



# RSB Principles and Criteria for Smallholder Groups

## Introduction

The RSB Principles and Criteria for Smallholder Groups presents the RSB Principles, Criteria and Requirements for the production of biomass feedstock by smallholders and for micro and small-scale feedstock processing and biomass production. The RSB Principles, Criteria and Requirements are derived from the RSB P&C version 2.0.

The rules concerning the group management of a smallholder group certification scheme are defined in a separate standard: RSB Standard for Smallholder Group Certification

## Scope of the standard

This standard specifies sustainability requirements for the certification of groups of smallholder feedstock producers. Additional requirements have been developed in the processing section for the micro or small-scale biomaterial feedstock processing or biomaterial production facilities that are part of the group.

## Definition of Smallholder

The RSB Principles and Criteria for Smallholder Groups apply to Feedstock Producers (e.g. farmers) whose total amount of land does not exceed 75 ha. The RSB will continue to explore possible options for the definition of smallholders, based on additional parameters such as the use of family labor, access to technology, income, etc.

## Structure

The standard consists of principles, criterion and requirements. The requirements are supposed to be implemented at group or member level and its compliance will be evaluated by audits. The standard contains for each requirement (or combination of requirements) guidance on how the requirements could be met. The guidance in itself is not normative.

## Continuous improvement structure

The RSB Principles and Criteria for Smallholder Groups introduces a stepwise approach which allows the group to become fully compliant with the RSB standard within 2 years after the initial audit. After each requirement, it is indicated whether compliance needs to be assured at the initial external audit (0), the external audit after year 1 (1) and the external audit after year 2 (2). Groups are allowed to pursue compliance faster than the proposed timepath, but not slower. A few requirements require compliance after year 3 (3) in line with the RSB P&C version 2.0.

## Level of compliance

The smallholder standard of the RSB identified four levels of compliance:

Group management level:

*1. Awareness raising & support activities:* this level refers to whether or not the group management is expected to organize awareness raising and/or support activities towards the group members on the specific requirement. Compliance can be checked at group level (e.g. action plan, training records, good practice documentation) and its implementation verified with members.

*2. Compliance at group management level:* this level indicates whether or not the group management should comply with the specific requirement. Compliance with this requirement should be checked at group management level. These requirements could refer to actions which the group management should have in place (e.g. an overview of relevant laws and regulations) and requirements which refer to the functioning of the group management (e.g. labor rights of the the group management's staff).

Member level:

*3. Compliance at overall farm management:* this level refers to the farm management practices of a group member at the entire farm (not only the production plots on which biomass feedstock is produced). Compliance with this requirement should be checked at the farm.

*4. Compliance at biomass production plot:* this level refers to a specific group member's biomass production plot which has been included in the scope of certification. Compliance with this requirement should be checked at the specific production plot.

Note that "Operation sites with continuous boundaries cannot be divided into smaller certification units. Example: you cannot divide a contiguous plantation or field (i.e. production plot) into smaller units and exclude some of these smaller units from the certification scope. Non-contiguous fields or operational sites under common ownership may be excluded from the certification scope." (RSB Standard for Participating Operator RSB-STD-30-001)

*Note: The RSB Principles & Criteria for Smallholder Groups were drafted by a group of consultants (AidEnvironment) under the mandate of EPFL. Based on their experience with similar schemes (e.g. RSPO, IFOAM), they proposed to use a stepwise approach towards compliance, which allows smallholders to move progressively towards compliance and over a longer period than other participating operators. The way the different requirements are split across the compliance schedule (from year 0 to year 3) is the result of their work (incl. case studies and surveys), as well as several rounds of internal discussions at the Secretariat level.*

## Non-Applicable Principles

Principle 5: Small farmers and micro operators in regions of poverty contribute to the socioeconomic development of the area. In many cases, they themselves are poor or just above the poverty line, thus they are also considered as beneficiaries of the socioeconomic development they contribute to achieve. Compliance with Principle 5 is therefore waived.

## Additional Documents


The following documents are available upon request:

- RSB Standard for Certification of Smallholder Groups
- Guidance for Certification of Smallholder Groups
- Options for Definition of Smallholders
- RSB Greenhouse Gas Tool Questionnaire and Manual for Smallholders

The principles and criteria are outlined in the tables below.

**Note on RSB EU RED Standard**

This version of the RSB Principles and Criteria for Smallholder Groups is currently not included in the RSB EU RED Standard, which is recognised by the European Commission. The RSB Secretariat will investigate how the RSB Principles and Criteria for Smallholder Groups could be recognised by the European Commission.

