

Principle 9, Annex J: HCV Framework.

The objective of this High Conservation Value (HCV) Framework is to provide nationally specific interpretations of HCVs and *Best Available Information** for addressing HCVs.

This National HCV Framework is to be used by accredited Certification bodies and certificate holders.

The HCV interpretations and *Best Available Information** provided in this Framework are not necessarily exhaustive; additional examples of HCV occurrences may exist and shall be identified at the forest management unit scale.

The national or regional interpretations of the HCV categories and elements apply to all certificate holders, wherever occurrences of those HCVs may exist. Conversely, the Best Available Information for addressing those HCV interpretations may vary, depending on whether the certificate holder is a SLIMF or non-SLIMF, as indicated in the Framework.

Overarching Best Available Information

The following table shows the types of overarching Best Available Information (BAI) that is applicable for assessments for all HCVs, specific categories of HCV, or specific HCV elements. The purpose of listing this overarching BAI here is to avoid having to list it repetitively for each HCV in the following sections. BAI that is more specific to individual HCV Interpretations is included alongside those Interpretations in the following sections.

A. Overarching Best Available Information for HCV Identification and Assessments

| Best Available Information* for Identifying and Assessing Regional or National HCV Interpretations | | BAI >SLIMF | BAI SLIMF |
|---|---|----------------------|------------------|
| All HCV Categories: All Elements | Data, facts, documents, expert opinions, and results of field surveys or consultations with stakeholders that are most credible, accurate, complete, and/or pertinent and that can be obtained through reasonable* effort and cost, subject to the scale* and intensity* of the management activities and the Precautionary Approach*. High Conservation Value* surveys of the Management Unit*; relevant databases and maps; culturally appropriate* engagement*with, affected rights holders*, affected* and interested stakeholders*, and relevant local and regional experts; FSC Guidelines for the Implementation of Free, Prior and Informed Consent (2021); review of the results by knowledgeable expert(s) independent of The Organization*. | X | X |
| HCV 2: Element 1, IFLs | <i>Not Applicable.</i> | | |
| HCV 5: Element 1, Values fundamental to local communities | Culturally appropriate engagement with local communities. Note this shall be the primary BAI for these elements. | X | X |
| HCV 5: Element 2, Values fundamental to Indigenous Peoples | Not Applicable. | | |
| HCV 6: Element 2, Values important to local communities | Culturally appropriate engagement with local communities. Note this shall be the primary BAI for these elements. | X | X |
| HCV 6: Element 3, Values important to Indigenous Peoples | Not Applicable. | | |

B. Overarching Best Available Information for Development of Management Strategies

The following table shows the types of overarching Best Available Information (BAI) that is applicable for the development of management strategies all HCVs, specific categories of HCVs, or specific HCV elements. The purpose of listing this overarching BAI here is to avoid having to list it repetitively for each HCV in the following sections. BAI that is more specific to individual HCV Interpretations is included alongside those Interpretations in the following sections.

| Best Available Information* for Developing Management Strategies for Regional or National HCV Interpretations | | BAI >SLIMF | BAI SLIMF |
|--|---|----------------------|------------------|
| All HCV Categories, All Elements | Identification of threats, using: Data, facts, documents, expert opinions, and results of field surveys or consultations with stakeholders that are most credible, accurate, complete, and/or pertinent and that can be obtained through reasonable* effort and cost, subject to the scale* and intensity* of the management activities and the Precautionary Approach*. Engagement*with affected rights holders*, affected* and interested stakeholders*, and experts. | X | X |
| HCV 5: Element 1, Values fundamental to local communities | Culturally appropriate engagement with local communities. Note this shall be the primary BAI for these elements. Note the “fundamentality” of the resource should be determined in collaboration with the local communities. | X | X |
| HCV 5: Element 2, Values fundamental to Indigenous Peoples | Not Applicable. | | |
| HCV 6: Element 2, Values important to local communities | Culturally appropriate engagement with local communities. Note this shall be the primary BAI for these elements. Note that “critical... importance” should be understood as an outcome of engagement with the local communities | X | X |
| HCV 6: Element 3, Values important to Indigenous Peoples | Not Applicable. | | |

C. Overarching Best Available Information for Development of Monitoring Methodologies

The following table shows the types of overarching Best Available Information (BAI) that is applicable for the monitoring all HCVs, specific categories of HCVs, or specific HCV elements. The purpose of listing this overarching BAI here is to avoid having to list it repetitively for each HCV in the following sections. BAI that is more specific to individual HCV Interpretations is included alongside those Interpretations in the following sections.

| Best Available Information* for Monitoring Regional or National HCV Interpretations | | BAI >SLIMF | BAI SLIMF |
|--|---|----------------------|------------------|
| All HCV Categories, All Elements | Engagement with rights-holders, consistent with Criteria 4.5 and 4.7; culturally appropriate engagement with affected and interested stakeholders; information on engaging with representatives of the local communities; monitoring conducted by the local communities; and engagement with experts. | X | X |

