

SCS Global Services Evaluation of Groupe Savoie Inc. Compliance with the SBP Framework: Public Summary Report

Third Surveillance Audit

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Completed in accordance with the CB Public Summary Report Template Version 1.4

*For further information on the SBP Framework and to view the full set of documentation see
www.sbp-cert.org*

Document history

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1 Overview

CB Name and contact: SCS Global Services, 2000 Powell St. Ste 600 Emeryville, CA 94608

Primary contact for SBP: Maggie Schwartz, mschwartzs@scsglobalservices.com

Current report completion date: 27/Feb/2020

Report authors: Kyle Meister

Name of the Company: Groupe Savoie Inc.

Company contact for SBP: Danny Perron; danny.perron@groupe savoie.com

Certified Supply Base: New-Brunswick, south-eastern Québec, Ontario, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island in Canada; and states of Maine, Connecticut, Vermont, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Massachusetts and Pennsylvania in the United States

SBP Certificate Code: SBP-04-05

Date of certificate issue: 06/Jun/2017

Date of certificate expiry: 05/Jun/2022

This report relates to the Third Surveillance Audit

2 Scope of the evaluation and SBP certificate

This certificate covers production and distribution of wood pellets, for use in energy production, at Groupe Savoie, Inc. pellet mill and road transportation to port facility, Port of Belledune, for storage, aggregation and seafaring vessel loadout. The scope of the certificate does not include Supply Base Evaluation.

The scope of the evaluation was to evaluate the full scope of the certificate with the specific objective and audit techniques uses as described in section 3.

3 Specific objective

The specific objective of this audit was to confirm that the Biomass Producer's management system is capable of ensuring that all requirements of specified SBP Standards are implemented across the entire scope of certification.

The following critical control points were identified and evaluated:

- Processes for procurement and processing, transport and storage
 - o Review of supplier documentation and observations during facility walkthrough, interview with staff
 - o Observation of feedstock storage and sorting prior to loading into hoppers to initiate the production process. No feedstock can enter the production process from any other point.
 - o After processing, SBP material is stored in silos prior to loading it into transport trucks. SBP material is weighted prior to exiting the pellet mill for the Port.
 - o Transport trucks must pass a security point at the Port of Belledune. The BP's pellets are stored in a separate warehouse after transport information has been verified. From the warehouse, pellets are loaded onto ships. Upon entry into the buyer's ship, the pellets come under the legal ownership of the buyer.
- Volume accounting method
 - o Review of volume credit accounts and production reports, interview with staff
- Documentation of transactions
 - o Review of sales documentation and DTS, interview with staff
- Energy data collection and reporting
 - o Review of SAR and energy invoices and calculations, as well as supporting data and any assumptions made (e.g., conversion factors), interview with staff

4 SBP Standards utilised

4.1 SBP Standards utilised

Please select all SBP Standards used during this evaluation. All Standards can be accessed and downloaded from <https://sbp-cert.org/documents/standards-documents/standards>

- SBP Framework Standard 1: Feedstock Compliance Standard (Version 1.0, 26 March 2015)
- SBP Framework Standard 2: Verification of SBP-compliant Feedstock (Version 1.0, 26 March 2015)
- SBP Framework Standard 4: Chain of Custody (Version 1.0, 26 March 2015)
- SBP Framework Standard 5: Collection and Communication of Data (Version 1.0, 26 March 2015)

4.2 SBP-endorsed Regional Risk Assessment

Not applicable.

