

THE ABC OF HCVs

The Biodiverse Oil Palm Landscape project (PPB in Spanish) was executed between 2012 and 2018 by the National Federation of Oil Palm Growers (FEDEPALMA in Spanish), in association with Cenipalma, the Humboldt Institute and WWF Colombia. It was financed by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and its implementing agency was the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB).

This project provided the oil palm sector with environmental information, guidelines and tools to support better decision-making processes in the feasibility analysis, design and management of oil palm crops, implementing strategies and good practices that conserve biodiversity and increase productivity.

One of these tools relates to High Conservation Values (HCVs). This document will tell you what they are and why are they important for the palm oil sector.

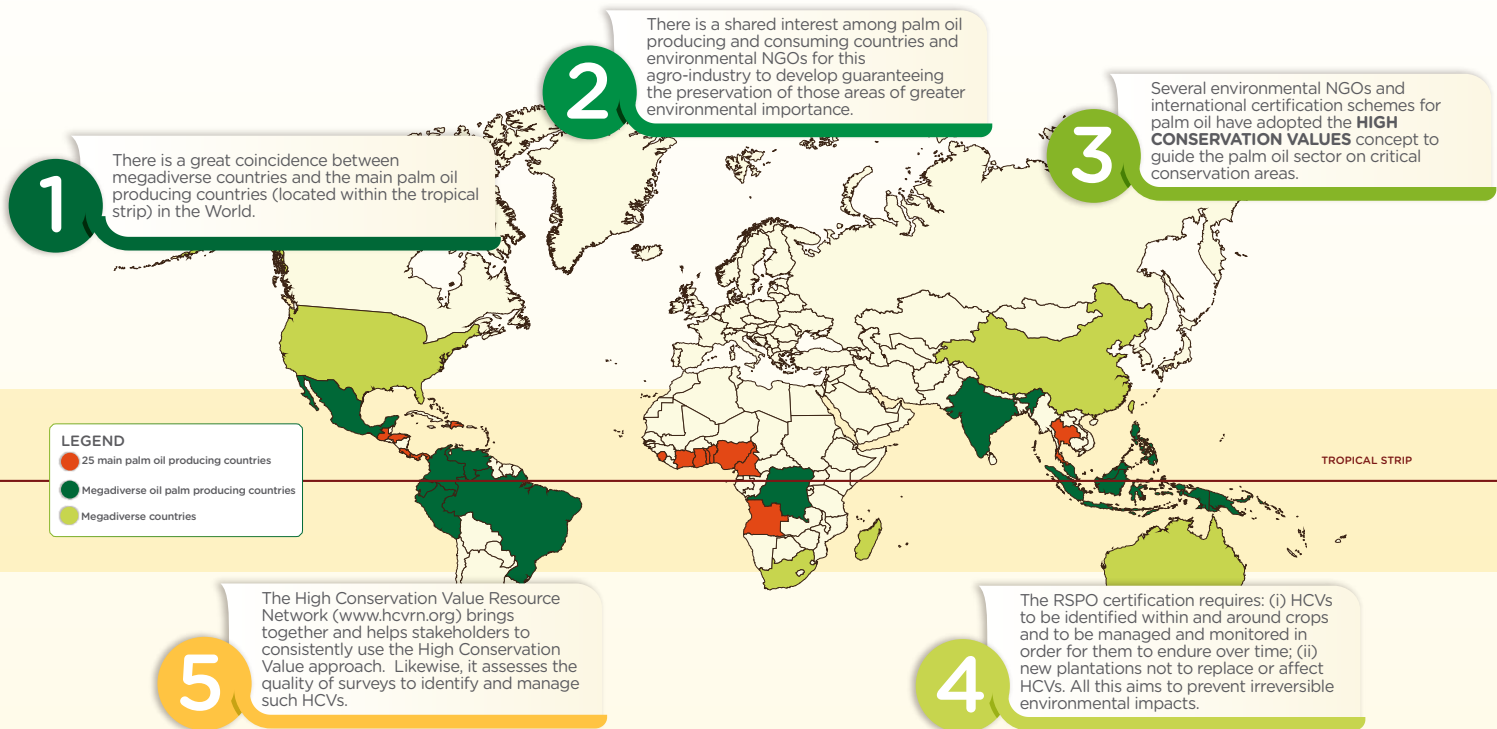
Did you know that out of the

17 MEGADIVERSE COUNTRIES

12 are ranked

AMONG THE 25 MAIN PALM OIL PRODUCING COUNTRIES?

For that reason, developing a competitive agro-industry in harmony with biodiversity and our natural capital is an important challenge for the palm oil sector worldwide.

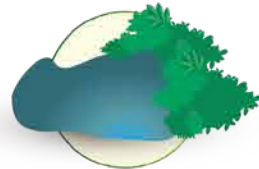


The PPB Project adopted the HCV concept and the HCVRN methodologies to guide the Colombian oil palm sector on key areas to be protected.

HCV 6

Significant sites, resources, habitats and landscapes for local communities or indigenous peoples due to **cultural, historical, religious or archaeological reasons**.