 <b>Table 1: RSB Principles and Criteria for Smallholder Groups (biomaterial feedstock production)</b>						
		P		Principle		
		C		Criterion		
		i-x		Requirement		
Code	Description	Level of compliance & year of compliance (see introduction sheet) (0 = at initial audit, 1 = at year 1, 2 = at year 2)				Guidance
		Group management level		Member level		
		Awareness raising & support to members	Applicable to group management	Applicable to overall farm management	Applicable to feedstock production plots	
<b>P1</b>	<b>Legality: Biomaterial feedstock operations shall follow all applicable laws and regulations.</b>					
C1.a	<i>Biomaterial feedstock operations shall comply with all applicable laws and regulations of the country in which the operations occurs</i>					
i	There is an up-to-date overview of national laws and regulations applicable to the operations of the group management and members and an action plan to support producers to towards compliance.		0			Keep yourself informed about the laws and regulations that concern your group and your members. Important areas are land use rights, labor rights, health & safety, and environment . Answer the following questions and write them down in a table: which are the relevant laws? What do they require? Do we comply already? What can we do to ensure compliance in the future?
ii	Biomaterial feedstock production operations comply with applicable laws and regulations.	0		2		Make sure that the actions towards complying with applicable laws are implemented at group management and member level. Remind your members about their obligations towards laws and regulations and that compliance is necessary for RSB certification. Where necessary support members to comply with the laws. This requirement needs to be fulfilled in year 2, unless under other principles in this standard legal compliance is required earlier (e.g. the child labor requirement under Principle 4).
<b>P2</b>	<b>Planning, Monitoring and Continuous Improvement: Sustainable biomaterial operations shall be planned, implemented, and continuously improved through an open, transparent, and consultative impact assessment and management process and an economic viability analysis</b>					
C2.a	<i>Biomaterial feedstock production operations shall undertake an assessment to assess impacts and risks and ensure sustainability through the development of effective and efficient implementation, mitigation, monitoring and evaluation plans.</i>					
i	The Group Management or external agent conducts a Simplified Social and Environment Impact Assessments of existing and possible future impacts of member operations is conducted. There are proven efforts of achieving participation of relevant stakeholders and local experts as well as group members. The SSEIA shall be updated on annual regular basis.		0			The SSEIA will be a participatory assessment and should involve member producers, community representatives and stakeholders in the locality who can provide the required expertise on social and environmental impacts (local CSOs, NGOs, authorities). The SSEIA could be either facilitated by the group manager or an external person. The SSEIA should cover all sustainability issues of the RSB Smallholder P&C and consider existing and potential impacts both on individual farm level and cumulative group level. The SSEIA should consist of a combination of group meetings and field visits. Where possible, maps are used to support the SSEIA.
ii	An action plan exists to reduce negative impacts as identified in the SSEIA. The action plan includes targets, activities and a monitoring and evaluation system.		0			

C2.b	<i>Biomaterial feedstock producers shall implement practices that reflect a commitment to long-term economic viability.</i>					
i	Group members are aware of the long-term economic viability of their operations and apply best practices to enhance long-term economic viability.	1			2	An example of a practice which can contribute to an improved economic viability is keeping records of the expenses and revenues made on the farm. furthermore, it is good to find answers to the following questions : - What are the main factors impacting your cost and your revenues? - What are measures that could increase revenues or decrease costs? - What investments are required for these measures and how long does it take before they generate a profit? - What are the major risks that could affect revenues and cost; examples are market prices, prices of fertilizer or other farm inputs, drought or flooding, and pest and diseases? - What are the best measures to adress those risks? - What are options to diversify household income in order to become less vulnerable to crop specific risks?
P3	<b>Greenhouse Gas Emissions: Biomaterial shall contribute to climate change mitigation by significantly reducing lifecycle GHG emissions as compared to fossil fuels.</b>					
C3.a	<i>Lifecycle GHG emissions of biomaterials shall be calculated at group level, using the RSB lifecycle GHG emission calculation methodology</i>					
i	Group management organizes the collection, aggregation and documentation of input data as required by the RSB lifecycle GHG methodology from members to calculate lifecycle GHG emissions. It provides access to their buyer of this data of RSB certified produce. To increase the economic feasibility of data collection, the group management may use the sampling method as described in the GHG Tool Manual – for Smallholder Groups.		0			The methodology and guidance to calculate GHG emissions can be found in the GHG Tool Manual – for Smallholder Groups.
P4	<b>Human and Labor Rights: Biomaterial feedstock production operations shall not violate human rights or labor rights, and shall promote decent work and the well-being of workers.</b>					
C4.a	<i>Workers shall enjoy freedom of association, the right to organize, and the right to collectively bargain.</i>					
i	Workers shall have freedom of association, the right to organize, and the right to collectively bargain. In countries, where the law prevents collective bargaining or unionization, there shall be no interference with workers' own efforts to set up representational mechanisms.	0	0	0		Be available for the workers on your farm to hear their concerns on a regular basis, for example in a monthly meeting. Do not interfere when the workers on your farm discuss their work-related matters and concerns with other fellow workers or want to join workers organizations and related gatherings. Respect the rights of your workers to collectively bargain their wages and enter into a dialogue with their chosen representatives.
ii	The effective functioning of labour organizations is not opposed and there shall be no discrimination to members or representatives of labor organizations.	0	0	0		Do not treat workers differently because they are members of a labor organization and do not try to undermine or disturb the functioning of labor organizations. Be flexible in providing time for your workers to contribute to the labor organizations they belong to and to join related meetings and activities.

