



Standards Development Process

Standards Development Process: Terms of Reference

Sustainable Biomass Program
sbp-cert.org



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Document history

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1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose

This Standards Development Process Terms of Reference (ToR) sets out the approach proposed in the development of Standards 1 to 6.

1.2 Key



Denotes section relevant to Standards 1 and 2 only



Denotes stage in Standards 1 & 2 timeline



Denotes stage in Standards 3 to 6 timeline

1.3 Terms of Reference development process

The Standards Development Process Terms of Reference (ToR) has been developed by the Secretariat in line with the requirements set out in the Document Development Procedure v2.0 (October 2019).

The ToR has been presented to the Standards Committee (SC), Technical Committee (TC) and Stakeholder Advisory Group (SADG) for review and comment, prior to proceeding with the development of Standards 1 to 6.

The Secretariat has approached organisations responsible for similar international standards, such as FSC, PEFC, SFI and AFF. They were invited to comment on the ToR and have been invited to participate in relevant stakeholder events during the Process.

A public summary of the Standards Development Process has also been developed to ensure that stakeholders have the information they need to determine whether and how to participate.

2 Objectives of the Standards

The overall objectives of the standards are set out below and their contribution to SBP's purpose discussed.

2.1 Objectives of Standards 1 and 2

Standards 1 and 2 aim to provide an effective and verifiable process that Biomass Producers (BPs) can use to assure End-users that feedstock is legally and sustainably sourced. The process applies a risk-based regional approach using credible information and evidence that addresses legality and sustainability criteria at the regional level combined with the application of mitigation measures by Biomass Producers to address any identified sustainability risks.

2.2 Objectives of Standards 3 to 6

Standards 3 to 6 aim to set out the requirements for:

- Independent Certification Bodies to ensure credible and consistent application of the SBP requirements;
- Maintaining the Chain of Custody for biomass through the supply chain;
- Data collection and communication; and
- Certification of the energy and carbon balance calculation (note: Standard 6 is not currently used).

3 Scope of the standards

- **SBP Standard 1: Feedstock Compliance** sets out the principles, criteria and indicators to be met by participating BPs as part of a Supply Base Evaluation (SBE). The requirements are applicable to woody feedstock used in the production of biomass, including feedstock for the biomass product and that used in the production process, e.g. for drying.
- **Standard 2: Verification of SBP-compliant Feedstock** sets out how BPs verify feedstock inputs against the SBP requirements, including those specified in Standard 1: Feedstock Compliance.
- **SBP Standard 3: Requirements for Certification Bodies** defines how the Certification Body assesses that the evaluation undertaken by organisations meets the SBP requirements.
- **SBP Standard 4: Chain of Custody** sets out the systems that need to be put in place by organisations to make claims related to compliance with the SBP requirements.
- **SBP Standard 5: Collection and Communication of Data** specifies how the data, which must accompany SBP-certified biomass through the supply chain, are to be collected and communicated.
- **SBP Standard 6: Energy and Carbon Balance Calculation** allows for the certification of the energy and carbon balance calculation by Biomass End-users.

4 Standards Development Process

The development of Standards 1 and 2 will involve the stages illustrated in Figure 1.

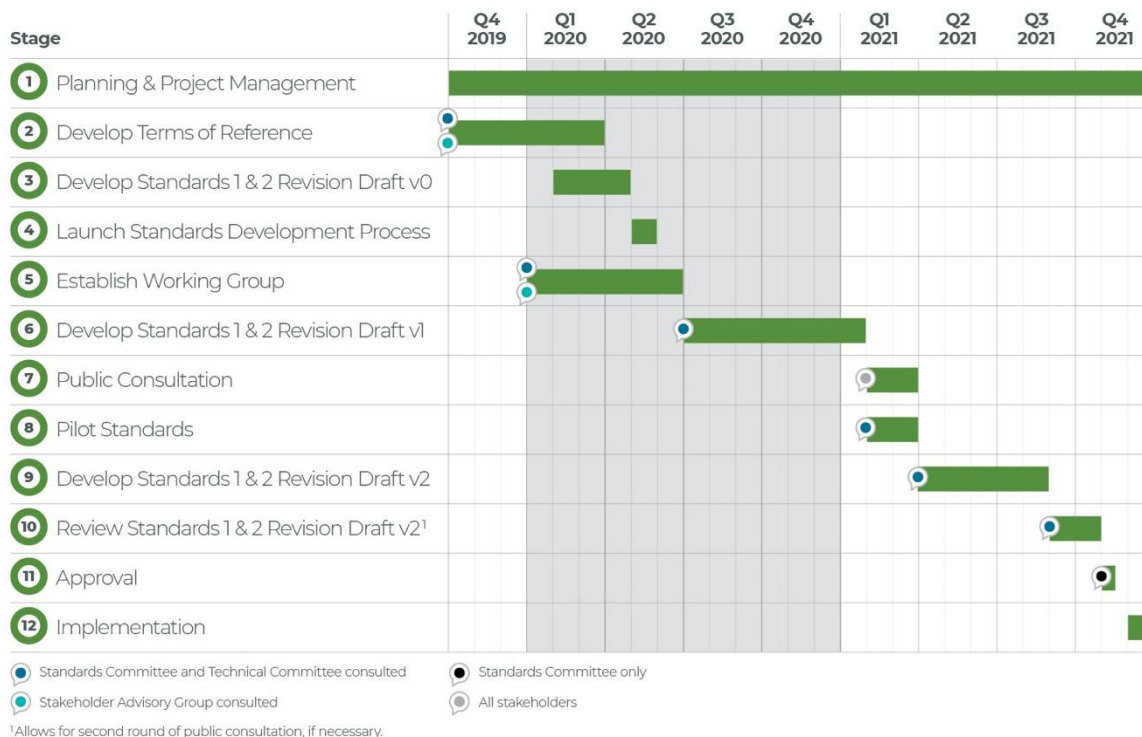


Figure 1 Timeline for Standards 1 and 2

The development of Standards 3 to 6 will involve the stages illustrated in Figure 2.