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**

A. Interpretations of HCV 1, for HCV Identification. (See also the Overarching BAI, Section A.)

Element 1: Concentrations of *biological diversity that are *significant** at global, regional, or national levels:**

| National or regional interpretations of this HCV element: | Best Available Information* for identifying occurrences of this interpretation: | BAI >SLIMF | BAI SLIMF |
|---|--|------------|-----------|
| Protected areas, including: Species Protection Areas (SPAs), National Heritage Areas (NHAs), Special Areas for Conservation (SACs), National Parks (NPs), and Nature Reserves (NRs). (Per: FSC, 2012; SA, 2010; others) | National Parks & Wildlife Service (NPWS) staff. NPWS map of SPAs, NHAs, and SACs: https://dahg.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=8f7060450de3485fa1c1085536d477ba . Map of NPs: https://www.npws.ie/national-parks . Map for NRs: https://www.npws.ie/nature-reserves . | X | X |
| Proposed protected areas, e.g.: Proposed NHAs. (Per: FSC, 2012; SA, 2012) | NPWS staff. NPWS map: https://dahg.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=8f7060450de3485fa1c1085536d477ba . | X | X |
| Wildfowl Sanctuaries, RAMSAR sites, and other critical temporal, seasonal, or ephemeral habitats/resources such as sites for roosting, breeding, hibernation, shelter and migration, where not covered by protected areas. (Per: FSC, 2017) | For RAMSAR sites: Map of sites: https://rsis.ramsar.org/ris-search/?f[0]=regionCountry_en_ss%3Aireland . List of sites with information on each: https://rsis.ramsar.org/ris-search/?f[0]=regionCountry_en_ss%3Aireland&pagetab=1 . | X | X |
| Ephemeral water bodies should be protected even if they are not classified under RAMSAR. Arterial drainage is detrimental for organisms such as the Common Frog and Smooth Newt and ephemeral water bodies should be preserved to ensure the protection of our native amphibians. | | | |
| Per the precautionary principle, consider as possible HCV Areas: Areas adjacent to protected areas including: buffer zones, forests that provide habitats for the same biodiversity; and forests that provide habitat connectivity or other supporting values. | | | |
| Per the precautionary principle, consider as possible HCV: Important Bird Areas (IBAs), where not covered by protected areas. | Map of IBAs: http://datazone.birdlife.org/country/ireland/ibas . List of IBAs: http://datazone.birdlife.org/site/results?cty=103&fam=0&gen=0 . | X | |
| there are many surface waters, which are not formally designated, but which support populations of Annex II species designated under the habitats Directive. | | | |
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Element 2: Concentrations of endemic species that are *significant at global, regional, or national levels:**

| National or regional interpretations of this HCV element: | Best Available Information* for identifying occurrences of this interpretation: | BAI >SLIMF | BAI SLIMF |
|---|---|------------|-----------|
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| Significant concentrations of endemic plant or animal species, e.g., populations of an endemic species that is Vulnerable, Endangered, Critically Endangered, or Near Threatened, and/or populations of multiple endemic species. | See the BAI for rare, threatened, or endangered (RTE) species below. | X | X |
| The Irish Pollan (<i>Coregonus pollan</i>) are a rare endangered and protected species listed and protected under Annex 5 of the Habitats Directive, unique to the Island of Ireland with its current known distribution being limited to five lakes, Lough Allen, Lough Ree and Lough Derg and Lough Neagh and Lower Lough Erne. | | | |
| The Arctic char (<i>Salvelinus alpinus</i>) is another example of a highly sensitive fish species endemic to Irish upland waters and which is protected under national legislation. | | | |
| The European Eel is endangered. | | | |

Element 3: Concentrations of rare,* threatened,* or endangered species that are significant* at global, regional, or national levels:

| National or regional interpretations of this HCV element: | Best Available Information* for identifying occurrences of this interpretation: | BAI >SLIMF | BAI SLIMF |
|--|--|------------|-----------|
| Areas with significant populations of lesser horseshoe bat or freshwater pearl mussel. Consider also red squirrel, in areas where it is still recovering. (Per: FSC, 2012; SA, 2010; SA, 2012) | See the BAI below. | X | X |
| Other significant occurrences of terrestrial and freshwater plant or animal species listed by the IUCN Red List or national species lists as Vulnerable, Endangered, Critically Endangered, or Near Threatened. Including occurrences of: any Critically Endangered species, more than 1% of a listed species' population, several or more listed species, and/or listed species in special ecological niches, e.g., wide-ranging carnivores, keystone species, umbrella species, species with very small populations or ranges, and other conservation priority species. (Per: FSC, 2012; SA, 2020; others) | For the IUCN Red List, see http://www.iucnredlist.org . For national lists, see: https://www.npws.ie/publications/red-lists and https://www.biodiversityireland.ie/resources/irish-red-lists/ . For maps for some species, see: https://maps.biodiversityireland.ie/ . For maps by location: https://maps.biodiversityireland.ie/Map . Additional data on some species: https://www.npws.ie/maps-and-data/habitat-and-species-data . | X | X |
| Alliance for Zero Extinction sites, if any are designated in the future (none currently designated). | | | |
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B. Assessments for HCV 1. (See also the Overarching BAI, Section A.)

