

# SBP Framework Standard 3: Certification Systems. Requirements for Certification Bodies

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Documents included with this Standard:

*Instruction Note 3A: General Surveillance – SBP requirements for CBs*

*Instruction Note 3B: Surveillance of Biomass Producers – SBP requirements for CBs*

*Instruction Note 3C: CoC Surveillance – SBP requirements for CBs*

*Instruction Note 3D: Non-compliance – SBP requirements for CBs*

*Instruction Note 3E: Public Summary Reports – SBP requirements for CBs*

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

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## List of abbreviations#

BP	Biomass Producer
CPET	Central Point of Expertise for Timber (run by DEFRA)
CB	Certification Body
CoC	Chain of Custody
CHP	Combined Heat and Power
CITES	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species
DEFRA	UK Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
DECC	UK Department of Energy and Climate Change
EUTR	European Union Timber Regulation
FM	Forest Management
FMS	Forest Management Scheme
FSC®	Forest Stewardship Council
GRI	Global Reporting Initiative
GGL	Green Gold Label
GHG	Greenhouse Gas
ILO	International Labour Organisation
LVS	Legality Verification Systems
LAV	Locally Applicable Verifiers
PPE	Personal Protective Equipment
PEFC	Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification
RRA	Regional Risk Assessment
RA	Risk Assessment
RSB	Roundtable on Sustainable Biomaterials
SVP	Supplier Verification Programme
SB	Supply Base
SBE	Supply Base Evaluation
SBR	Supply Base Report
SBP	Sustainable Biomass Partnership
SFI	Sustainable Forestry Initiative

# 1 Background

The Sustainable Biomass Partnership (SBP) was formed in 2013 by European utilities that are using biomass, mostly in the form of wood pellets or chips, in large thermal generating plants. Biomass-fired power and heat generation is seen as an important technology for achieving the EU's 2020 renewable energy targets and EU member states are adopting their own national approaches to ensuring that the biomass used is legally and sustainably sourced.

SBP's objective is to develop the tools necessary to demonstrate that, as a minimum, solid biomass used for energy production meets these national requirements. The SBP Framework is designed as a clear statement of principles, standards and processes necessary to demonstrate such compliance. Wherever possible, the Framework takes into account and builds on existing regulatory mechanisms and on voluntary certification standards already applied to other forest product streams or to other biomass sources.

The SBP Framework provides a means to collect data describing the nature of the feedstock as well as data to be employed in the regulatory calculations of greenhouse gas (GHG) savings from its use. It also provides a means to demonstrate that risks to forest carbon stocks are managed and that forests' carbon sequestration capability is maintained.

Collectively, the six SBP Standards represent a certification framework, or scheme, against which organisations can be assessed for compliance by independent third-party Certification Bodies (CBs). An organisation that satisfactorily demonstrates compliance receives a certificate and is entitled to make SBP claims in relation to its biomass.

The SBP Framework is made freely available for use by all supply chain actors irrespective of whether or not they are members of SBP.

## 2 Scope

This document (SBP Standard 3: Certification Systems. Requirements for Certification Bodies) specifies the requirements for all Certification Bodies (CBs) providing SBP certification including the audit of BP Supply Base Evaluations (SBEs), Chain of Custody (CoC) systems, and certification claims made by organisations. The objective of this Standard is to ensure that CBs operate in a consistent, reliable and credible manner, thereby facilitating their acceptance on a national and international basis, thus furthering trade and promoting sustainable biomass use.

In cases where documented SBP requirements require further interpretation, this will be provided on a publicly available internet platform managed by SBP.

The SBP will conduct an interim process of approval of CBs. CBs shall be required to demonstrate their capacity to implement the SBP requirements. Lead auditors and personnel in the review and certification decision-making process shall have successfully completed an SBP-approved training course. The performance of CBs shall be monitored on an ongoing basis, including the review of all audit reports by the SBP prior to the certification of BPs.

