

A GUIDE TO RSB CERTIFICATION

The independent, global
coalition working to promote
the sustainability of biomaterials

How to get your operation certified



RSB
Roundtable on
Sustainable Biomaterials
www.rsb.org

WHY IS CERTIFICATION VALUABLE?

A growing number of markets, investors, and businesses are demanding trusted and credible solutions for the new generation of low carbon products.

RSB certification is globally recognised as best-in-class for the sustainability certification of innovative, game-changing products, materials and fuels.

RSB certification:

- Helps to identify and mitigate risks
- Unlocks new and discerning markets such as the incentivised EU market and aviation
- Increases trust & credibility among investors, shareholders and customers
- Has earned global recognition for being at the forefront of sustainable biomaterials
- Is supported by many NGOs, helping to reduce reputational risk



WHY CHOOSE THE RSB.?

Trusted Solutions for a New World.

The Roundtable on Sustainable Biomaterials (RSB) is a global, multi stakeholder independent organisation that drives the **development** of a new world bio economy through sustainability solutions, **certification, innovation advocacy and collaborative partnerships**.

The RSB offers trusted, credible tools and solutions for sustainability & biomaterials certification that mitigate business risk, fuel the bioeconomy and contribute to the UN Sustainable Development Goals in order to enable the protection of ecosystems and the promotion of food security.

RSB's certification is:

- User-friendly
- Recognised as the strongest and most trusted of its kind by WWF, IUCN and NRDC
- Comprehensive, ensuring credibility in diverse context
- Widely recognised by regulatory authorities in Europe, the US and elsewhere, allowing RSB-certified products swift approval, and preferential market access.

The RSB is growing rapidly as advanced biofuel and biomaterial technologies reach commercial scale. Now is a key time to engage with RSB, and the companies we work with. As markets grow for bio-based products, RSB certification can build trust and credibility in the sector and promote the sustainability of biomaterials.

The RSB is a full member of ISEAL, a global alliance conferring the highest credibility on sustainability standards.



WHAT CAN BE CERTIFIED?

RSB's user-friendly certification scheme is a little different from other schemes. Rather than being devised for specific commodities or markets, RSB's scheme is global and applicable to diverse and multiple feedstocks.

The RSB Standard is uniquely positioned to cover any bio-based feedstock, biomass-derived material and any advanced fuel, as well as complete supply-chains and novel technologies. Composed of a variety of different standards, the RSB Standard has been designed and continuously developed to support certification in all circumstances, anywhere in the world.

Certification is available for all elements of the bioeconomy including the following:

Biomass or Recycled Carbon	Biofuels, Advanced Fuels & Advanced Products
<i>Examples Include:</i>	<i>Examples Include:</i>
Perennial Grasses	Traditional Biofuels: Biodiesel and Ethanol
Annual Crops	Advanced Fuels
Algae	Cellulosic Ethanol
Oilseeds	Drop-In Biofuels
Short Rotation Coppice Woody Biomass	Bioplastics
Crop Residues	Biolubricants
	Renewable Base Oils
	Plant Oils and Animal Fats
	Starches and Sugars
	Feed and Nutritionals
	Energy Pellets and Chips
	Bio-Chemicals

RSB can also certify complete supply chains, as well as novel biomass and biomaterial technologies such as oil and sugar based biofuels, cellulosic ethanol and chemicals, renewable diesel and biojet, bioplastics, biolubricants, and other bio-based chemicals.

RSB-certified biomaterials are already in use in aviation, and downstream customers are increasingly likely to request certification for biofuels in the sector.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

There are three steps to certification.

Once you've successfully completed these steps, described below, you can start using your certification to promote and grow your business.



