



RSB Bulletin (December 2012)

Dear RSB Members,

This issue of the RSB Bulletin is special in many ways. Not only this is the last RSB Bulletin of 2012, but it is also the last issue produced from our premises at the Ecole Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne (EPFL). As a result of the transition process initiated about a year ago, the Roundtable on Sustainable Biofuels will start flying with its own wings as of January 1, 2013. This is the end of an important chapter in the history of the RSB, which was initiated in 2007 by EPFL and hosted in its premises. The in-kind contribution of EPFL (offices, IT support, steering board meetings, human resources, etc.) to the effective functioning of the RSB over this period has been invaluable and the RSB constituencies are very grateful for the support received.

Following the legal establishment of the RSB under Swiss Law, a new Board of Directors and Assembly of Delegates will soon be elected.

The transition of the RSB out of EPFL will neither affect our mission and vision, nor its general governance and decision-making process, which will remain as inclusive, participatory and transparent as always. You will keep receiving regular news through our bulletin and newsletter, while www.rsb.org remains our website where you can find our standards, guidelines and other online resources. The generic email address of the RSB is now info@rsb.org. We will soon communicate the rest of our new contact information, including email addresses and phone numbers.

The most noticeable change regards the staff. Mr. Rolf Hogan will take up the position of Executive Secretary in January and I will gladly support him as Standards Director. The rest of our current collaborators will pursue research activities on bioenergy at EPFL and I take this opportunity to share my sincere appreciation for their strong commitment to the RSB mission and vision. They have been an incredible source of inspiration and enrichment over these past years and I wish them all the best for the continuation of their career.

Besides the transition of the RSB, this issue will also take you through the latest discussions and decisions of the RSB Steering Board on December 13 ([summary report](#)), recent news from RSB Services, including a profile of the two new certified companies and an update on ongoing projects like benchmarking, Global Bio-pact, ITAKA and more.

Thanks for your support and contribution to the RSB over this past year. We would not be where we are today without you and I look forward to our continued collaboration next year!

I wish you all a happy holiday season!

Sébastien Haye, Executive Secretary (Acting)

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News on the Transition to a new Entity

By Barbara Bramble, Chair of the RSB

On January 1, the new RSB will finally make the formal shift from being an initiative of the Energy Center of the EPFL, to being an autonomous non-profit based in Switzerland.

Earlier this year the RSB Steering Board (SB) authorized the formation of a temporary Transition Management Association (TMA) to manage the process, composed of SB members Barbara Bramble (National Wildlife Federation), Khoo Hock Aun (Cosmo Biofuels), and Maarten van Dijk (SkyNRG), with Alwin Kopse acting as the Transition Director and Secretary of the TMA. This group established itself legally, and then set about implementing all required work.

The steps included drafting Articles of Association during the summer, shepherding them through member consultations and approval by the SB in September, legally constituting the RSB Association in October and formally transferring the RSB membership to the new organization in November. The TMA implemented a formal staff recruiting process in September, and was gratified to receive many excellent applicants to lead the new organization. Interviews of the top candidates were held during October, and Rolf Hogan was selected as the new Executive Secretary.



With an academic background in both natural and social sciences Rolf has been working at the international level for more than 15 years in policy, project management, fundraising and communications. He held various positions with the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) including the coordination of technical and policy work on the UNESCO World Heritage Convention from 1995 to 2002. From 2002 he worked as a consultant and freelance writer based in Switzerland and began leading international biodiversity policy for WWF International. From 2007 to 2012 Rolf led the Protected Areas for a Living Planet (PA4LP) an ambitious programme to enhance protected areas systems across 25 countries in five ecoregions. The programme successfully used multi-stakeholder

platforms to leverage funding and political support to deliver practical results on the ground. Rolf will formally start on January 1, though he has already joined in key decisions. The TMA also selected Sébastien Haye as our new Director of Standards; and Alwin Kopse as Senior Advisor.

