



ÉCOLE POLYTECHNIQUE  
FÉDÉRALE DE LAUSANNE

CEN - ENERGY CENTER

ROUNDTABLE ON SUSTAINABLE BIOFUELS

## RSB Bulletin May 2010

**Dear RSB members:**

***Welcome to this special edition of the RSB Bulletin, written to keep you all updated on the outcomes of the Steering Board meeting held last week from Tuesday June 15th through Thursday June 17th. Official meeting notes will be finalized and available early July. Below find the highlights from the Steering Board meeting as well as other important news from the Secretariat.***

***Warm regards,***

***Alwin***

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## Steering Board meeting outcomes

The RSB staff would like to thank the Steering Board facilitator Gillian Martin Mehers for her important contribution to this event, as well as Elisabeth Bato and Samira

Ben Mansour for coordinating the logistics. The valuable work of all participants in finding compromises and achieving consensus made the event a success.

### **Annual report**

The annual report was welcomed by the Steering Board and a Q&A session was conducted on its contents. The report will be publicly available by the end of June.

### **Elections**

The RSB is pleased to announce that its Steering Board decided to prolong the term of the current chair, Barbara Bramble, until the new chambers are formed, Co-Chairs elected, and the new Board takes up its function. Between now and the formation of a new Steering Board, it was decided not to replace Richard Sykes, who wished to step down from his position as one of the two RSB Vice Chairs. The RSB Secretariat thanked Richard for his leadership and crucial contribution as a Vice Chair. The second Vice Chair, Mr. Khoo Hock Aun, will continue to hold his office until the new Board is constituted in September 2010.

### **Vision**

The Steering Board spoke extensively about the future of the RSB standards and the approach we would like to take moving forward. The Steering Board reconfirmed the commitment to a "holistic" approach, meaning that all the Principles and their criteria are important, not just Principle 3 on Greenhouse Gases (GHG). In addition, the Board reaffirmed that the RSB should be "inclusive", meaning that no specific feedstock or type of fuel should be automatically, or by definition, excluded from eligibility for certification. Among other benefits, the forthcoming benchmarking process, involving the feedstock-specific standards, would allow an assessment of how certificates delivered by other standard organizations might be integrated in the chain of custody required to make a final RSB claim.

### **RSB GHG Emission Calculation Methodology**

The Steering Board approved the proposed RSB GHG calculation methodology (Criterion 3b), based on input from the GHG Expert Group and debate among the Board members. The potential for eventually using a "System expansion" approach to LCA calculation, and how to deal with iLUC, are methodological questions that need to be further discussed. At this time the GHG methodology does not include an iLUC factor.

### **GHG Emission Reduction Threshold**

The Steering Board came to a consensus on the GHG threshold for biofuels eligible for RSB certification, as described under Criterion 3c. Biofuel blends must be on average 50% better than the fossil fuel baseline. Before blending, each biofuel must have at least a better GHG balance than the fossil fuel baseline. In practice, a biofuel blender (or retailer) would be allowed to mix RSB compliant biofuels with various GHG performances, so that the overall mix reaches a 50% GHG savings on average,

compared to fossil fuels. Along with this consensus, the Board agreed on an 18 months work plan, including research and other action items related to Principle 3. In particular it is essential to ensure that the rules pertaining to off-product claims are appropriate to, and consistent with, this consensus approach.

The Board consensus on GHG methodology and emission reduction threshold will be open to consultation among RSB members during the upcoming chamber calls in early July.

### **Indirect Impacts**

The RSB's future consideration of Indirect Impacts was discussed at length. The report from the [Brazil workshop on indirect impacts](#) (2 June in Rio de Janeiro; follow the link to download) was very helpful in identifying some of the discussion points. The Board identified several elements that need to be addressed by November of this year, and June next year, respectively. Based on these discussions, the Secretariat will develop and publish a "*Way Forward on Indirect Impacts*" document.

### **Pilots to Field Test the Principles and Criteria**

Annie Sugrue gave an excellent presentation on pilots from Mozambique, complemented by a few pictures from Matt Rudolf on pilot projects in South America. The pilots have so far been very informative. Outputs from pilot testing of the standards will need to be thoroughly reviewed by the Secretariat, the Chambers and the Steering Board, with a view to revising the RSB Standards accordingly. A small Board Committee will be formed to help the Secretariat prepare the revision of the Principles and Criteria during the Fall of this year. The proposals will be presented to the Chambers for consultation, and a round of public consultation, before the Board finalizes Version 2.0.

### **Organizational Development**

Vice Chair Khoo Hock Aun presented the outcome of a workshop to begin consideration of a long-term strategy for the RSB, held in Amsterdam in March of this year. The RSB Secretariat shared its thinking on organizational development of the RSB, including how to fulfill the different roles that a certification organization entails. Both included a proposal to create, over the next year, two new entities out of the existing RSB: a) "RSB Standards" would continue to be the standard development organization that RSB is now; and b) "RSB Services" would be the standard operation/implementing entity. The Secretariat is working on a draft business plan that outlines the organizational and financial development options for the coming years.

### **Other News**

### **Benchmarking**

The Benchmarking Project was presented to the Steering Board. This project is jointly developed with GTZ, ISEAL, Leading Standards and the Rainforest Alliance. The RSB Secretariat participated this week in a workshop organized by ISEAL to discuss the project with other standards organizations.

### **Revised Terms of Reference**

The revised RSB Terms of Reference will enter into force on July 1, 2010. The new Chamber structure necessitates elections of Chamber Co-Chairs and Alternates. The Secretariat will facilitate the nomination process for the Chambers, and organize the elections for the leadership teams in the Chambers over the next month. The new Steering Board is planned to hold its constituting telephone conference call meeting on September 16, 2010.

### **Next Chamber Calls (GHG Methodology and Threshold)**

- Chamber 1: July 6 – 11.00 UTC
- Chamber 2: July 2 – 15.00 UTC
- Chamber 3 (Former Chambers 3 & 4): July 1 – 15.00 UTC
- Chamber 4 (Former Chambers 5 & 9): July 6 – 12.00 UTC
- Chamber 5 (Former Chambers 6 & 10): July 2 – 13.00 UTC
- Chamber 6 (Former Chambers 7 & 8): July 12 – 13.00 UTC
- Chamber 7 (Former Chamber 11): July 1 – 17.00 UTC (Americas) and July 9 – 9.00 (Asia-Africa-Europe)

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