A process for the accreditation of CBs may be introduced at a later stage.

### 3 Normative references

*ISO/IEC 17065:2012 Conformity assessment -- Requirements for bodies certifying products, processes and services*

*SBP Standard 1: Feedstock Compliance Standard*

*SBP Standard 2: Verification of SBP-compliant Feedstock*

*SBP Standard 4: Chain of Custody*

*SBP Standard 5: Collection and Communication of Data*

*SBP Standard 6: Energy and Carbon Balance Calculation*

*Standards from SBP-approved FM schemes (FSC® and PEFC)*

*Standards from SBP-approved CoC schemes (see Table 1)*

## 4 Glossary of terms and definitions

Please refer to separate *SBP Glossary of Terms and Definitions* document.



## 5 Accreditation requirements

5.1 For the evaluation of the BP's management systems, CBs shall be accredited by either Accreditation Services International (ASI) or a National Accreditation Body to provide FSC® or PEFC Forest Management certification.

5.2 For CoC certification, CBs shall hold valid FSC®, PEFC, or SFI CoC accreditation. The scope of the accreditation (supply chain or forest management) shall be equivalent to the applicable scope for SBP certification (supply chain or BP's management systems evaluation).

5.3 CBs shall operate SBP certification in compliance with the requirements of ISO/IEC 17065:2012 Conformity assessment – Requirements for bodies certifying products, processes and services.

5.4 For certification against SBP Standard 5: Collection and Communication of Data and SBP Standard 6: Energy and Carbon Balance Calculation, additional requirements may be found in Instruction Document 5A and relevant country specific Instruction Documents relating to Standard 6.

## 6 General requirements

6.1 For audits undertaken on companies operating a FSC® based management system, the CB shall implement all relevant requirements of FSC-STD-20-001 V3-0 EN: General requirements for FSC® accredited Certification Bodies: application of ISO/IEC Guide 65:1996 (E).

6.2 For audits undertaken on companies operating a PEFC based management system, the CB shall implement all relevant requirements of PEFC, Annex 6, Certification and Accreditation procedures.

6.3 For audits undertaken on companies operating a SFI based management system, the CB shall implement all relevant requirements of SFI, SFI 2010-2014, Section 9. Audit procedures and auditor qualification and accreditation.

6.4 For audits undertaken on companies operating FSC®, PEFC or SFI CoC systems the CB shall implement all relevant requirements as shown in the table below.

Scheme	Standard(s) for CoC evaluation	Standard(s) for BP certification
FSC®	FSC® CoC system - <i>Accreditation Standard for Chain of Custody Evaluations, FSC-STD-20-011 V2-0 EN</i>	<i>Standard for evaluation of FSC® Controlled Wood in Forest Management Enterprises, FSC-STD-20-012 V1-1 and Forest management evaluations, FSC-STD-20-007 V3-0 EN</i>
PEFC	PEFC CoC system - <i>Requirements for Certification Bodies operating Certification against the PEFC International Chain of Custody Standard, PEFC ST 2003:2012.</i>	PEFC, Annex 6, <i>Certification and Accreditation procedures</i>
SFI	SFI CoC System - <i>SFI 2010-2014, Section 9. Audit procedures and auditor qualification and accreditation.</i>	SFI 2010-2014, Section 9. <i>Audit procedures and auditor qualification and accreditation</i>

Table 1. Relevant standards from three SBP-approved CoC systems.

Note: Where these standards have been superseded the latest versions shall be applicable with the same Standard effective date.

6.5 The CB shall state which SBP-approved CoC systems the assessment is undertaken against.

## 7 Basic principles

7.1 An SBP certificate issued by a CB provides a credible assurance that there is no major failure in conformance with the requirements of the applicable SBP Standard across the entire scope of the certificate.