C4.b	<i>No slave labor or forced labor shall occur</i>				
i	There shall be no forced, compulsory, bonded, trafficked or otherwise forced labor.	0	0	0	Make sure that your workers are free to decide whether to work for you or not and that they are not forced to work by any third party like an agent. Do not withhold any property or documents like identity cards or travel documents of your workers as a means to force them to keep working with you. If you provide loans to your workers, come to a mutual agreement on how they are paid back and do not use loans to bind workers to your farm. Agreed payments like salaries, benefits or wages should be paid regularly and not be withhold as a means to bind your workers to your farm.
C4.c	<i>No child labor shall occur, except on family farms and then only when work does not interfere with the child's schooling and does not put his or her health at risk</i>				
i	Children of the age of 14 and under (or below the legal minimum age if this is higher) are not employed in group management or members operations.	0	0	0	Ask your workers for a verification of age (identity card, birth certificate) before you employ them and register the year of birth of all workers in your record book. Do not employ applicants who are 14 years of age or younger or below the minimum age. Be sure you are aware of all temporary workers on your farm and that no children of age 14 or younger work on your farm.
ii	Where permitted by law, children between 12 and 14 years of age can work part time on family farms, only if they are family members or neighbors in a community where children have traditionally helped with agricultural work. Work by children of group members is only done under adult supervision and does not interfere with their educational, social or physical development. Their work day including schooling, transport and work does not exceed 10 hours.	0	0	0	Help from children who are family members or neighbors in the community should only be possible under all of the following conditions (and where local laws do not prohibit it): - only for light work - for a limited number of hours - if the work does not jeopardize their physical and mental well-being - if the work does not interfere with their schooling. - They do not conduct hazardous work and are always accompanied by an adult relative. Children should be free to go to school or do receive appropriate schooling at home in accordance with a recognized programme.
iii	Workers below 18 years of age do not perform hazardous work, which is work in dangerous, unhealthy or unsafe conditions that could result in them being killed, injured or becoming ill.	0	0	0	Identify which work on your farms could be dangerous to health or result in severe injuries. This could be work where heavy equipment or hazardous chemicals are used. Make sure that workers who perform this kind of work are 18 years or older.
C4.d	<i>Workers shall be free of discrimination of any kind, whether in employment or opportunity, with respect to gender, wages, working conditions, and social benefits.</i>				
i	There shall be no discrimination on workers in hiring, remuneration, benefits, access to training, promotion, termination, retirement or any other aspect of employment, based on race, color, gender, religion, political opinion, national extraction, social origin, sexual orientation, family responsibilities, marital status, union membership, age or any other condition that could give rise to discrimination.	0	0	0	Treat all workers equally regarding the salary or wage you pay, the opportunities and any other services you provide. Provide those services on objective and clearly defined criteria, not religious belief, political orientation, caste, sexual orientation or origin. Make sure that workers on your farm feel free to express their religious beliefs and can follow related rituals or traditions, including important religious holidays. Workers with disabilities or pregnant women should receive working opportunities which fit their abilities.
ii	Workers shall not be subjected to corporal punishment, mental or physical oppression and coercion, verbal or physical abuse, sexual harassment or any other kind of intimidation.	0	0	0	Do not use violence or threats to discipline your workers. Avoid behavior, gestures, language, and physical contact that is sexually abusive, coercive or threatening.

C4.e	<i>Workers' wages and working conditions shall respect all applicable laws and international conventions, as well as all relevant collective agreements.</i>					
i	Workers (permanent and temporary) are paid at least the gross wages that comply with national legislation and sector agreements, whichever is higher.	0	0	0		<p>Make sure you know the applicable national minimum wages or sector agreements for the workers on your farm and keep your workers informed. All workers should be remunerated in accordance no matter if they are permanent or temporary workers. Negotiate wages with your workers regularly and write down what has been agreed upon. For piece work done on your farm, provide remuneration high enough to ensure that the minimum wages can be met by your worker within a 40 hours working week. Write down the payments you make to your workers. This will help you to check that you pay in accordance with the national laws and the agreements with workers.</p> <p>Give workers reasonable breaks while working and sufficient rest periods between shifts. Schedule breaks strategically so that no employee is required to work for extended periods of time during a shift without a rest period. Allow workers at least a 24 consecutive hours of rest in every seven day period.</p>
ii	Where a minimum wage is absent, the wage paid for a particular activity shall be negotiated and agreed on an at least annual basis with the worker.	0	0	0		
iii	For piecework (pay based on the output of work provided rather than hours), the pay rate must allow workers to earn at least the legal minimum wage or industry standards, whichever is higher, based on an eight-hour workday under average conditions.	0	0	0		
v	Wages shall be provided on a regular basis in cash or in another form acceptable to workers.	0	0	0		
vi	No deductions from wages as a result of disciplinary measures are made.	0	0	0		
vii	The maximum number of regular hours worked per week must not exceed 48. Workers may work overtime which shall be voluntary, and paid at least equal to regular work, but total working hours shall not exceed 80 per week.	0	0	0		
C4.f	<i>Conditions of occupational safety and health for workers shall follow internationally-recognized standards.</i>					
i	All workers are provided with and regularly use adequate personal protective equipment to protect them from all occupational health and safety hazards associated with their respective jobs.	0	1	1		Identify which work on your farm could be dangerous to health or result in injuries. This is especially the case for the use of agro-chemicals. What measures are available to ensure the safety of the workers performing such activities? Provide yourself and workers with the necessary equipment and clothing that can protect them from accidents or health risk and explain them the benefits of using the equipment. Don't allow workers on your farm to do hazardous work without the necessary protective equipment.
ii	Accident and emergency procedures and measures (including first aid, fire containment procedures, and spill responses) are in place at all operations and smallholder farms in accordance with the identified risks in the Simplified Social and Environment Risk Assessment.	0	1	1		Be aware of the types of work on your farm which could pose a risk to health or lead to injuries. Talk to your workers about those risks and how to react in case of an emergency. Are you prepared to react in an emergency? Make sure that first aid kits and fire fight equipment are available where necessary and workers performing dangerous work are not working alone.
iii	Workers follow safety instructions on the storage, handling, use, disposal of hazardous substances and waste and follow emergency procedures following accidental spillages.	0	1	1		Make sure you know all the hazardous substances used in your farm and how to handle them in a manner to reduce any risk to health or the environment. Visibly mark hazardous substances and the place where they are stored. Store hazardous substances in a safe place where they cannot be reached by children. Liquids should be stored close to the ground. Make sure that you or workers using hazardous substances follow the safety instructions on the package.
iv	Workers shall have access to drinking water.	0	1	1		Provide workers with potable water or encourage them to take it with them during their work in case there is no drinking water available close to the place they work. If your workers use water sources in your farm for drinking water, make sure the water is safe and does not pose any risk to health.
v	Any housing provided by the group management or members for permanent or temporary workers shall be built and maintained to ensure good sanitary, health, and safety conditions and shall have access to adequate drinking water facilities.	1	2	2		Make sure that the housing you provide to your workers is safe, clean and meets their basic needs. Provide adequate and hygienic sanitary facilities in proximity.
C4.g	<i>Operators shall implement a mechanism to ensure the human rights and labor rights outlined in this principle apply equally when labor is contracted through third parties.</i>					
	Members are aware of the rights of sub-contracted workers and occupational health and safety requirements and these sub-contracted workers confirm these rights.	1	3	3		Tell your sub-contractors that you expect them to treat your workers like you do. Observe or pose questions to these worker to verify whether they are treated accordingly. In time, make compliance of these requirements a condition for sub-contracting work.