The process of fundraising also began several months ago, with proposals submitted to both foundations and government agencies. So far, the Packard Foundation, and Boeing's Global Corporate Citizenship fund have approved significant grants (thank you for your support!) and others are in the pipeline.

Elections for new chamber leaders are underway, and the new Assembly of Delegates and Board of Directors will take over from the old Steering Board and the temporary TMA in January.

More recently, the TMA finalized many of the transition details, such as an agreement with EPFL for the formal transfer of the RSB trade mark and logo; and made "back end" decisions, like arranging for the creation of a new RSB web site, at our same web address: www.rsb.org, finding office space (the new RSB will be located in Geneva), and setting up the arrangements for electronic communications and offices services, etc. The transition process is expected to take place, as planned, on January 1, 2013.

News from the RSB Steering Board

This section describes the latest decisions of the RSB Steering Board, which held a teleconference on December 13, 2012. The summary report of the teleconference is available on [our website](#).

New Policy on By-Products and Residues

The RSB Steering Board approved the new RSB policy for certification of biofuels based on by-products and residues. The Secretariat had developed the policy based on thorough investigations and in consultation with RSB Services, private companies, several experts and a dedicated working group that included RSB Members. At the end of November, the draft was submitted for consultation to the RSB chambers, which introduced several changes to the policy. The approved policy offers a flexible approach to operators using residues and by-products for biofuel production. In most cases, e.g. for residues derived from the processing of forestry products, such as tall oil pitch, a by-product from pulp and paper production or industrial processes, such as recovered fats, no upstream certification will be needed. Only operators processing the residue for the specific purpose of producing biofuel will be audited. For animal fats, the RSB will require additional guarantees regarding the origin of these by-products through sustainability and traceability requirements. Further discussion will be held on how to deal with forestry harvesting residues. The RSB policy for by-products and residues can be found on the [RSB website](#).

Revised Screening Tool

The RSB Screening Tool, an essential step in the impact assessment process required in Principle 2 (RSB Principles & Criteria. RSB-STD-01-001) has been under revision for more than a year, in consultation with RSB Members, RSB Services, and outside experts. The current version of the RSB Screening Tool was temporarily approved as of March 2012, but required additional work and improvements in terms of practicality and user-friendliness. Specifically, the following sections of the Screening Tool were improved:

- Sections related to social impacts related to biofuel production (RSB Principles 2, 5, 12);
- Section related to impacts on biodiversity and other conservation aspects (RSB Principle 7).

Social Impacts

The sections related to social impacts of biofuels were revised on the basis of recommendations made by a team of experts as part of a larger project aiming at the revision of several RSB Guidelines used for compliance with social requirements. These

sections require operators to evaluate the potential impacts of their operations on local communities and, if relevant, specific measures to improve livelihood, food security and protect local tenure rights. Most of the recommendations from the experts were approved but some still need to be discussed and incorporated, in particular on food security.

Conservation

Section 4 of the Screening Tool requires the operator to evaluate potential impacts on biodiversity and conservation values, as defined in RSB Principle 7. Similarly to social impacts, conservation is a complex topic, which requires a good deal of expertise. A Working Group was set up to specifically discuss how to further improve the process through which biofuel operations may trigger a full conservation impact assessment. Since the balance between technical accuracy and cost-effectiveness is critical, the working group comprised conservation experts, biomass/biofuel producers and representatives from environmental NGOs, mostly from within the RSB membership. RSB Services was also included in the discussion.

A new draft screening tool was developed, based on the recommendations of the working group, and discussed in chamber calls in November. Based on recommendations of the RSB Chambers, the RSB Steering Board approved a new version of the RSB Screening Tool, which will be immediately implemented.

