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RSB Bulletin June 2011

Dear RSB Members and friends:

It is our pleasure to present to you the latest RSB Bulletin, which provides details on the recent decisions taken by the RSB Steering Board and the work of the Secretariat. As you will be able to note, a lot of progress has been made since the last issue of the Bulletin. We are getting closer to the point where we will be able to celebrate the first certifications under the RSB Standards.

We appreciate your continued interest and involvement in the activities of the Roundtable on Sustainable Biofuels, and wish you the best with your activities as we work together to realize the promise of sustainable biofuels on a global scale.

Very best regards,

Alwin

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Steering Board Meeting – Outcomes

An in-person meeting of the RSB Steering Board was held on June 15-17, 2011 that resulted in important decisions. Key results of the meeting are the following:

- The Board was provided with a presentation on the Annual Report for 2010, which was well received; the Board was also updated on progress related to the establishment and operationalization of the **RSB Services** organization. The written version of the Annual Report will be made available on www.rsb.org soon.
- The Board approved the revised **Terms of Reference**: the key changes relate to defining the claims a RSB Member can make in relation to the RSB, updating the definition of subsidiary companies (as well as the stipulation that subsidiaries within a single holding company are to be represented within the same Chamber), and clarifying how the locations of corporate headquarters are to be determined; the role of alternates on the Board was also made more clear.
- The Board was presented with the outcomes of the **GMO expert group**. The proposed change of language in Principle 11 will be included in the revision process for a future Version 3 of the RSB Principles & Criteria.
- The Board approved the approach proposed by the Secretariat for treatment of “end-of-life products” and specifically for **municipal solid waste** and **used cooking oil**. The Board confirmed that the RSB Standard will apply to such products, and that the chain of custody will begin at the collection point. The RSB Secretariat is now mandated by the Board to further refine the definition of “collection point”. In addition, the Board decided that further research is necessary to decide how the RSB will address co-products, by-products and residues.
- The Board took note of the status report on **Indirect Impacts** and confirmed that the Secretariat should continue to work on several options for related work as had been proposed, in particular its work in conjunction with WWF International, Ecofys and other project partners on the development of a certification module for low indirect impacts biofuels (CIIB), further work indirect impacts mitigation practices, and additional research on simplified ILUC factor calculation methods. It was also decided that the Secretariat should publish a fact sheet on indirect impacts, which we look forward to issuing soon.
- The Board approved the proposed transition to a **two-tiered standards system**. It adopted standard with lower sustainability requirements (known as “Tier One”) compared to the RSB Principles & Criteria. The purpose of this new standard will be to enable operators that want to achieve the RSB Principles & Criteria to enter the RSB standard system in meeting this new level of sustainability requirements. Operators who chose to make this first step instead of complying directly with the RSB Principles & Criteria will have three years to transition to the latter standard. The adoption of the “Tier One” necessitates the refinement of the claims policy and revision of documents related to tools and guidelines. Our expectation is that the two-tiered system will be up and running in the first half of 2012; thereafter, formal approval for the new Tier One system will be sought from the European Commission and other relevant bodies. Under the two-tiered system, Tier One companies will need to transition to the higher tier within three years (although extensions may be allowed in cases of force majeure). The Board will have the opportunity to revise the appropriate length of this transition period in two years time.

***Please keep in mind that until the formal launch of the two-tiered system, there is only one RSB standard, embodied in the currently approved Version 2.0 of the RSB Principles & Criteria. We will announce when the two-tiered system is formally established and when the lower tier will be open for business; once the two-tiered system is fully operational,*

*RSB members will then have the ability to choose which tier to implement at the outset, though the higher tier will still be required within 3 years.***

Asia-Pacific RSB Members' Caucus

On July 1, an Asia-Pacific RSB Members' Caucus will be held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. This will be a valuable occasion for producers and other stakeholders in that region to share information and perspectives in this dynamic region which holds so much potential for sustainable biofuels. We look forward to sharing details of this meeting, and to convening similar get-togethers in other key regions in the future.

