

HIGH CONSERVATION VALUES (HCVS) EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

For use in the context of implementing Controlled Wood standards.

FSC

Australia

Version 2-0

August 2021



1. Introduction and Background

This document is a normative annex to the Australian National Risk Assessment (NRA) for sourcing of controlled wood. The evaluation framework is a mandatory control measure for organisations sourcing controlled wood, either from uncertified forests where risks of impacts on High Conservation Values is **specified**, or forests certified to FSC-STD-30-010 V2.0. Risks are specified at the bioregional, state and/or national spatial scale.

This document provides the capacity for organisations to develop appropriate control measures to maintain identified values threatened by forestry operations and/or implement mandatory control measures. Mandatory control measures can only be dropped or adapted where the outcome of implementation can be demonstrated to be stronger than the mandatory control measure.

This Evaluation Framework has been developed in accordance with the requirements of FSC-PRO-60-002a V1-0 EN (FSC® National Risk Assessment Framework). This Framework supersedes and replaces the previous Framework (V3.4).

A new internationally standardised nomenclature for describing the components of the high conservation value system has been developed by FSC (FSC xxx xxx xx). The six HCV values identified by the FSC Principles and Criteria Version 5 are normative and are now described as HCV **Elements**. The national interpretations of these in HCV Assessment Frameworks are now known as **Designations**. This nomenclature has been used throughout this document.

2. Context of this Framework

This section provides context for the Controlled Wood HCV Framework within the FSC system of standards.

1.1 FSC Principles and Criteria Requirements

Principle 9 Management activities in high conservation value forests shall maintain and/or enhance the attributes that define such forests. Decisions regarding high conservation value forests shall always be considered in the context of a precautionary approach.

1.2 HCV in the controlled wood system

The main differences between the Controlled Wood framework and the framework for use with Australian national standard is that:

- There is no requirement to enhance HCV only to maintain them.
- There is no monitoring requirement.

The HCV framework for use in the national standard has been informed by the development of a range of indicators in a number of principles and criteria. This is not the case with the Controlled Wood HCV framework.

Given the fundamental differences between the two systems and the constraints they impose, every attempt has been made to harmonise the two Australian frameworks. In particular definitions and thresholds are common to both wherever possible. A *precautionary approach** must still be adopted.



1.3 The Controlled Wood standards (FSC-STD-40-005 V3-1 and FSC-STD-30-010 V 2)

Standard FSC-STD-40-005 V3-1 requires organizations to implement a due diligence system when sourcing controlled wood, to minimise the risk of unacceptable wood from the five Unacceptable Material Controlled Wood Elements entering the FSC system. The due diligence system consists of obtaining information, risk assessment and risk mitigation. The risk mitigation mechanism is the main difference to the previous versions of the standard. The organizations will be using the FSC Australia risk assessment. Due diligence covers not only geographical sources of the controlled wood, but also the supply chains that controlled wood is sourced through.

Standard FSC-STD-30-010 V 2 operates at the FM level and requires forest managers to undertake assessments to ensure that wood supplied from the FMU excludes wood from the 5 Elements. The use of this assessment framework is normative for assessing and managing Controlled Wood Category 3 – High Conservation Values.

1.4 The National Risk Assessment

As part of the requirement of undertaking the NRA, FSC Australia identified homogenous spatial units as either low risk or specified risk. Risk was assessed against each HCV Element 1. Details of this assessment is available in the National Risk Assessment.

1 Previously known as HCV 'Elements' in the previous HCV Evaluation Framework.

The Evaluation Framework shall be applied against all the HCV Designations of these Elements where risk is specified.

Table 1. Mandatory Maximum Scale of Risk Assessment for HCV 1-6

HCV Element	Mandatory maximum scale of risk assessment	Risk Specification
1	Native forests in NSW, QLD, WA, Vic and Tas Hardwood plantations in NSW and QLD	Specified risk
1	Native forests in SA, NT and ACT Hardwood plantations in SA, NT, WA, Vic, Tas and ACT All softwood plantations	Low risk
2	All native forests in all states and territories (SA and ACT N/A)	Specified risk
2	Plantations in all States and Territories	Low Risk
3	Native forests in NSW, QLD, NT, WA, Vic and Tas Hardwood plantations in NSW and QLD	Specified Risk
3	Native forest in SA and ACT Hardwood plantations in SA, NT, WA, Vic, Tas and ACT All softwood plantations	Low Risk
4	All States and Territories.	Specified risk
5	All States and Territories.	Low Risk
6	All States and Territories.	Specified Risk

For Controlled Wood implementation the organisation shall include:



Assessment to identify the presence of high conservation values, in the supply areas and CW FMU. This framework presents the required approach for assessment of each HCV Element.