P6	<b>Local food security: Biomaterial feedstock production operations shall ensure the human right to adequate food and improve food security in food insecure regions</b>					
C6.a	<i>Biomaterial feedstock production operations shall be aware of the impact of biomaterial feedstock production on the local community</i>					
i	Group members are aware of the risks in terms of food security of switching their entire farmland into non-food biomaterial feedstock production and are aware of cropping models which include the production of food where it is an economic viable option.	1		1		Before dedicating large shares of your available land to the production of non-food biomaterial feedstock, consider the effects it will have on the availability of food in your family and community. Growing less food for your own consumption will increase your expenditure and make you dependent on food markets in the future. Diversifying sources of income and growing crops for your own consumption can help to reduce the risk from rising food prices or yield failure of your biomaterial crop. Be aware that agro-chemicals you use for your biomaterial crop could impact the availability of traditional sources of food (e.g. fish in the river or rice fields). Environmental degradation from biomaterial production, e.g. soil erosion or increased occurrence of pests, can have negative impacts on the food production in your community. Those impacts should be considered. In case you are switching land away from food production or other livelihood activities to use it for biomaterial production, consider how the loss in food production or livelihoods will be compensated for and whether this is likely to provide economic benefits in the longterm.
P7	<b>Conservation: Biomaterial feedstock production operations shall avoid negative impacts on biodiversity, ecosystems, and conservation values</b>					
C7.a	<i>Conservation values of local, regional or global importance within the potential or existing area of operation shall be maintained or enhanced.</i>					
i	There shall be a map or a list of areas with conservation values of global, regional or local importance or that serve to maintain or enhance such conservation values. Members are aware of these areas.	0	0	0		Natural landscapes can provide important services to your community and beyond, for example flood protection, drinking water, a favourable microclimate, biodiversity, sources of income and many more. Discuss within your community, which areas are important to provide such services or as traditional sources of food, medicine or water. Usually natural landscapes are especially valuable. Also consider areas of cultural importance. Get in touch with local authorities responsible for environmental protection and ask them about protected or important areas close to your community. Delineate such areas in an appropriate map during the SSEIA process, and make it available to the public to be sure that everybody knows about their location and importance. The RSB distinguishes between "no-go" areas and "no conversion" areas. This classification should be considered when drafting a map of areas with conservation values. "No-go" areas as of January 2009 cannot be used in any form for biomaterial production under the RSB certification. "No conversion" areas cannot be converted for farming as of January 2009.
ii	Areas defined under requirement C7.a.i shall not be converted after the 1st of January 2008, or for forest products after November 1994 (as prescribed by FSC) or for palm after November 2004 (as prescribed by RSPO) or other relevant international standards.	0		0		"No-go" areas are all nationally, regionally or international legally protected areas They include : - The World Conservation Union "IUCN" Category I-IV protected areas: <a href="http://www.protectedplanet.net">www.protectedplanet.net</a> - Wetlands of International Importance designated under the Ramsar Convention: <a href="http://www.ramsar.wetlands.org">www.ramsar.wetlands.org</a> - World Heritage Sites designated under the UNESCO World Heritage Convention: <a href="http://www.whc.unesco.org/en/list">www.whc.unesco.org/en/list</a> - Biosphere Reserves designated under the UNESCO Man and the Biosphere Programme: <a href="http://www.unesco.org/new/en/natural-sciences/environment/ecological-sciences/biosphere-reserves">www.unesco.org/new/en/natural-sciences/environment/ecological-sciences/biosphere-reserves</a> - Other legally protected areas  "no conversion" areas include: - Alliance for zero extinction areas - IUCN key biodiversity areas (check the IBAT for business tool online) - Natura 2000 sites : <a href="http://natura2000.eea.europa.eu">http://natura2000.eea.europa.eu</a>  The areas identified with the help of local authorities as well as the local community should be managed accordingly to the RSB requirements and to mitigate and manage impacts on those areas from biomaterial production. They should not be used, (e.g. harvesting) in such way that it reduces their value for the community and beyond in the long-term.



