

SBP

Sustainable Biomass Program

SBP Framework Instruction Document 3H: Peer Review – SBP Requirements for CBs

www.sbp-cert.org



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For further information on the SBP Framework and to view the full set of documentation see

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1 Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of the peer review is to ensure the quality of certification decisions, certificates issued and consistency across certificates.

2 General requirements

2.1 Prior to making a certification decision, the Certification Body (CB) shall submit the draft certification report to a formal peer review process, for the following audit scopes:

- Main and re-assessment of Biomass Producers (BPs) against Standard 1, that is, BPs with Supply Base Evaluation;
- Extension of scope of the Supply Base Evaluation; and
- First assessment at re-instatement of any suspended SBP BP certificate with Supply Base Evaluation.

Note: A CB may apply to SBP to waive the peer review where waiving of the peer review would not affect the quality of the audit or reporting. An example might include where suspension has resulted from non-payment of CB fees.

3 Selection of a peer reviewer

- 3.1 Peer reviewers shall be selected from a list of SBP-approved peer reviewers.
- 3.2 Peer reviewer(s) shall not have been otherwise contracted by the Certification Body during the last two (2) years. Peer reviewers shall disclose any prior association with the BP or auditee, and shall be subject to the same requirements relating to independence and confidentiality as other personnel with input to the certification decision.

4 Peer review process requirements

- 4.1 The report shall be reviewed by at least one (1) independent peer reviewer from the SBP-approved list of peer reviewers.
- 4.2 Peer reviewers may comment on any aspect of the certification decision process, including (but not limited to) those specified in ISO 17065 under 'Resource requirements' and 'Process requirements'.
- 4.3 The peer review is to be conducted after the CB considers that a positive certification decision can be made in compliance with ISO/IEC 17065:2012 clause 7.6.2, including section 7.5 Review. As such the peer review does not qualify for meeting the requirements of 7.5 and is additional to that review.
- 4.4 The CB may engage additional reviewers (for example, with specialist knowledge concerning indigenous peoples rights or high conservation values) where necessary.
- 4.5 The review should encompass all areas of the audit and the certification decision processes such that the reviewer should be able to concur with the certification decision.
 - 4.5.1 The peer reviewer should be provided with all relevant information to enable them to provide adequately informed comment.
 - 4.5.2 The peer reviewer may request re-submission of revised documentation or additional evidence to make a positive certification recommendation.
 - 4.5.3 The CB may decline to provide the peer reviewer with the requested additional information or revised documentation, but must justify such action in the response to the peer reviewer.

Note: In the event of a difference of opinion between the CB and the peer reviewer SBP may provide guidance.

- 4.6 Peer reviewers' confidentiality contracts with CBs shall not extend to providing information to SBP or ASI and peer reviewers shall have the right to inform SBP and ASI if they consider the CB has not met SBP's requirements in issuing the certificate.

5 Peer review process outcomes

- 5.1 The peer reviewer shall operate according to clear terms of reference (including response times), which include the requirement to comment explicitly on:
 - i. The adequacy of the field work as the basis for making a certification decision;
 - ii. The clarity of presentation of the observations as the basis for a certification decision; and
 - iii. Whether the proposed certification decision is justified by the observations presented.
- 5.2 The peer reviewer shall take account of the local and national context with regards to the Supply Base, and shall consider environmental, social and economic perspectives.
- 5.3 The comments of the peer reviewer shall be attributed and documented.
- 5.4 The CB shall respond in writing to the peer reviewer's comments identifying what, if any, changes were made to address the comments, and provide the peer reviewer with a copy of its response.

6 Records and reporting

- 6.1 The CB shall maintain and implement documented policies and procedures for maintenance of confidentiality, including a written confidentiality agreement to be signed by all peer reviewers.
- 6.2 The CB shall maintain accurate and complete records including peer review comments and CB responses which shall be readily available, including for evaluation by ASI.