Evidence of consultation with relevant stakeholders where applicable on the presence and threats to high conservation values with respect to the evaluated supply areas.

A list of identified high conservation values together with evidence that control measure will be effective for the current or proposed forest management activities, including consultation with stakeholders and relevant experts. A management plan may assist in this assessment.

While the identification or presence of HCVs does not automatically exclude harvesting, it is the responsibility of the forest manager to demonstrate that the HCVs will be effectively maintained by proposed control measures, and the precautionary principle has been applied. In some cases the presence or identification of some HCVs will not be compatible with harvesting.

1.5 Scale, Intensity and Risk (SIR)

FSC recognises that the scale and intensity of forest harvesting influence the level of risk posed by that forest harvesting. This HCV Framework designates supply areas as fitting into one of two classes for scale, intensity and risk: Low SIR and Standard SIR.

For Standard SIR supply areas, each HCV Designation identified in the Framework applies. For Low SIR, only specific Designations are required to be assessed. The 'assessment pathways' for assessing each Designation are also simplified for Low SIR.

To qualify as low SIR, the wood source must be plantation only, and be sourced from a supply area smaller than 1000ha or a where annual harvest is less than 5000 m³/per annum.

3. References

International

[FSC-STD-40-005 V2-1](#) Standard for company evaluation of FSC Controlled Wood

[FSC-STD-30-010 V2-0](#) FSC Controlled Wood standard for forest management enterprises

FSC-PRO-60-002a V1-0 EN FSC National Risk Assessment Framework

[FSC-DIR-40-005](#) FSC Directive on Controlled Wood

[FSC-STD-20-012](#) Standard for evaluation of FSC Controlled Wood in Forest Management Enterprises

[FSC-STD-20-011](#) Accreditation standards for Chain of Custody evaluations

[FSC-STD-01-001](#) FSC Principles and Criteria

[FSC-GUI-30-009 V1-0](#) Conservation Value Guidance for Forest Managers Guidance Document (GUI)

ISEAL : Stakeholder consultation practices in Standards Development RO44-Version 1

Australian

[Interim Biogeographic Regionalization for Australia \(IBRA\)](#). In all cases including IBRA we are using the latest version

[Australian National Risk Assessment](#)



THE AUSTRALIAN HCV FRAMEWORK

Introduction

Overriding Notes

For the purpose of this Framework, legal compliance is a necessary but not a sufficient condition for compliance with these requirements. It should not be assumed that because a forest management operation complies with relevant federal, state and/or local laws and regulations that these laws meet the requirements of the Framework.

Participating stakeholders should be provided with information sufficient to provide meaningful feedback.

Section 2.

Includes definitions and guidance that pertains to all six Elements of *HCVs**.

Section 3.

Provides a definition of each *HCV** Element together with a breakdown of subsets of values (known as 'Designations') that are considered under each Element to be important in the Australian context. These Designations are not a comprehensive list. They represent a minimum requirement of what must be considered subject to *scale, intensity and risk** (SIR) in each category in the Australian context.

Each *HCV** Element includes variations of the minimum requirement of Designations to be considered for Low SIR. Given the small scale, lower *intensity**, and consequently lower risk for Low SIR operations, a number of *HCV** Designations are much less likely to be applicable.

*Stakeholders** and experts may identify additional values within designations. If these are identified they should be considered where appropriate and relevant during the *HCV** evaluation process.

Definitions

Where a term or concept is followed with a ‘*’ it means that a definition has been provided. All definitions are normative.

Framework specific definitions are provided in this section. HCV-specific definitions are included in the relevant HCV Element sections. All other definitions are to be sourced from the Glossary of Australian National Standard for Forest Management.

Bioregional Assessment Scale: The scale for assessment and identification of values is dependent on the value being assessed. Generally, this will be at the Interim Biogeographic Regionalisation for Australia (IBRA) scale for biological values, while recognising that some *landscape values** will cross IBRA regions. Where appropriate, including on the basis of *scale, intensity and risk**, finer resolution of analysis may be required.

Best Available Information*: Specific guidance on *Best Available Information** has been developed for each of the six *HCV** Elements.