To learn more about how certification to RSB standards works you could also take a look at our online procedure at

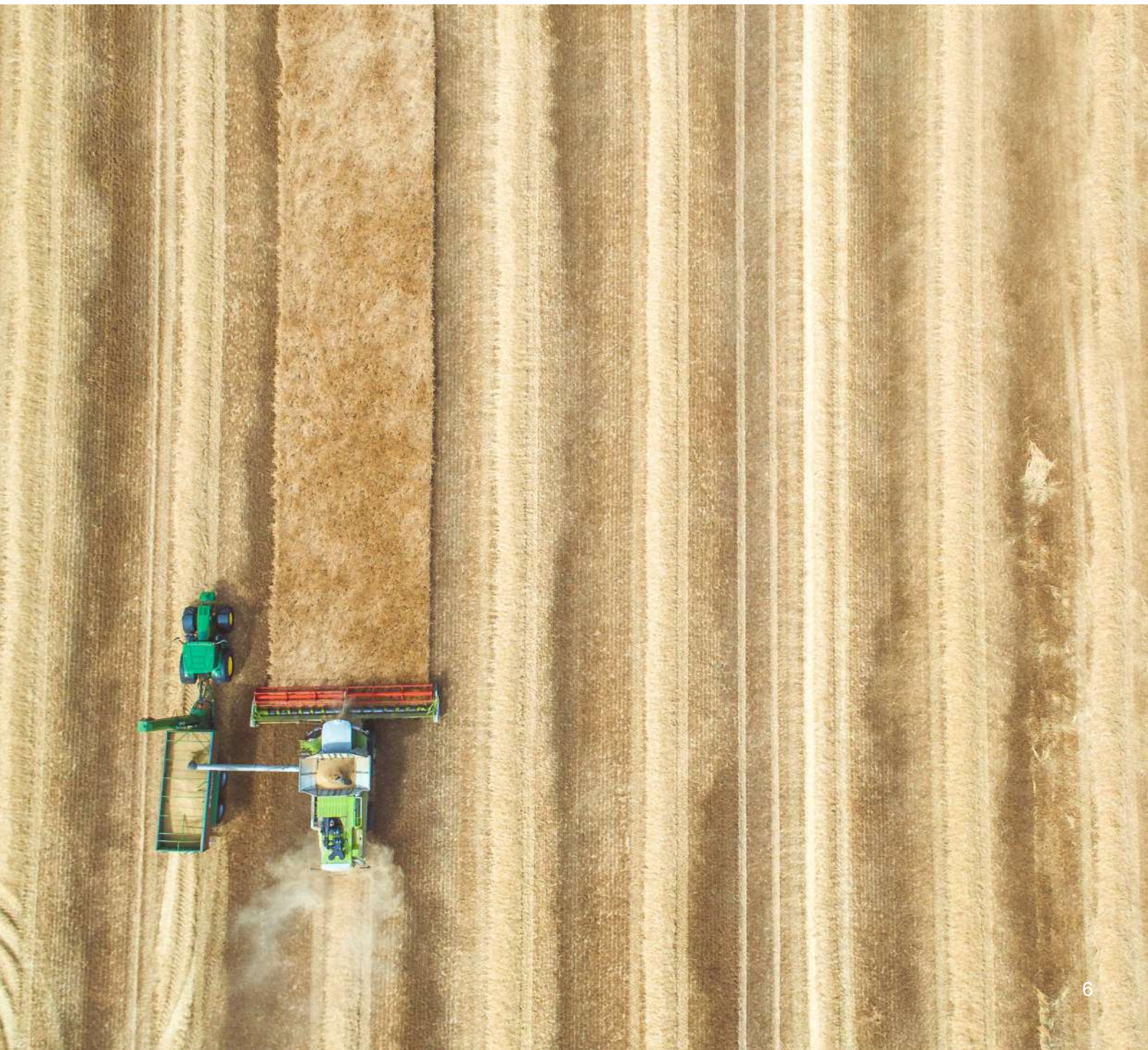
<http://rsb.org/certification/apply-for-certification/>

You don't have to complete the online procedure the first time and it's a good way to understand what it's all about.



1. APPLICATION

1. To start your RSB application, **register on the RSB website**, and accept the terms and conditions.
2. Upon receipt of the application, RSB will acknowledge and confirm receipt by email.
3. You then contact an RSB approved auditor and arrange your audit. You choose which you work with, and make arrangements with your particular auditor. Your audit must have started within six months of your application being accepted by RSB, but you are encouraged to reach out to an auditing body as early as possible. The auditor will need time to prepare for the audit and carry out a stakeholder consultation. In the meantime, you can complete your audit preparation as outlined below.
4. All applications are posted on RSB's website for 14 days for public comment.