7.2 In order to provide such an assurance, the CB shall:

- a) Analyse and describe any and all of the following that apply to the organisation:
  - Structure, operation, inputs and outputs
  - CoC system
  - Critical control points
  - Greenhouse gas (GHG) data collection
  - The Supply Base Evaluation (SBE), including SBE scope
  - Implementation of the Instructions for Biomass Producers for the development of Locally Applicable Verifiers.
  - Risk scoring of each Indicator at both Risk Assessment (RA) and Supplier Verification Programme (SVP) stages
  - Effectiveness of any mitigation measures implemented as part of the SBE
  - Staff competence in meeting SBP requirements
  - Competence of the organisation responsible for conducting the SBE (whether internal or external).
- b) Confirm that the organisation's management system is capable of ensuring that all requirements of the standards are implemented across the entire scope of the evaluation.
- c) Conduct adequate and appropriate sampling and review of sites, documents, management records, interviews, consultations with stakeholders and direct observations, in order to verify that there is full conformance with the performance thresholds specified in the applicable standards.
- d) Confirm that the certificate holder complies with all the CB's and SBP's requirements regarding claims, logos, certification marks and trademarks.

7.3 In addition to the specified FSC®, PEFC and SFI scheme specific certification requirements, the CB shall also implement the requirements for surveillance audits set out in Instruction Notes 3A, 3B, 3C and 3D of this document.

## 8 Competence

8.1 The CB shall employ, or have access to, a sufficient number of personnel to cover its operations related to the certification schemes and to the applicable standards and other normative documents.

8.2 The personnel shall be competent for the functions they perform, including making required technical judgments, defining policies and implementing them.

8.3 The CB shall implement the requirements of ISO/IEC 17065:2012(E) section 6.1.2 Management of competence for personnel involved in the certification process.

8.4 The CB shall ensure that the audit team undertaking an audit of a BP has the combined necessary knowledge and experience to evaluate against the SBP Feedstock Compliance Standard in the local context of the Supply Base (SB), including:

- Knowledge of ecological and social values associated with the SB
- Knowledge of applicable laws and regulations
- Knowledge of business management practices
- Knowledge of operation of suppliers, including management systems and products
- Knowledge of the local forest resource
- Language skills appropriate to all stakeholders

8.5 The CB shall ensure that the audit team undertaking an audit against any SBP Standard has the combined necessary knowledge and experience to evaluate against that Standard.

8.6 Lead auditors and personnel in the review and certification decision-making process shall be approved by SBP for their tasks at the time of undertaking those tasks. Confirmation of approval is available to CBs from SBP.

## 9 Certification Body stakeholder consultation

9.1 During the main audit of the BP and the re-certification audit, the CB shall undertake a stakeholder consultation process.

9.2 During the stakeholder consultation process, the CB shall identify relevant individuals and organisations interested in and affected by the operation of the applicant BP. CBs are not expected to identify and consult all possible stakeholders, but shall consult with a sufficient number of affected stakeholders in order to verify that management systems (documented or undocumented) are working effectively and consistently under the full range of conditions present in the area under evaluation.

9.3 The CB shall consult with stakeholders included in the BPs SBE consultation and the Locally Applicable Verifiers (LAVs) process. As a part of the CB consultation the CB shall determine if stakeholders' comments were adequately addressed by the BP.

9.4 The CB shall give stakeholders at least one month's notice of the audit. Notification shall include adequate information to enable stakeholders to make informed comments, but shall not include sensitive or commercially confidential information.

9.5 The CB shall encourage stakeholders to submit relevant information to the CB, in order to evaluate compliance of the BP with SBP requirements.

9.6 During the audit process, the CB shall review all submissions and evaluate those that are relevant. All submissions shall be recorded and the CB shall document actions taken in relation to relevant submissions, and the conclusions of the CB regarding compliance of the BP with the Standards.