Applying *HCV definitions and wording to local conditions:** Where the definitions provided do not provide locally specific detail for assessing *HCVs** *The Organisation** shall use the best available scientific information, including recognised government and expert definitions, to determine how *HCV** definitions are most appropriately applied.

Minimum area threshold for *HCV Areas:** For some *HCV** designations, a minimum area threshold for identifying what constitutes an *HCV Area** is required. This applies particularly to *HCV** designations relating to specific vegetation types or *habitat** requirements. In the identification of *HCV Areas**, the minimum size threshold will be the smallest area in which the viability and integrity of that particular designation can be maintained, based on the best available scientific information, including recognised government and expert definitions and research.

Field Assessment*. A field visit to the site associated with planning and is often undertaken in conjunction with surveys for other aspects of management. *Field assessments** should involve the use of standardised techniques and reporting that are relevant to the values being assessed. The intensity of survey effort, expertise of assessors, and survey techniques will vary depending on the result of desktop assessments, the intensity of operations, and other factors. *Field assessments** may result in the need for more detailed targeted surveys and *habitat** evaluations.

Targeted Survey and *Habitat Evaluations:** In-forest surveys or evaluations of *habitat** suitability, performed by qualified experts and/or other suitably trained individuals in accordance with scientifically rigorous methods, that seek to identify locations of individuals or populations of single or multiple species, or *habitat** likely to be suitable for individuals or populations of single or multiple species. These surveys or evaluations may be undertaken in order to calibrate

desktop assessments, inform *landscape** planning, inform operational management responses, *monitor** the effectiveness of management measures, or other purposes.

Threat Assessment: The process of identifying specific threats to the maintenance of identified HCVs*, including an assessment of the likelihood of occurrence and the severity of consequences. Threats may include those from management activities and other causes.

Section 3: HCV* Specific Requirements and Guidance

HCV 1 – Species diversity.

Concentrations of *biological diversity including endemic species, and *rare**, *threatened** or endangered species, that are *significant** at global, regional or national levels.**

Table 2. Designations to be assessed for HCV1

Designation	Description	LOW SIR
HCV 1.1	Areas that contain <i>significant concentrations</i> * of <i>rare and threatened species</i> * or that contain <i>habitat</i> * <i>critical</i> * to the survival and long-term viability of these species.	required
HCV 1.2	Areas that contain centres of endemism.	not required
HCV 1.3	Areas that contain <i>significant concentrations</i> * of <i>rare species</i> * that are poorly reserved at the IBRA* region scale.	not required
HCV 1.4	Areas with mapped significant <i>seasonal concentrations</i> * of species.	required
HCV 1.5	Areas of high species/community diversity	not required



Designation	Description	LOW SIR
HCV 1.6	Refugia	not required

HCV 1 – Definitions

Habitat* includes features such as hollow bearing trees, and other features that are critical to survival and long term viability to a significant concentration of that species.

‘Refugia’: an area identified in formally recognised reports or peer-reviewed journals as performing a significant function in maintaining species during, for example, periods of climate variability and extremes; human induced causes such as disease; or population fluctuations from natural or human-induced causes.

‘Significant concentrations’: Concentrations of species that are considered significant at a global, regional or national scale.

‘Areas that contain significant concentrations of rare and threatened species*’: may include specific areas where there are a significant number of multiple species, or where there is a proportionately large population of an individual species. Concentrations of species are often linked to one stage of a species’ life history and associated with activities such as breeding, staging, feeding or over-wintering.

‘Areas with Significant seasonal concentrations of species’: areas important to the lifecycle or migration paths of migratory and communal breeding species.

Best Available Information* for HCV 1

Includes as applicable:

- Recovery plans and related documents,
- Habitat** mapping,
- Databases,
- Peer reviewed journal articles,
- Reports by government bodies and credible institutions, organisations and experts,
- Appendix A of the Australian National Risk Assessment
- Expert research and advice (including for high SIR operations, provided by a locally knowledgeable expert independent of the organization), including Population Viability Analysis and other relevant techniques.
- Expert and knowledgeable *stakeholder** data, and
- Field surveys.

Table 3. Assessment Pathway for HCV1

SIR Category	National Designation
Low SIR	1: Consult the <i>Best Available Information*</i> to identify relevant datasets and prepare lists and maps of potential <i>HCV*</i> accordingly. 2: Identify Control Measures required to maintain identified <i>HCVs*</i> (see HCV 1 Control Measures under Pathway). 3: Consult <i>stakeholders*</i> on assessment and Control Measures. 4: Implement Control Measures.



