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RSB Social Impact Assessment (SIA) Guidelines

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Note on the use of this document

These guidelines are designed to help the operator understand the RSB Social Impact Assessment process (SIA).

The guidelines should be read together with the RSB Impact Assessment Guidelines (RSB-GUI-01-002-01) which provide a map book through the various processes required to complete the RSB impact assessment process and stakeholder engagement process, the latter being central to the completion of the SIA.

The SIA will need to be integrated with the other social impact specialist studies that may be required by biofuel operations.

These guidelines can be used by the auditor to get a better understanding of key-aspects to be considered during the certification process.

These guidelines were prepared in collaboration with:
Coastal & Environmental Services
www.cesnet.co.za

RSB SOCIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT GUIDELINES

1 INTRODUCTION

As is the case with the majority of agro-industrial developments, there is potential for positive and negative socio-economic impacts. The purpose of this document is to provide a guideline for conducting a socio-economic impact assessment (SIA) of biofuel operations seeking certification from the RSB. Such an assessment could be undertaken as part of a broader Environmental and Social Impact Assessment of the proposed development or as an individual specialist study. However, if an SIA is required, it is likely that other specialist studies may also be required such as land and/or food impact assessments. The social impact assessment would provide baseline information on the social context and contribute to the identification, assessment and mitigation of the social impacts. This data will also be necessary when complying with principle 5. The RSB principles and criteria were used as a point of departure in developing these guidelines and a variety of references related to SIAs, Biofuels and Performance Standards were used.

2 APPROACHES TO SIA

Traditionally, SIAs were undertaken in a very top-down manner that involved the expert social scientist collecting socio-economic data from various sources and analyzing it to make his/her own neutral interpretation and prediction of the potential social impacts of a proposed development. However, the development of participatory approaches over the last 30 years has resulted in a shift to more participatory approaches in ESIA and in SIAs. These approaches recognize the value of the knowledge and experiences of local stakeholders and affected parties and attempt to tap into this knowledge to inform the impact assessment. In this situation the social scientist will “act as a facilitator of knowledge sharing, interpretation and reporting of impacts” (Barbour, 2007). This is considered to be a bottom-up approach.

Compliance with RSB principle 2 will require the adoption of a participatory approach in the SIA. Such an approach will also assist the ESIA practitioners in ensuring that the recommendations of the ESIA are the outcome of a consensus-driven stakeholder engagement process. However, the constraints to stakeholder participation discussed in sections 2 of the RSB Impact Assessment Guidelines (RSB-GUI-01-002-01) mean that it would be inappropriate to rely entirely on the stakeholders to analyze the significance of the socio-economic impacts, as this may not provide an adequate analysis of the impacts. Due to the different world views, and potentially contradictory and competitive self interests of the various stakeholder groups it is unlikely that they would be able to agree on the nature and significance of all the social impacts. Any attempt to reach consensus on the impacts would require an onerous amount of time and effort from the facilitators and the participant to ensure that all stakeholders were in agreement. This level of commitment would be difficult to secure and is not really necessary. These constraints can be overcome by using a combination of the participatory and expert approaches mentioned above. This is therefore the approach that is recommended for SIA assessing biofuel operations.

The process of collecting and analyzing socio-economic impacts and assessing the potential impacts in an objective, balanced and holistic manner is not easy or straight forward, particularly in developing country contexts where there may be very little reliable and detailed spatially specific socio-economic data. The research and assessment process can be even more difficult if a participatory approach is

adopted. It is recommended therefore that experienced and skilled social researchers and facilitators are contracted to undertake the Socio-economic impact assessment. It would be preferable if these persons had an in-depth knowledge of the affected areas and communities and their languages, but if this is not possible, then the possibility of using experienced socio-economic professionals working together with key local informants and/or facilitators/translators needs to be considered.

3 ESTABLISHMENT OF BASELINE CONDITIONS

The collection of baseline socio-economic data on the locality and region is required as part of the SIA for two reasons. Firstly, to inform the assessment of the potential impacts in the ESIA, and secondly, to provide the baseline data against which all future monitoring of the actual impact of the development can be measured/compared. Consequently, the baseline assessment must provide a holistic description of the historical context and current socio-economic conditions, but it must also provide some quantifiable data that can be used for comparing against the results of future impact monitoring.