9.7 CBs are not required to undertake a stakeholder consultation process during surveillance audits. However, all submissions received by the CB regarding the compliance of a certified BP, shall be recorded. If submissions contain information relevant to compliance with SBP requirements, the CB shall evaluate the comments as they affect the certification, during or prior to the next audit, as appropriate.

9.8 Records of evaluations and outcomes of all stakeholder consultations shall be maintained for at least five years.

## 10 Certification Body reporting

10.1 Where a certificate is issued to a BP, the CB shall make available a public summary of its audit of the BP. Additional requirements are included in Instruction Note 3E in this Standard.

10.2 CBs shall download and use the current version of reporting templates as listed by SBP on the SBP website.

Note: The listing of a reporting template on the SBP website shall mean that its use is mandatory.

10.3 Main evaluation reports, surveillance reports, public summary reports and updates shall be submitted to SBP no later than ninety (90) days after the on-site closing meeting at the end of a CB audit.

10.4 The basic quantitative information for each certificate shall be entered and updated in the SBP database of registered certificates at each evaluation as required by SBP.

## 11 SBP certificates

11.1 The CB shall issue certificates using the latest version of the SBP certificate template. This is available for downloading from the SBP website.

11.2 Certificates shall be numbered using the form:

SBP-XX-YY

Where:

SBP does not change

XX- is a 2 digit number allocated to the CB by SBP

YY- is a unique 2 digit integer specific to the certificate holder.

Note: The CB may add additional '0' (zero) values in front of the 'XX' and 'YY' values where this facilitates integration with existing data systems.

## 12 Certification of generators against regulatory requirements

12.1 Requirements are set out in SBP Standard 6: Energy and Carbon Balance Calculation.



## 13 Client contracts

Adapted from reference text: *General requirements for FSC®-accredited Certification Bodies. FSC-STD-20-001 V3-0 EN*

Contracts between BP applicants (the “**Clients**”) and CBs must include the following:

13.1 The relevant provisions ensuring the right of the CB and SBP and their respective authorised agents at any reasonable time to have access to the Client’s premises (or to arrange for such authorised representatives to have access to other relevant premises owned or controlled by the Client or its group companies) for the purpose of inspecting and taking copies of any information, documentation, goods, books and records deemed necessary by the CB or SBP.

13.2 The relevant provisions ensuring the Client is required to promptly provide to the CB and SBP and their respective authorised agents all such information, documentation books and records deemed necessary by the CB or SBP.

13.3 The relevant provisions ensuring the right of the CB and/or SBP to use and process any information relating to the Client or otherwise provided by or through the Client including but not limited to any Supply Base Report (SBR); CB public summary reports; data required by SBP for GHG calculations and regulatory reporting; any data required by SBP to be supplied to the Client’s purchaser/customer with each batch of biomass supplied or sold.

13.4 The conditions and terms necessary for a Client (as a holder of a certificate issued by the CB) to comply with on an on-going basis in order to maintain a certificate issued by the CB (the “**Certificate**”) shall include that the Client:

- 13.4.1 complies and continues to comply with all the CB’s conditions and terms for maintaining, renewing and re-issuing of the Certificate, including but not limited to the full implementation of any actions required to correct minor non-conformances that were identified prior to the issue of the Certificate;
- 13.4.2 complies and continues to comply with all the CB’s and SBP requirements, arrangement and licences regarding claims, logos, certification marks, trademarks or any other intellectual property rights of the CB and SBP;
- 13.4.3 corrects any major non-conformances with the applicable standard(s) within the minimum period specified by the CB;
- 13.4.4 undergoes surveillance as determined by the CB; and
- 13.4.5 complies and continues to comply with all agreements and arrangements between the Client and SBP and all SBP requirements.

