



ÉCOLE POLYTECHNIQUE
FÉDÉRALE DE LAUSANNE

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ROUNDTABLE ON SUSTAINABLE BIOFUELS

RSB Bulletin June 2010

Dear RSB members:

Welcome to the second edition of the RSB Bulletin, sent to members of the Roundtable on Sustainable Biofuels. To enhance accessibility of information about the latest developments within the RSB, we also decided to make the Bulletin available on the RSB website in the Further Readings section.

We hope that you find these bulletins to be a useful tool in keeping you updated. Please, let us know if you have any suggestions on how these news briefings can be most useful to you.

Warm regards,

Alwin

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Steering Board Meeting

The upcoming Steering Board meeting will be held in a workshop style this week, Tuesday (June 15) afternoon through Thursday (June 17) afternoon. We will be welcoming a new Board member as the Vice-Chair for Chamber 2. The Steering Board's Chair and one Vice-Chair position is up for reelection. The following is a brief description of the agenda.

Tuesday:

- Discussion of the revision to the Terms of Reference
- We will discuss the annual report of the Secretariat and look at the broader question

of the vision of the RSB going forward

Wednesday:

- Discussion of a way forward for a GHG threshold
- Demonstration of RSB tool
- Discussion of Indirect Impacts
- Slide shows of pilot projects along with a presentation on Mozambique by Annie Sugrue, followed by a discussion of activities the Secretariat undertook during the first period of the pilot phase

Thursday:

- Finances and organizational development
- Continue the discussion of the vision for the RSB

Pilots

Pilot project continue to move forward in several locations. We are also making progress with funding in Latin America; the financial contributor is scheduled to sign the contract with the certification company this week.

We are beginning to get feedback from the pilot projects on use of the standards. The overall feedback is positive about the applicability of the RSB Standard on the field. The pilots conducted so far also point to areas which need improvement.

A majority of the comments related to better explanation, specifically in the areas of the social and environmental planning requirements, stakeholder engagement, the business plan and the water management plan. In all these areas both operators and auditors felt that adding or expanding indicators would be a useful tool, in helping them to understand if they are performing the task as envisioned. While operators like the risk management approach, some operators also felt that some of the risk factors included should be improved.

Auditors felt that there is a need to distinguish between the minor and major non compliances. It was also pointed out that some of the criteria and indicators are duplicated in the standard.

Summary of ongoing or potential pilot projects

Mozambique – We are currently working with a sugar ethanol pilot project and a sugar and sweet sorghum pilot project in Mozambique. They have just been pilot audited. The owners of both projects felt they already meet most of the standards so they did not present them with significantly more work, although the risk self assessment was not clear. Some discussion about how to reward operators that already go beyond the standards.

Latin America – Two projects (Guatemala, Brazil) have already completed their risk self assessment and initial feedback has been provided. These projects are now waiting for their pilot audits and are beginning to work through the self-evaluation against the Principles & Criteria. A third project (Peru) has just signed the confidentiality agreement and work on

the pilot project will begin soon. A new project will be starting in Colombia shortly (see below "Trip to Colombia").

Australia – RSB is currently finalizing the terms of reference for funding on this project, and plan to have the pilot ready to move forward by the end of June.

Trip to Colombia

EMPA was awarded a bid by the Inter-American Development Bank to conduct a lifecycle analysis of the sugar ethanol and palm biodiesel sectors. They will be adapting the EMPA tool for use in Colombia. There will also be a GIS mapping exercise and they will investigate socioeconomic concerns using questions largely based on the IDB scorecard. The Secretariat follows this work closely and is involved in the outreach activities. It is investigating a potential new pilot project in Colombia.

Outcome of recent workshops and conferences

Aviation Workshop, 1 June. Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

The [Sustainable Aviation Fuel User's Group \(SAFUG\)](#) and RSB organized a session called "Global Developments in Sustainable Aviation Fuels and the RSB" in Rio de Janeiro on June 1. The meeting was attended by members of airline and carrier companies, government officials, RSB members, NGOs, biofuel producers focusing on aviation biofuels, and other stakeholders.

The meeting covered the following items:

- Update on status of the RSB and its benchmarking project (Victoria Junquera, RSB)
- Current state of biofuels technical certification (Dr. Jim Kinder, Boeing)
- Overview of Sustainable Aviation Fuel activities outside Brazil (Darrin Morgan, Boeing)
- Presentation of research on jatropha cultivation and GHG emissions (Dr. Robert Bailis, Yale University)
- Open discussion on topics of group interest

Indirect Impacts Workshop, 2 June. Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

On the 2nd of June 2010, the RSB Workshop on Biofuels and Indirect Impacts was organized in Rio de Janeiro as a side event of the [Challenge Bibendum](#), an outstanding event of Michelin to promote sustainable mobility. The Workshop was co-sponsored by Michelin, the UN Environment Programme, Petrobras and the RSB Secretariat. It gathered about 60 participants from 17 countries, including RSB members.

The Workshop successfully brought together a wide range of stakeholders and let them share their opinions about indirect impacts and how to address indirect impacts in the RSB Standard. The participants worked in break-out groups in which a list of issues related to indirect impacts of biofuels was discussed. Topics included iLUC, food security, low-risk practices and feedstocks and how to address these issues in the RSB Standard.

Main outputs:

- Besides negative there are also positive indirect impacts. The latter should be

promoted by the RSB

- Participants recognized the relevance of the work undertaken by the RSB on indirect impacts; however the integration of an iLUC factor in the LCA methodology was only supported by a few participants.
- A majority of participants thought that indirect impacts should be addressed qualitatively, for instance based on low-risk practices.
- Non-food crops are not necessarily considered an appropriate response since food crops allow some flexibility with regards to the food security in the region of operations.

Bioenergy Markets Africa, 11-12 May. Maputo

Annie Sugrue went to Maputo and gave a presentation on the RSB Standards. Operators found the presentation to be very useful and felt it gave them the opportunity to more fully understand the standards. They found the standards to be reasonable and the only major concern was about the cost of auditing.

Benchmarking

We continue to work with GTZ, ISEAL and Rainforest Alliance, in a collaborative effort on benchmarking to form a strategic alliance in the terms of the GTZ. The RSB Secretariat leads the effort to bring companies on board.

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