible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HCSA Training package TP 10 	Presentation
The Assessor Licensing Scheme				
Being a licensed assessor	Know what is expected from licensed assessors?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contractual commitments with ALS and performance requirements to remain licensed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HCV Network Charter ALS Terms & Conditions 	Group activity “What makes a good assessor?”

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What makes a good assessor (the behaviour and ethics expected from a licensed assessor) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ALS Code of Conduct 	
ALS introduction	Understand the role of the ALS, how assessments are reviewed, and how to get licensed as an assessor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The licensing process (application, provisional license, full license) • ALS quality assurance (report evaluation process, Quality Panel, etc) • Who requires licensed assessors and why? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ALS Specification 	

6. Participant evaluation

Recommendations for participant evaluation include:

- Pre-test – based on reading of the ‘Common Guidance for HCV Identification’ and the HCV-HCSA Assessment Manual
- Participation throughout the course during discussions, punctuality, etc.

Requirements for participant evaluation include:

- **Exam** – brief final exam based on modules (contents of the HCV-HCSA Assessment Manual and reporting templates, possibly including simulation studies)
- **Each participant must produce a “mock” summary report of the course case study. This brief written report should use the HCV-HCSA Assessment Report Template (Training Version) and be completed individually.** In the interest of time, it is recommended that the report be submitted to the trainers after the course (up to two weeks later).

Upon successful completion of the training course, RTPs must provide participants with a certificate or letter as proof of their successful completion of the course, within at least 14 days of receipt of the unique reference number from HCVN (training certificate format can be provided by the HCV Network Secretariat team on request). There will not be an official endorsement of the participant’s completion of training by the HCVN, nor should any HCVN or ALS logo be used on any certificate or letter without prior approval by the HCVN Secretariat (training@hcvnetwork.org).

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7. Participant Feedback

It is recommended to get feedback from participants after the course, which can be through an open discussion, but also requesting that participants complete a feedback questionnaire.

The HCVN Secretariat will contact each participant directly by email to complete a standardised online feedback questionnaire. **The RTPs must provide the HCVN Secretariat (training@hcvnetwork.org) the email contacts for all participants within 5 working days of the course completion, and the details and final outcome of the successful participants within 60 days of course completion⁵.**

8. Case study documents

For the simulated case study, participants should be encouraged to use or be provided with the types of reference literature recommended in the HCV Common Guidance for HCV Identification and the Assessment Manual, e.g. conservation reports, academic papers, lists of endangered species, other web based resources, especially spatial ones, landcover cover maps.

For more information about the HCV Assessor Licensing Scheme please visit www.hcvnetwork.org/.

⁵ RTPs must use the standard ALS Training Certificate Record Template to record participants and their details