13.5 In the event that the CB suspends, terminates or withdraws a Certificate the Client shall

- 13.5.1 immediately at its own expense remove SBP's name (in any form), initials, logo, certification mark, trademarks and intellectual property from its products, information, website, documents, advertising or marketing or any other materials;
- 13.5.2 immediately cease and desist from using (including by the Client's group companies) SBP's name (in any form), initials, logo, certification mark, trademarks and intellectual property;
- 13.5.3 immediately cease to sell any products with SBP claims or references or SBP name or any SBP marks or any intellectual property relating to SBP or make any claims or representation (oral or written) that imply that it complies with the requirements of the Certificate, CB or SBP;
- 13.5.4 where a product (including biomass) has been supplied with an SBP-compliant claim or representation or mark, immediately identify all relevant customers/purchasers who are in receipt of, or have ordered, such product, and notify each of such customers/purchasers of the suspension, withdrawal or termination (as the case may be) in writing within three (3) business days of the suspension, withdrawal or termination and maintain records of such notification;
- 13.4.5 provide such co-operation and information as may be required by CB or SBP to enable CB or SBP to verify and confirm that the Client is in compliance with all its obligations to CB and SBP.
- 13.6 That on withdrawal or termination of the Certificate, the Client shall promptly return the original and all copies of the Certificate to the issuing CB or destroy the original, and commit to destroy any electronic copies and hardcopies in its possession or control.
- 13.7 In the event that the CB suspends, terminates or withdraws a Certificate, it shall promptly (and in any event within three (3) business days of the suspension or withdrawal or termination) notify SBP in writing of the same and such notification shall state the action taken and the effective date and reason of suspension or withdrawal or termination.
- 13.8 That both the CB and SBP shall be entitled and authorized to process the Client's personal data and business data (so far as is necessary for the purpose of performance obligations to CB and/or SBP) in accordance with Directive 95/46/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data, and any other applicable data protection legislation.

## Instruction Note 3A: General Surveillance - SBP requirements for CBs

Adapted from Reference Source: *General requirements for FSC® accredited certification bodies: application of ISO/IEC Guide 65:1996 (E) FSC-STD-20-001 (Version 3-0) EN*

See also: *Surveillance (ISO/IEC Guide 65: 1996 (E) Clause 13)*

- 1 Surveillance evaluations of SBP certificate holders shall take place annually (i.e. every 12 months), or more frequently, depending on factors such as:
  - a) The scale of the operation (e.g. the area of the SB, the quantity of material manufactured, or the value and/or volume of material traded)
  - b) The intensity of resource management in the case of a SB (e.g. the frequency and level of timber harvesting)
  - c) The complexity of the CoC control system
  - d) The ecological sensitivity of the SB to management intervention
  - e) The experience and performance record of the personnel involved (e.g. managers, staff, contractors)
  - f) The number and nature of any non-conformances identified by the CB
  - g) The number and nature of any complaints submitted by stakeholders.
  
- 2 The CB shall assign one or more persons who were independent of the audit to decide whether or not to continue, suspend or withdraw certification based on their review of surveillance activities.

# Instruction Note 3B: Surveillance of Biomass Producers – SBP requirements for CBs

Adapted from Reference Source: *FSC-STD-20-007 (V3-0) EN: Forest management evaluations*

## 1 Surveillance

### 1.1 General requirements

1.1.1 The CB shall carry out a surveillance evaluation to monitor the certificate holder's continued conformance with applicable certification requirements, at least annually (i.e. every 12 months).

1.1.2 For certificates with a duration of five years, at least four surveillance evaluations shall take place before the certificate expires.

1.1.3 The CB shall carry out one or more annual on-site visits for all BP certificate holders.

1.1.4 Surveillance evaluations shall follow clear, documented procedures and shall include the elements specified in this Standard.

1.1.5 The CB shall have documented procedures for surveillance which include:

- a) Evaluation of the certificate holder's compliance with all conditions and subsequent corrective actions, on which certification is based
- b) Review of any complaints or allegations of non-compliance with any aspect of the applicable SBP Standards
- c) Evaluation of an adequate and appropriate sample of sites and records, and interviews with a sufficient number of affected stakeholders, in order to verify that management systems (documented or undocumented) are working effectively and consistently, under the full range of conditions present in the area under evaluation.