National or regionally appropriate methodologies and BAI* for assessments for HCV 1:

| National or regional methodologies for assessing occurrences of the HCV 1 interpretations: | Best Available Information* for assessing occurrences of these interpretations: | BAI >SLIMF | BAI SLIMF |
|---|---|------------|-----------|
| For protected areas: Confirm whether policies and practices effectively protect the area and its HCVs, including from both forestry and non-forestry activities | | | |

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| (e.g., development, grazing, invasive species, etc.). (Per: SA, 2011; others) | | | |
| For IBAs: See the BAI at right. | For summary descriptions of their values, see the IBA factsheets at: http://datazone.birdlife.org/site/results?cty=103&fam=0&gen=0 . | X | X |
| For guidance in identifying and assessing other examples of HCV 1 that may exist in the management unit, consider: FSC (2020a) and HCVRN (2017) (e.g., Chapter 2, Best Practice Considerations for HCV Assessments, and Chapter 3.1, Identification of HCV 1). | | | |
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C. Strategies for Maintaining and Enhancing HCV 1. (See also the Overarching BAI, Section B.)

Management strategies for HCV 1:

| National or regional strategies for maintaining and/or enhancing the HCV 1 interpretations: | Best Available Information* for management strategies for these interpretations: | BAI >SLIMF | BAI SLIMF |
|--|--|----------------------|------------------|
| For all HCV 1 Interpretations: Protection zones, harvest prescriptions, and/or other strategies to protect threatened, endangered, endemic species, or other concentrations of <i>biological diversity*</i> and the ecological communities and <i>habitats*</i> upon which they depend, sufficient to prevent reductions in the extent, integrity, quality, and viability of the <i>habitats*</i> and species occurrences. | | | |
| For all HCV 1 Interpretations: Where enhancement is identified as the <i>objective*</i> , measures to develop, expand, and/or <i>restore* habitats*</i> for such species. | | | |
| For SACs: See the BAI at right. | Consider the NPWS Conservation Management Plans at https://www.npws.ie/protected-sites/conservation-planning/available-plans . | X | X |
| For RTE and endemic species: See the BAI at right. | Consider the management manuals and threat response plans for select species at: https://www.npws.ie/publications/irish-wildlife-manuals and https://www.npws.ie/publications/species-action-plans . | X | X |
| For additional guidance, consider: FSC (2020a) and HCVRN (2018) (e.g., Part 2). | | | |
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D. Monitoring for HCV 1 (See also the Overarching BAI, Section C.)

Methodologies and BAI* for monitoring programs for HCV 1:

| National or regional methodologies for monitoring occurrences of the HCV 1 interpretations: | Best Available Information* for monitoring occurrences of these interpretations: | BAI >SLIMF | BAI SLIMF |
|--|---|----------------------|------------------|
| For guidance, consider: FSC (2020a) and HCVRN (2018) (e.g., Part 3). | | | |
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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.

A. Interpretations of HCV 2, for HCV Identification (See also the Overarching BAI, Section A.)

Element 1: Intact Forest landscapes*:

| National or regional interpretations of this HCV element: | Best Available Information* for identifying occurrences of this interpretation: | BAI >SLIMF | BAI SLIMF |
|--|---|------------|-----------|
| Not applicable. <i>Intact Forest Landscapes*</i> as defined in the FSC International Generic Indicators and by Global Forest Watch are not present in Ireland. | | | |

Element 2: Large landscape*-level ecosystems* 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:

| National or regional interpretations of this HCV element: | Best Available Information* for identifying occurrences of this interpretation: | BAI >SLIMF | BAI SLIMF |
|--|---|------------|-----------|
| Important wetlands, e.g., RAMSAR sites. (See also protected areas at HCV 1.) | Map of sites: https://rsis.ramsar.org/ris-search/?ff[0]=regionCountry_en_ss%3Aireland . List of sites with information on each: https://rsis.ramsar.org/ris-search/?ff[0]=regionCountry_en_ss%3Aireland&pagetab=1 . | X | X |
| Peatlands | | | |
| Woodland areas identified by the Ancient & Long-Established Woodland Inventory 2010 should be included in this list. As “This inventory is provisional in nature”, any woodlands which are added when further analyses are carried out should be included also. These woodland areas should not be developed for commercial forestry at all, ever. https://www.geohive.ie/maps/09b1c7f2cd794c51aa59f21c4df16bcc/about Accessed: 07/01/2022 | | | |

Element 3: 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:

| National or regional interpretations of this HCV element: | Best Available Information* for identifying occurrences of this interpretation: | BAI >SLIMF | BAI SLIMF |
|--|---|------------|-----------|
| Forest ecosystems forming a significant landscape-level (e.g., 10,000 ha) mosaic with other vegetation types used by a diversity of most native species. | | | |
| Per the precautionary principle, consider as possible HCV Areas: Hedgerows and other connectivity corridors between protected areas and/or other HCV 1 occurrences, including corridors in degraded or converted landscapes. (Per: Bullock et al, 2013; others.) | | | |