2. PREPARING FOR YOUR AUDIT

1. Getting Ready for your RSB Audit

This document provides helpful information on how to best prepare for your audit.

2. Self-Risk Assessment

This online questionnaire gives you an initial risk class, which will determine your audit frequency.

3. Screening Exercise

This downloadable tool helps you to identify areas of elevated risk, as well as the Principles and Criteria which do not apply to your operation.

The results will inform whether any specialist impact assessments are needed, which will be helpful in the development of your ESMP (see below).

4. Greenhouse Gas Calculation – Biofuels are required to demonstrate a minimum 50% reduction on GHG from fossil fuels. This GHG value should be included in the ESMP, described below. RSB has a freely-available Excel-based calculator for all participating operators. Please email ghg@rsb.org to request a copy. Alternatively, you can use other options as described in the RSB Standard.

5. ESMP

The ESMP (Environmental and Social Management Plan) is a central document that describes how you will adhere to the environmental and social objectives of the RSB Principles & Criteria and all activities currently being undertaken to ensure such compliance. RSB can provide an outline ESMP to provide some guidance.

6. Chain of Custody Outline of Procedure

A chain of custody procedure describes how you track material through your facilities.

7. RSB Claims Outline of Procedure

When you have received your RSB certificate, you can make claims about your product being compliant, based on RSB's claims procedure. RSB can work with you to develop claims suited to your product and business need.

8. Stakeholder Lists

We offer a list of generic types of stakeholders to consult depending on your situation.

The tools described above have been created by RSB to facilitate your audit preparation and help you gather documentation and evidence needed for certification. They are meant to help you if you don't already have equivalent tools to gather documentation and evidence through your own business systems.

This includes information to demonstrate compliance that auditors typically ask for, but it is not exhaustive as the auditor may ask for additional evidence. Please consult your auditor or RSB contact person with any questions regarding these tools.

*For more details on the standards themselves refer to the **Standards Guide** and the **RSB website**.*

3. AUDIT

As soon as your certificate is issued, you can start using your certification to promote and grow your business.

Subsequent audits will need to be carried out periodically, at a frequency determined by your risk score.

If a major non-compliance is indicated, your auditor will work with you to set a schedule to resolve the issue so that your certificate can be issued. Minor non-compliances do not prevent the certificate from being issued but need to be addressed before your next audit.

Certification Process

1

Application

- Register with RSB
- Contact Auditor
- Set Audit Date
- Pay Application Fee
- Public Comment Period

2

Preparation for Audit

- Getting Ready for Your Audit document
- Self-Risk Assessment
- Screening Exercise
- ESMP
- GHG Calculation
- Chain of Custody Procedure
- RSB Claims Procedure

3

Audit

- Documents Review
- Site Visits
- Stakeholder Consultation

1

2

3

Certification

- Certificate Issued
- Make off-product and on-product certification claims

CHAIN OF CUSTODY

Certified materials are often transformed and travel great distances before reaching consumers, and that's certainly the case with biomaterials. So RSB's standards have to ensure that good practices certified at production can still be accounted for right along the supply chain from primary production through conversion, processing, and trade to end use.

- Identity Preserved ensures that there is no mixing of RSB-compliant biomaterial batches whatsoever. Biofuel tracked under this model can be traced back to its origin.
- Product Segregation ensures that RSB-compliant biofuel is not mixed with other types of compliant biofuel (it can only contain a mixture of RSB-compliant biofuel).
- Mass Balance allows for compliant and noncompliant fuel to be mixed, but to keep track of the compliant fuel, the documentation for each remains separate.
- Content Ratio Accounting is like a Mass Balance system but allowing averaging over time. Carries out any necessary specialist impacts assessment, identifies mitigation measures, and collates these into an Environmental and Social Management Plan
- Book and Claim, also called 'certificate trading', allows certified upstream operators to sell credits to downstream operators for the right to make sustainability claims. This is done by RSB's 'chain of custody' system. There are actually five different systems, but the two most important are Mass Balance and Book and Claim.