Benchmarking – FSC, IFC, Canada

Recognition of FSC-certified operators

RSB conducted a comparative analysis of the RSB and FSC standards in order to identify existing areas of overlaps in the current versions used for certification by the two organisations (RSB Principles & Criteria Version 2 and FSC Principles & Criteria Version 4). Scientific Certification Systems undertook the initial analysis, which was then further improved by the RSB Secretariat, in consultation with FSC staff. As the Version 5 of the FSC Standard will enter into force shortly, the RSB and FSC Secretariat extended the analysis to the upcoming version of the FSC Standard. The gap analysis revealed a significant overlap between RSB and FSC Principles & Criteria, with the exception of greenhouse gas calculation and food security, which is not relevant in the context of natural forestry. On December 13, the RSB Steering Board approved the development of a simplified audit process whereby FSC-certified operators will receive RSB certification by demonstrating compliance with the RSB requirements which are not covered in FSC Principles & Criteria. The full results of the gap analysis are available upon request.

Evaluation of IFC Performance Standards

The RSB Secretariat has commissioned ProForest to conduct a comparative analysis of the RSB Standard and the IFC Sustainability Framework. The IFC Performance Standards (PS) are used to evaluate the sustainability level of projects applying for IFC funding. Many of the evaluation criteria are in line with RSB requirements. Hence, this exercise is the first step of a process through which RSB certified members could more easily demonstrate compliance with IFC PS. This will also facilitate the access of IFC supported projects to RSB certification.

Benchmark of Canadian laws

The first phase of the regulatory benchmark of Canadian laws relevant to the biofuel production chain was completed with a diagnosis of relevant local regulations, which could be used by auditors as proof of compliance with RSB requirements during the audit process. The second step of this process will consist in the development of checklists for auditors and operators located in Canada. The outcomes of these benchmarking exercises will be further improved and implemented in 2013.

Indirect Impacts

After several years of work, in 2012 the RSB Secretariat organized a broad consultation, within and outside its membership, to assess whether and how to address indirect impacts in the RSB Standard. The proposal from the Secretariat, and the option most respondents and members supported, is to add an optional additional certification module for operators willing to claim "low indirect impacts" practices (LIIB). Version Zero of the [LIIB methodology](#) was published in July 2012. It would need to be adapted for use in the RSB Standard and its adaptation would take at least 6 months.

However, no consensus could be reached on the proposed way forward because of the opposition of several RSB Members to this option. This is due to a perceived lack of scientific evidence of the indirect impacts of biofuels.

Meanwhile, the European Commission recently proposed a modification to the EU RED in order to address ILUC. This proposal must now go through the ordinary legislative procedure, which includes the consultation of and approval by the European Parliament and European Council. This process could take from several months to two years.

The most recent elements of understanding will be reviewed by RSB Members. In case no consensus is found, the way forward on indirect impacts will be submitted to a vote.

ISEAL Membership Committee

We are pleased to announce that the ISEAL Board approved the appointment of Khoo Hock Aun (RSB Vice-Chair and Co-Chair of Chamber 1) to the ISEAL Membership Committee. The Membership Committee consists of representatives from ISEAL's full member organizations with a member of the ISEAL Board acting as chairperson and was established in 2010 to incorporate the views of ISEAL's members into decisions that affect ISEAL's membership. This includes making recommendations to the Board of Directors about any new applications for associate membership. More details are available on the [ISEAL website](#).

News from RSB Services

New Certifications

We are pleased to announce that two new biofuel operators received RSB sustainability certification:

- The Global Clean Energy Holdings (GCEH) is the first biofuels feedstock producer to receive an RSB certificate in North America. The RSB certification encompasses three of GCEH's jatropha farms in the Yucatan Peninsula of Mexico, all of which are owned and operated by GCEH. Currently the largest actively cultivated jatropha project in the Americas, GCEH's completion of RSB certification offers tangible evidence that sustainable biofuel feedstocks can be produced at a large scale while adhering to ambitious social and environmental standards. The summary report of the audit is available [here](#).
- As announced in the last issue of the RSB Bulletin, two of the subsidiaries of Maple Energy PLC have been certified. The RSB certification applies to Maple Etanol S.R.L. and Maple Biocombustibles S.R.L. fields and facility in Piura, Peru. Maple Energy is producing ethanol from sugarcane in Piura. Maple Energy's completion of RSB certification offers tangible evidence that sustainable biofuels are efficiently and economically produced at a large scale while adhering to ambitious social and environmental standards. The public audit summary is also available to download [here](#).