5 Description of Company, Supply Base and Forest Management

5.1 Description of Company

Groupe Savoie Inc. manufactures industrial wood pellets for export to European power utilities and residential wood pellets for domestic markets. Groupe Savoie's main operation site is located in Saint-Quentin, New Brunswick (N.B.) Canada, where a pellet mill, two sawmills, a components plant, a pallet plant and dry kiln are located. Groupe Savoie also operates a component plant and a dry kiln in Kedgwick, N.B., one pallet production and recycling plant in Moncton, N.B., and one sawmill in Westville, Nova-Scotia. The organization sources primary material, such as treetops and branches through external suppliers and secondary material such as sawdust, shavings and bark through their own operation and from other sawmills. Feedstock for the pellet mill is composed mainly of primary feedstock from the province of New-Brunswick. To a lesser extent, feedstock is sourced from south-eastern Québec, Ontario, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island in Canada and the New England states of Maine, Connecticut, Vermont, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Massachusetts and Pennsylvania. Groupe Savoie's sawmill residuals (sawdust, shavings and bark) and forest operation residuals (branches and tops) are the primary feedstock for the Saint-Quentin wood pellet plant. All feedstock is sourced through Groupe Savoie's PEFC Chain of Custody certificate which covers PEFC certified input as well as PEFC Controlled sources, which are sourced through a risk assessment. Both PEFC certified material and PEFC controlled sources constitute input for pellet production. The organization operates a PEFC chain of custody percentage-based method with volume credit method and has sufficient credit to sell all pellets with an SBP-compliant claim. The organization transports pellets from the Saint-Quentin plant to the port Belledune where they are stored in a warehouse. The pellets change ownership to Groupe Savoie's customers upon loading of the ship. Transport, unloading, and loading of pellets is outsourced to Eastern Canada Stevedoring. A representative of Groupe Savoie supervises the loading of ships with pellets.

5.2 Description of Company's Supply Base

Groupe Savoie Inc.'s supply base covers the Canadian provinces of New-Brunswick and Québec, Ontario, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island and the US states Maine, Connecticut, Vermont, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Massachusetts and Pennsylvania. Primary feedstock is sourced as PEFC certified and PEFC Controlled Sources through external suppliers through the organization's PEFC COC system including a risk assessment in the PEFC DDS. Secondary feedstock is sourced from Groupe Savoie's own sawmills, components and pallet plants and external sawmills and wood processing facilities. Main species that are sourced from the supply base are *Acer saccharum*, *Acer rubrum*, *Betula alleghaniensis*, *Betula papyrifera*, *Populus tremuloides*, *Populus balsamea*, *Fagus grandifolia* and *Fraxinus* spp. The supply base covers both crown lands (state owned land), private land, industrial freehold, and federal lands. More information on the supply base is available in the Company's Supply Base Report (SBR), which is available on its website or via its certificate page in the SBP Certificate Database.

5.3 Detailed description of Supply Base

This information is from the SBR, which is available on the company's website and the SBP certificate database.

Total volume of Feedstock:

- 203,236 metric tonnes (calendar year 2019)

a. Volume of primary feedstock: 0-200 000 metric tonnes

- 59 892 metric tonnes (calendar year 2019)

b. List percentage of primary feedstock (g), by the following categories. - percentages may be shown in a banding between XX% to YY% if a compelling justification is provided*. Subdivide by SBP-approved Forest Management Schemes:

Certified to an SBP-approved Forest Management Scheme	81,00% (2019)
Not certified to an SBP-approved Forest Management Scheme	19,00% (2019)

c. List all species in primary feedstock, including scientific name

Sugar maple	Acer saccharum
Red maple	Acer rubrum
Yellow birch	Betula alleghaniensis
White birch	Betula papyrifera
Poplar	Populus tremuloides
Aspen	Populus balsamea
Beech	Fagus grandifolia
Ash	Fraxinus sp.

d. Volume of primary feedstock from primary forest

100%

e. List percentage of primary feedstock from primary forest (j), by the following categories. Subdivide by SBP-approved Forest Management Schemes:

Certified to an SBP-approved Forest Management Scheme	81,00% (2019)
Not certified to an SBP-approved Forest Management Scheme	19,00% (2019)

f. Volume of secondary feedstock: specify origin and type - the volume may be shown as a % of the figure in (f) and percentages may be shown in a banding between XX% to YY% if a compelling justification is provided*.

