

## COURSE REPORT

# TRAINING ON THE MANAGEMENT AND MONITORING OF HCV-HCS AREAS IN OIL PALM PLANTATIONS

August 10-11, 2022

Sekadau, West Kalimantan, Indonesia

Field course co-organized by:

Environmental Leadership & Training Initiative (ELTI),  
Tropenbos Indonesia Program (TBI),  
PT. Parna Agromas (PAM)



Group photo during a field visit

**Background:** In recent decades, vast areas of natural forest have been cleared across the tropics for oil palm plantations. Indonesia and Malaysia, which account for approximately 85% of the world's total palm oil production, have been particularly badly affected. This deforestation has reduced biodiversity, degraded ecosystem services, adversely affected local communities and their livelihoods, and compounded the effects of climate change.

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To help address the effects of deforestation, World Wildlife Fund, the Malaysian Palm Oil Association, Unilever, AAK, and Migros established the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) in 2004. The RSPO is as a multi-stakeholder certification initiative to promote sustainable growth and use of palm oil. The management of forest areas within oil palm plantations to safeguard and enhance their high conservation values (HCV) and high carbon stocks (HCS) is a key requirement for RSPO certification.

The HCV approach was developed and implemented in 1999 by the Forest Stewardship Council to maintain and enhance environmental and social values in production landscapes. HCV focuses on six areas: species diversity; ecosystems; mosaics at the landscape level and intact forest areas; ecosystem and habitat; ecosystem services; and community needs and cultural values.

The HCS approach was developed and launched in 2013 by palm oil company Golden Agri-Resources (GAR), Greenpeace, and the Forest Trust to monitor adherence to GAR's no-deforestation commitment. HCS is a methodology that assesses the amount of carbon stored in an area to distinguish between viable natural forests and degraded areas that could be converted to oil palm.

Overlap between these approaches has led to some confusion. In addition, many oil palm producers do not have the knowledge and skills needed to set up an HCV-HCS management and monitoring system. This training aims to introduce the concepts and best practices of HCV- HCS management and monitoring to oil palm plantation staff.

### **Course Objectives:**

1. Introduce HCV-HCS concepts and approaches
2. Describe common threats to HCV-HCS forest areas
3. Provide guidance on best practices in HCV-HCSA management and monitoring

### **Course Format:**

The course was facilitated by Mr. Sulton Afifudin (TBI-ELTI) and ELTI alumnus Mr. Abrar Ramlan (PT. Parna Agromas [PAM]) and took place August 10-11, 2022, at the PAM plantation.





Mr. Abrar Ramlan delivering introductory remarks



Dr. Harnios Arief delivering a lecture about forest ecosystems



Mr. Abrar Ramlan providing a briefing before starting field activities

## Program

### Day 1

Mr. Afifudin and Mr. Ramlan gave introductions, followed by a welcome message from Mr. Ryu Jaeyong (head of environment, health, safety, and security, PAM). Dr. Harnios Arief (lecturer, Bogor Agricultural University) introduced the HCV approach and described the steps in conserving HCV areas: preparation, planning, site identification, management, and monitoring. He also explained how the concepts relate to several government regulations regarding biodiversity. To end the day's session, Mr. Afifudin and Mr. Ramlan divided participants into two groups and explained the objectives of the next day's field practice.

### Day 2

Mr. Ramlan launched the second day of the course with a briefing on the three field sites participants would visit. At the first site, the PAM nursery, Mr. AH Shukri (HCV assistant manager, PAM) spoke about the seedling collections that PAM uses for reforestation in HCV watershed and remediation areas. Participants then visited the Engkuning River riparian zone within the PAM plantation, where Mr. Yanuar Wicaksono (sustainability manager, Genting Plantation) discussed management and monitoring plans for the area that address criteria for HCVs set by the RSPO. Participants also visited a forest area within the PAM concession that has cultural and religious HCVs for the surrounding community. After the field visits, Mr. Wicaksono introduced the HCS approach, including its history and the steps needed to carry out a high carbon stock assessment. Dr. Arief then provided additional information (on the management and monitoring of HCV-HCS areas and led a discussion with participants. Finally, the two groups each wrote a report on the management





Mr.A.H. Syukri introducing tree seedlings found in the company's nursery



Participants discussing the management of HCV forest areas in accordance with RSPO principles



Participants discussing the management of HCV forest areas in accordance with RSPO principles

plans they'd learned about during the day, which they presented to the other group. The course instructors and facilitators provided feedback to participants and evaluated the reports. The training ended with a course evaluation and distribution of certificates to the participants and course instructors.

### Participants:

Participants in the course were 23 managers and staff from three oil palm plantations in West Kalimantan: PT. Parna Agromas (PAM), PT. Grand Utama Mandiri (GUM), and PT. Titin Boyok Sawit Makmur (TBSM).

### Follow-up:

Participants were enthusiastic about applying the lessons learned from this training activity in the plantations where they work. A WhatsApp discussion group was created so course organizers, course instructors, and participants can stay in touch and share new information. Participants also requested ELTI support for an additional training on nursery management related to revegetation efforts in riparian areas.





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