New Team Member

A new team member joined RSB Services in the last few weeks. Dr. Aurea Nardelli, Regional Director in South America, has 20 years of experience related to sustainability, environment and climate change. She has a strong knowledge and work experience related to sustainability standards and certification systems in the context of forestry and agriculture value chains in Brazil and other South American countries. In her past roles as a forestry engineer, independent lead auditor for SGS, consultant at ProForest and other organizations, and graduate professor, she had the opportunity to lead diverse teams and to have dialogue with diverse stakeholders. In her new role with RSB Services, Dr. Nardelli will help expand RSB's outreach in Brazil and other South American countries.

Outreach

The RSB Services team attended several events since October, including the F.O. Licht's Ethanol Latin America 2012 in Peru and the Biofuels International 2012 Conference & Expo in Belgium.

Projects

Launch of ITAKA

A consortium of leading aerospace and fuel companies has launched ITAKA, an initiative to produce sustainable biofuels for use in aviation. The project will contribute to the EU Advanced Biofuels Flight Path programme, which aims to speed up the commercialisation of aviation biofuels in Europe.

Funded by the EU FP7 Programme, ITAKA is a collaborative project, involving EPFL, as well as Camelina Company España; Neste Oil, SkyNRG; Airbus, EADS IW UK, SENASA (Spanish aviation research company and project coordinator) and other partners.

ITAKA focuses on European camelina oil and used cooking oil in order to achieve a minimum of 60% on greenhouse gas emission saving compared to the fossil jetA1. The project aims to certify the entire chain of production according to the RSB EU RED Standard.

SDC II phase

After its launch in September, the project is now moving into forward with the implementation of both its streams of activities. Firstly, EPFL has retained AidEnvironment, a consultancy focusing on sustainable value chains, climate change and ecosystems, and sustainability analysis and tools, to support the EPFL team in adapting the RSB system to smallholders and develop general recommendations to increase access to certification by small farmers. Secondly, EPFL has launched a request for proposals to implement a roadmap process in Burkina Faso and Cameroun, while it will shortly launch a similar process in Thailand.

Global Biopact

The RSB is a partner of the Global Bio-Pact project, which is funded by the EU's 7th Framework Program (FP7). The project will be coming to an end on January 31, 2013 and the RSB Secretariat is currently working on the finalization of four deliverables related to the public perception of biofuels and its inclusion in relevant policies, the development of socio-economic impact indicators and their implementation in Monitoring & Evaluation Systems as well as the development of general recommendations on the integration of the socio-economic dimension in EU policies.

In September 2012, the Secretariat took part in an internal project meeting and study tour in Argentina and presented the RSB at an international conference on "Social and environmental impacts of biofuel production in Argentina" organized by INTA ("Instituto

Nacional de Tecnología Agropecuaria"). The final Global Bio-Pact meeting and conference will be held in Brussels on January 28-30, 2013. Please see the [Global Bio-Pact's website](#) for more information.

Forthcoming events

The RSB staff will be attending the following conference:

- [Register of Biofuels Origination Kick-off Meeting](#): Brussels (Belgium), January 16, 2013
- [IDGA Tactical Power Sources Summit](#): Alexandria, VA (USA), January 28-30, 2013
- [3rd Annual Municipal Solid Waste to Biofuels & Bio-Products Summit](#): Orlando, Florida (USA), February 20-21, 2013
- [World Biofuels Markets](#): Rotterdam (Netherlands), March 12-14, 2013

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