Examples: cemeteries, bathing sites along rivers or lakes, pilgrimage sites, archaeological findings, places intended for ceremonies, rites and offerings.



Bathing sites



Archaeological findings

HCV 5

Sites and resources to meet the **basic needs** of local communities or indigenous groups.

Examples: areas where local communities obtain construction or clothing materials, or where they collect medicinal plants.



Lakes where communities fish.



Areas for local food supply.



Trees that protect field crops from gusts of wind.

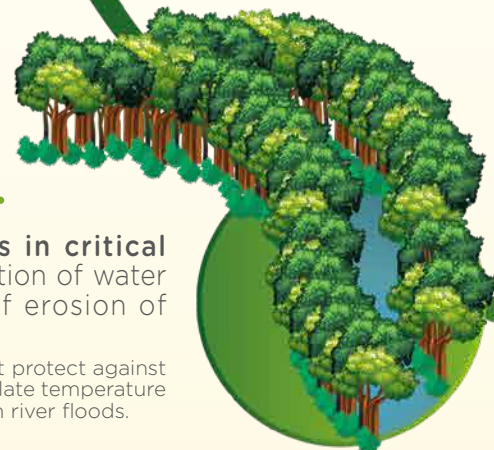


Trees that provide protection from mountain slides.

HCV 4

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

Examples: riparian buffer zones that protect against erosion and floods, forests that regulate temperature and humidity, wetlands that dampen river floods.



High Conservation Values (HCVs) are...



biological, ecological, social or cultural values...



which are outstandingly significant or critically important...



at the national, regional or global level or for a local community.

All natural habitats possess inherent conservation values, including the presence of rare or endemic species or ecosystems, provision of ecosystem services, sacred sites, or resources harvested by local residents to satisfy their basic needs.

There are six ways to identify if one of them is a **High Conservation Value** (or six categories of HCVs):

HCV 1

Concentrations of biological diversity including endemic, rare, threatened or endangered species.

Examples: flora: American cedar; bird: cattetero duck; mammal: otter, ocelot; reptile: Morrocoy Amazonian tortoise.



Morrocoy Amazonian tortoise



Ocelot

HCV 2

Landscape-level ecosystems and mosaics. Intact forest landscapes and large landscape-level ecosystems and ecosystem mosaics that contain viable populations of the great majority of the naturally occurring species.

Examples in Colombia: large forested areas in the Amazon and Pacific regions; the *Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta* Mountain Range, high Andean forest and moorland complexes, the Santa Marta Marsh Complex, biodiverse natural savannahs in the Orinoco basin, among others.



Santa Marta Mountain Range and Marsh.



Large forests in the Amazon and Pacific coast regions.

HCV 3

Rare, threatened or endangered ecosystems.

Examples: dry forest, moriche swamps, among others.



Moriche swamps in the Orinoco



Chiribiquete mountain range



What is the best strategy to preserve HCVs over time?

Prepare and implement a management plan for the HCVs identified

- Identify threats affecting or that might affect the HCVs. These threats may be caused by:

- Activities undertaken within your land.
- Activities held in neighboring lands or by neighboring communities.
- Natural phenomena.

Examples: hunting, fishing, logging, burning, use of agrochemicals, landslides or floods.

- Develop a management strategy to prevent or control those threats.
- Implement educational campaigns for a better understanding of HCVs and how to protect them.

Develop a monitoring strategy

- Assess the presence and condition of HCVs with monitoring activities for species, ecosystems and other HCV areas identified.
- Periodically assess if the threats identified still have an impact on HCVs in your land.
- Use the information collected during monitoring activities to validate the effectiveness of the HCV preservation strategy over time.

Identify them

- Acquaint yourself with your environment, habitats, and species that either live or have lived there.
- Know your neighbors and nearby communities, and the basic needs they satisfy with the region's natural resources and areas (water, food, recreation, culture, etc.).
- Identify the location of the six HCV categories in your land and its surrounding areas. Lean on experts from your oil palm core group.

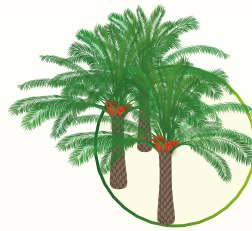
Why is it important to identify, manage and monitor HCVs in new and existing crops?



New Crops

Identifying existing HCVs before preparing the land for sowing allows to:

- Develop the project without transforming or affecting High Conservation Value areas.
- Recognize species, ecosystems and natural habitats that require specific management during crop establishment and operation.
- Establish monitoring tactics to determine if and how the oil palm project contributes to maintain and improve High Conservation Values.



Crops already established

Identifying HCVs in areas with existing crops allows to:

- Distinguish previously unknown elements that require protection and special management such as species, ecosystems and areas significant for local communities.
- Better understand the natural vegetation and species that inhabit and coexist with oil palm crops.
- Identify natural areas that need to be enhanced or restored. Examples: riparian buffer zones, water springs, remaining forest patches.
- Connect natural areas within or around oil palm crops, to favor the passage of fauna and dispersion of seeds from high value species.

By identifying, managing and monitoring HCVs, you are building an oil palm agro-industry model that protects biodiversity and is more competitive and sustainable.

