

ASSESSMENT ON HCV SITES WITHIN SIME DARBY PLANTATION (LIBERIA) INC

(10,000 ha)



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Executive Summary

This is an assessment of the sites within the Sime Darby Plantations estates in Liberia to determine the presence of sites with high conservation attributes.

The main objective of this study is to identify these HCV sites in line with the certification requirements of Roundtable Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) certification scheme. Having identified these sites a training module will be developed to ensure that the management staff of each estate will be able to guide all the workers in maintaining, monitoring and enhancing their conservation values. The assessment is guided by Proforest *High Conservation Value Forest (HCVF) Toolkit* in the documentation and field surveys conducted in each estate. The initial field work was completed in February 2011 by a team of ecologists and biologists, followed with documentation review. A subsequent field visit was conducted in May 2011.

The location of the proposed project site is shown in the map below:



From the assessment it was noted that the proposed site had been cleared of the natural vegetation for the previous rubber planting as well as the many shifting cultivation conducted by the local communities. Secondary vegetation had covered the area owing to the absence of maintenance during the country period of unrest. There were demonstrated efforts to protect of the waterways with well defined riparian buffer belts (HCV 4.2). These waterways were of importance to the local communities as source of water as well as transport system. The many towns within and around the project area had been identified and consultations held with the inhabitants during the assessment. The planted sites around these communities would be excluded from the plantation activities and protected under HCV 5. Sites of religious significance had also been indentified and demarcated for protection under HCV6.

A summary of the HCV sites is presented in the following Table.

Table showing a summary of HCV Sites in the Sime Darby Plantations Liberia

Project area	HCV 1				HCV 2	HCV 3	HCV 4			HCV 5	HCV 6
	1.1	1.2	1.3	1.4	2	3	4.1	4.2	4.3	5	6
10, 000 ha project site	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	X	X

The management practices for maintaining and enhancing the values of HCV sites were also prescribed for each estate. To ensure that this could be understood by the management and field workers a training module was developed. Monitoring regimes had been proposed to ensure that the HCV values would be maintained. Continuous consultations with stakeholders would be established through liaison committee.