Guidance for using the HCV assessment report template

About the report template and guidance

This document provides detailed guidance for preparing an HCV assessment report according to Assessor Licensing Scheme (ALS) requirements. It explains what is required for different sections of the report so that you know what the ALS Quality Panel will be evaluating. If you have any questions or need further clarification, please contact **qualitymanager@hcvnetwork.org**

Most sections have a brief explanation of what is required, unless it is self-explanatory (e.g., the date of report submission). Throughout the document we also highlight particularly important text and use icons to remind you when something is a key issue or when a map is required.

Key issues

Required maps

This report template is based on the updated HCV Assessment Manual and it must be used for all HCV assessment reports submitted to the ALS for evaluation. In addition to report structure and content, the length of the report has an impact on report evaluation. **It is not a strict requirement to adhere to the page limits for each section, rather it is important that the overall report length does not exceed 65 pages**. If the report exceeds the recommended length, the assessor may be asked to condense certain sections before the report evaluation can begin – thus delaying the outcome.

Note: Page limit guidance refers to pages of text only. The following are not counted in the page limit: cover page, acronym page, maps, figures, references, and annexes.

Overall page limit is 65 with the following recommended page limits for each report section:

01	Introduction	5 pages
02	Assessment team	1 page
03	Assessment timeline	1 page
04	Pre-assessment	4 pages
05	Scoping Study	4 pages
06	Description of the AOI	6 pages
07	Social section: methods and results	16 pages
08	Environmental section: methods and results	16 pages
09	Management and monitoring recommendations	5 pages
10	Final consultation	5 pages
11	Next steps	2 pages

Reference documents to be used:

*Always check that you are using the most recent version of these documents. If there is a new version, ALS will communicate this to assessors via email.

- HCV Assessment Manual (March 2019)
- Common Guidance for the Identification of HCVs (October 2013 – updated HCV 2 definition added September 2017)
- Common Guidance for the Management and Monitoring of HCVs (September 2014)
- National HCV interpretation(s), where available. It is useful to refer to National HCV interpretations, but note that the global guidance takes precedence in terms of official definitions and interpretation of the HCV approach. You must specify if an HCV national interpretation was used as the primary reference to interpret HCV presence.

To help reduce report length and to avoid repetition, do not include copied sections of text from the above reference documents. Instead, simply reference the relevant sections or pages from these documents.

Cover Page: HCV assessment report

Date contract for assessment was signed	
Assessment start date (month/year)	Enter the date the assessment began. This should be when assessment activities (e.g., pre-assessment phase information gathering) first started. You can mention the exact date if known, but at least the month and year must be given here.
Date of first report submission to ALS	
Date of first report resubmission (if applicable)	
Date of second report resubmission (if applicable)	
Name of ALS lead assessor	
Contact information of lead assessor (Organisation or institution, address, email, telephone, Skype)	Enter your Organisation or institution (if applicable), address, email, telephone, and Skype contact information. Note that contact information will not be posted publicly on the ALS website. Please indicate if there is a preferred contact method for the ALS Quality Manager to reach you.
Contact information of Organisation commissioning the HCV assessment (name, address, email, phone)	Enter the contact information for the person in the commissioning Organisation who is the main relevant contact. This person will also be contacted by ALS throughout the report evaluation process. Please indicate if there is a preferred contact method.

Acronyms and abbreviations

Add these as relevant, for example common ones include:

AOI	Area of Interest
FPIC	Free Prior and Informed Consent
HCV	High Conservation Value

Table of contents

1. Introduction and Background 15
   1.1. Purpose of the assessment 15
   1.2. Location of the assessment 15
   1.3. Overview of the Organisation commissioning the assessment 15
   1.4. Brief national or regional context 16
2. Assessment team 17
3. Assessment timeline 18
4. Pre-assessment phase 19
   4.1. Due diligence 19
   Preconditions to be met by the Organisation 19
   4.2. FPIC gate 21
5. Scoping Study 22
   5.1. Summary of scoping study activities 22
   Timeline of scoping study 22
   5.2. List of consultations 23
   Experts and stakeholders contacted/consulted during the scoping study... 23
   5.3. FPIC gate 23
6. Description of the AOI 24
   6.1. Boundaries of the AOI 24
   6.2. Physical and environmental characteristics 25
   6.3. Biological and ecological characteristics 25
   6.4. Social, cultural and economic characteristics 25
   6.5. Land use and development trends 25
   6.6. Land cover classification 25