- **118 606 metric tonnes (2019)**

- g. Volume of tertiary feedstock: specify origin and composition - the volume may be shown as a % of the figure in (f) and percentages may be shown in a banding between XX% to YY% if a compelling justification is provided*.
- **24 737 metric tonnes (2019)**

5.4 Chain of Custody system

The organization uses the PEFC COC system as their underlying COC system for SBP. The organization operates the percentage-based method for controlling PEFC claims based on volume credits. Groupe Savoie also verifies PEFC Controlled Sources through a DDS including a risk assessment covering the aforementioned provinces and states in Canada and the US, respectively. The organization operates a scale where all incoming material is weighed and registered. Upon receipt a transportation certificate is issued which constitutes a legal document. This document lists the supplier, delivered quantity, the origin of the material and –if applicable- the name of the primary wood processor. Received volume and claim are entered into the PEFC credit account. The origin of the material is indicated as codes that represent a certain area in the supply base. A PEFC credit account is used to account for volumes sold with PEFC and SBP claims. Sales of SBP-compliant biomass are deducted from the PEFC credit account and the organization covers all sales of SBP-compliant biomass via their PEFC credits. The BP has implemented comprehensive procedures covering all aspects of the COC system. SBP procedures are integrated within the PEFC procedural system. The COC system is administered by the Quality & Process Improvement Manager. The organizations PEFC management system and procedures were previously evaluated by another certification body and no nonconformities were identified

Since material is tracked via a credit account, PEFC certified and controlled sources material is not kept separate on site. Outgoing pellets are loaded onto trucks and are weighed on the scale. The transportation certificate gets entered into the credit account and is subtracted from the credits. Transportation Supplier declarations, signed by both parties are in place.

6 Evaluation process

6.1 Timing of evaluation activities

Site Name or Location:	251 Route 180, Saint-Quentin, NB E8A2K9 Canada	
Date and Time of Audit:	DAY 1: 8:00 AM – 24/Feb/2020	
Audit Activity	Items to Review / Actions	Approx. Start Time
Opening meeting	Introductions, auditor review of audit scope, audit plan and intro/update to SBP, FSC, and SCS standards and protocols, client description of organization, review of any open findings, and general discussion of grading of nonconformities	8:00 AM
Review of CoC/SBP procedures, products and material accounting	Written procedures, work instructions, feedstock description (see ID 5B section 4), product group list, accounting system (transfer, percentage or credit; physical separation, percentage method)	8:30 AM
Evaluation of trademarks	Review of auditor-selected sample of SBP and/or SCS on-product and/or promotional trademark uses; review of any on-site trademark uses such as banners, posters, entryway signs	10:00 AM
Walkthrough of facility	Review of physical inputs and outputs, material receipt, processing, storage, credit account (if applicable), sale, and overall control. Verify GHG inventory.	10:30am
Lunch		12-1 PM
Review of material balances and records	Auditor-selected sample of the following: material tracking system, summary of purchases and sales, invoices, shipping documents, training records, outsourcing agreements, other applicable SBP/CoC systems, procedures and records, tracebacks from certified outputs to eligible inputs; Remote interview with in-charge at Port of Belledune	1-4:30 PM
Verification of calculations and transactions	Auditor-selected sample and verification of calculations for conversion factors, percentage claims, and credit accounts, as applicable, review of DTS transactions	
Brief summary of DAY 1		4:30 PM
End of DAY 1		5:00 PM
Site Name or Location:	251 Route 180, Saint-Quentin, NB E8A2K9 Canada	
Date and Time of Audit:	DAY 2: 8:00 AM – 25/Feb/2020	
Audit Activity	Items to Review / Actions	Approx. Start Time
SBP ST 5, ID5A, ID5B, & ID5C	Review of GHG data collection	8:00 AM – 12:00 PM
SBP ST 5, ID5A, ID5B, & ID5C	Review of inputs and outputs, material receipt, processing, storage, credit account, sales, GHG inventory verification.	
Closing meeting preparation	Auditor takes time to consolidate notes and review audit findings for presentation at closing meeting	
Closing meeting and review of findings	Convene with all relevant staff to summarize audit findings, review identified nonconformities, and discuss next steps	
End		

Groupe Savoie: 12 employees and one contractor (president of Port of Belledune)

Abies Consultants: one consultant

SCS: Lead auditor (same as report author)

6.2 Description of evaluation activities

On-site audit:

The on-site surveillance audit included an audit of the SBR, documented management system, work instructions, training plan and training records, health and safety procedures and commitment, and procedures on collection and communication of greenhouse gas data. The appropriate personnel were interviewed to cover all aspects of the audit and certificate scope and the SBP requirements.

