

Regional Risk Assessment for the Province of British Columbia, Canada: SBP Response to Consultation

Sustainable Biomass Program
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In the case of inconsistency between translations, the official English language version shall always take precedence.

SBP welcomes comments and suggestions for changes, revisions and/or clarifications on all of its Standards documentation. Please contact: info@sbp-cert.org

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1 Introduction

SBP-endorsed Regional Risk Assessments (RRAs) are a key part of SBP's focus on identifying and mitigating risks associated with sustainably sourcing feedstock for biomass pellet and woodchip production. The SBP Framework is designed to provide assurance that feedstock is sourced legally and sustainably.

The purpose of an SBP-endorsed RRA is to evaluate an entire geographic region and determine the risks associated with sourcing feedstock for biomass pellet or woodchip production from that region. Thus, the need for individual Biomass Producers (BPs) to conduct risk assessments is avoided and, therefore, consistency between BPs is improved. The SBP RRA Procedure also ensures active engagement with a diverse range of stakeholders in the region.

The SBP RRA Procedure (v1.1) specifies the requirements and processes that must be followed in order to develop and endorse SBP risk assessments of regions or countries. The Wood Pellet Association of Canada (WPAC) initiated the RRA for the province of British Columbia (BC) in 2018 to verify the legality and sustainability of uncertified feedstock. Hopkin Forest Management Consulting Ltd. and a team of independent natural resource and certification professionals formed the Working Body (WB).

The WB facilitated the risk assessment to ensure that relevant BC laws and policies and practices, as well as practical knowledge of forestry, in BC were accurately captured in the RRA. Important information included interviews with experts and the experience and knowledge of consultants, applicable legislation, reports from Provincial authorities and other stakeholders, various databases and statistical data sources. Information was obtained from Provincial authorities, such as the BC Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development, Wildlife and Parks, the BC Ministry of the Environment and federal authorities such as the Canadian Forest Service of Natural Resources Canada and Environment Canada. Many stakeholders were consulted in the process and information was obtained verbally and from written public and private sources.

In April 2020, in line with the RRA Procedure, the Working Body submitted the Draft RRA Report for the Province of British Columbia to SBP for review prior to the WB's public consultation. Following which, the Working Body invited stakeholders to comment on the document during the 30-day public consultation between 20 April 2020 and 22 May 2020.

The WB submitted the Final Draft Report to SBP on 31 August 2020; on 3 September 2020, SBP conducted its own 30-day public consultation. This report is SBP's response to that consultation.

The RRA for British Columbia was formally approved and endorsed by the SBP CEO on 10 August 2021.

2 Regional Risk Assessment Procedure

The SBP Regional Risk Assessment (RRA) Procedure (v1.1) specifies the requirements and processes that must be followed in order to develop and endorse SBP risk assessments of regions or countries.

On 31 August 2020, The Working Body submitted a Final Draft RRA Report for the Province of British Columbia to SBP. SBP then undertook its own public consultation and internal technical review of the Final Draft RRA Report, the results of which can be found in the following Sections 3 and 4.

3 SBP Public consultation

3.1 Consultation period

On 3 September 2020, the Final Draft RRA Report for the Province of British Columbia was published on the SBP website for consultation at: <https://sbp-cert.org/documents/consultation-documents/archive/risk-britishcolumbia/>. Interested parties were invited to provide written comments on the final draft by Monday, 5 October 2020.

3.2 Comments received

No comments were received.

3.3 Summary and consideration of comments received

No comments were received.

4 SBP Internal Review

Following the close of the public consultation period, SBP performed an internal technical review of Final Draft RRA Report for the Province of British Columbia against the procedural requirements. Comments arising from that review were directed back to the Working Body. The Working Body provided a complete response to each of the issues raised and revised the Final Draft RRA Report to include additional clarifications and/or explanations as necessary. The revised Final Draft RRA Report was submitted to SBP on 26 May 2021.

5 Review by the Independent Technical Committee

On 3 June 2021, the Final Draft RRA Report was submitted to the SBP Technical Committee for the final independent technical review. The Technical Committee reviewed the report to ensure that the overall process and report quality met SBP's requirements and recommended approval on 28 June 2021.

6 Approval and endorsement of Regional Risk Assessment

The RRA for the Province of British Columbia was formally approved by the SBP CEO on 10 August 2021 and the SBP-endorsed RRA published alongside this document on 11 August 2021.

SBP-endorsed RRAs usually remain valid for a period of five (5) years from the approval date, although it may be superseded if a new RRA is completed within the five (5) year period. At the time of publication, all SBP Standards are under review and, where necessary, revision. Any revision of Standard 1 will necessitate revision of the SBP-endorsed RRAs. Review and, if necessary, revision will be required by the end of the transition period for the revised Standards (v2.0).