7. Social section: methods and results 27
7.1. Social methods 27
7.1.1. Literature review and use of secondary data 27
7.1.2. Social fieldwork 27
7.2. Results: Social HCVs 28
7.2.1. Status of FPIC 28
7.2.2. Results of social fieldwork 28
7.2.3. HCV 4: Ecosystem services in critical situations 29
7.2.4. HCV 5: Local people's basic needs 30
7.2.5. HCV 6: Cultural values 31
8. Environmental section: methods and results 33
8.1. Environmental methods 33
8.1.1. Literature review and use of secondary data 33
8.1.2. Environmental fieldwork 34
8.2. Results: Environmental HCVs 34
8.2.1. Environmental fieldwork results 34
8.2.2. HCV 1: Concentrations of biodiversity 34
8.2.3. HCV 2: Large landscapes 35
8.2.4. HCV 3: Rare ecosystems 36
9. Management and monitoring recommendations 37
9.1. Threat assessment 37
9.2. Recommendations for each value 37
9.3. Cross-cutting recommendations 38
9.4. Summary map 38
10. Final consultation 40

11. Next steps 42

List of required maps

Required elements for maps:

Maps must be clear for the reader (e.g., of adequate resolution, presented at a scale sufficient to interpret the information they display, using distinguishable colours and patterns (or symbology) and readable font sizes and be clearly labelled). All maps must include legend, gridlines, scale bar, orientation (i.e., north/south arrow), data sources, datum/projection, creation date, map version and coordinates. Maps must be marked as draft or final if applicable and there must be an explanation of what is recommended to move from a draft to a final map version. This could be part of the recommendations or next steps section of the report.

List all maps found in the report and indicate where (page number) all required maps can be found in the report.

Required maps	Section where map is located (please add page number)
Map showing location of the management unit (MU) (area where the commodity production activity will take place – this could be MU, concession, etc. depending on what is appropriate for the context) in the country. Map must also show major infrastructure (roads and tracks) and surrounding land uses	1.2 Location of the assessment
Sites/locations visited during scoping study (settlements, habitat types)	5.1 Summary of scoping study activities

Map of Area of Interest (AOI) with the boundaries of the wider landscape and management unit. Map must show land cover classification.	6.1 Boundaries of the AOI
Map of land cover classification and associated raw image	6.6 Land cover classification
Map showing the AOI relative to protected areas or conservation priority areas in the wider landscape Map showing watershed boundaries, important rivers, and other water bodies in the AOI	6.2 Environmental and physical characteristics 6.3 Biological and ecological characteristics
Map showing human settlements overlapping the AOI. Village boundaries (formal or customary) must be shown (where available). It must be clear where the MU overlaps with boundaries of human settlements.	6.4 Social, cultural, and economic characteristics
A map to show where participatory mapping was conducted. Maps for each type of field study showing e.g., location of studies (as applicable).	7.1.2 Social methods 8.1 Environmental methods
Maps resulting from participatory mapping with local stakeholders	7.2.2 Results of social fieldwork Or, as relevant in HCV 5 and 6 identification 7.2.4 and 7.2.5

A different HCV map must be presented for each of the HCV categories (1-6) identified during the assessment (present or potentially present). If the HCV can easily be identified as a point on a map (e.g., a hunting camp) then that is the HCV location. In other cases, the HCV map will show an HCV area (the area where an HCV is present or potentially present). E.g., area where tigers or wide-ranging species occurs (or may occur). Maps must show HCVs inside the MU and where the HCV extends into the wider landscape. Maps must include landcover layer and any other layers relevant to the designation of each HCV category.	In sections and for all the relevant subsections where HCVs have been identified (present and/or potentially present)
HCV management areas for all identified HCVs (present or potentially present), with relevant layers to understand the rationale of designation.	10.2 Management and monitoring recommendations for each value.
Summary map showing all values identified and all management areas (inside the MU) with boundaries of MU and wider landscape. Map must include landcover layer.	10.4 Summary map

Other maps may include e.g.:

- Slope and elevation maps
- Fire historical map - this site may be useful: https://firms.modaps.eosdis.nasa.gov/download/

List of supplementary materials

The submission of shapefiles is voluntary. However, the ALS encourages assessors to submit the underlying geospatial data to support their assessment report. These following files are requested:

- Shapefile of the management unit boundaries
- Shapefile of the land cover
- Shapefiles of HCVs or HCV areas (proxies for where HCVs occurs)

Geospatial data

Shape file (GIS vector layer or format)

Shapefiles are a simple, nontopological format for storing the geometric location and attribute information of geographic features. A shapefile is one of the spatial data formats that you can work with and edit in ArcGIS (ESRI, 2008).

