



Consultation on the Biomass Assurance Framework

1. Introduction

The Sustainable Biomass Partnership (SBP) is an industry-led initiative formed in 2013 by major European utilities that use biomass, mostly in the form of wood pellets, in large thermal power plants.

SBP's vision is an economically, environmentally and socially sustainable solid biomass supply-chain that contributes to a low-carbon economy.

SBP is currently focusing on developing tools to provide assurance that woody biomass is sourced from legal and sustainable sources. SBP recognises fully the credibility of existing and well-proven forest certification schemes, the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) and the Programme for Endorsement of Forest Certification schemes (PEFC), and does not wish to compete with or replicate them. Unfortunately there is limited uptake of certification in some key forest-source areas and the schemes themselves do not yet cover all the key requirements of biomass users.

Therefore, SBP is working to develop solutions, short-term and long-term, to address both these issues and is in discussion with both schemes on how these challenges might be overcome.

SBP's immediate priority is to develop standards & processes allowing companies in the biomass sector to demonstrate compliance with legal, regulatory and sustainability requirements.

The SBP's Biomass Assurance Framework is designed as a clear statement of principles, standards and processes necessary to demonstrate such compliance. Wherever possible, use is made of the FSC and PEFC standards and processes already applied to other forest product streams. Further refinement and strengthening of these SBP standards will follow as necessary.

Further information on the SBP will be available on www.sustainablebiomasspartnership.org

2. What is the Biomass Assurance Framework?

SBP has developed a suite of standards which together make up the Biomass Assurance Framework.

A summary document – *Key Concepts in the BAF Consultation Draft* – provides an overview of the Biomass Assurance Framework as a whole.

There are five core standards:

- SBP Standard #1. Sustainable Feedstock Standard
- SBP Standard #2. The evaluation of Feedstock against the SFS
- SBP Standard #3. Certification Systems standard
- SBP Standard #4. Chain of Custody standard
- SBP Standard #5. Energy and Carbon data collection standard

Copies of the documentation are available on www.sustainablebiomasspartnership.org

3. Invitation to make comment on the draft Biomass Assurance Framework documentation

This consultation forms just one part of our work to gather feedback on the first draft of the Biomass Assurance Framework. The SBP has also engaged with pellet producers, forest managers, regulators, sustainable forest management certification schemes and others during the development process. In addition, SBP is currently undertaking a programme of pilots in Europe and North America to test the practicability of the draft standards.

It is important to stress that the Consultation Drafts are at a draft stage and are not in their final format; they are intended to present the concepts that the SBP is considering in a straightforward way.

You are free to make any input you wish but the SBP would be particularly interested to hear your comments on the content of the standard with specific reference to whether it is clearly expressed, consistent and practicable.

You might wish to highlight what you like as well as your ideas for improvements. Maybe you think there are omissions or perhaps you think some areas could be cut or trimmed.

In particular, we want you to propose possible solutions to any problems that you identify.

Whatever you think, the SBP wants to hear!

4. How will the SBP consider the input received?

All the comments will be brought together in an Issues Paper for consideration by SBP's Assurance Framework Development Group (AFDG). Following further discussion, the AFDG will prepare a further draft of the Biomass Assurance Framework for the consideration of the SBP Board.

A note of the issues raised will be placed on the SBP website which will show how each issue has been considered and the outcome of the Assurance Framework Development Group's discussions.

Once SBP Board approval is received the Biomass Assurance Framework Version 1 will be published. SBP's aim is to publish the standard during summer 2014.

5. How should I respond and what is the deadline for making my input?

Your comments are required by Friday, 25th April 2014.

Please use the Consultation Feedback Form available on www.sustainablebiomasspartnership.org and identify and explain the issues you wish to raise and any suggested solution for each.

Please email your completed form to consultation@sustainablebiomasspartnership.org.

Sustainable Biomass Partnership
27th March 2014