SIR Category	National Designation
Standard SIR	<p>1: Consult the <i>Best Available Information</i>* to identify relevant datasets and prepare lists and maps of potential <i>HCV</i>* accordingly.</p> <p>2: Consult experts and other knowledgeable <i>stakeholders</i>* to identify <i>HCVs</i>*.</p> <p>3 (if required): A gap analysis shall be undertaken of the adequacy of existing data with a focus on Endangered and Critically Endangered species including in circumstances where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Species are poorly recorded or mapped; and/or <input type="checkbox"/> Habitat requirements are not easily defined or poorly understood; <p>Further investigation and/or research and consultation to address identified significant data gaps shall be undertaken where gaps are identified. This includes targeted surveys/<i>habitat</i>* evaluations where required.</p> <p>4: Undertake a <i>threat assessment</i>* of proposed management activities on identified <i>HCVs</i>*.</p> <p>5: Identify Control Measures required to maintain identified <i>HCVs</i>* (see HCV 1 Control Measures under Pathway).</p> <p>6: Consult <i>stakeholders</i>* on assessment and Control Measures.</p> <p>7: Implement Control Measures.</p>

HCV 1 Recommended Control Measures

Measures to maintain identified *HCV Areas** shall aim to prevent reductions in the extent, integrity, and quality of *habitat** that negatively impact on long-term viability of species populations.

Management strategies and actions for identified *HCV Areas** may include *protection** zones, harvest prescriptions, vegetation retention, *landscape** scale *protections**, *habitat** restoration*, *connectivity** planning, *field assessment*, *pre-harvest** surveys and/or *habitat** evaluations. *HCV Areas** that are more vulnerable and subject to higher threat levels are more likely to require operational level *field assessment** and targeted surveys/*habitat** evaluations; harvest exclusions; and/or site-specific actions.

HCV 1 Mandatory Control Measures

Where HCV 1 areas have been identified within the Supply Unit, the Organisation* shall ensure appropriate management strategies and actions have been implemented.

HCV 2 – landscape*-level ecosystems* and mosaics.

***Intact Forest Landscapes** and large landscape*-level ecosystems* and ecosystem* mosaics that are *significant** at global, regional or national levels, and that contain viable populations of the great majority of the naturally occurring species in natural patterns of distribution and abundance.**

Table 4. Designations to be assessed for HCV2

Designation	Description	LOW SIR
HCV 2.1	<i>Landscape-level* native forests*</i> with successional stages, forest structures, and species composition that are similar in distribution and abundance to <i>native forests*</i> that have experienced minimal human disturbance, excluding traditional <i>Indigenous*</i> management regimes.	not required



Designation	Description	LOW SIR
HCV 2.2	Forests recognised as being regionally significant at the bioregion or larger scale in formally recognised reports or peer-reviewed journals, due to the unusual <i>landscape</i> *- <i>scale</i> * biodiversity values provided by size and condition of the forest relative to regional forest land cover and land use trends.	not required
HCV 2.3	Forests that provide regionally significant <i>habitat</i> * <i>connectivity</i> * between larger forest areas and/or <i>refugia</i> *.	required
HCV 2.4	<i>Intact Forest Landscapes</i> *, wilderness areas, forests that are roadless, and/or have not been affected by forest management activity.	required

The focus of this *HCV** category is **regionally significant large *landscape**-level forests**. Under this *HCV** category, areas that are generally thousands or tens of thousands of hectares in size which contain the above values qualify as HCV 2.

HCV 2 Definitions

Intact Forest Landscape: A territory within today's global extent of forest cover which contains forest and non-forest *ecosystems** minimally influenced by human economic activity, with an area of at least 500 km² (50,000 ha) and a minimal width of 10 km (measured as the diameter of a circle that is entirely inscribed within the boundaries of the territory) (Source: Intact Forests / Global Forest Watch. 2006-2014).

Intact Forest Landscape Core Areas: The portion of an Intact Forest *landscape** that contains the most important ecological and cultural values.

Definition of ‘Large *landscape-level *native forests**’:** Relatively contiguous areas of forest (which may be crossed by land management roads or public roads). At the minimum these forests are likely to be thousands or tens of thousands of hectares in size.

However, “large” is relative to regional *landscape** context (particularly the size of forested blocks in the bioregion) and might be smaller or larger than this figure as indicated by consultation with regional experts.