The shapefile format defines the geometry and attributes of geographically referenced features in three or more files with specific file extensions that should be stored in the same project workspace. They are:

- .shp—The main file that stores the feature geometry. Required.
- .shx—The index file that stores the index of the feature geometry. Required.
- .dbf—The dBASE table that stores the attribute information of features. Required.

There is a one-to-one relationship between geometry and attributes, which is based on record number. Attribute records in the dBASE file must be in the same order as records in the main file.

- .sbn and .
- sbx—The files that store the spatial index of the features.
- .prj—The file that stores the coordinate system information. Used by ArcGIS.
- .xml—Metadata for ArcGIS—stores information about the shapefile.

- .cpg—An optional file that can be used to specify the codepage for identifying the character set to be used. (ESRI, 2008)

To check all Shapefile (shp) data the assessor needs to submit all the extensions (otherwise we cannot check it). For example, for the Landcover layer, the extensions for the shape files are:

- landcover.shp
- landcover.shx
- landcover.dbf
- landcover.sbn
- landcover.sbx
- landcover.prj
- landcover.shp (XML doc)/ landcover.xml
- landcover.cpg

TIF (GIS raster file)

Specifically, for landcover data, a satellite image is needed to be checked in GIS software. For that satellite imagery needs to be masked and stored in tiff format. Automatically when satellite imagery is masked and edited in GIS software the three follow-up files, there are:

- .tfw—Uncompressed image data which, when associated in a directory with a tfw ("world file") of the same file basename, is a GeoTIFF, georeferenced image
- .gsg—be used for the output signature file
- .xml—Metadata for ArcGIS—stores information about the raster file

For example, masking data for specific satellite imagery:

File name satellite_2202019

satellite_220219.tfw

satellite_220219.gsg

satellite_220219.xml

1. Introduction and Background

1.1. Purpose of the assessment

Provide an overview of the purpose of the assessment (e.g., to comply with certification scheme requirements). Describe the current or proposed project and its present situation (e.g., forestry or agriculture) and specify if it is a new development or expansion or rehabilitation of existing agricultural land. What kind of development is planned or on-going? What is the type of lease or ownership arrangement? What is the proposed start date of production activities, what are the previous (if any) and proposed extent and dates of conversion or clearing (if applicable)? What is the size (ha) of the management unit (MU)[1]?

1.2. Location of the assessment

Describe the geographical location of the assessment (including name, location, area (ha) and coordinates of the MU). Include a map showing where the assessment took place within the country (i.e., map must indicate where the assessment site is in relation to the whole country). A detailed description of the AOI (MU + wider landscape) is included in section 6.

1.3. Overview of the Organisation commissioning the assessment

Provide an overview of the Organisation commissioning the assessment. What kind of Organisation is it? Does the Organisation have multiple developments in the country or region? Is the Organisation a member of a certification scheme or in the process of joining one? Is the MU/commodity already certified or is the Organisation pursuing certification? Is it a subsidiary of a certified company? Has the Organisation been the object of any complaints or campaigns?

[1] The "management unit" refers to the area where there are commodity development plans or current operations. This may be the same as the concession boundaries, the management unit, the permit, or lease area, etc.

1.4. Brief national or regional context

Provide a brief overview of any directly relevant information regarding the national or regional context within which the assessment took place. For example, information on national policies or plans (including national land use plan or any policies or regulations affecting the relevant sector,

e.g., deforestation moratoriums) that may be relevant to the findings of the assessment. Please keep this section brief, as the focus of this report is on the AOI.

2. Assessment team

This section must show that a qualified team conducted the assessment.

Complete the following tables. CVs (max two pages) of all team members must be included in an annex.

If interpreters were used this should be mentioned and they must be listed as team members.

Lead ALS assessor

The lead assessor holds an ALS licence (provisional or full).

Name	Role	Institution (if relevant)	Relevant expertise (e.g., plant taxonomy, hydrology, etc.)	Relevant country or regional experience (including language proficiency)
	Lead assessor			

Other experts in the team (environmental, social, and geospatial)

Name	Role	Institution (if relevant)	Relevant expertise (e.g., plant taxonomy, hydrology, anthropology, participatory mapping etc.)	Relevant country or regional experience (including language proficiency)

3. Assessment timeline

Provide a detailed assessment timeline (including pre-assessment, scoping study, and full assessment) clearly showing time in the field including dates, duration, and location. The scoping study section below is where to provide details on activities conducted during the scoping study. Maps showing locations of the field activities must be included in sections 7.1 and 8.1 below.

