

SENT TO LSU AGCENTER/LOUISIANA FOREST PRODUCTS DEVELOPMENT CENTER - FOREST SECTOR / FORESTY PRODUCTS INTEREST GROUP



Sustainable Biomass Program responds to NRDC paper---

(<https://www.nrdc.org/resources/sustainable-biomass-program-smokescreen-forest-destruction-and-corporate-non>)

<https://sbp-cert.org/>

By Sustainable Biomass Partnership | July 07, 2017

Sustainable Biomass Program is a credible and robust certification system enabling users of woody biomass for energy production to demonstrate compliance with regulatory, including sustainability, requirements. At the core of the system are:

- 38 indicators defining legality and sustainability;
- alignment with leading regulatory regimes on sustainable biomass practice; and
- independent scrutiny of certificate holders' management systems and procedures.

Responding to the Dogwood Alliance and Natural Resources Defense Council issue paper, "The Sustainable Biomass Program: A Smokescreen for Forest Destruction and Corporate Non-accountability," Carsten Huljus, CEO of SBP, commented, "SBP has been benchmarked and accepted by leading competent regulatory authorities as a means of verification for compliance with biomass sustainability criteria. The suggestion that SBP is a smokescreen is based on a misunderstanding of what the system stands for and how it operates.

"The scope of the SBP certification system is clearly and publicly defined. Claims that SBP uses "flawed and incomplete carbon accounting, lacks independent audits and verification, and fails to provide performance-based thresholds and protections" are simply unfounded.

"Policymakers, civil society, biomass consumers and producers, and all other stakeholders can have every confidence in SBP providing assurances on the legality and sustainability of biomass used in energy production".

The SBP certification system is founded on the two principles of legality and sustainability. Those principles are broken down into criteria and again into indicators, of which there are 38 in total covering a range of requirements, including ensuring compliance with local laws, ensuring features and species of outstanding or exceptional value are identified and protected, and ensuring carbon stocks are maintained or increased over the medium to long term.



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Together those indicators set SBP's definition of sustainability and legality, and are published in the first of the suite of six SBP standards. SBP's definition maps on to similar schemes, such as the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), the Programme for Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC), and those schemes recognised by PEFC, such as the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI), and is based on the biomass sustainability criteria of European countries, in particular, Belgium, Denmark, the Netherlands and the UK.

The other five SBP standards cover how to evaluate the sustainability of the feedstock material, including requirements for stakeholder consultation and public reporting, how third-party verification is to be undertaken, and requirements for chain of custody.

At the heart of the SBP certification system is independent scrutiny. The first point of certification in the SBP certification system is the biomass producer (wood pellet/chip producer). The biomass producer is audited for compliance with the SBP standards, specifically that the feedstock it uses is sourced both legally and sustainably. In line with FSC, PEFC and SFI, that audit must be carried out by an independent, third-party Certification Body.

Since August 2016, the accreditation body, Accreditation Services International (ASI), has been responsible for reviewing the certification decisions made by the Certification Bodies, providing another level of independent oversight. And finally, the independent Technical Committee makes recommendations on technical decisions, including initial certification decisions.

Aside from the independence of the certification decision-making process, the independent Advisory Board provides advice directly to the Board of Directors on strategic matters, credibility of the certification system, and technical and public policy issues.

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