In regions where *native forests** are heavily fragmented by forest type conversion or land use conversion, the increased value of smaller occurrences of remaining natural forest should also be included in the assessment. The forest may be in single or multiple ownerships.

HCV 2 includes areas that are in (or close to) what might be called their ‘natural’ condition. Such areas have a relatively full complement of the species that are appropriate to the *habitat**. HCV 2 designation may arise because the intact forest area is unusually large and therefore of high value due to its contribution to wilderness or *landscape values**.

The general approach in assessing for HCV 2 is to compare forest characteristics (such as extent and intensity of harvest practices, forest communities, successional stages, structures, and species composition and abundance) with *native forests** that have only been subject to natural disturbance processes or minimal human intervention. Aerial photography or satellite images of the surrounding landscape should also be considered.

‘Regionally Significant’: The forest is significant in the region due to its size, condition, and/or importance to biodiversity conservation. Factors to consider include:

- Rarity of forests of this size and quality within the region;
- Less affected by anthropogenic factors than similar areas in the region.



Best Available Information* for HCV 2

Includes where applicable:

- Mapping and other data on forest cover, age, succession, structure, species composition, *habitat** connectivity, anthropogenic disturbance, roadless areas, wilderness, intact forests, and other relevant information on forest condition; and
- Peer reviewed journals, government or expert reports and data identifying significant *landscape**-level forests, for example World Heritage Reports, values threat analysis; scientific reports of landscape scale impacts, comparative study of historical and current aerial photographs.
- For Intact Forest Landscapes*, mapping and data from Global Forest Watch and World Resource Institute.

Table 5. Assessment Pathway for HCV 2.

SIR Category	National Designation
Low SIR	1: Consult the <i>Best Available Information*</i> to identify relevant datasets and prepare lists and maps of potential <i>HCV*</i> accordingly. 2: Identify Control Measures required to maintain identified <i>HCVs*</i> (see HCV 2 Control Measures under Pathway). 3: Consult <i>stakeholders*</i> on assessment and Control Measures. 4: Implement Control Measures.

SIR Category	National Designation
Standard SIR	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1: Consult the <i>Best Available Information</i>* to identify relevant datasets and prepare lists and maps of potential <i>HCV</i>* accordingly. 2: Consult experts and other knowledgeable <i>stakeholders</i>* to identify <i>HCVs</i>*. 3: Identify Control Measures required to maintain identified <i>HCVs</i>* (see HCV 2 Control Measures under Pathway). 4: Consult <i>stakeholders</i>* on assessment and Control Measures. 5: Implement Control Measures.

HCV 2 Recommended Control Measures

Management strategies and actions shall aim to maintain identified HCVs and are likely to include measures to maintain the integrity of *landscape**-level values of identified HCV 2 areas. Measures to maintain identified HCV 2 may include *protection** zones; lowered harvest intensity and lengthened rotations; harvest distribution; *landscape**-*scale** protections; *connectivity** corridors; and/or other measures to maintain forest structure, composition, *regeneration** and disturbance patterns.

HCV 2 areas that constitute provide *habitat** connectivity, and that most closely resemble undisturbed forests are more likely to require *conservation** and *protection** zones.

HCV 2 areas that contain unusual *landscape**-*scale** biodiversity values and that have higher levels of disturbance are more likely to be managed through longer harvest rotation, harvest distribution, lower harvest intensity, and/or *landscape** management measures.

HCV2 Mandatory Control Measures



Demonstrate that wood is not sourced from HCV2 areas that constitute Intact Forest Landscapes unless it can demonstrate that it is not impacting more than 20% of the IFL in the Management Unit and does not reduce the IFL below the threshold of 50,000 ha in the landscape.

HCV 2 areas containing undisturbed rainforest are more likely to require conservation and protection zones.

HCV 3 – *Ecosystems** and *habitats**. *Rare**, *threatened**, or endangered ecosystems, *habitats** or *refugia**.

Ecosystems that are rare and/or threatened at a global, national or regional level. Distinctiveness in terms of size, quality (particularly lack of human disturbance), or location within the ecosystems geographic range may be considered in assessing ecosystem* rarity.**

Table 6. Designations to be assessed for HCV 3

Designation	Description	LOW SIR
HCV 3.1	Ecosystems* (including rainforests) that are threatened, depleted or poorly reserved at the IBRA* bioregion scale, or are subject to threatening processes predicted to substantially reduce their extent and function.	required
HCV 3.2	Areas for conservation of important genes or genetically distinct populations	not required

Designation	Description	LOW SIR
HCV 3.3	Old-growth forests	required
HCV 3.4	Remnant vegetation in heavily cleared landscapes and mature forest in degraded landscapes	required

The focus of this *HCV** category are forests that are in rare, threatened or endangered *ecosystems**, or that contain such *ecosystems**.