Also mention timing of any other related major assessments, including ESIA etc. Explain how the HCV assessment was coordinated or combined with other studies or assessments if relevant.

4. Pre-assessment phase

We recommend an introductory paragraph on the pre-assessment and how the assessor began the assessment activities, such as collecting initial basic information and communicating with the Organisation.

4.1. Due diligence

Refer to manual section 2.1.3

For this section, the ALS does not expect the assessor to be a legal expert or to confirm compliance of companies. Instead, we simply want to see that the assessor has raised these four topics (pre-conditions) with the commissioning Organisation and that there is an explanation (with evidence if possible) for each.

For each of the four preconditions below, provide an explanation (with evidence if available included as an Annex) of how the Organisation met the pre-conditions before the full assessment took place. Field verification of these preconditions takes place during the scoping study and

full assessment. Once again, the assessor is not responsible, for example, for confirming the authenticity of a land permit – but if concerns are identified during stakeholder consultation, this must be included in the report.

Preconditions to be met by the Organisation

1. Commitment to environmental and social safeguards
Explanation Provide information on how the precondition has been met.

2. Commitment to postpose or halt any land clearing or land preparation until the HCV assessment has been completed
Explanation Provide information on how the precondition has been met.

3. Demonstrated legal right over or permission to explore the MU
Explanation Provide information on how the preconditions has been met. Has the Organisation provided a map with the coordinates of the MU (lease/permit/concession area)?

4. FPIC process has been initiated with full disclosure of the proposed project with all potentially affected communities and stakeholders, and the process for negotiation and consent going forward has been agreed, with representatives appointed through a fair process
Explanation Provide information on how the preconditions has been met. Initiate engagement with affected communities to check for what the Organisation is required to do. Check for the following outputs: The designation of communities as affected, their initial FPIC to the continuation of the process, and the specification of mechanisms for subsequent interactions between communities and the company. These arrangements and the agreement are set out in a written document that is signed or otherwise formally validated by the Organisation and by the freely chosen representatives of the communities that have agreed to take part. A detailed record is made of the meetings that have taken place, including attendees, content, and outcomes.

4.2. FPIC gate

See Manual Section 2.1.4 Briefly (a paragraph) explain how information gathered during the pre-assessment phase led you to proceed with the scoping study.

5. Scoping Study

All of section 5 is a key issue.

5.1. Summary of scoping study activities

This section must explain the activities and findings of the scoping study (including the required field visit). See manual section 2.2 for detailed guidance. Describe the different activities conducted during the scoping study, along with the dates of when those activities took place.

You must also provide a map or maps of the locations visited during the scoping study (e.g., where did you conduct field visits? which villages or other areas of interest were visited?).

Timeline of scoping study

Add or edit activities as relevant

Activity	Description	Timing
Information gathering		
Field visit(s)		
Visiting sample of communities		
Stakeholder identification and initial consultations		

5.2. List of consultations

Provide details on people and/or groups consulted during the scoping study. This may include a selection of local communities, technical experts, company representatives, government, social and environmental NGOs, etc.

Experts and stakeholders contacted/consulted during the scoping study

Add rows to table or additional information as relevant

Name	Title/role	Organisation/social group	Key concerns & recommendations

5.3. FPIC gate

See manual section 2.2.4 Briefly (a paragraph) explain how information gathered during the scoping study led you to proceed with the full assessment.

6. Description of the AOI

For section 6, it is only subsection 6.1 that is a key issue. However, remember that required maps are also part of a key issue.

6.1. Boundaries of the AOI

The AOI is the management unit (MU) and the wider landscape surrounding or adjacent to the MU. The wider landscape may be determined by identifying a single or combination of social or environmental features that are connected to and extend beyond the MU boundaries such as a watershed or a geographical land unit containing a cluster of interacting ecosystems, and community lands.

Rationale for the determination of the wider boundary must be provided, along with a map showing the boundaries of the MU and the wider landscape. Describe the AOI (MU plus the wider landscape) and the rationale for the determination of AOI boundaries. See manual section 2.1.2 and “understanding the landcover in the AOI” in manual section 2.2.1.

A map showing the MU and the wider landscape boundaries and reflecting the criteria used to define it must be included. The AOI map must include the landcover layer.

The following information must be included:

- time of any cut-off date of the certification scheme (if applicable)
- time when the company obtained permit/licence
- time when land clearance started
- time when the assessment was conducted

All with satellite images and the respective land cover interpretation.