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| <p>“Forest ecosystems forming a significant landscape-level (e.g., 10,000 ha) mosaic with other vegetation types used by a diversity of most native species.”</p> <p>As our native forest ecosystems have been severely degraded and reduced, 10,000 hectares is a completely unreasonable area, given the local context. I would like to see this changed to “Forest ecosystems forming a significant landscape-level (i.e. greater than 1,000 ha) mosaic with other vegetation types used by a diversity of most native species”. Our native forest ecosystems need all of the protection they can get and planting commercial forests on these sites is counterproductive.</p> <p>Best Available Information - Datasets such as CORINE 2018 (or any subsequent versions) would be useful in identifying forest areas greater than 1.000 ha.</p> <p>https://data.gov.ie/dataset/corine-landcover-2018?package_type=dataset</p> | | | |
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B. Assessments for HCV 2 (See also the Overarching BAI, Section A.)

National or regionally appropriate methodologies and BAI* for assessments for HCV 2:

| National or regional methodologies for assessing occurrences of the HCV 2 interpretations: | Best Available Information* for assessing occurrences of these interpretations: | BAI >SLIMF | BAI SLIMF |
|--|--|------------|-----------|
| For RAMSAR sites: | For highlights of each site’s key features, see: https://rsis.ramsar.org/ris-search/?ff0=regionCountry_en_ss%3Aireland&pagetab=1 | X | X |
| For guidance in identifying and assessing examples of HCV 2 that may exist in the management unit, consider: FSC (2020a) and HCVRN (2017) (e.g., Chapter 2, Best Practice Considerations for HCV Assessments, and Chapter 3.2, Identification of HCV 2). | Smith, G.F., O’Donoghue, P, O’Hora, K and Delaney, E (2011) Best Practice Guidance for Habitat Survey and Mapping. Heritage Council. Kilkenny. | | |
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C: Strategies for Maintaining and Enhancing HCV 2 (See also the Overarching BAI, Section B.)

Management strategies for HCV 2:

| National or regional strategies for maintaining and/or enhancing the HCV 2 interpretations: | Best Available Information* for management strategies for these interpretations: | BAI >SLIMF | BAI SLIMF |
|---|--|------------|-----------|
| For all HCV 2 Interpretations: Strategies that fully maintain the extent and intactness of the <i>forest* ecosystems*</i> and the viability of their biodiversity concentrations, including plant and animal indicator species, keystone species, and/or guilds associated with large intact <i>natural forest* ecosystems*</i> . Examples include <i>protection*</i> zones and set-aside areas, with any commercial activity in areas that are not set-aside being limited to <i>low-intensity*</i> operations that fully maintain <i>forest*</i> structure, composition, regeneration, and disturbance patterns at all times. | | | |
| For all HCV 2 Interpretations: Where enhancement is identified as the <i>objective*</i> , measures to <i>restore*</i> and | | | |

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| reconnect <i>forest* ecosystems*</i> , their intactness, and <i>habitats*</i> that support natural <i>biological diversity*</i> are in place. | | | |
| For additional guidance, consider: FSC (2020a) and HCVRN (2018) (e.g., Part 2). | | | |
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D. Monitoring for HCV 2 (See also the *Overarching BAI*, Section C.)

Methodologies and *BAI for monitoring programs for HCV 2:**

| National or regional methodologies for monitoring occurrences of the HCV 2 interpretations: | <i>Best Available Information*</i> for monitoring occurrences of these interpretations: | BAI >SLIMF | BAI SLIMF |
|--|--|----------------------|------------------|
| For guidance, consider: FSC (2020a) and HCVRN (2018) (e.g., Part 3). | | | |
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HCV 3 – Ecosystems* and habitats*. Rare*, threatened*, or endangered ecosystems*, habitats* or refugia*.

A. Interpretations of HCV 3, for HCV Identification (See also the Overarching BAI, Section A.)

Element 1: Rare*, threatened*, or endangered ecosystems*:

| National or regional interpretations of this HCV element: | Best Available Information* for identifying occurrences of this interpretation: | BAI >SLIMF | BAI SLIMF |
|---|--|----------------------|------------------|
| Ancient woodlands, old woodland sites (OWS), and other long-established woodlands, including those not located in protected areas. (Per: CU, 2012; CU, 2020; SA, 2010; FSC UK, 2019; SIF, 2021; Bullock et al, 2013; Cross et al, 2017) | For descriptions of woodland categories, see Cross et al (2017). For maps showing some ancient and long-established woodlands, see: https://www.npws.ie/maps-and-data/habitat-and-species-data and https://maps.biodiversityireland.ie/Map . Also consider any other woodlands appearing on 1 st Edition 6 Inch Ordinance Survey (OS) maps from the 1830s and 1840s. (See also Perrin et al (2008) and Perrin et al (2010), if their results are not fully included in the NPWS maps.) | X | X |
| Consider as possible HCV, other established woodlands, including broadleaf, Scots pine, and other woodlands continually present since the 1 st or 2 nd Edition OS maps. (Per: SA, 2018; Cross et al, 2017.) | | | |
| Consider as possible HCV, new native woodlands established for conservation and ecosystem restoration purposes. (Per: SA, 2010) | | | |
| Note: UNESCO Biosphere Reserves are covered by Protected Areas at HCV 1. (Per: FSC, 2017) | | | |
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Element 2: Rare*, threatened*, or endangered habitats*:

| National or regional interpretations of this HCV element: | Best Available Information* for identifying occurrences of this interpretation: | BAI >SLIMF | BAI SLIMF |
|--|---|----------------------|------------------|
| Critically rare habitats per the EU Habitats Directive, including Annex 1 habitats, proposed NHAs, and habitats outside of protected areas. (Per: FSC, 2012; SA, 2018) | For information on Annex 1 habitats, see: https://www.biodiversityireland.ie/projects/biodiversity-inventory/habitats/ . | X | X |
| Habitats rated in “bad” condition by NPWS, including: old oak woodlands, residual alluvial forest, yew woodland, some grasslands, mires, some fens, swamps, bogs (raised, blanket), heaths (wet, dry, alpine, subalpine), oligotrophic soft water lakes (including as affected by peatland management), coastal lagoons. (Per: NPWS, 2019; FSC, 2012). | For NPWS’ rating of all habitat types, see: NPWS (2019). | | |
| (Note that RTE ecosystems listed above may also be RTE habitats.) | | | |
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Element 3: Refugia*:

| National or regional interpretations of this HCV element: | Best Available Information* for identifying occurrences of this interpretation: | BAI >SLIMF | BAI SLIMF |
|--|---|------------|-----------|
| Isolated areas where extensive changes, typically due to changing climate or by disturbances such as those caused by humans, have not occurred and where plants and animals typical of a region may survive. | | | |
| (Note that protected areas listed at HCV 1 may also be refugia.) | | | |
| Landscape features such as old, stone walls should be preserved as these are very important refugia for animals such as amphibians and lizards. Similarly important refugia should be allowed to remain such as fallen trees and deadwood. | | | |
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B. Assessments for HCV 3 (See also the Overarching BAI, Section A.)

National or regionally appropriate methodologies and BAI* for assessments for HCV 3:

| National or regional methodologies for assessing occurrences of the HCV 3 interpretations: | Best Available Information* for assessing occurrences of these interpretations: | BAI >SLIMF | BAI SLIMF |
|--|--|------------|-----------|
| For ancient and old woodlands: See the BAI at right. (Per: Cross et al, 2017) | For identification and assessment methods, consider: Byrnes (2007a), and Byrnes (2007b). | X | |
| Where habitat types are not known: Conduct habitat mapping to at least level 3 per Fossitt (2000). (Per: FSC, 2012; FSC, 2017) | | | |
| For guidance in identifying and assessing other examples of HCV 3 that may exist in the management unit, consider: FSC (2020a) and HCVRN (2017) (e.g., Chapter 2, Best Practice Considerations for HCV Assessments, and Chapter 3.3, Identification of HCV 3). | | | |
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C: Strategies for Maintaining and Enhancing HCV 3 (See also the Overarching BAI, Section B.)

Management strategies for HCV 3:

| National or regional strategies for maintaining and/or enhancing the HCV 3 interpretations: | Best Available Information* for management strategies for these interpretations: | BAI >SLIMF | BAI SLIMF |
|--|--|------------|-----------|
| For all HCV 3 Interpretations: Strategies that fully maintain the extent and integrity of rare or threatened <i>ecosystems*</i> , <i>habitats*</i> , or <i>refugia*</i> . | | | |
| For all HCV 3 Interpretations: Where enhancement is identified as the <i>objective*</i> , measures to <i>restore*</i> and/or develop rare or threatened <i>ecosystems*</i> , <i>habitats*</i> , or <i>refugia*</i> are in place. | | | |
| For ancient, old, or long-established woodlands: Avoid harm to old native trees, coppice stools, soils, and historical artifacts. Where relevant, also consider: Gradual removal of non-native conifers while maintaining native species and | See Cross et al (2017), Sections B and C. See also Pryor et al (2002). | X | X |

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| canopy cover; and measures to address threats such as excessive grazing, excessive deer browse, rhododendron and other invasive species, etc. See the BAI at right. (Per: Cross et al, 2017; Bullock et al, 2013; others) | | | |
| For other existing native woodlands: See the BAI at right. | See Cross et al (2017), Sections B3 through B8, and Section C. | X | X |
| Where restoration and expansion (i.e., “enhancement”) of native woodlands is identified as an objective: Consider participating in the Native Woodland Scheme (NWS). (Per: SIF, 2021; others.) | For information on the NWS, see: https://www.forestryfocus.ie/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/NeighbourWoodScheme120712.pdf or https://www.teagasc.ie/crops/forestry/grants/management-grants/native-woodland-conservation/gov.ie - Forestry (www.gov.ie) and gov.ie - Native Woodland Conservation Scheme (www.gov.ie) and DAFM (2015). Native Woodland Establishment GPC9 & GPC10 Silvicultural Standards. September, 2015. Department of Agriculture, Food & the Marine, Johnstown Castle Estate, Co. Wexford. | | |
| For additional guidance, consider: FSC (2020a) and HCVRN (2018) (e.g., Part 2). | | | |
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D. Monitoring for HCV 3 (See also the Overarching BAI, Section C.)