HCV 3 Definitions

‘Mature Forest’: Mature Forests are forests that contain overstorey trees typically greater than 100 years old and beginning to develop structural features typically found in older forests, including large spreading crowns, tree hollows and stages of senescence.

‘Mature forest in degraded landscapes’: A forest area containing mature forest where mature forest is rare in the surrounding landscape and/or is reduced in extent such that it is inadequate in maintaining landscape or ecological functions. Thresholds for determining rareness and degradation shall be based on assessments by government agencies, peer reviewed literature, or assessments by recognised experts, and be considered at the *landscape** level.

‘Old-growth forest’: Ecologically mature forest where the effects of disturbances are now negligible.

Best Available Information* for HCV 3



Includes, as applicable, mapping and other data on:

- Ecosystem* protection* and conservation status* at IBRA* scales;
- Old-growth forest*;
- Forest cover and disturbance;
- Forest maturity; and
- Anthropogenic disturbance at the *landscape** scale.

Table 7. Assessment Pathway for HCV 3

SIR Category	National Designation
Low SIR	1: Consult the <i>Best Available Information*</i> to identify relevant datasets and prepare lists and maps of potential <i>HCV*</i> accordingly. 2: Identify Control Measures required to maintain identified <i>HCVs*</i> (see HCV 3 Control Measures under Pathway). 3: Consult <i>stakeholders*</i> on assessment and Control Measures. 4: Implement Control Measures.
Standard SIR	1: Consult the <i>Best Available Information*</i> to identify relevant datasets and prepare lists and maps of potential <i>HCV*</i> accordingly. 2: Consult experts and other knowledgeable <i>stakeholders*</i> to identify <i>HCVs*</i> . 3: Undertake a <i>threat assessment*</i> of management activities on identified <i>HCVs*</i> . 4: Identify Control Measures required to maintain identified <i>HCVs*</i> (see HCV 3 Control Measures under Pathway) 5: Consult <i>stakeholders*</i> on assessment and Control Measures. 6: Implement Control Measures.

HCV 3 Recommended Control Measures

Management strategies and actions to maintain identified HCV 3 areas include measures to maintain *ecosystem* extent, integrity, structure and/or function and should be considered at the *landscape* level.

Measures to maintain identified HCV 3 may include *protection** zones; target-based *protections**; *landscape*-scale* protections**; harvest exclusions, and/or retention in harvest areas.

HCV areas that are more vulnerable and subject to higher threat levels are more likely to require operational-level *field assessment**; verification of desktop data; harvest exclusions; and/or site-specific actions.

HCV 3 Mandatory Control Measures

For HCV 3.3 Old Growth, demonstrate that wood is not sourced from *Old Growth Forest**. Permissible management activities include tree removals for safety and access provided this is justified. The minimum area for Old Growth is as per the definition for *Minimum Threshold for HCV Areas**.

HCV 4 - Critical* ecosystem services*.

Basic ecosystem services* in critical situations*, including *protection of water catchments and control of erosion of vulnerable soils and slopes.**



HCV 4 is focused on basic *ecosystem services** in **critical situations**. Substantial alteration of these forests is likely to result in an unacceptable impact on the delivery of *ecosystem services**.

Table 8. Designations to be assessed for HCV 4

Designation	Description	LOW SIR
HCV 4.1	Areas that provide <i>protection</i> * from flooding	not required
HCV 4.2	Areas that provide <i>protection</i> * from erosion	required
HCV 4.3	Areas that provide barriers to the spread of destructive fires	not required
HCV 4.4	Areas that provide clean water catchments	not required

HCV 4 Definitions

‘Critical situations*’: An *ecosystem service** is considered to be ‘critical’* where a disruption of that service is likely to cause, or poses a threat of, severe negative impacts on the welfare, health or survival of local communities, on the environment, on *High Conservation Values**, or on the functioning of significant *infrastructure** (roads, dams, buildings, etc.). The notion of criticality here refers to the importance and risk for natural resources and environmental and socioeconomic values.