1.1.6 During annual surveillance evaluations, the CB may focus on specific elements of the applicable SBP Standards, including particular SBP principles or aspects of management, thereby reducing the duration and cost of surveillance. However, all aspects of the SBP Standards shall be monitored during the period of validity of the certificate.

### 1.2 Review of documentation and records

1.2.1 The CB shall review:

- a) Any changes to the area included in the scope of the SBE, including additions, exclusions, or SB area changes
- b) Changes to the certificate holder's management system
- c) Complaints received

- d) Training records
- e) Operational plan(s) for the next 12 months
- f) Feedstock supply records
- g) Records of sales of SBP-certified products (copies of invoices, bills, shipping documents)
- h) Records of the RA, SVP and monitoring carried out
- i) Records of any mitigation measures and their subsequent monitoring.

1.2.2 The CB shall specifically assess the capacity of the certificate holder's management system to manage any change in scope of the certificate, including any increase in the number of suppliers, and in the size, number or complexity of the SB within the scope of the certificate.

1.2.3 Documentation and records covering the period since the previous evaluation may be submitted to the CB for review, prior to a site visit.

# Instruction Note 3C: CoC Surveillance – SBP requirements for CBs

Adapted from Reference Source: *FSC-STD-20-011 V2-0 EN: Chain of Custody Evaluations Part 1, Section 3, Surveillance Evaluations.*

## 1 General requirements

1.1 Surveillance audits shall follow clear, documented procedures, which address the elements specified in this Standard, and shall include in particular:

- a) Inspection and, if necessary, retention of relevant records of the certified and non-certified inputs used by the certificate holder
- b) Sampling of other relevant records
- c) Physical site inspection to verify the consistency and completeness of records and to ensure that an effective CoC system is in place.

1.2 The CB shall carry out a surveillance evaluation to monitor the certificate-holder's continued compliance with the applicable requirements of the relevant SBP certification standard(s) at least annually.

1.2.1 For a certificate that has a five-year duration, at least four surveillance evaluations shall take place before the certificate expires (unless clause 1.2.1 applies). However, a surveillance evaluation may not require a site level visit (see clause 1.2.2).

1.2.2 Surveillance evaluations may be waived for operations that have not produced, labelled or sold any biomass with an SBP-claim since the previous audit.

1.2.3 The CB has the authority to waive a surveillance evaluation on the grounds described above. The CB may still require a surveillance evaluation to be carried out, if this is considered necessary to ensure confidence in the certificate.

1.2.4 Under the circumstances described in 1.2.2, the CB shall require the certificate holder to sign a declaration stating that no biomass has been produced, labelled or sold with an SBP-claim since the last audit. The declaration shall contain a commitment by the certificate holder to contact the CB before commencing the production, labelling or sale of material with an SBP-claim. The declaration shall also contain a commitment to maintaining the certificate holder's CoC system during the period in question.

During the next surveillance evaluation, the CB shall review all records dating back to the previous on-site audit, to ensure that the CoC system has been maintained, and that no biomass has been produced, labelled or sold with an SBP-claim.

1.2.5 CBs shall not waive more than two consecutive surveillance evaluations.

1.3 Surveillance evaluations shall include:

- a) Evaluation of the certificate holder's implementation of all corrective action requests on which certification is based
- b) Review of any complaints, disputes or allegations of non-compliance regarding any applicable aspect of the relevant SBP certification standard(s)
- c) Evaluation of an adequate and appropriate sample of sites and records in order to verify that the management system (documented or undocumented) is working effectively and consistently, in the full range of conditions present in the entity under evaluation.