Methodologies and BAI* for monitoring programs for HCV 3:

| National or regional methodologies for monitoring occurrences of the HCV 3 interpretations: | Best Available Information* for monitoring occurrences of these interpretations: | BAI | BAI |
|--|---|------------|------------|
| For monitoring guidance, consider: FSC (2020a) and (2018) (e.g., Part 3). | | | |
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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.

A. Interpretations of HCV 4, for HCV Identification (See also the Overarching BAI, Section A.)

Element 1: Water catchments in critical* situations:

| National or regional interpretations of this HCV element: | Best Available Information* for identifying occurrences of this interpretation: | BAI >SLIMF | BAI SLIMF |
|---|---|------------|-----------|
| Water bodies and water sources relied upon by communities for drinking water, irrigation, or other daily uses, or that support rare, threatened, or endangered species or other HCVs. (Per: Orsi et al, 2020; FSC, 2017; SA, 2020) | Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) staff and databases. (See also HCV 5, re. potential community water sources.) | X | X |
| RAMSAR sites. (See also HCV 1). | Map of sites: https://rsis.ramsar.org/ris-search/?ff[0]=regionCountry_en_ss%3Alreland . List of sites with information on each: https://rsis.ramsar.org/ris-search/?ff[0]=regionCountry_en_ss%3Alreland&pagetab=1 . | X | X |
| Raised bogs, blanket bogs, marshes, fens, and other wetlands should not be developed for commercial forestry. These habitats are essential for regulating supply of water and in flood management. Where these sites have been degraded, they should be rewetted and brought back to full ecosystem health. | | | |
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Element 2: Control of erosion of vulnerable soils and slopes in critical* situations:

| National or regional interpretations of this HCV element: | Best Available Information* for identifying occurrences of this interpretation: | BAI >SLIMF | BAI SLIMF |
|--|---|------------|-----------|
| Areas at high risk for landslides, flooding, or erosion, especially where other HCVs, settlements, or communities may be affected. (Per: Orsi et al, 2020; SA, 2010) | Maps of steep or, unstable soils, flood risk maps. | X | X |
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Element 3: Other ecosystem services* in critical* situations:

| National or regional interpretations of this HCV element: | Best Available Information* for identifying occurrences of this interpretation: | BAI >SLIMF | BAI SLIMF |
|---|---|------------|-----------|
| Recreational opportunities in Parks and other public forests near urban centers. (Per: Bullock et al, 2016) | | | |
| Maintenance of naturally occurring carbon storage in peatlands. (Per: Bullock et al, 2016) | | | |
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B. Assessments for HCV 4 (See also the Overarching BAI, Section A.)

National or regionally appropriate methodologies and BAI* for assessments for HCV 4:

| National or regional methodologies for assessing occurrences of the HCV 4 interpretations: | Best Available Information* for assessing occurrences of these interpretations: | BAI >SLIMF | BAI SLIMF |
|---|---|------------|-----------|
| For guidance in identifying and assessing examples of HCV 4 that may exist in the management unit, consider: FSC (2020a) and HCVRN (2017) (e.g., Chapter 2, Best Practice Considerations for HCV Assessments, and Chapter 3.4, Identification of HCV 4). The FSC Ecosystem Services Procedure (FSC, 2017b) may also be helpful. | | | |
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C: Strategies for Maintaining and Enhancing HCV 4 (See also the Overarching BAI, Section B.)

Management strategies for HCV 4:

| National or regional strategies for maintaining and/or enhancing specific HCV 4 interpretations: | Best Available Information* for management strategies for these interpretations: | BAI >SLIMF | BAI SLIMF |
|---|--|------------|-----------|
| For water catchments of importance to <i>local communities*</i> located within or downstream of the <i>Management Unit*</i> , and areas within the unit that are particularly unstable or susceptible to erosion: <i>Protection*</i> zones, harvest prescriptions, chemical use restrictions, and/or prescriptions for road construction and maintenance, to protect water catchments and upstream and upslope areas. Where enhancement is identified as the <i>objective*</i> , measures to <i>restore*</i> water quality and quantity are in place. | | | |
| For climate regulation: Strategies to maintain or enhance carbon sequestration and storage are in place. Wetlands should not be drained for the establishment of commercial forestry as this can lead to net increases in greenhouse gas emissions. Wetlands that have already been degraded should be rewetted rather than being planted for commercial forestry. | | | |
| For afforested peatlands upstream of water bodies and water sources important to communities or other HCVs: Assess the effects of ditching, water uptake by trees, etc., and where relevant, implement measures to restore natural hydrological patterns. (Per: Bullock et al, 2016) | | | |
| For additional guidance, consider: FSC (2020a) and HCVRN (2018) (e.g., Part 2). | | | |
| For afforested peatlands”: [these should not be FSC Certified] once the trees have reached maturity, the trees should be felled and the area should be rewetted. If it is not possible or viable to rewet the area, it should be planted only with native trees of local provenance. | | | |
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D. Monitoring for HCV 4 (See also the Overarching BAI, Section C.)