The requirements for each of these systems are set out in RSB's Chain of Custody Standard. Any RSB participating operator making RSB Sustainability Claims about their product must have their Chain of Custody systems verified by an independent audit.

For EU RED, the chain of custody has to be a Mass Balance system - but you may choose to go a step or two further and use Product Segregation or Identity Preserved.

With the Global system you can choose any of the five approaches offered by RSB, i.e. also Content Ratio Accounting or Book and Claim.



RSB GLOBAL OR EU RED?

You may need to know that many of RSB's standards - including chain of custody - exist in two parallel versions: 'global' and 'EU RED'. They are very similar - the main differences are to do with land conversion, GHG calculation and Chain of Custody - but you'll need to use the EU RED system if you're trading alternative fuels with the European Union. Any product certified under the RSB's EU RED Standard is eligible for shipment to Europe.

The global standards are somewhat more flexible and apply to any type of feedstock worldwide. RSB can help you choose which is best for you RSB also provides specific standards that may be of interest, e.g. for biomaterials, low Indirect Land Use Change, or for Smallholder Groups. A separate biomaterials standard also exists for non-energy products. The full set is on [RSB's website](#).



SMALLHOLDER CERTIFICATION

RSB has a particular provision called 'group certification' to enable small-scale farmers (smallholders) to access certification.

This works by groups of farmers joining together to generate the necessary economies of scale to comply with the standard and system requirements. An appointed 'management unit' takes responsibility for managing the certification process and putting the necessary systems in place to ensure the compliance of the individual group members.

An external certification body assesses the functioning of the group management system on a regular basis as well as the compliance of individual group members on a sample basis. The appointed management unit carries out internal inspections of certified members to monitor their compliance with the standard.

A streamlined version of RSB's Principles and Criteria is also used for smallholders.



WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU'RE CERTIFIED?

Certified operators can demonstrate their compliance with RSB's standards by using the RSB Certified logo.

Once a certificate has been issued, RSB will list you on its website, and start working with you to optimise publicity for your certification.

Options include:

- Work with RSB to produce a release announcing the certification
- Share the news with shareholders, employees, suppliers, buyers, vendors and partners.
- Include news of your RSB certification in your newsletters and social media.
- Highlight RSB certification in your annual report.
- Include the RSB Certified logo on certified shipped product.
- Add the RSB Certified logo to your website.



There are of course some requirements to meet when using RSB's trademarks (and any on-product EU RED compliance claims). These are set out in a Communications and Claims procedure, as are all RSB's standards documents.

To promote RSB's continued work on sustainability, there are also nominal licensing fees for using the RSB Certified logo and RSB trademarks. Licensing fees are based on area certified for agricultural producers and certified mass output for industrial processing facilities, considering actual production volumes each calendar quarter.

Don't forget you'll need to have subsequent audits every year or two (depending on your risk rating) to keep your certificate valid. And as part of subsequent audits, you'll be required to report on your use of claims. You might well also want to consider becoming an RSB member.

Membership has many benefits, including:

1. Ensuring your views are heard, engaging in dialogue, profiling your work and helping shape the future of sustainable biomaterials.
2. Expanding your network, meeting others committed to sustainability issues and keeping in touch with the latest developments for the industry, civil society and government. RSB members have already found common areas of interest and forged partnerships on policy, smallholders and technical issues.³⁴ Being part of a worldwide movement and demonstrating your commitment to sustainability. You can use your RSB membership to strengthen your social responsibility message to buyers, consumers, employees, and business partners.

More information on membership is on [RSB's website](https://www.rsb.org).



The Roundtable on Sustainable Biomaterials (RSB) is an independent and global multi-stakeholder coalition which works to promote the sustainability of biomaterials. RSB's user-friendly certification scheme is the strongest and most trusted of its kind. It verifies that biomaterials are ethical, sustainable and credibly-sourced. The certification is approved by RSB's members, including leading NGOs and UN agencies. RSB members work across sectors to set global best practice for sustainable biomaterial production. Choosing RSB-certified biomaterials helps build trust and credibility in the bio-based sector and supports a healthy biobased community.



www.rsb.org

For more information:

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