

THE ROUNDTABLE ON SUSTAINABLE BIOMATERIALS (RSB)

RSB Certification: Preparing for an RSB Audit

This document is a supplement to the [RSB Certification Guide](#) and provides detailed information on how an RSB operator should prepare for their third-party audit to achieve or retain RSB certification.

Information on the benefits, application process and fees is available in the [RSB Certification Guide](#).

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1. Background

As soon as you have chosen to pursue RSB certification, you can begin preparing for your audit.

Once you have identified the scope of your certification, selected the appropriate RSB certification scheme, completed your application form and paid the application fee, you can contact an RSB Certification Body and schedule your third-party audit.

An audit requires an investment in time and resources from your organisation. Use this document to guide you through the different audit requirements and help you prepare your materials effectively and efficiently.

2. Pre-audit requirements

The following table highlights which pre-audit requirements apply to each specific type of operator.

<i>Operator Type</i>	Risk Assessment (using the RSB Risk Assessment Tool)	Self-evaluation against the applicable RSB requirements	Screening Tool (based on the RSB Principles & Criteria)	GHG Calculation	ESMP (Environmental & Social Management Plan)	Chain of Custody Procedure	Claims Procedure
<i>Biomass Producers</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<i>Points of origin (wastes and residues)*</i>		✓	✗	✗	✗	✓	✗
<i>First collectors (wastes and residues)</i>	✓	✓	✗	✓	✗	✓	✓

Industrial operators	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Mechanical operators	✓	✓	✗	✓	✗	✓	✓
Traders	✓	✓	✗	✓	✗	✓	✓

* Please check specific requirements applicable to Points of Origin under RSB Japan FIT certification

3. Audit preparation

a. Review the procedures and standards relevant to your operation

You should review the RSB standards and procedures that apply to your operation. You can find all the schemes listed online [here](#).

Which RSB Standards and Procedures are applicable to me? The specific RSB Standards and Procedures are defined by the scope of your operation. By reviewing the specific certification page, you can find all of the documents that apply.

b. Conduct a risk assessment

Use RSB's Risk Assessment Tool to conduct a self-risk assessment of your operation.

Do I need to use RSB's Risk Assessment Tool? Yes. All operators, regardless of type or certification scheme, are required to conduct a self-risk assessment using the RSB Risk Assessment Tool.

What is the RSB Risk Assessment Tool? This excel-based tool will help operators to identify and evaluate relevant risks in the scope of their operations. The tool will help you to identify risks that need to be addressed in your management plans and will also identify your risk class, which will determine the length of your certificate validity, audit sampling and other details of your audit. It should cover all operations and sites included in your certification scope.

Complete a self-evaluation against all applicable RSB requirements.

Download the RSB Risk Assessment Tool [here](#).
(NB: this is an Excel-based tool which will download automatically)

c. Complete a self-evaluation against all applicable RSB requirements

A self-evaluation against all applicable requirements should be carried out ahead of the audit.

Do I need to conduct a self-evaluation? Yes. All operators, regardless of type or certification scheme, should conduct a self-evaluation against the requirements that apply to them.

What is the self-evaluation? The format of the self-evaluation is not prescribed, but RSB recommends that the self-evaluation be conducted against the auditors' checklist (available from your Certification Body). The self-evaluation process will help you to understand your current performance and identify areas and opportunities for improvement. From the self-evaluation, you can address any gaps identified before your audit. The self-evaluation has to be carried out for the entire scope of certification.

d. Complete the RSB Screening Tool exercise

If the RSB Principles & Criteria are applicable to your scope, you will need to complete RSB's Screening Tool. This may trigger you to further complete the Environmental and Social Impact Assessments.

Do I need to complete the RSB Screening Tool? The screening tool is an exercise that is applicable to all biomass producers and industrial operators (excluding mechanical operators).

It is not applicable to traders and points of origin and collectors of wastes & residues.

What is the RSB Screening Tool? The tool provides instructions related to the implementation of the RSB Principles & Criteria. Completing the exercise will help operators seeking certification to identify:

- a. the social and environmental aspects relevant to their operations which will need to be more closely monitored, and
- b. when a more detailed study or assessment of a particular aspect of the standard is required.

Download the RSB Screening Tool [here](#).
(NB: this is an Excel-based tool which will download automatically)

e. Prepare your ESMP

The Environmental & Social Management Plan (ESMP) is an important component of RSB certification and is a central document that pulls together or references all baseline studies, reports, impact assessments, mitigation, management, monitoring and evaluation plans into one location.

Do I need to develop an ESMP? If the RSB Principles & Criteria are applicable to your scope an ESMP is required. All biomass producers and industrial operators (excluding mechanical operators) should prepare an ESMP. It is not applicable to traders and points of origin and collectors of wastes & residues.

What is an ESMP? The ESMP is a living organic document that is constantly updated and improved as the project progresses. Instead of creating something new, the ESMP can refer to existing CSR / ISO 14001 systems or can be developed in the style of a document that also details your processes for managing traceability (Chain of Custody), GHG emissions calculation and RSB claims. RSB supplies a template of an ESMP within the RSB Impact Assessment Guidelines, but you may follow any format you prefer (including using existing documentation or management plans).

Download the RSB Impact Assessment Guidelines [here](#).

f. Calculate your GHG emissions

The GHG emissions calculation affects compliance with RSB's Principle 3, as well as specific regulatory requirements (e.g. EU RED, CORSIA) when applicable, and GHG emissions claims.

Do I need to conduct a GHG calculation? All operators in the RSB system that generate emissions (e.g. biomass producers, transporter, industrial operators) are required to conduct a GHG calculation.

Which GHG calculator can I use? RSB has developed a GHG Calculation Tool which incorporates the RSB Global, EU RED and CORSIA GHG Calculation methodologies and is available for free to RSB Participating Operators and members. RSB also allows operators to use other methodologies.

g. Prepare your chain of custody

Do I need to prepare a Chain of Custody Procedure? All operators in the RSB system are required to develop a Chain of Custody.

RSB allows different options for the chain of custody system you may use:

1. Identity Preserved
2. Product Segregation
3. Mass Balance
4. Content Ratio Accounting
5. Book & Claim
6. Attribution (RSB Global Advanced Products Certification only)

Establishing a robust and transparent system provides traceability for the RSB Certified Material across the entire supply chain and ensures that RSB claims are only carried on products which are compliant with RSB standards.

Which Chain of Custody System can I use? RSB's Procedure for Chain of Custody explains which systems can be used and how to implement them.

[Download RSB's Procedure For Chain Of Custody \(Global\).](#)

[Download RSB's EU Red Procedure For Chain Of Custody.](#)

h. Develop your RSB claims

Do I need to develop RSB Claims? All operators in the RSB system selling RSB certified products are required to develop their RSB claims, according to the RSB Communications & Claims Procedure. This can include for dispatch notes, product labelling, marketing and anywhere else you will make reference to your RSB certification.

When you have received your RSB certificate, you can make claims about your product being RSB compliant, based on the RSB claims procedure.

RSB provides guidance on claims in the Procedure for Communication and Claims. Prior to your audit you should check which claims you plan to make and if you wish to deviate from the prescribed claims in the procedure, request written permission from the RSB secretariat to use your own claims.

[Download RSB's Procedure For Communication And Claims.](#)