It is necessary therefore to collect data on the following socio-economic aspects of the project area and its surrounds:

- The cultural heritage and history of the area.
- The local and regional institutions, governance structures and capabilities.
- Institutional dynamics and relationships between stakeholders.
- The size, structure and growth of the local and regional populations.
- Population movement trends.
- Spatial distribution of the population and settlement patterns.
- Land rights and use
- Resource rights and use (i.e. water, grasses, medicinal plants, wild foods, trees, fish, game, etc).
- Local livelihoods (i.e. Employment, businesses, farming, and natural resource based livelihoods)
- Household incomes and poverty
- Agricultural practices (i.e. seasonal and inter-annual patterns of land use, use of inputs, cultivation, livestock, aquaculture, etc)
- Food security (including seasonal and inter-annual occurrence of food insecurity and degrees)
- Living conditions
- Health conditions
- Education
- Crime
- Traditional cultural practices, graves and sacred sites

Given the wide range of issues needing investigation from a variety of sources, it is recommended that a detailed research plan and specific research tools (i.e. Questionnaires, interview schedules, etc) are developed prior to initiation of the research. These tools and plans can then be adapted when in the field if this proves to be necessary.

A variety of data sources and methods will need to be used to collect and analyze this qualitative and quantitative information. Given that a combined expert and participatory approach is required, the data should be sourced partially from stakeholders and partially from other existing sources. These might include existing demographic and economic statistics, other studies that have been undertaken, satellite images and aerial photographs of the project area and surrounds, and relevant socio-economic literature and theory. Data from stakeholders can be obtained from interviews and workshops with government officials and representatives, local leaders, local residents, teachers, health workers, agricultural extension officers, NGO/CBO workers and business persons. When interviewing or meeting with local residents care should be taken to ensure that a representative sample of residents involved in all the different kinds of livelihood activities is engaged. These interviews could be undertaken with

groups or with individuals. Data can also be obtained from field observations and a variety of participatory appraisal methods (many of which can be used in an interview or workshop context). Some of these methods are mentioned in section 9.9 of the RSB ESIA guidelines and a list of reference material for such methods is provided at the end of this guideline document.

In cases where there is little or unreliable official demographic and economic data on the local population, it will be necessary to collect primary data on these aspects from local residents. In some cases it may be possible to obtain data on population size and distribution on a village by village basis from the local authorities, but this data is not likely to provide sufficient insight into local livelihoods and land use practices. Consequently, it will probably be necessary to undertake a representative survey of local households to get more insight into the structure of the local population, and the livelihoods and land/resource use practices of local households. This will be particularly important in cases where the biofuel project may result in a loss of agricultural land and/or resettlement, as the results of the survey can be used to estimate the potential scale of the resettlement impact and the costs in terms of compensation.

Investigation of the spatial distribution and density of the local population is particularly important in cases where large scale biofuel estates are proposed in contexts where the indigenous people use rural land under traditional forms of tenure and agriculture. This information can be used to make recommendations on how the location and boundaries of the proposed estate can be modified to avoid or minimize agricultural land loss and resettlement impacts for local people. Recent aerial photographs are the most reliable source of such information. However, in the absence of this, satellite images can help identify areas of cultivated land, and participatory mapping and transects can be undertaken with local residents to identify the spatial distribution of the population and various land and resource uses.

It should be noted that the tools and methods for assessing food security impacts, and impacts on land and water rights, that are also relevant to the SIA are described in more detail in the specific documents relevant to those areas.

4 POTENTIAL SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACTS ASSOCIATED WITH BIOFUEL DEVELOPMENTS

There are a large number of potential socio-economic impacts associated with biofuel developments. Although these have been incorporated into the RSB principles (see Boxes 1 – 3), for the purpose of this guideline it is necessary to list the most common impacts as sourced from relevant literature. A list of key socio-economic issues and impacts that should be investigated and assessed is provided in Table 1. The investigation of impacts should however not be limited to this prescribed list, and should depend rather on the local context and the nature of the proposed development. It should be noted that it is necessary to consider both the direct impacts associated with the proposed development as well as potential secondary and cumulative impacts. While the direct impacts may be of low significance, their significance might be elevated when considered in the broader context (for example, loss of access to land and natural resources due directly to the project development and indirectly due to densification, in-migration and resettlement). The process of identifying the potential socio-economic impacts should begin with an examination of the issues and impacts raised by stakeholders during the Scoping phase.