Also included was a tour of the site including a tour of the pellet plant from receiving, storage, hammer mills, dryers, pelletisation, cooling, storage to loading. Furthermore, the scale was inspected, and records reviewed at the scale house. The port was not visited during this audit in accordance with Instruction Note 3b, 1.1.6 The port was visited on previous evaluations. The BP rents out a warehouse and only SBP-compliant pellets are stored there. The material accounting of the BP is robust and there is no risk of mixing biomass at the port. The contractor used for services at the port was interviewed via phone call.

Document and record review consisted of a review of the Supply Base Report (SBR), Audit Report on Energy and GHG Data (SAR), Static Biomass Profiling Data sheet, PEFC and SBP procedures, OHS procedures, suppliers list, product groups PEFC certificate validity check and review of last PEFC audit report.

The audit methods consisted of review of documentation, records, websites, emails, databases and staff interviews. The site tour and visits were evaluated by review of documentation, monitoring results, observations, and interviews.

6.3 Process for consultation with stakeholders

SCS relies on its Master Stakeholder List, which contains stakeholders that are identified by type, e.g. ENGO, Government/regulatory, Educational/Academic, Industry, Indigenous/Aboriginal/Tribal, etc.... This list is categorized by country and state/province at the very least, and for this consultation was filtered to omit any stakeholders that were not geographically relevant to the certificate holder/applicant's supply base. A stakeholder notification is sent out to all identified stakeholders after the BP's stakeholder consultation period has ended. Stakeholder comments that are received outside of regular stakeholder consultation periods are fully taken into account. No SHC was conducted by SCS for this audit project.

Per interviews with BP, no stakeholders have provided any comments during the audit period. No stakeholders provided comments to SCS before, during or after this annual surveillance audit.

7 Results

7.1 Main strengths and weaknesses

The organization has a very comprehensive and detailed management and procedural system in place which covers all aspects of the SBP audit scope and the underlying PEFC chain of custody certification. The databases to keep track of qualitative and quantitative information are well managed, readily accessible and featured all information as requested by the auditor. Procedures, commercial documentation, records on paper were also easily accessible throughout the audit. The interviewed Chain of Custody Administrator has very good knowledge of all processes and requirements needed to achieve conformity to the SBP standards included in the scope of the certificate. All other personnel involved showed good awareness of requirements pertaining to their roles.

Weaknesses and opportunities for improvement have been recorded as nonconformities and observations and are discussed in section 10.

7.2 Rigour of Supply Base Evaluation

Not applicable.

7.3 Collection and Communication of Data

Groupe Savoie is fully committed to collecting and reporting all energy data as required by SBP standards and their customers. The company uses databases and spreadsheet-based programs to collect the data and will communicate those to the client in form of the SAR and Static Biomass Profiling Datasheet (SBPD). The Quality & Process Improvement Manager is responsible for maintaining and collecting energy data and is supported by staff.

7.4 Competency of involved personnel

The SBP management administrator has several years of managing the PEFC Chain of Custody, the SFI Fibre Sourcing and other certifications for Groupe Savoie. He was very knowledgeable of SBP requirements and manages most of the aspects of the certification. He manages clean and comprehensive databases of records and data pertaining to the SBP and PEFC certifications. All other personnel involved showed good awareness of PEFC and SBP requirements pertaining to their roles. Regarding SBP, the organization is consulted by Daniel Martin (Abies Consultants Inc.) who has several years of experience in forestry in the region and different forestry management certifications, such as FSC, PEFC, SFI and SBP.

7.5 Stakeholder feedback

No stakeholder feedback was received before, during or after the audit.

7.6 Preconditions

Not applicable.

8 Review of Company's Risk Assessments

Describe how the Certification Body assessed risk for the Indicators. Summarise the CB's final risk ratings in Table 1, together with the Company's final risk ratings. Default for each indicator is 'Low', click on the rating to change. Note: this summary should show the risk ratings before AND after the SVP has been performed and after any mitigation measures have been implemented.

Not applicable.

9 Review of Company's mitigation measures

Not applicable.