iii	Areas defined under requirement C7.a.i shall only be used if adequate management practices maintain or enhance the identified conversation values (e.g. sustainable biomass harvesting).	0		0		Any harvesting of biomass should only be done at a rate and scale that the resource can be maintained over long-term. This may require an assessment and regular review of the conservation status of target species and populations. Try to base collection activities on adequate identification, mapping, inventory, assessment and monitoring of the target species. Collection activities should prevent any negative impacts on other wild species, the collection area and neighbouring areas. Get informed about the animals and plants in your area which are considered as rare, threatened, endangered or which are legally protected.
iv	Where necessary, buffer zones shall be protected, restored, or created to to avoid negative impacts from biomaterial feedstock production operations on areas defined under requirement C7.a.i	1		1		Natural landscapes can provide important services to your community and beyond, for example flood protection, drinking water, a favorable microclimate, biodiversity, sources of income and many more. Discuss within your community, which areas are important.
v	Hunting, fishing, ensnaring, poisoning and exploitation of rare, threatened, endangered and legally protected species shall not occur on the biomaterial feedstock production sites, related buffer zones and set-asides.	0		0		Get informed about the animals and plants in your area which are considered as rare, threatened, endangered or which are legally protected. Local authorities or environmental organisations can provide this information. Information is also available on the web: <a href="http://www.iucnredlist.org">www.iucnredlist.org</a> <a href="http://www.natureserve.org">www.natureserve.org</a>  Once identified, make sure that those plants or animals are not exploited on your farm or the protected areas identified under 7.a.
<b>C7.b</b>	<b><i>Biomaterial feedstock production operations shall prevent invasive species from invading areas outside the operation site.</i></b>					
i	Members will not use any species prohibited in the country of operation and recorded as highly invasive under similar conditions (climate, local ecosystems, soil types, etc.) in the Global Invasive Species Database (GISD).	0		0		Do you know what varieties/species you are using on your farm? Make sure that they are not prohibited in your country by consulting local authorities. Check the GISD online or ask someone to check for you whether the species you use are mentioned there as highly invasive. If the species you are using are either prohibited in your country or mentioned as highly invasive in the GISD, stop using those species and find alternatives by consulting local authorities or support agencies. The link to the GISD is <a href="http://www.issg.org/database/welcome">http://www.issg.org/database/welcome</a> The following crops are never considered invasive: sugarcane, soybean, corn and African palm.

<b>P8</b>	<b>Soil: Biomaterials feedstock production operations shall implement practices that seek to reverse soil degradation and/or maintain soil health.</b>				
C8.a	<i>Biomaterial feedstock producers shall implement practices to maintain or enhance soil physical, chemical, and biological conditions.</i>				
i	Members implement available and economically viable best practices to avoid soil erosion (e.g. crop rotation, direct planting, maintaining vegetative ground cover, terracing, maintaining or creating tree hedges, and the avoidance of land clearance on sensitive or highly erodible soils, especially on steep slopes).	0		1	The soil you grow your crops is an important capital of your farm. Avoid that soil is removed from your farm by water or wind. Do you know any practices adequate for your farm to do so? Discuss with other group members on good practices to avoid erosion or where to get related information. Some basic techniques are to avoid tillage, avoid planting on steep slopes, keep the ground covered by vegetation all year or create barriers on sloped land by planting hedges.
ii	Members implement available and economically viable best practices to maintain or enhance soil organic matter in their operations. This also implies that the use of agrarian and forestry residual products for biomaterial feedstock production, including lignocellulosic material, shall not be at the expense of long-term soil stability and organic matter content.	0		1	The amount of organic matter in the soil is an important aspect of soil fertility and ensures the availability of nutrients to the crops you plant. Leaving agricultural residues in the farm will increase soil organic matter. Do you know any practices to increase soil organic matter? If yes, consider applying them where it is economically feasible; if not, try to get information about such measures, for example from the local agricultural extension office or other farmers in the group.
iii	Members implement practices to minimize soil compaction.	0		1	Soil compaction is a process in which the air in the soil is reduced. This will reduce the ability of the soil to hold water and provide nutrients to the crops. It results from using regular ploughing, heavy machinery, or vehicles in the farm or by having large amounts of heavy livestock in the farm. Discuss and share with group members what can be done to reduce soil compaction in your farm as it has a negative impact on the longterm fertility of your soils. Measures can reduce the risk on soil compaction may include, avoiding wet conditions, minimising passes on the field and using low pressure tyres.
iv	Members implement practices to minimize the risk of fire (e.g. maintenance of appropriate natural barriers).	0		1	Identify areas where the risk of fire is large. Those are usually large, uninterrupted fields of the same crop. Risks are especially high the dry season. Natural barriers like hedges, trees and streams can avoid that fires spread rapidly on your farm and from farm to farm. Make sure to maintain those natural barriers or establish them where possible.
v	Group manager will measure organic matter content in a sample of members plots at least every 5 years to monitor changes in soil quality.		2		The soil organic matter content will be measured for a sample of smallholders within the second year of certification. This should then be repeated on a regular basis (at least every 5 years) to monitor changes in soil quality.
<b>P9</b>	<b>Water: Biomaterial feedstock production operations shall maintain or enhance the quality and quantity of surface and ground water resources, and respect prior formal or customary water rights.</b>				
C9.a	<i>Biomaterial feedstock production operations shall respect the existing water rights of local and indigenous communities.</i>				
i	The use of irrigation water shall not be at the expense of the water needed by the communities that rely on the same water source(s) for subsistence.	0		1	Make sure that you know who else is relying on the water sources you use for irrigation. Your increased water use for irrigation could reduce the water available for those communities to plant subsistence crop. This has to be avoided and irrigation from shared sources can only be done to an extent where it does not reduce the water availability of other users for subsistence farming.
ii	Water resources under legitimate dispute shall not be used for biomaterial operations until any legitimate disputes have been settled through negotiated agreements with affected stakeholders.	0		1	Identify downstream or groundwater users and determine the formal or customary water rights that exist. If you have any dispute about water resources, settle the dispute, enter a constructive dialogue with affected stakeholders. If there are any disputes on water, they need to be resolved before the audit in year 1, otherwise this water shall not be used or the concerning plot should be left out of the scope of certification.
iii	Formal or customary water rights shall be respected.	0		1	
C9.b	<i>Biomaterial feedstock production operations shall not contribute to the depletion of surface or groundwater resources beyond replenishment capacities.</i>				
i	The use of irrigation water use shall be approved by government agency or other competent bodies if required by law or regulation.	0		1	Where government regulation exists on the use of irrigation water, assure that you comply with it. In absence of such regulation, make sure that you know where the water you use for irrigation is coming from and consider whether you are overusing the water source (for example by performing regular measurements of water ponds). Only use as much water for irrigation as can be replenished by your water source.