Best Available Information* for HCV 4

Includes, as applicable, mapping, reports, expert consultation and other data on:

- Flood risk;
- Soil erodibility and erosion *risk**;
- Fire risk and behaviour in the *landscape**; and
- Water catchment location and water quality.

Table 9. Assessment Pathway for HCV 4

SIR Category	National Designation
Low SIR	<p>1: Consult the <i>Best Available Information</i>* to identify relevant datasets and prepare lists and maps of potential <i>HCV</i>* accordingly.</p> <p>2: Identify Control Measures required to maintain identified <i>HCVs</i>* (see HCV 3 Control Measures under Pathway),</p> <p>3: Consult <i>stakeholders</i>* on assessment and Control Measures.</p> <p>4: Implement Control Measures.</p>
Standard SIR	<p>1: Consult the <i>Best Available Information</i>* to identify relevant datasets and prepare lists and maps of potential <i>HCV</i>* accordingly.</p> <p>2: Consult experts and other knowledgeable <i>stakeholders</i>* to identify <i>HCVs</i>*.</p> <p>3: Undertake a <i>threat assessment</i>* of management activities on identified <i>HCVs</i>*.</p> <p>4: Identify Control Measures required to maintain identified <i>HCVs</i>* (see HCV 4 Control Measures under Pathway).</p> <p>5: Consult <i>stakeholders</i>* on assessment and Control Measures.</p> <p>6: Implement Control Measures.</p>



HCV 4 Recommended Control Measures

Management strategies to maintain areas identified under HCV 4 may include *protection** zones, harvest prescriptions, chemical use restrictions, and/or prescriptions for road construction and maintenance.

HCV 4 Mandatory Control Measures

Harvesting Codes of Practice shall be adhered to (both voluntary and mandatory codes of practice).

In circumstances where there is high risk of erosion or history of issues related to erosion then additional management measures may be required.

HCV 5 - Forest areas fundamental to meeting basic needs of local communities* (e.g. subsistence, health).

A site or resource is fundamental for satisfying basic needs if the services it provides are irreplaceable (i.e., if alternatives are not readily accessible or affordable), and if its loss or *damage** would cause serious suffering to *affected stakeholders**. HCV 5 is most likely to be more important in areas where whole communities or significant portions of them are heavily dependent on those *ecosystems** for their livelihoods, and where there is limited availability of alternatives. In general, if local people are dependent on *Indigenous** or traditionally managed *ecosystems**, HCV 5 may be present.

Table 10. Designations to be assessed for HCV 5

Designation	Description	LOW SIR
HCV 5.1	Unique/main sources of water <i>fundamental</i> * for drinking and other daily uses	required
HCV 5.2	Unique/main sources of water <i>fundamental</i> * for the irrigation of subsistence food crops	required
HCV 5.3	Food and medicines <i>fundamental</i> * for local traditional <i>Indigenous</i> * uses	required

HCV 5 Definitions

‘Basic human needs’: Local people use the area to obtain resources on which they are critically dependent. Potential fundamental basic needs include, but are not limited to: unique sources of water for drinking and other daily uses; food, medicine, fuel, building and craft resources; the production of food crops and subsistence cash crops; *protection** of “agricultural” plots against adverse microclimate, and traditional farming practices.

‘Fundamental’: Loss of the resources from this area would have a significant impact in the supply of the resource and decrease local community well-being.

Best Available Information* for HCV 5

Includes:



- Mapping, reports, expert and *stakeholder** consultation and other data on unique and primary sources of water for daily uses and the location of areas that provide traditional food and medicines

Table 11. Assessment Pathway for HCV 5.

SIR Category	National Designation
Low SIR	1: Consult the <i>Best Available Information*</i> to identify relevant datasets and prepare lists and maps of potential <i>HCV*</i> accordingly. 2: Identify Control Measures required to maintain identified <i>HCVs*</i> (see HCV 3 Control Measures under Pathway). 3: Consult <i>stakeholders*</i> on assessment and Control Measures. 4: Implement Control Measures.
Standard SIR	1: Consult the <i>Best Available Information*</i> to identify relevant datasets and prepare lists and maps of potential <i>HCV</i> accordingly. 2: Consult experts and other knowledgeable <i>stakeholders*</i> to identify <i>HCVs*</i> . 3: Undertake a <i>threat assessment*</i> of management activities on identified <i>HCVs*</i> . 4: Identify Control Measures required to maintain identified <i>HCVs*</i> (see HCV 5 Control Measures under Pathway). 5: Consult <i>stakeholders*</i> on assessment and Control Measures. 6: Implement Control Measures.