Methodologies and BAI* for monitoring programs for HCV 4:

| National or regional methodologies for monitoring occurrences of the HCV 4 interpretations: | Best Available Information* for monitoring occurrences of these interpretations: | BAI >SLIMF | BAI SLIMF |
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For guidance, consider: FSC (2020a) and HCVRN (2018) (e.g., Part 3). Consider also the FSC Ecosystem Services Procedure (FSC, 2017b), including Annex D.

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| For guidance, consider: FSC (2020a) and HCVRN (2018) (e.g., Part 3). Consider also the FSC Ecosystem Services Procedure (FSC, 2017b), including Annex D. | | | |
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HCV 5 – Community needs. Sites and resources fundamental for satisfying the basic necessities of *local communities (for livelihoods, health, nutrition, water, etc.), identified through *engagement** with these communities.**

A. Interpretations of HCV 5, for HCV Identification (See also the Overarching BAI, Section A.)

Element 1: Sites and resources fundamental for satisfying the basic necessities of *local communities (for livelihoods, health, nutrition, water, etc.):**

| National or regional interpretations of this HCV element: | Best Available Information* for identifying occurrences of this interpretation: | BAI >SLIMF | BAI SLIMF |
|---|---|------------|-----------|
| Water bodies and water sources relied upon by communities for drinking water, irrigation, or other daily uses. (Per: Orsi et al, 2020; FSC, 2017) | Culturally appropriate engagement with the local communities. | X | X |
| Other sites and resources from which local communities satisfy basic needs. | Culturally appropriate engagement with the local communities. | X | X |
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Element 2: Sites and resources fundamental for satisfying the basic necessities of *Indigenous Peoples (for livelihoods, health, nutrition, water, etc.):**

| National or regional interpretations of this HCV element: | Best Available Information* for identifying occurrences of this interpretation: | BAI >SLIMF | BAI SLIMF |
|---|---|------------|-----------|
| Not Applicable. There do not appear to be identifiable <i>Indigenous Peoples</i> * in Ireland, distinct from the general population. (Per: FSC, 2012b.) | | | |

B. Assessments for HCV 5 (See also the Overarching BAI, Section A.)

National or regionally appropriate methodologies and BAI* for assessments for HCV 5:

| National or regional methodologies for assessing occurrences of the HCV 5 interpretations: | Best Available Information* for assessing occurrences of these interpretations: | BAI >SLIMF | BAI SLIMF |
|---|---|------------|-----------|
| For all HCV 5 Interpretations: Use culturally appropriate engagement, per the Overarching BAI, Section A. | The local communities. | X | X |
| Consider whether specific levels and practices of grazing and other forest utilization are sustaining the resource, and also avoiding harm to biodiversity and other HCVs. | | | |
| For additional guidance on assessing HCV 5, consider: FSC (2020a) and HCVRN (2017) (e.g., Chapter 2, Best Practice Considerations for HCV Assessments, and Chapter 3.5, Identification of HCV 5). | | | |
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C: Strategies for Maintaining and Enhancing HCV 5 (See also the Overarching BAI, Section B.)

Management strategies for HCV 5:

| National or regional strategies for maintaining and/or enhancing the HCV 5 interpretations: | Best Available Information* for management strategies for these interpretations: | BAI >SLIMF | BAI SLIMF |
|--|--|------------|-----------|
| For all HCV 5 Interpretations: Strategies to protect the community's needs in relation to the <i>Management Unit</i> * are | The local communities, per the Overarching BAI. | X | X |

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| developed in cooperation with representatives and members of <i>local communities</i> * | | | |
| Strategies do not include maintaining specific levels or practices of grazing or other forest utilization that do not sustain the resource or that harm biodiversity or other HCVs. | | | |
| For additional guidance, consider: FSC (2020a) and HCVRN (2018) (e.g., Part 2). | | | |
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D. Monitoring for HCV 5 (See also the *Overarching BAI*, Section C.)

Methodologies and *BAI* for monitoring programs for HCV 5:

| National or regional methodologies for monitoring occurrences of the HCV 5 interpretations: | <i>Best Available Information</i>* for monitoring occurrences of these interpretations: | BAI >SLIMF | BAI SLIMF |
|---|--|----------------------|------------------|
| Monitoring conducted by the local communities, or using methods developed cooperatively with the communities. | | | |
| For additional guidance, consider: FSC (2020a) and HCVRN (2018) (e.g., Part 3) | | | |
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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.**