Sections 6.2 through 6.6 must focus on the characteristics of the AOI and not general information about the country or region. However, relevant information about the area beyond the AOI can be included if it is directly relevant to the social and environmental values of the AOI.

6.2. Physical and environmental characteristics

Describe such features as: topography, climate, major landforms, geology and soils and hydrology (watersheds, etc.). A map showing important watersheds, rivers, and other water bodies in the AOI must be included.

6.3. Biological and ecological characteristics

Describe such features as: Biogeographic zones, ecosystem types, presence and condition of protected areas, forest reserves, important biodiversity areas, occurrence of known populations of species of global concern, migration corridors, wetlands, peatlands, Intact Forest Landscapes (IFL), etc.

Insert map(s) of the site within the wider landscape, with any nearby protected areas labelled.

6.4. Social, cultural, and economic characteristics

Describe the social, cultural, and economic characteristics of the AOI including names and locations of settlements, population, ethnicity, socio-economic activities, religion, health, infrastructure, education, community organisations and customary rights to land and resources.

The assessor should reference resources such as any Social Impact Assessment that has been conducted in the recent past (i.e., less than three years old at the time of the assessment). Insert a map showing the human settlements (boundaries and centre point) overlapping the AOI.

6.5. Land use and development trends

History of land use (supported by maps and referring to cut off dates set by relevant certification schemes) and development trends including future plans (e.g., road building), development initiatives and existing/proposed commercial exploitation and production licenses. Brief history of forest disturbance in the area, drivers of deforestation.

6.6. Land cover classification

For quality assurance purposes describe methods used for image analysis (if done by assessment team) and land cover classification, including:

- Date of images. This should be as close as possible to the dates of the field assessment (and no older than 12 months).
- Source of images
- Justification for use of image dataset

Include description of desk-based work, scoping study field work, data training and validation, show classification of polygons (samples) used and matrix. Insert a land cover map. Land cover classes must be clearly described.

The land cover map is the basis for other field studies, and it must be shown how sampling strategies and survey designs were based on the land cover map.

7. Social section: methods and results

7.1. Social methods

Describe social methods used in the assessment, with a focus on literature review, use of secondary data (see manual section 2.3.1) and fieldwork carried out by the assessment team. Choice of methods and sampling (sample size and design) must be justified.

7.1.1. Literature review and use of secondary data

Provide a description of the methods used in desk-based information gathering activities. All literature and secondary data must be listed in the reference section.

7.1.2. Social fieldwork

This refers to primary data collection conducted by the assessment team. Summarise methods and justify choice of method and sampling. Detailed methods should be annexed, including copies of interview guides, surveys, etc. A map or maps of where social fieldwork was conducted must be included in the report. These maps must be overlaid on a map presenting information regarding land tenure and land use.

Mention how methods were participatory and representative of all groups, if relevant. How many and which communities and other stakeholders were involved and through what methods? Mention how FPIC was considered in methods if relevant. Note if any communities refused to participate in the assessment or/and have not granted FPIC for the assessment activities.

Social methods include e.g.:

- Participatory mapping
- Household surveys
- Focus groups discussions
- Seasonal calendars
- Interviews

Note that participatory mapping is required. See manual Box 4. Describe how participatory mapping was conducted and show on a map where participatory mapping activities took place. The results of participatory mapping must be used as supporting evidence for HCV identification and must be provided as an Annex.

7.2. Results: Social HCVs

This section must clearly present the results of the assessment, adequately justified and supported by evidence. Where evidence is weak or results are uncertain, assessors must demonstrate appropriate use of the precautionary approach (see 2.6.2 of Common Guidance for Identification of HCVs). Limitations of studies, fieldwork, etc. must always be clearly explained – and particularly so for cases where fieldwork was very brief (i.e., three months or less for full assessment). Discuss how limitations will affect the outcomes of the assessment (for example: HCV maps will be draft until studies completed; recommendations included to halt development until all pending social studies completed).

7.2.1. Status of FPIC

Provide an overview of the status of FPIC in the MU by the end of the assessment. This should include how you verified the FPIC-related information gathered during the due diligence step, and how advanced the FPIC activities are by the end of the assessment. Refer to manual section 1.4 for details on FPIC during the assessment. In the annex include evidence: meeting minutes, attendance records etc.

7.2.2. Results of social fieldwork

Participatory mapping

Give an overview of the results of participatory mapping. This must form the basis for HCV identification and management and monitoring recommendations regarding local people's resource use.

Briefly describe any participatory mapping activities that took place before the assessment began. Insert geo-referenced maps that were produced from participatory mapping here or in the relevant section on HCV 5 and 6 identification.