The Caucus will be held in conjunction with a RSB Services roll-out programme which consists of presentations on the RSB and its Certification System. Presentations will also be made by the representatives of the respective Chambers and Stakeholders in the Biofuels Industry. It is also an opportunity to engage spiritedly with the representatives from the regional oil palm industry and learn from them firsthand about their perspectives on the EU Renewal Energy Directive and to explain how the RSB Certification system could play a role in facilitating market access.

ISEAL Membership

We are delighted to announce that the RSB recently became a full member of the ISEAL Alliance. As the ISEAL Alliance website states, "ISEAL members are leaders in their fields, committed to creating solid and credible standard systems that give business, governments and consumers the ability to choose goods and services that have been ethically sourced but most of all help the environment and guarantee producers a decent living." We are pleased to be recognized as a member of this select group of organizations.

Successful Auditor Training Held

A successful auditor training course was held in Mexico City on June 6-10, 2011, with the participation of a diverse range of some 15 organizations (including participants from Guatemala, Mexico, Europe and the USA). We were pleased to see that many different organizations, both those that are long-time auditors and those who are just starting out, are interested in becoming RSB registered auditors. Already, there are some 24 trained auditors, based in a variety of different regions (concentrated mainly in Europe, the USA and Latin America). Those trainees who successfully completed their examinations will be issued certificates and will be listed in the registry of 'RSB Registered' auditors. The auditor course training materials will be developed into an electronic (online) course format over the coming months; we will share details about this e-learning platform when it is ready for use.

Launch of the RSB Tool

Over the last 16 months, the RSB, in collaboration with the Swiss Federal Laboratories for Material Sciences & technology (EMPA) developed the RSB Tool. This is a web based software application that allows companies and interested stakeholders to acquaint themselves with the RSB certification system, calculate the GHG emission values of their biomass and biofuel products and undertake the necessary steps in preparation for the certification application. On June 14, the project partners, together with the main sponsor, the State Secretariat of Economic Affairs (SECO), officially launched this Tool. We would like to take this opportunity to thank all project partners involved: EMPA, HTW Berlin (University of Applied Sciences), Novozymes and SECO. The URL of the RSB Tool is

Social Impacts Expert Group/Progress on SDC project

The RSB staff successfully facilitated a meeting of the Social Impacts Expert Group on June 6-9, 2011, the members of whom will assist with improving the RSB guidelines and tools used to facilitate compliance with the social aspects of the standard. This work is part of a program supported by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation ([SDC](#)) to advance work in the standard on land and water rights, rural and social development, local food security and other social issues as they relate to biofuel sustainability certification.

The participants in this meeting included representatives of the Food and Agricultural Association (FAO), the Centre for International Forestry Research (CIFOR), the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), University College Cork, International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED), University of San Diego, Imperial College London, IUCN and the Forest Peoples Programme. The meeting discussed options to improve the RSB guidelines for complying with the RSB standard on social issues, the screening tool and it also looked at the approach for the development of definitions for the terms "region", "poverty", "food insecurity" and legitimate disputes. Additional issues were also considered such as introducing simple user friendly household-level questionnaires and other elements that will help operators in their quest for certification by the RSB the group develop improved guidelines. An initial draft of the revised RSB guidelines and suggestions for the above definitions will be ready at the end of September for consideration by the chambers and the board.

The process will also benefit from input coming from a number of field evaluations during which time both the existing and the revised RSB social issues guidelines and tools will be tested and checked against different situations on the ground in developing countries. The first field evaluation took place in Mali in May and further tests will take place in 2011 and early 2012.

New Secretariat Staff

Ms. Elisa Calcaterra joined the RSB Secretariat in June 2011 as a manager for the areas of transparency and social affairs. Elisa previously worked for the IUCN, where she led the program of work on local governance and biodiversity and oversaw various pilot projects in developing countries related to the 2010 biodiversity targets; she also has consulting experience related to international development projects and evaluation. Elisa holds a degree in International Relations and Diplomacy from the University of Trieste, Italy, and an M.Sc. in Development Management with a specialization in participation theory and practice from the London School of Economics.

We are also pleased to have two interns working with us for the Summer to assist our business development activities; they are Ms. Soojin Kim, from the Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies, who is working on activities related to the USA and Brazil, and Mr. Ferrante Benvenuti, from the Fletcher School of Law & Diplomacy at Tufts University, who is working on activities related to Argentina.