A. Interpretations of HCV 6, for HCV Identification (See also the Overarching BAI, Section A.)

Element 1: Sites, resources, *habitats and *landscapes** of global or national cultural, archaeological or historical significance:**

| National or regional interpretations of this HCV element: | Best Available Information* for identifying occurrences of this interpretation: | BAI >SLIMF | BAI SLIMF |
|--|--|------------|-----------|
| Internationally or nationally important cultural, archaeological, or historical sites, resources, habitats, or landscapes, including but not limited to early settlements, mass rocks, old stoneworks, early industrial sites. (Per: FSC, 2017.) | National Monuments Service (NMS) staff and databases, e.g., https://maps.archaeology.ie/HistoricEnvironment/ Local Historical Societies | X | X |
| Per the precautionary approach, consider if management might indirectly affect existing and proposed World Heritage sites (<i>unlikely in most cases</i>). | UNESCO, e.g., whc.unesco.org/en/statesparties/ie . | X | X |
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Element 2: Sites, resources, *habitats and *landscapes** of *critical** cultural, ecological, economic or religious/sacred importance for the traditional cultures of *local communities**:**

| National or regional interpretations of this HCV element: | Best Available Information* for identifying occurrences of this interpretation: | BAI >SLIMF | BAI SLIMF |
|---|--|------------|-----------|
| Other sites, resources, habitats, or landscapes of cultural, ecological, economic, or religious/sacred importance to local communities. | Culturally appropriate engagement with the local communities. and Local Historical Societies | X | X |
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Element 3: Sites, resources, *habitats and *landscapes** of *critical** cultural, ecological, economic or religious/sacred importance for the traditional cultures of Indigenous Peoples:**

| National or regional interpretations of this HCV element: | Best Available Information* for identifying occurrences of this interpretation: | BAI >SLIMF | BAI SLIMF |
|---|---|------------|-----------|
| Not Applicable. There do not appear to be identifiable <i>Indigenous Peoples</i> * in Ireland, distinct from the general population. (Per: FSC, 2012b.) | | | |

B. Assessments for HCV 6 (See also the Overarching BAI, Section A.)

National or regionally appropriate methodologies and BAI* for assessments for HCV 6:

| National or regional methodologies for assessing occurrences of the HCV 6 interpretations: | Best Available Information* for assessing occurrences of these interpretations: | BAI >SLIMF | BAI SLIMF |
|---|---|------------|-----------|
| For HCVs important to local communities: Culturally appropriate engagement, per the Overarching BAI, Section A. | The local communities. | X | X |
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C: Strategies for Maintaining and Enhancing HCV 6 (See also the Overarching BAI, Section B.)

Management strategies for HCV 6:

| National or regional strategies for maintaining and/or enhancing the HCV 6 interpretations: | Best Available Information* for management strategies for these interpretations: | BAI >SLIMF | BAI SLIMF |
|---|--|------------|-----------|
| For HCVs related to local communities: Strategies to protect the cultural values are developed in cooperation with representatives and members of the <i>local communities</i> * | The local communities, per the Overarching BAI. | X | X |
| For other HCV occurrences (i.e., those identified primarily due to global or national significance): Strategies are based on Best Available Information, and considered effective for maintaining and/or enhancing the HCV. | | | |
| For additional guidance, consider: FSC (2020a) and HCVRN (2018) (e.g., Part 2). | | | |
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D. Monitoring for HCV 6 (See also the Overarching BAI, Section C.)

Methodologies and BAI* for monitoring programs for HCV 6:

| National or regional methodologies for monitoring occurrences of the HCV 6 interpretations: | Best Available Information* for monitoring occurrences of these interpretations: | BAI >SLIMF | BAI SLIMF |
|---|--|------------|-----------|
| For HCV occurrences related to local communities: Monitoring conducted by the local communities, or using methods developed cooperatively with the communities. | | | |
| For additional guidance, consider: FSC (2020a) and HCVRN (2018) (e.g., Part 3) | | | |
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Examples of Relevant Stakeholders and Experts

(This is a list of stakeholder and expert organizations likely to be especially relevant to HCV assessments, strategies, and/or monitoring, either in general, or for particular HCV categories or elements. The list is not exhaustive, may need to change over time, and can be updated by standards developers. Where additional stakeholders and experts are relevant to specific management units, they should also be identified and considered by managers.)

Environmental Stakeholders:

- An Taisce.
- Birdwatch Ireland.
- Irish Peatland Conservation Council.
- Local wildlife societies, groups, and trusts.
- Native Woodland Trust.
- Regional and local councils, e.g., Wicklow Uplands Council.

Social Stakeholders and Community Development Organizations:

- An Taisce.
- Heritage Council.
- Local water boards.
- Regional and local councils, e.g., Wicklow Uplands Council.
- Regional and local hiking and mountaineering clubs.
- Regional and local rural development organizations.

Other Expert Organizations – Environmental and Social:

- Irish Raptor Study Group.
- Regional and local archaeology societies.
- Regional fisheries boards.
- Rural Studies Group, National University of Ireland, Galway.
- [Trinity College Dublin](#)
- University College Cork.
- Woodlands of Ireland.

Government Agencies:

- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).
- [Forest Service, Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine](#)
- National Parks & Wildlife Service (NPWS), Department of Housing, Local Government & Heritage.
- National Monuments Service (NMS), Department of Housing, Local Government & Heritage.
- [Teagasc](#)

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(Relevant references may include weblinks or full references for BAI listed above, as well as supporting references for HCV Interpretations.)

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