Other social fieldwork

As relevant, insert results of social fieldwork conducted during the assessment. Add relevant subtitles for different social fieldwork conducted.

7.2.3. HCV 4: Ecosystem services in critical situations

Considering all elements of the HCV 4 definition, and clearly stating if additional guidance will be used for the interpretation (such as a national interpretation) and why, provide a clear decision on presence, potential presence, or absence of HCV 4, supported by evidence (i.e., literature review, fieldwork, consultation).

It is insufficient to declare “potential presence” of an HCV without providing an evaluation of the likelihood of presence and the limitations of current knowledge. If a value is deemed potentially present, the precautionary approach should be used, otherwise a detailed outline of what needs to be done to identify the HCV for certain is required. HCV 4 draws on both social and environmental results to designate HCVs. Avoid duplicating information but provide a brief reference and explanation to environmental information. For example, refer to slopes and riparian buffer zones which link to section 8 (Environmental methods and results) on topography and hydrology as relevant.

HCV 4	Finding
Basic ecosystem services in critical situations, including protection of water catchments and control of erosion of vulnerable soils and slopes.	Insert: Present, Potentially Present, Absent

Insert map of HCV 4.

Maps must show HCV 4 for the entire AOI where the HCV extends into the wider landscape. Draft maps (such as when consultation is pending with some stakeholders) must be clearly labelled.

7.2.4. HCV 5: Local people's basic needs

Considering all elements of the HCV 5 definition, and clearly stating if additional guidance will be used for the interpretation (such as a national interpretation) and why, provide a clear decision on presence, potential presence, or absence of HCV 5, supported by evidence (i.e., literature review, fieldwork, consultation).

It is insufficient to declare "potential presence" of an HCV without providing an evaluation of the likelihood of presence and the limitations of current knowledge. If a value is deemed potentially present, the precautionary approach should be used, otherwise a detailed outline of what needs to be done to confidently identify the HCV is required. The identification of HCV 5 must be supported by evidence from participatory mapping and stakeholder consultation and must refer to needs of each community/group found in the area, as needs are likely to vary from one community to another. When using a national interpretation, its required methods (sampling size, etc) and approach must be fully followed.

The differential impacts on the various sub-groups within communities must also be considered, according to gender, ethnic group, or socio- economic status.

For the purposes of the HCV assessment, the assessor is expected to engage in discussions about lands needed for future livelihoods. Present an overview of these discussions.

Access to areas for hunting, fishing, trapping, and the collection of non-timber forest products (NTFPs) must consider current and projected future usage patterns and be in line with stated community wishes. This topic may require extensive time and may not be realistic to cover all aspects during the assessment period. Therefore, it is important to include these issues in the recommendations to the Organisation.

HCV 5	Finding
Sites and resources fundamental for satisfying the basic necessities of local communities or indigenous peoples (for livelihoods, health, nutrition, water, etc...), identified through engagement with these communities or indigenous peoples.	Insert: Present, Potentially Present, Absent

Insert map of HCV 5.

Maps of HCV 5 must show HCV 5 for the entire AOI, including areas of use outside the assessment site, where the HCV extends into the wider landscape (e.g., areas of use outside the assessment area, when such areas will replace present areas of use inside the assessment site). Draft maps (such as when consultation is pending with some stakeholders) must be clearly labelled.

7.2.5. HCV 6: Cultural values

Considering all elements of the HCV 6 definition, and clearly stating if additional guidance will be used for the interpretation (such as a national interpretation) and why, provide a clear decision on presence, potential presence, or absence of HCV 6, supported by evidence (i.e., literature review, fieldwork, consultation).

It is insufficient to declare “potential presence” of an HCV without providing an evaluation of the likelihood of presence and the limitations of current knowledge. If a value is deemed potentially present, the precautionary approach should be used, otherwise a detailed outline of what needs to be done to identify the HCV for certain is required. The identification of HCV 6 must be supported by evidence from participatory mapping and stakeholder consultation.

HCV 6	Finding
Sites, resources, habitats, and landscapes of global or national cultural, archaeological, or historical significance, and/or of critical cultural, ecological, economic, or religious/sacred importance for the traditional cultures of local communities or indigenous peoples, identified through engagement with these local communities or indigenous peoples.	Insert: Present, Potentially Present, Absent

Insert map of HCV 6 Map.

Map must show HCV 6 for the entire AOI, where the HCV extends into the wider landscape. Draft maps (such as when consultation is pending with some stakeholders) must be clearly labelled.