HCV 5 Recommended Control Measures

Management strategies to maintain areas identified under HCV 5 should be developed in cooperation with representatives and members of affected *local communities** and *Indigenous Peoples**.

HCV 6 - Cultural values.

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**.**

Table 12. Designations too be assessed for HCV 6.

Designation	Description	LOW SIR
HCV 6.1	Aesthetic values	not required
HCV 6.2	Historic values of global or national cultural or archaeological significance.	required
HCV 6.3	Long term research sites	required
HCV 6.4	Social (including economic) values	not required
HCV 6.5	Spiritual and cultural values	required

HCV 6 Definitions

‘Cultural significance’: This Annex has adopted the ICOMOS Burra Charter definition of Cultural Significance which is recognised at all levels of government and in legislation in



Australia. “Cultural significance’ means aesthetic, historic, scientific, social or spiritual value for past, present or future generations. Cultural significance is embodied in the place itself, its fabric, setting, use, associations, meanings, records, related places and related objects. Places may have a range of values for different individuals or groups.”²

Best Available Information* for HCV 6

Includes as applicable:

- Mapping;
- Reports;
- Databases;
- Field surveys, and
- Expert and knowledgeable stakeholder* consultation.
- Consultation with identified* Traditional Owners and other relevant Indigenous interests*.

‘Traditional Owners’: are those people who, through membership in a descent group or clan, have responsibility for caring for particular country. Traditional Owners are authorised to speak for country and its heritage. Authorisation to speak for country and heritage may be as a senior traditional owner, an elder, or in more recent times, as a registered Native Title claimant.³

‘Other Indigenous people with interests’ are those people who through their personal or family history of involvement with a particular place have an interest in its heritage values.

² The Burra Charter: *The Australia ICOMOS Charter of Places of Cultural Significance 1999.*

³ Australian Heritage Commission 2002, *Ask first : a guide to respecting indigenous heritage places and values*, Australian Heritage Commission, Canberra

Sometimes these people are described as custodians, but this can mean different things in different areas of Australia. In some areas custodians are responsible for looking after places and sometimes the stories and ceremonies linked to these places. In other areas custodians are Indigenous people who look after a place on behalf of others. The relevant Indigenous people are the Traditional Owners and other Indigenous people with interests in a place.

‘Identification’ Aboriginal Land Councils, state heritage agencies, State Aboriginal Affairs offices/departments, the National Native Title Tribunal, Native Title representative bodies, Native Title claimants and Prescribed Body Corporates under the Native Title Act, can provide advice on how to identify the relevant authorised and other Indigenous people with interests in a place. FSC Australia regularly convenes an Indigenous Working Group and/or network of experts on Indigenous issues related to forestry and land management. As such, for up to date advice on the relevant state and federal agencies and/or Indigenous organisations it is recommended that FSC Australia is contacted.

Table 13. Assessment Pathway for HCV 6

SIR Category	National Designation
Low SIR	1: Consult the <i>Best Available Information</i> * to identify relevant datasets and prepare lists and maps of potential <i>HCV</i> * accordingly. 2: Identify Control Measures required to maintain identified <i>HCVs</i> *. 3: Consult <i>stakeholders</i> * on assessment and Control Measures. 4: Implement Control Measures.



SIR Category	National Designation
Standard SIR	1: Consult the <i>Best Available Information</i> * to identify relevant datasets and prepare lists and maps of potential <i>HCV</i> * accordingly. 2: Consult experts and other knowledgeable <i>stakeholders</i> * to identify <i>HCVs</i> *. 3: Undertake a <i>threat assessment</i> * of management activities on identified <i>HCVs</i> *. 4: Identify Control Measures required to maintain identified <i>HCVs</i> *. 5: Consult <i>stakeholders</i> * on assessment and Control Measures. 6: Implement Control Measures.

HCV 6 Recommended Control Measures

Management strategies and actions shall aim to maintain *HCV Areas** identified under HCV 6 may include *protection** zones; target-based protections; *landscape**-*scale** *protections**; harvest exclusions, and/or retention in harvest areas.

Mandatory Control Measures

Measures for maintaining Indigenous cultural values shall be agreed to with the *Indigenous Peoples** *connected to** the *Management unit**, and/or as directed by state and *national laws**.