ii	Irrigated biomaterial feedstock production shall not be established in long-term freshwater-stressed areas, unless the implementation of: a. good practices, or, b. an adequate mitigation process that does not contradict other requirements in this standard ensures that the water level remains stable.	0			1	Long-term water stressed areas, are areas which are characterized by regular droughts and structural water shortages for the various uses of a water source.
iii	Members shall not withdraw water from natural watercourses to the extent that it modifies its natural course or the flora and fauna it had before the beginning of operations.	0			1	If you and farmers in your group use water from a natural river, stream, or spring, do you know the effects on that source of water? Make sure that the water source is not disturbed by the withdrawal of water. Disturbed could mean that its natural course or the flora and fauna changes.
C9.c	<i>Biomaterial feedstock production operations shall contribute to the enhancement or maintaining of the quality of the surface and groundwater resources.</i>					
i	Biomaterial feedstock production shall not occur on a critical aquifer recharge area without a specific authorization from legal authorities	0			0	An aquifer is a layer in the ground from which ground water can be extracted. Water moves to those layers from the surface, so called recharge areas. Usually forests are important aquifer recharge areas. Check with local authorities or support agencies where critical aquifer recharge areas are located in your proximity and ensure that no biomaterial production takes place on those areas or obtain a permit to use water from this areas.
ii	Adequate precautions shall be taken to contain effluents and avoid runoffs and contamination of surface and ground water resources, in particular from chemicals and biological agents (e.g. adequate buffer zones of natural vegetation).	0			1	Maintain or restore natural vegetation, of preferably native species, close to rivers and streams. When using agro-chemicals, make sure that they reach their target and are not wasted or end up in the surface or ground water. Avoid application before heavy rain and do not apply agro-chemicals close to rivers or streams. Do not apply them on water-logged, cracked, compacted or frozen grounds and neither on steep slopes. Try to identify fertilizers that slowly release nutrients. This not only improves the water quality in your community but makes sure that the nutrients will be available to your crops.
<b>P10</b>	<b>Air: Air pollution from biomaterial feedstock production operations shall be minimized along the supply chain.</b>					
C10.a	<i>Biomaterial feedstock production operations shall avoid and, where possible, eliminate open-air burning of residues, wastes or by-products, or open air burning to clear the land.</i>					
i	For sugarcane cultivation, if open-air burning of leaves, straw and other agricultural residues takes place, a plan shall be put in place to phase out within three years following certification. For other crops, burning of agricultural residues shall be avoided where possible and be left in the field, used for composting or re-used for other purposes.		0		3	Burning of agricultural residues like leaves and straw or dead plants leads to air pollution that can seriously affect your health. Discuss with the group members about alternatives to manage those farm residues in the field, clear land and manage trash instead of burning it. This can also have positive effects on the quality of your soil.  If burning of agricultural residues from sugarcane cultivation takes place, make a plan which outlines how burning will be stopped within 3 years. This plan can be updated every year. Burning has to be stopped within 3 years after the first certification.
ii	There is no open-air burning of inorganic wastes or by-products, or open-air burning for land clearing.	0			1	Burning of inorganic waste (e.g. plastics or rubber) and natural vegetation leads to air pollution that can seriously affect your health. Identify these practices and find alternatives to them.