## 2 Review of documentation and records

2.1 The CB shall review at a minimum:

2.1.1 Any changes to the scope of the certificate, including new CoC procedures, operations and changes in activities.

2.1.2 Changes to the certificate holder's management system.

2.1.3 Inventory records.

2.1.4 Purchasing and sales documentation for feedstock and biomass (invoices, bills, transport documents, sales contracts).

2.1.5 Confirmation that inputs described as SBP-certified were covered by a valid SBP CoC certificate and supplied with the appropriate certification codes.

2.1.6 a) Calculations of credits and/or input percentages for each product group within the scope of the certificate.

b) A sample of records of certified outputs, and confirmation that these can be traced to certified inputs.

2.1.7 Use of the SBP trademarks (in transport and delivery documentation and promotional materials).

2.1.8 Training records.

2.1.9 Complaints received.

2.2 Records of complaints and resolution procedures shall be assessed by the CB during the evaluation.

## 3 Surveillance of the operational site

3.1 The auditor(s) shall visit the physical site(s) of each operation selected for evaluation in order to observe the applicable CoC system. This is to verify that there has been compliance with the requirements of the specific SBP certification standard(s) under evaluation at that site.

3.2 Desk audits may be carried out, without the need for on-site visits, for operations that do not take physical possession of SBP-certified materials or products in their own or rented facilities, and do not label, alter, store or re-package the products (e.g. sales offices or agents).



## Instruction Note 3D: Non-compliance – SBP requirements for CBs

Adapted from Reference Source: *FSC-STD-20-011 V2-0 EN: Chain of Custody Evaluations, Part 1, Section 4, Certification Decision.*

1.1 CBs shall make certification decisions based on their evaluation of the operation's compliance with each applicable requirement, as specified in the relevant SBP certification standard(s).

1.2 All non-compliances with the applicable requirements of the relevant SBP certification standard(s) that are identified by the CB during main or surveillance audits shall be recorded in the evaluation report or associated checklists.

1.3 The CB shall identify and evaluate each non-compliance to determine whether it constitutes a minor or major non-compliance. Non-compliances shall result in corrective action requests, and, in some cases, suspension or withdrawal of the certificate.

1.4 The auditor may also identify emerging issues, which, if not addressed by the client, may lead to future non-compliances. Such issues shall be recorded in the main evaluation or surveillance audit report as 'observations' for the benefit of the client.

1.5 A non-compliance may be considered minor if:

- a) It is a temporary lapse OR
- b) It is unusual/non-systemic OR
- c) The impacts of the non-compliance are limited in their scale and duration AND
- d) It does not result in failure to meet the relevant requirement.

1.6 A non-compliance shall be considered major if, either alone or in combination with further non-compliances, it results in, or is likely to result in, a fundamental failure to meet the relevant requirement(s) for operation(s) within the scope of the evaluation.

Such failure shall be indicated by non-compliance(s) which:

- a) Continue over a long period of time, OR
- b) Are repeated or systematic, OR
- c) Affect a wide range of the production, OR
- d) Are not corrected or adequately addressed by the responsible managers, once they have been identified.

1.7 The CB shall consider the impact of a non-compliance on the integrity of the affected SBP-certified products and the credibility of the SBP trademarks, when evaluating whether a non-compliance results in, or is likely to result in, a fundamental failure to meet the relevant requirement.

1.8 The CB shall determine whether the impact of multiple minor non-compliances is sufficient to demonstrate 'systemic' failure (i.e. failure of management systems). In such situations, these minor non-compliances shall constitute a major non-compliance.

1.9 Corrective action requests shall adhere to the following timeframes:

1.9.1 Minor non-compliances shall be corrected within one year (under exceptional circumstances, within two years).

1.9.2 Major non-compliance shall be corrected within three months (under exceptional circumstances, within six months).

1.9.3 Action(s) to correct a major non-compliance may take more than three months to complete, but sufficient action shall be taken within the specified period (i.e. three months, or six months in exceptional circumstances), to prevent new instances of non-compliance within the scope of the certification.