8. Environmental section: methods and results

8.1. Environmental methods

Describe environmental methods used in the assessment, with a focus on literature review, use of secondary data (see manual section 2.3.1) and fieldwork carried out by the assessment team. Choice of methods and sample size must be justified. Maps showing sampling points or sites of field studies must be overlaid on the land cover classification map.

Methods must be presented for all studies conducted during the assessment, for example: the following types of studies e.g.:

- Soil studies (ideally conducted separately and before the HCV assessment)
- Hydrological studies
- Floral/botanical surveys
- Faunal surveys
- Aquatic surveys
- Peat studies
- Interviews
- Literature review

8.1.1. Literature review and use of secondary data

Provide a description of the methods used in desk-based information gathering activities. All literature and secondary data must be listed in the reference section. Aim to use recent data. If you use older data (e.g., older than three years old), then explain how the situation might have changed or why that information is still valid/useful. The objective is to show that you have used the best available information and have explained the limitations of available information.

8.1.2. Environmental fieldwork

Describe and justify field methods. Describe how the land cover classification (map) was used to help determine survey designs, sampling, sites for field work, etc.

8.2. Results: Environmental HCVs

Overview text can be added here

8.2.1. Environmental fieldwork results

As relevant, insert results of environmental fieldwork conducted during the assessment. For example, faunal study results.

8.2.2. HCV 1: Concentrations of biodiversity

Considering all elements of the HCV 1 definition, and clearly stating if additional guidance will be used for the interpretation (such as a national interpretation) and why, provide a clear decision on presence, potential presence, or absence of HCV 1, supported by evidence (i.e., literature review, fieldwork, consultation).

It is insufficient to declare “potential presence” of an HCV without providing an evaluation of the likelihood of presence and the limitations of current knowledge. If a value is deemed potentially present, the precautionary approach should be used, otherwise a detailed outline of what needs to be done to confidently identify the HCV is required.

Include a summary table of all HCV 1 species (present and potentially present).

HCV 1	Finding
Concentrations of biological diversity including endemic species and rare, threatened, or endangered species that are significant at global, regional, or national levels	Insert: Present, Potentially Present, Absent

Insert HCV 1 Map

Map(s) must show HCV 1 for the entire AOI (assessment site and wider landscape), where the HCV extends into the wider landscape. Draft maps must be clearly labelled.

8.2.3. HCV 2: Large landscapes

Considering all elements of the HCV 2 definition, and clearly stating if additional guidance will be used for the interpretation (such as a national interpretation) and why, provide a clear decision on presence, potential presence, or absence of HCV 2, supported by evidence (i.e., literature review, fieldwork, consultation).

It is insufficient to declare "potential presence" of an HCV without providing an evaluation of the likelihood of presence and the limitations of current knowledge. If a value is deemed potentially present, the precautionary approach should be used, otherwise a detailed outline of what needs to be done to identify the HCV for certain is required.

HCV 2	Finding
Large landscape-level ecosystems, ecosystem mosaics and Intact Forest Landscapes that are significant at global, regional, or national levels.	Insert: Present, Potentially Present, Absent

Insert HCV 2 Map

Map(s) must show HCV 2 for the entire AOI (assessment site and wider landscape). It must be clear if and where the HCV extends into the wider landscape or where the AOI may provide buffering or connectivity for HCVs present in the region. Draft maps must be clearly labelled.

8.2.4. HCV 3: Rare ecosystems

Considering all elements of the HCV 3 definition, and clearly stating if additional guidance will be used for the interpretation (such as a national interpretation) and why, provide a clear decision on presence, potential presence, or absence of HCV 3, supported by evidence (i.e., literature review, fieldwork, consultation).

It is insufficient to declare “potential presence” of an HCV without providing an evaluation of the likelihood of presence and the limitations of current knowledge. If a value is deemed potentially present, the precautionary approach should be used, otherwise a detailed outline of what needs to be done to identify the HCV for certain is required.

HCV 3	Finding
Rare, threatened, or endangered ecosystems, habitats or refugia.	Insert: Present, Potentially Present, Absent

Insert HCV 3 Map

Map(s) must show HCV 3 for the entire AOI (assessment site and wider landscape), where the HCV extends into the wider landscape. Draft maps must be clearly labelled.

9. Management and monitoring recommendations

This section must explain the conditions necessary for value maintenance or enhancement of the values identified during the assessment. The whole of section 10 is a key issue.

9.1. Threat assessment

A threat assessment is a required part of this section. Describe how you conducted the threat assessment. Identify and describe the current and potential threats to all HCVs identified. Refer to the Common Guidance for Management and Monitoring of HCVs section 2.1 (D).