Table 1. Potential socio-economic impacts associated with biofuel developments requiring a full ESIA

Issue	Impact
Economic Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased employment • Increased income earning opportunities (i.e. sale of goods and services) • Increased cash for consumption and savings/investment (i.e. in livestock, education, dwellings etc)
Economic losses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of labour for other existing livelihood activities

Issue	Impact
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of land and natural resources • Less access to land (reduced availability) • Tenure security/insecurity
Resettlement (either physical or economic)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of land, dwellings and other physical resources • Loss of crops and cleared arable land • Loss of natural resources and grazing land • Loss of land rights and entitlements • Compensation • Disruption of social networks and relationships • Disruption of relationship with the land and natural resources
Food Insecurity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to maintain household food production (depends on labour, productivity and cash) • Ability to purchase food (depends on availability of food, prices and income)
In-migration and Population growth and concentration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Densification and concentration of settlement • Social tensions related to competition and differences between locals and in-migrants • Less compliance with local norms and regulations
Social conflicts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due to competition between groups for employment and other economic benefits • Due to competition and differences between locals and in-migrants • Due to tensions between resettled households and residents in host areas and neighbouring areas. • Due to increased pressure on land and natural resources and tensions around land administration and land use management • Due to increased crime
Disturbance &/or loss of cultural heritage sites and resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impacts on graves, sacred sites and important cultural heritage sites and resources • Movement of graves
Health and welfare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to sufficient potable water • Increased risk of HIV/AIDs and other diseases • Increased crime • Access to natural resources for traditional medicines • Education • Increased traffic safety risks • Health risks from employment, pollution and sanitation problems • Health risks associated with introduction of vectors, especially water borne vectors due to irrigation • Increasing need for basic infrastructure and services
Governance impacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management of resettlement • Changes in administration of land rights and use • Increased pressure on land and natural resources and tensions around land administration and land use management • Development of concentrated villages and urban centers • Increased demand for basic infrastructure and services • Need to maintain roads and other basic infrastructure and services • Management of increased social tensions

5 ISSUES AND IMPACTS TO BE CONSIDERED DURING A RAPID ASSESSMENT

As discussed in the RSB Impact Assessment guidelines document (RSB-GUI-01-002-01), under certain circumstances an operator may conduct a rapid assessment (RESA) rather than a full ESIA. Generally speaking this is because the nature and significance of the impacts is expected to be much lower. Consequently, the amount of baseline data needed is more limited and may be more general. The following issues (Table 2) could be used as a guide if the operator was conducting a RESA but also wanted to ensure that certain basic social impacts are taken into consideration. The investigation of impacts should however not be limited to this prescribed list and should depend rather on the local context and the nature of the proposed development.

Table 2. Potential socio-economic impacts associated with a biofuel development only requiring a Rapid Environmental and Social Assessment (RESA).

Issue	Impact
Economic Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased employment • Increased income earning opportunities (i.e. sale of goods and services) • Increased cash for consumption and savings/investment (i.e. in livestock, education, dwellings etc)
Economic losses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of labor for other existing livelihood activities • Less access to land (reduced availability) but not compromising local production systems • Less access to natural resources (including water if irrigation is proposed) but not compromising local production systems
Food Insecurity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to maintain household food production (depends on labor, productivity and cash) • Ability to purchase food (depends on availability of food, prices and income)
Social conflicts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due to competition between participating and non-participating farmers • Due to increased pressure on land and natural resources and tensions around land administration and land use management
Health and welfare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to sufficient potable water • Access to natural resources for traditional medicines • Increased traffic safety risks
Governance impacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased pressure on land and natural resources and tensions around land administration and land use management • Need to maintain roads and other basic infrastructure and services

In such a study, however, it would still be necessary to do a small household survey that provided reliable data on land and resource use, livelihoods and food security for participating and non-participating households in the affected area.