1.9.4 Corrective action request timelines commence from the moment when they are formally presented to the auditee and no later than three months from the audit closing date.

1.10 The CB shall determine whether the corrective action has been appropriately implemented within its timeframe. If the action taken is not considered adequate, then:

1.10.1 Minor non-compliances shall be re-categorised as major non-compliances, which shall be corrected within a maximum period of three months (or in exceptional circumstances, six months).

1.10.2 Major non-compliances shall lead to immediate suspension of the certificate.

1.10.3 Major non-compliances shall not be downgraded to minor non-compliances.

1.11 The occurrence of five or more major non-compliances in a surveillance audit shall be considered as a breakdown of the company's system and the certificate shall be suspended immediately.

1.12 The CB shall not issue or re-issue a certificate to a company if there is a major non-compliance with the requirements of the applicable SBP Standard(s).

1.12.1 Corrective action shall be taken by the company and approved by the Certification Body before a certificate is re-issued.

1.13 The CB shall issue a letter of notification to companies whose certificate has expired, or has been terminated, suspended or withdrawn. The notification letter shall include:

- a) A clear statement about the invalid status of the certificate (expired, suspended, withdrawn or terminated)
- b) The official date from which the certification becomes invalid
- c) The rationale for invalidating the certification which shall include, but is not limited to, an explanation for any breach of the certification contract and the nature of the relevant non-compliance with SBP certification standard(s) (including name, version number and date)

- d) In case of expired certification, or certification having been terminated voluntarily, a reference to the voluntary decision of the company or the agreement between the company and the CB
- e) A requirement to refrain from using any and all SBP trademarks.
- f) A statement requiring the company to provide acknowledge in writing of receipt of the letter of notification, its acceptance of its conditions and that it understands the invalidation of its certification.

1.14 The CB shall keep records of all letters of notification sent to companies and the respective letters acknowledging receipt and understanding of the conditions.

# Instruction Note 3E: Public Summary Reports – SBP requirements for CBs

Adapted from Reference Source: *Forest management evaluations addendum – Forest certification public summary reports FSC-STD-20-007b (V1-0) EN*

## 1 General requirements

1.1 The CB shall prepare a public summary report for each BP to which a certificate is issued in accordance with the requirements specified in this standard.

1.2 If the main evaluation report meets the content requirements for the public summary report and the main evaluation report is publicly available in accordance with the requirements of this standard for language and public availability, then there is no requirement to prepare an additional, separate, public summary.

## 2 Public availability

2.1 The CB public summary report will be published on the SBP website.

2.2 Main evaluation reports, public summary reports and annual updates shall be submitted to the SBP no later than ninety (90) days after the on-site closing meeting at the end of a CB audit.

## 3 Content

3.1 The public summary report shall be concise, covering the most important features, and shall be completed using the latest versions of the public summary report template downloaded from the SBP website.

## 4 Updates

4.1 The CB shall provide SBP with an update of the public summary report within ninety (90) days after the last field day of each surveillance evaluation. Updates should be provided in the form of a revised report or additional pages, either published separately or added to the original public summary.

4.2 Updates shall include at least the following information:

- a) The date of the surveillance evaluation and a brief summary of the sites inspected
- b) A description of any significant changes in the SB, mitigation measures or risk ratings
- c) A description of the actions taken by the certificate holder to correct any non-conformities identified at previous evaluations or subsequently
- d) The CB's conclusions as to whether the actions taken constitute full conformity with the requirements of the relevant elements of the applicable SBP Standard and, if not, whether the remaining non-conformities is considered a 'minor' or 'major' non-conformity

- e) Description of any further non-conformities identified as a results of the surveillance audit
- f) Updated presentation of stakeholder comments and the results of the evaluation of those comments.
- g) Statement of new conditions (namely, requirements to correct all identified non- conformities)
- h) The updated certification decision.