10 Non-conformities and observations

Identify all non-conformities and observations raised/closed during the evaluation (a tabular format below may be used here). Please use as many copies of the table as needed. For each, give details to include at least the following:

- applicable requirement(s)
- grading of the non-conformity (major or minor) or observation with supporting rationale
- timeframe for resolution of the non-conformity
- a statement as to whether the non-conformity is likely to impact upon the integrity of the affected SBP-certified products and the credibility of the SBP trademarks.

2019 Audit Findings

NC number 1	NC Grading: Minor
Standard & Requirement:	SBP ID 5B, 5.5.2 and 5.5.1
Description of Non-conformance and Related Evidence:	
The electricity consumption for the Granule Burner was incorrectly reported for May 2018. The invoice indicates a total consumption of 475,654 kWh but was recorded as 430,675 kWh “2018 pellet plant electricity consumption” datasheet. Consequently, the total electricity consumption in the SAR is incorrect. Review of the 2018 – Pellet Plant Electricity consumption, May 2018 electricity invoice, and SAR. Review of the 2018 Pellet Plant Electricity consumption, May 2018 electricity invoice, and SAR.	
Timeline for Conformance:	By the next surveillance audit, but no later than 12 months from report finalisation date
Evidence Provided by Company to close NC:	Review of updated SAR and “2018 Pellet Plant Electricity Consumption” datasheet
Findings for Evaluation of Evidence:	The organization corrected the electricity consumption on the SAR to 9,576,681 kWh.
NC Status:	Closed

NC number 2	NC Grading: Minor
Standard & Requirement:	SBP ID 5A, 2.2.5 & 2.2.6
Description of Non-conformance and Related Evidence:	
The SDI are in the form: SBP-XX-YY-ZZ. However, ZZ has been not been allocated in ascending linear numerical order. The organization the went from 01 to 18 (04-05-01 to 04-05-18). The organization misunderstood that ZZ could represent the year the SAR is approved. Review of the SAR and DTS transaction report.	
Timeline for Conformance:	By the next surveillance audit, but no later than 12 months from report finalisation date
Evidence Provided by Company to close NC:	Review of updated SAR
Findings for Evaluation of Evidence (2019):	Review of updated SAR. The organization corrected the 2018 SDI to 04-05-03. The SDI stated in Section C on page 33 is not identical to the one stated on the top page of the SAR. Also in the static biomass profiling datasheet, the incorrect or outdated SDI is used. CAR remains open.

Findings for Evaluation of Evidence (2020):	The 2018 SAR was updated and accepted by the BP’s buyer. The 2019 SAR is now under ID5E and thus ID5A requirements are no longer relevant.
NC Status:	Closed

NC number 3	NC Grading: Observation
Standard & Requirement:	SBP ID 5A, 2.3.1
Description of Non-conformance and Related Evidence:	
The organization is not communicating Dynamic Batch Sustainability Data to end-users (EU Member States) but completed part 4 of the SAR. Part 4 of the SAR is not applicable and could create confusion to end-users in the future. Review of the 2018 SAR – Part 4	
Timeline for Conformance:	Other Optional
Evidence Provided by Company to close NC:	Updated SAR
Findings for Evaluation of Evidence:	The organization removed the data in Part 4 of the SAR.
NC Status:	Closed

NC number 4	NC Grading: Observation
Standard & Requirement:	SBP IN 2C, 4.1
Description of Non-conformance and Related Evidence:	
In section 2.4 of the SBR, information about the supply base that is located in the US is not included in the table, however, the supply base is correctly described and quantified in section 2.1.	
Timeline for Conformance:	Other Optional
Evidence Provided by Company to close NC:	Updated SBR
Findings for Evaluation of Evidence:	The BP stated in the opening meeting that providing data such as the area of the US States in the supply base from which tertiary feedstock is sourced would add little value as only 1-2% of the supply consists of such feedstock. Table 1 of Section 2.1 contains the quantifiable description of the percentage of feedstock being sourced from US States. An internet search reveals that obtaining forest area information by state and ownership type may be possible. Other issues with the SBR content were detected, as described in Minor CAR 2020.1
NC Status:	Closed

