



ÉCOLE POLYTECHNIQUE
FÉDÉRALE DE LAUSANNE

CEN - ENERGY CENTER

ROUNDTABLE ON SUSTAINABLE BIOFUELS

RSB Bulletin - December 2010

Dear RSB members:

Welcome to the latest RSB Bulletin. We hope you are doing well during this busy end-of-the-year season – but we encourage you to take a moment to read on and keep informed about the latest activities of the RSB Steering Board, Chambers and Secretariat. We are especially pleased to announce the recent approval of a project for practical work on land rights, food security and social upliftment. Another important development is that the discussions on a “two-tiered certification system” are moving into the next round of discussions in the Steering Board.

As always, thanks again for your interest and support of the RSB.

Warm regards,

Alwin

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Two-Tiered Certification System

We are pleased to have received an overall positive response from the Chambers regarding the development of a two-tiered certification system. The main unresolved issue remaining is the appropriate mechanism for transitioning operators from Tier One to Tier Two. A majority of the Chambers felt very strongly that the integrity of the RSB Standard as a whole is at stake if operators are not required to improve while one Chamber was of the view that contractually requiring operators to move to the upper level of sustainability would discourage them to apply for Tier One.

The Steering Board will hold a second conference call meeting to address the two-tiered system on December 23rd. At this meeting we expect that the two-tiered system will only attain broader support and consensus if more information is provided on a mechanism for movement between the tiers. The Secretariat will be preparing a recommendations paper laying out options for the mechanism for transitioning from Tier One to Tier Two. If the Steering Board cannot come to an agreement on this major issue at the coming meeting, the two-tiered system will likely be discussed at a third consecutive meeting of the Board early January. At that meeting, a vote on the introduction of a two-tiered system can be taken.

GMO Expert Group

The Steering Board has approved the Terms of Reference for a GMO Expert Group, which will evaluate and assess what (if any) additional GMO-related liabilities could be created by RSB certification for participating operators. The Expert Group will recommend enhancements to RSB guidelines for risk mitigation regarding GMOs, in order to minimize potential liabilities. We would like to invite all experts with legal qualifications in biotechnologies regulation and related legal areas to join! Please send your information requests and applications to Sebastien Haye at [sebastien.haye\[at\]epfl.ch](mailto:sebastien.haye@epfl.ch).

SDC Project

We are excited to announce that the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation ([SDC](#)) has just approved a project with the RSB to advance work on land rights, food security and other social issues as they relate to biofuel sustainability certification. The funding includes support for up to six pilot projects over a two year period. The information from these pilots and other project activities will be valuable for further development of practical tools and guidelines and will allow us to ensure these important concerns are addressed within the RSB Standard and certification system.

Screening Tool

The RSB Secretariat has been working on further developing a "Screening Guideline" to guide the operators throughout the screening exercise required as the first step of the impact assessment process (See Principle 2 in the RSB Standard). The screening of potential social and environmental impacts of operations is a key step, which is required for all operators. It determines whether some impact exists and if that is the case, whether

they would require further investigation, such as a full ESIA or a specialized impact assessment. RSB Chambers will be given an opportunity to consult on this new tool within the next couple of weeks, in parallel to a public consultation; we plan to finalize this Screening Tool by mid-February 2011.

EU Recognition

The RSB application process for recognition under the EU RED is moving forward! Following the recommendations of the European Commission, we have developed a consolidated RSB Standard for compliance with EU RED. The changes needed to comply with the EU are highlighted in the [EU RED Market Access Standard document](#). After receiving a first response from the European Commission (EC) in the end of September, we submitted the next version of the RSB-EU RED Standard recently. A provisional decision from the European Commission is expected in January.

Forum on Food Security and Nutrition of the FAO

The [Forum on Food Security and Nutrition \(FSN\)](#) will be hosting an online discussion on food security, as addressed in the RSB Standard, and covering direct and indirect impacts on food security. The discussion will be moderated by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) as part of the Bioenergy and Food Security Criteria and Indicators ([BEFSCI](#)) project from January 3rd through 31st. This will be a great opportunity for the RSB to gain valuable feedback on this important issue.

A note on the process for RSB members when they wish to change the person officially representing them at Chamber meetings

From time to time, RSB members wish to change the person representing them in the RSB Chambers. Whatever the reason for such a change, please make sure that the current representative as announced in the application letter, or the person having signed the application form informs the RSB Secretariat about the change in representation by providing the contact details of the new representative. This procedure will ensure a smooth transition in representation the continued exchange of information with the member concerned.

Best Wishes for the Coming Year

2011 promises to be an exciting year, as the RSB moves toward concrete implementation of a sustainability certification system. We wish you a Happy New Year and look forward to your continued interest and support in 2011!