<b>P11</b>	<b>Use of Technology, Inputs, and Management of Waste: The use of technologies in biomaterial feedstock production operations shall seek to maximize production efficiency and social and environmental performance, and minimize the risk of damages to the environment and people.</b>					
<b>C11.a</b>	<i>The technologies used in biomaterial feedstock production operations including genetically modified: plants, micro-organisms, and algae, shall minimize the risk of damages to environment and people, and improve environmental and/or social performance over the long term.</i>					
i	There shall be no use of GMOs in areas where this is forbidden by law.				0	Make sure you know whether you are using genetically modified organisms on your farm. If you are not sure, consult the provider of your seeds / seedlings or an government extension office nearby. Also check whether the regulations in your country allow the use of this specific GMO material in your locality. Be aware of any national or international guidelines laws and agreements relevant to the GMO you use.
ii	The use of genetically modified organisms shall follow relevant national or international guidelines, laws and agreements. Members using GMOs shall take measures to prevent any risks of its use, including the risk of migration of genetically modified material, and shall cooperate with neighbors, regulatory and conservation authorities, and local stakeholders to implement monitoring and preventative measures.	0			2	Do you know those risks and how to mitigate them? Get informed about possible risks and measures to mitigate them. If there are risks on migration of genetically modified material, members shall cooperate with neighbors, regulatory and conservation authorities, and local stakeholders to implement monitoring and preventative measures. Existing regulations and guidelines on the use of genetical modified organisms are leading in the design of such measures.
iii.	For new operations, members shall use indigenous crops whenever alternative crops reduce yield and/or environmental and/or social performance compared to indigenous crops.	1			2	Before establishing your farm, make sure you chose the best available planting material. Also consider indigenous crops and discuss the long-term performance of all alternatives. Ponder environmental, social and economic risks and benefits of each each alternative and seek information from various external sources instead of relying only on one opinion.
<b>C11.b</b>	<i>Good practices shall be implemented for the storage, handling, use, and disposal of chemicals</i>					
i	The group management maintains a list of all chemicals recorded in the: - WHO's 1a and 1b lists - Annex III of the Rotterdam Convention - Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs)		0			This information is available in English language in the world wide web. Where possible find the information, if necessary with help from someone with an internet connection. The links are: WHO: <a href="http://www.who.int/ipcs/publications/pesticides_hazard_rev_3.pdf">www.who.int/ipcs/publications/pesticides_hazard_rev_3.pdf</a> Rotterdam Convention: <a href="http://www.pic.int">www.pic.int</a> Stockholm Conventions: <a href="http://www.pops.int">www.pops.int</a>
ii	Group management maintains and updates a list of all chemicals or biological agents used on certified member farms. The list is accessible by the public on request made to the group management		0			Make sure it is known what chemicals are used on member farms. Not only the name of the product is important, but the active ingredients mentioned on the package.
iii	No chemicals that are recorded on the WHO's 1a and 1b lists shall be used.	0		1		Check in the list (11.d.i) whether any of the chemicals you are using are mentioned on the WHO's 1a and 1b lists. If the answer is yes, stop using it and find alternatives.
iv	The use of chemicals recorded in Annex III of the Rotterdam Convention and in the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) shall be listed (type and annual volume used) and a plan to phase out any such chemical over the three years following certification shall be described.		0			If the chemicals used are mentioned under the Annex III of the Rotterdam Convention and in the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) be aware that you have to find alternatives within 3 years after certification. Discuss with others using those chemicals how to replace them with chemicals not mentioned in your list.
v	There shall be no use of chemicals recorded in Annex III of the Rotterdam Convention and in the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs).	0		3		