As it is likely that other specialist impact assessment will be required in addition to the SIA, these guidelines should be read together with the following guidelines:

Food Security Impact Assessment (RSB-GUI-01-006-01)

Land rights Guidelines (RSB-GUI-01-012-01)

6 ASSESSMENT OF THE SIGNIFICANCE OF KEY ISSUES AND IMPACTS

The general approach to the identification and assessment of impacts as outlined in the final section of the RSB ESIA guidelines (RSB-GUI-01-002-03) must be adopted. The discussion of the impacts should be specific rather than general and must apply the impact significance rating scale adopted for the ESIA. The impact rating scale used must be the same as that used by all the other specialist impact assessments. The impacts of the construction and operational stages of the proposed project need to be identified and assessed, as do the impacts of the project alternatives. The significance of the impacts also needs to be rated for the before and after mitigation scenarios.

6.1 Mitigation

It is not possible to anticipate the possible mitigation measures needed as these will depend on the nature and extent of the impacts, the local context and the practical constraints. The mitigation measures recommended for each impact need to be practical and effective in:

- eliminating the impact,
- reducing/increasing either the temporal or spatial scale of the impact,
- reducing its severity
- reducing the risk of the impact by reducing its likelihood of occurring.

The impact rating table needs to indicate how the mitigation measure will change one or more of these rating factors. For negative impacts the mitigation measures should reduce the significance levels, but for beneficial impacts the mitigation measures should enhance the benefits. Usually the mitigation measures will be specific to an individual impact, but sometimes they will be relevant to all the impacts that fall under a specific issue (i.e. governance).

In cases where biofuel projects are developed in regions of poverty, or if the project will result in some voluntary resettlement or food security impacts, then there will be a need to develop a Resettlement Action Plan (RAP) as described in the Land Rights Impact Assessment (RSB-GUI-01-012-01) and a rural & Social Development Plan (as required from principle 5) during the implementation phases of the project. The process of developing these plans needs to be a process of negotiation (based on Free Prior and Informed Consent - FPIC) involving all the key stakeholders. In the case of a RAP it will also be necessary to do a complete census of the affected households. However, implementation of the RAP and rural and social development plan does not have to have been completed by the time certification is applied for, as implementation may be time consuming or planned to take place over a few years. However, a preliminary policy document on Resettlement (RAP) and the rural and social development plan is needed for RSB accreditation. This RPF must be compliant with the requirements of IFC Performance Standard 5.

If an ESIA or RESA is not required, the ESMP should include recommendations on measures that need to be taken to ensure that labor rights are protected. The SIA should therefore include recommendations on these issues as part of the mitigation measures and ESMP.

6.2 Monitoring

Given that the RSB Impact Assessment Process and ESMP will be used by the RSB to award and assess accreditation for biofuel developments, it will be necessary for the ESIA to develop a Monitoring Plan that will facilitate ongoing assessment of the impact of the biofuel development. Consequently, the Social Expert needs to develop some recommendations with respect to what specific indicators, as developed during the project plan, should be monitored, when, by whom and how. These recommendations should be sufficiently detailed to allow the responsible persons to be able to collect

the data, analyze it and use it to assess project performance. Given the need to demonstrate compliance with the RSB principles 2c, 4 a-d, 5 a+b; 6 a+b; 9a and 12 a-c; the indicators will need to cover each of these principles and criteria. The indicators will therefore need to cover the following issues:

- FPIC of affected stakeholders
- Labor rights and employment conditions
- Land rights
- Water rights
- Food security
- Socio-economic development
- Benefits for women, youths, and indigenous and vulnerable persons

7 CONTENTS OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACT REPORT

Each of the specialist reports should follow that same structure and format. A suggested structure for the SIA Report is as follows:

#	Section Title	Contents
1	Summary	This should provide a summary of the specialist study including the impacts, conclusions and recommendations.
2	Introduction	The introduction should provide brief background information, the terms of reference for the study, and the study team.
	Project Description	An overview of the proposed development, including details of the agricultural, industrial and auxiliary components as well as the nature and extent of persons to be employed on the project and any social development components.
3	Methodology	This section should indicate what data sources and research methods were used as well as the methods of data analysis.
4	Description of the Social Environment	This section should provide an in-depth description of the regional and local socio-economic environment within which the proposed biofuel project is to be located.
5	Impact Assessment and Mitigation Measures	This section should form the bulk of the report. It should identify and discuss each of the individual impacts and use the impact ratings method to rate their significance before and after mitigation, as well as during the construction, operational and decommissioning phases of the project. For each impact, the recommended mitigation measures needed in order to reduce the negative impacts and enhance the positive impacts associated with the proposed development should be discussed. Attention should be drawn to any very high and irreversible impacts that cannot be mitigated as these may be fatal flaws that prevent the project from going ahead and detailed justification for such a significance rating will need to be provided.
6	Monitoring Recommendations	This section should identify the key indicators that should be monitored over time and the methods that should be employed to monitor them.
7	Conclusion	This should provide a summary of the context and impacts.
8	Recommendation	The recommendations should focus on the suggested mitigation measures.
9	References	A list of all the references and sources
10	Appendices	This should include key sources of data/results that informed the study, data collection forms/questionnaires used, pictures and other lists or long tables that could not be included in the text of the report.

8 Appendix 1

Example of a Terms of Reference for a Socio-economic Impact Assessment

The project will result in national and regional economic benefits and is also likely to result in local economic benefits. It could also provide support for infrastructural development and at a local level will provide job opportunities and benefits arising from the multiplier effects associated with these.

At present an accurate count / mapping of the number of households that are likely to be directly affected has not been conducted. The affected area will include the area to which affected households will be relocated.

The primary objectives of this study will be:

- a) To provide a detailed description of the socio-economic environment in and around the project area.
- b) Analyze the potential impacts of the proposed project.
- c) Provide guidelines for limiting or mitigating negative impacts and optimizing benefits.

The proposed project could result in the following impacts:

- Relocation of households will be required and will impact on the livelihoods of affected households.
- The creation of employment opportunities, particularly during the construction phase of the project may increase local opportunities for new economic activities.
- The expectation of a large number of jobs may not be satisfied or may result in an influx of outsiders into the area which could result in heightened tension in the surrounding communities.
- Noise and air emissions from the plant may impact on surrounding communities.
- Project related transportation may adversely impact the safety of other road users.
- A loss of land available for agricultural production and subsequent further decrease in food security.
- The loss of access to areas presently available for natural resources.
- The loss of communal resources.
- A possible reduction in soil fertility and, hence, productivity of the soil after development.
- Changes in authority structures in local communities.
- Increased stress on social infrastructure and services.

The specific terms of reference are as follows:

1. Describe the local socio-economic environment with particular reference to the communities that will be directly affected by the project, including the number of people currently employed and the extent of existing entrepreneurialism in the area;
2. Determine the current land use within the development area that are likely to be affected;
3. Working closely with the consultant doing the RAP as described in the RSB Land rights Impact Guidelines (RSB-GUI-01-012-01) integrate the issues of the resettlement plan within the SIA when the number of households (and people) that need to be resettled has been determined;
4. Assess the local social infrastructure (health, education, markets, community);
5. Identify any sites of cultural-historical importance;

6. Describe the formal and informal governing structures;
7. Gain an understanding of cultural beliefs and practices, particularly those relating to sites of cultural significance that could be affected
8. Determine the job creation potential of the biofuel operations, both permanent and temporary jobs during set up and implementation
9. Discuss division of gender tasks and other relevant gender issues with special attention to job creation potential within the project;
10. Identify income and expenditure trends;
11. Describe the local historical context;
12. Describe landownership and property rights;
13. Assess the significance of potential environmental and social impacts on the local populace and the District;
14. Identify local development needs and problems and evaluate how the project could contribute to a sustainable community development programme
15. Investigate possible impacts of the project on health, livelihoods, income levels, education levels, food security and other factors relevant to the affected community's ability to participate in the potential economic benefits the project may offer should be discussed;
16. Provide recommendations to mitigate negative impacts and optimize positive impacts.

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