NC number 5	NC Grading: Minor
Standard & Requirement:	SBP ID 5B 4.2.1
Description of Non-conformance and Related Evidence:	
The feedstock with ID # “TERTIARY FEEDSTOCK” on page 11 of the SAR has been incorrectly classified as primary feedstock under 1)TYPE	
Timeline for Conformance:	By the next surveillance audit, but no later than 12 months from report finalisation date
Evidence Provided by Company to close NC:	

Findings for Evaluation of Evidence:	<i>Review of 2019 SAR confirms that tertiary feedstock is recorded per SAR requirements. Note that ID5B is no longer applicable.</i>
NC Status:	Closed

2020 Audit Findings

NC number 2020.1	NC Grading: Minor
Standard & Requirement:	ST 2, SBP IN 2C, 4.1 ST 2, Section 5
Description of Non-conformance and Related Evidence:	
<p>In section 2.5 of the SBR, information about the supply base that is located in the US is not included in the table; however, the supply base is correctly described and quantified in section 2.1. An internet search reveals that obtaining data on forestland by area, type, and ownership may be possible for the US States included in the Supply Base for reporting in section 2.5.</p> <p>The BP had accidentally changed the numbering of Section 2 of the SBR. This was corrected during the audit.</p> <p>The percentage of feedstock sourced with PEFC claims (72%) reported in the first paragraph of Section 3 does not match the figures presented in related tables (81%; 2.5, e and Table in Section 3). This was also corrected during the audit in the SBR.</p> <p>The amount of feedstock volume received is not the same as the number reported in the SAR. The SAR shows 153,354 metric tonnes of feedstock, while the SBR lists 143,343 metric tonnes for 2019.</p> <p>The following required items are missing in section 2.1 of the SBR:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • comparison of the scale of harvesting compared to other forest based industries in the region • General description of the forest resources (land use and ownership status, socio-economic conditions, forest composition, profile of adjacent lands). • Description of the forestry management practices or land management practices used and the presence of any CITES or IUCN species • overview of the proportions of SBP feedstock product groups • indication of the number of suppliers for each SBP feedstock product group 	
Timeline for Conformance:	By the next surveillance audit, but no later than 12 months from report finalisation date
Evidence Provided by Company to close NC:	<i>Click or tap here to enter description provided by Company to close the NC.</i>
Findings for Evaluation of Evidence:	<i>Click or tap here to enter findings for evaluation of evidence by the auditor.</i>
NC Status:	Open

NC number 2020.2	NC Grading: Minor
Standard & Requirement:	ID 5E, 4.1.9: For stationary BPs (e.g. Pellet Mills) at least one SDI has been defined for the end of the BP's factory gate.
Description of Non-conformance and Related Evidence:	
The BP has not defined an SDI for the end of its factory gate. Since no SREG has been used, this is minor.	

Timeline for Conformance:	By the next surveillance audit, but no later than 12 months from report finalisation date
Evidence Provided by Company to close NC:	<i>Click or tap here to enter description provided by Company to close the NC.</i>
Findings for Evaluation of Evidence:	<i>Click or tap here to enter findings for evaluation of evidence by the auditor.</i>
NC Status:	Open

NC number 2020.3	NC Grading: Minor
Standard & Requirement:	<i>ID 5E, 6.5.3: The BP shall justify the data and methodology used for reporting energy and carbon data and this shall be recorded in the SAR and verified by the CB.</i>
Description of Non-conformance and Related Evidence:	
The incorrect conversion factor for converting diesel to MJ was used in the MJ of diesel per ton of pellets produced. Evidence: Incorrect value was used – 39 MJ instead of 39.6 MJ. This was corrected during the audit and the figure updated in the SAR and Excel file. The source for the diesel to MJ conversion factor was not cited in the summary Excel file and the SAR. This was included in the Excel file and the SAR during the audit.	
Timeline for Conformance:	By the next surveillance audit, but no later than 12 months from report finalisation date
Evidence Provided by Company to close NC:	Revised SAR and Excel file
Findings for Evaluation of Evidence:	See description in NCR; closed during the audit.
NC Status:	Closed

11 Certification decision

Based on the auditor's recommendation and the Certification Body's quality review, the following certification decision is taken:

Certification decision:	Certification approved
Certification decision by (name of the person):	Sebastian Häfele
Date of decision:	25/May/2020
Other comments:	<i>Click or tap here to enter text.</i>