9.2. Recommendations for each value

Show map(s) of HCV management areas. Describe how the management areas were designed to address threats and maintain values. Maps must show the extent of the management areas inside the assessment site only (e.g., where the organisation commissioning the assessment has rights and responsibilities to maintain the values found).

This section can be organised as follows for each value identified:

E.g., HCV 1: Tree species X

- Brief summary of the value and where it occurs
- Threats to the value
- Management prescriptions, management activities, design of management areas
- Monitoring recommendations

Or … it could be presented as a summary table. The summary table below is indicative. In the “value identified” column the assessor must list the specific value found (e.g., animal species, type of rare ecosystem) – with a different row added for each value or group of values to avoid duplication, if a justification for grouping them is included (e.g., species with similar habitat requirements, threats, and M&M requirements).

Value identified	Threats	Management areas and prescriptions	Monitoring recommendations
HCV 1			
HCV 2			
HCV 3			
HCV 4			
HCV 5			
HCV 6			

9.3. Cross-cutting recommendations

Summarize cross-cutting recommendations (i.e., how management recommendations can address multiple threats and/or support maintenance of values). Include a brief discussion on how HCVs that extend into the wider landscape could be maintained; e.g., identify the stakeholders with rights over those HCV areas.

9.4. Summary map

Insert: Summary map showing all values identified and all management areas with boundaries and wider landscape.

The summary table below is indicative. In the first column the assessor must list the specific value found (e.g., animal species, type of rare ecosystem) – with a different row added for each value.

Table: Summary of identified values

Environmental and social values to be conserved	Area (ha) where the value is found (inside MU only)	Management areas (ha) (inside MU only)
HCV 1		
HCV 2		
HCV 3		
HCV 4		
HCV 5		
HCV 6		

10. Final consultation

Provide a summary of the consultations held after all the assessment findings were synthesized and management recommendations drafted (see tables below). The "final" consultation is a chance for experts and stakeholders to comment on findings and to raise questions, concerns, or recommendations. See manual section 2.4.2.

Include information on who was consulted (e.g., expert, community members, groups) and the type of interaction (e.g., group meeting, individual meeting, email, letters, phone calls) including how (where applicable) inputs were incorporated into the final report. If only a sample of relevant stakeholders were consulted, explain the reasons for this and explain how the Organisation will be advised to follow up on any pending consultation (this must be clearly explained in the management and monitoring recommendations and next steps section).

Detailed documentation of all consultations must be presented as an annex.

For communities, it is important that consultation includes legitimately appointed spoke- persons (leader, shaman, etc), and that agreement of the HCV 5 and 6 and consent to engage in the development project are documented. If a community does not give consent, the affected areas (where consent is not granted) should be shown on a map.

Summary of consultations

Group consultations

Name	Title/role	Organisation/social group	Place and date	
T	T	T	T	T

Describe how consultation took place (i.e., group meeting, phone call, individual interview)
Key concerns & recommendations
Assessment team response

Individual consultations

Name	Title/role	Organisation/social group	Place and date	
T	T	T	T	T
Describe how consultation took place (i.e., group meeting, phone call, individual interview)				
Key concerns & recommendations				
Assessment team response				

11. Next steps

List any outstanding activities which need to be completed, including what needs to be done to finalise draft maps and leading into the elaboration of an HCV management plan, such as further field checking of boundaries, gaining consent, collaboration, and agreement.

Comment on:

- Immediate needs or immediate activities to be conducted
- Status of maps
- Status of FPIC. E.g., summarize again any areas where FPIC was not granted for the assessment.
- Any high-risk issues or unresolved issues that need to be addressed in the short term

Include specific wording on what needs to be done for draft maps to become final and for any potential HCV designations to have more certainty.

References

Annexes

Required annexes

- CVs of assessment team members (include relevant details on specialties (e.g., bird, mammal, plant taxonomy where applicable) and experience. Limit CVs to two pages each.
- Community engagement throughout the assessment. Details of meetings held (including dates, persons, and their role, topics/finding), participatory mapping activities, participation in field data collection.
- Final stakeholder consultation evidence: List of meetings, evidence of participation in meetings, list of people interviewed. Other relevant documents (e.g., correspondence from community, statements from stakeholders etc.).

Other annexes

- Detailed methodologies (including the coordinates of the survey effort) and research techniques (e.g., to include questionnaires used for the social assessment).
- Complete lists of species that includes potentially present species from the literature reviews
- Soil analyses
- Hydrology data
- Other technical information (as applicable)