vi	Good practices for the storage, handling, use, and disposal of chemicals shall be followed.	0		1		Always follow label instruction with regards to the use of chemicals. Do you store chemicals and the equipment that is contaminated with pesticide safely for humans and environment? Examples of equipment are: sprayers, Personal Protective Equipment, measuring equipment. Storage needs to be separate from food, feed, living quarters, food preparation and consumption areas. During transportation of chemicals to and within the operations do take into account health, environmental and safety precautions to reduce the risk of accidents or spills. Do you store fuel in a safe and secure way in a place constructed of suitable materials and located where risks to the environment or human health are minimised, in case of fire, spillage, flooding or other emergencies. Do not store fuel together with pesticides and fertilizers.
vii	Containers for chemicals are washed and disposed of in an environmentally appropriate way.	0		1		Good practice to clean empty crop protection product containers can be rinsing them 3 times with water. Return the rinsing from washing the empty crop protection product containers to the application equipment tank. After rinsing, perforate the containers to prevent re-use.
viii	Chemicals are disposed, recycled or destroyed in a manner that minimizes the risk of accidents and potential negative impacts on human health and on the environment.	0		1		Find out whether there are national regulations on the disposal of chemicals or what is considered as a best practice in your region.
<b>P12</b>	<b>Land rights: Biomaterial feedstock production operations shall respect land rights and land use rights.</b>					
<b>C12.a</b>	<i>Existing land rights and land use rights, both formal and informal, shall be assessed and established. The right to use land for biomaterial operations shall be established only when these rights are determined.</i>					
i	Group members can show evidence of their right to use the land included in the scope of certification.				2	Make sure you have a land use title. Where this is not available, ask the local authority or customary leader to confirm that you have the right to use your land for bioenergy feedstock production.
ii	Land under legitimate dispute cannot be included in the scope of certification until any legitimate disputes have been settled and negotiated agreements are made with affected land users. This covers formal and customary (traditional) land rights and land use rights.	0			0	How did you get access to the land you are using for certification? Are you sure that no other parties are claiming the right to use that land? Has there been any opposition against the sales of the land? To find out you can ask community leaders or local government authorities. If other individuals or groups claim the right to use the same land as you, come to a mutual agreement with them on how to settle the dispute. If possible, write down your agreement and let both disputing parties sign it. Only after this the land can be included in the scope of certification. Disputes can be settled either by following the rule of law or by voluntary negotiated agreements.
iii	Where there are land disputes between group members or group members and the local community, the group management establishes mechanisms to address and solve those disputes.		0			In the case of disputes over the land used by group members, the group manager should try to play the role as a mediator or facilitate a dialogue to solve disputes over land use rights. If possible try to find an independent person accepted by both dispute parties to act as a mediator. The RSB Guidelines for Land Rights [RSB-GUI-01-012-01 (version 2.1)] elaborate on other potential instruments to settle land disputes.
<b>C12.b</b>	<i>Land acquisition of biomaterial feedstock production shall be based on voluntary relinquishment of rights by previous land users or owners and appropriate compensation.</i>					
i	No involuntary resettlement and coercion to alter existing land rights or land use rights shall be allowed for biomaterial feedstock production, or has taken place in the last 10 years.	0			0	Consider the process on acquiring the land you attempt to use for certification. If you are established for more than 10 years and no land has been added to your farm in the last 10 years the land can be used for certification. Did previous owners of the land give up ownership voluntarily and based on a mutual agreement regarding the price and the timing? If people had to involuntarily move from the land within the last 10 years, it cannot be used for certification.
ii	Where land rights and land use rights are voluntarily relinquished, and/or acquired on a willing seller-willing buyer basis, local people shall be fairly, equitably and timely compensated. Compensation for voluntary relinquishment shall include appropriate balancing measures needed to preserve the ability of the persons concerned to sustain their livelihoods in an autonomous and dignified manner.	0			1	Special attention to the process of acquiring your land has to be given in the case that it has been acquired from poor, poorly educated or indigenous communities. Does the price paid for the land represent its real market value? There should be an agreement with the seller on the price and the timing of payments. You should pay a fair price that represents the actual value of the land and pay the seller on time, as agreed. Independent, qualified land valuation specialists or community members can help to determine the value of the land. Where no voluntary agreements between the seller on buyer of the land exist, such land cannot be included in the scope of certification.



## Table 2&3: RSB Principles and Criteria Smallholder Groups (micro and small-scale biomaterial feedstock processing & biomaterial production)

Table 2: Criterion and corresponding requirements that apply to small-scale processing facilities falling under the smallholder group certification

Principle	Criterion
P1 Legality	c.1a
P2 Planning, Monitoring and Continuous Improvement	C.2a, c.2b
P3 Greenhouse Gas Emissions	C.3a
P4 Human and Labor Rights	C.4a, C.4b, C.4c, C.4d, C.4e, C.4f, C.4g
P7 Conservation	C.7a
P9 Water	C.9a, C.9b, C.9c
P10 Air	C.10a
P11 Use of Technology, Inputs, and Management of Waste	C.11a, C.11b
P12 Land rights	C.12a, C.12b

Table 3: Additional criterion and requirements that small-scale processing facilities need to comply with

Principle	Criterion	Requirement	Year of compliance
P10 Air	<i>Air pollution emission sources from biofuel operations shall be identified, and air pollutant emissions minimized through an air management plan.</i>	An emission control plan appropriate to the scale and intensity of operations shall be developed. It identifies major air pollutants recognized as potentially harmful for the environment or human health. The plan shall describe any air pollution mitigation strategies that are employed, or else the rationale for not utilizing such strategies.	1
		Whenever possible in the local context, Best Available Technology (BAT) shall be implemented to reduce air pollution, appropriate to the scale and intensity of operation.	2
P11 Use of Technology, Inputs, and Management of Waste	<i>Residues, wastes and byproducts from feedstock processing and biofuel production units shall be managed such that soil, water and air physical, chemical, and biological conditions are not damaged.</i>	Wastes and byproducts are handled and/or disposed of in appropriate containers and to prevent any environmental contamination and damage to human health.	1
		These products shall not be in direct contact with soils, water sources and air outside the processing and production units unless their innocuousness to the environment and people is officially stated by manufacturers or the country or regional (e.g. EU, ASEAN, ALENA) guidelines. In all other cases, handling and disposal must follow the manufacturer's recommendation and the country or regional (e.g. EU, ASEAN, ALENA) guidelines.	1
		If burning is allowed for and required, there shall be necessary infrastructures for safe burning of waste and by-products.	1
		Measures shall be taken to implement clean and efficient processes for conversion of residues, wastes or by-products into energy appropriate to the scale and intensity of operation.	2
		<i>Micro-organisms used in biomaterial operations which may represent a risk to the environment or people shall be adequately contained to prevent release into the environment.</i>	In no case shall genetically modified micro-organisms or any micro-organisms that pose a risk (pathogenic, mutagenic, contaminant, etc.) to human health or the environment be released outside the production unit. Any such organism used shall be destroyed or adequately neutralised (i.e. loss of any potentially hazardous character) before being disposed of.