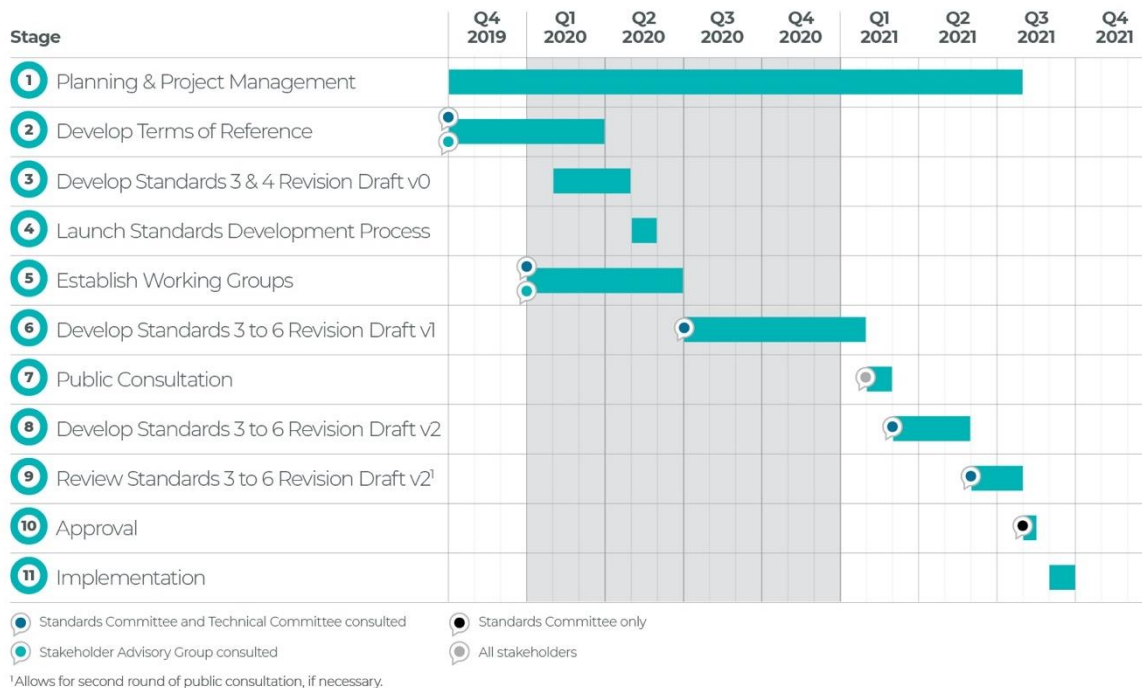


Figure 2 Timeline for Standards 3 to 6

The stages are elaborated on in Section 4.2, which is also explored further in Annex 2. However, it is helpful to first understand the roles of SC, TC and SADG as illustrated in the RACIE matrix in Section 4.1.

4.1 RACIE Matrix

Figure 3 sets out roles and responsibilities during the Standards Development Process for Standards 1 and 2.

Stage	Secretariat	Standards Development Process Working Group A	Standards Committee	Technical Committee	Stakeholder Advisory Group
Planning	R E		C	I	C
Standards Development Process Terms of Reference	R E		C	C	C
Stakeholder Engagement	R E		C	C	C
Standards Development Process Launch	R E		C	C	C
Establish Working Group	R E		C	C	C
Develop Standards 1 & 2 Revision Draft v1	R	E	C	C	I
Public Consultation	R E	I	I	I	I
Pilot	R E	I	I	I	I
Develop Standards 1 & 2 Revision Draft v2	R	E	C	C	I
Approval	I	I	A	C	I

● Responsible
 ● Accountable
 ● Consulted
 ● Informed
 ● Execute

Figure 3 RACIE matrix for Standards 1 and 2

Figure 4 sets out roles and responsibilities during the Standards Development Process for Standards 1 and 2.

Stage	Secretariat	Standards Development Process Working Groups B & C	Standards Committee	Technical Committee	Stakeholder Advisory Group
Planning	R E		C	I	C
Standards Development Process Terms of Reference	R E		C	C	C
Stakeholder Engagement	R E		C	C	C
Standards Development Process Launch	R E		C	C	C
Establish Working Groups	R E		C	C	C
Develop Standards 3 to 6 Revision Draft v1	R	E	C	C	I
Public Consultation	R E	I	I	I	I
Develop Standards 3 to 6 Revision Draft v2	R	E	C	C	I
Approval	I	I	A	C	I

● Responsible
 ● Accountable
 ● Consulted
 ● Informed
 ● Execute

Figure 4 RACIE matrix for Standards 3 to 6

4.2 Standards Development Process flowchart

Figure 5 explains the steps taken in the Standards Development Process. The roles of the SC, TC and SADG are highlighted separately on the Process flowchart at Annex 2.

Standard Revision Process Outline

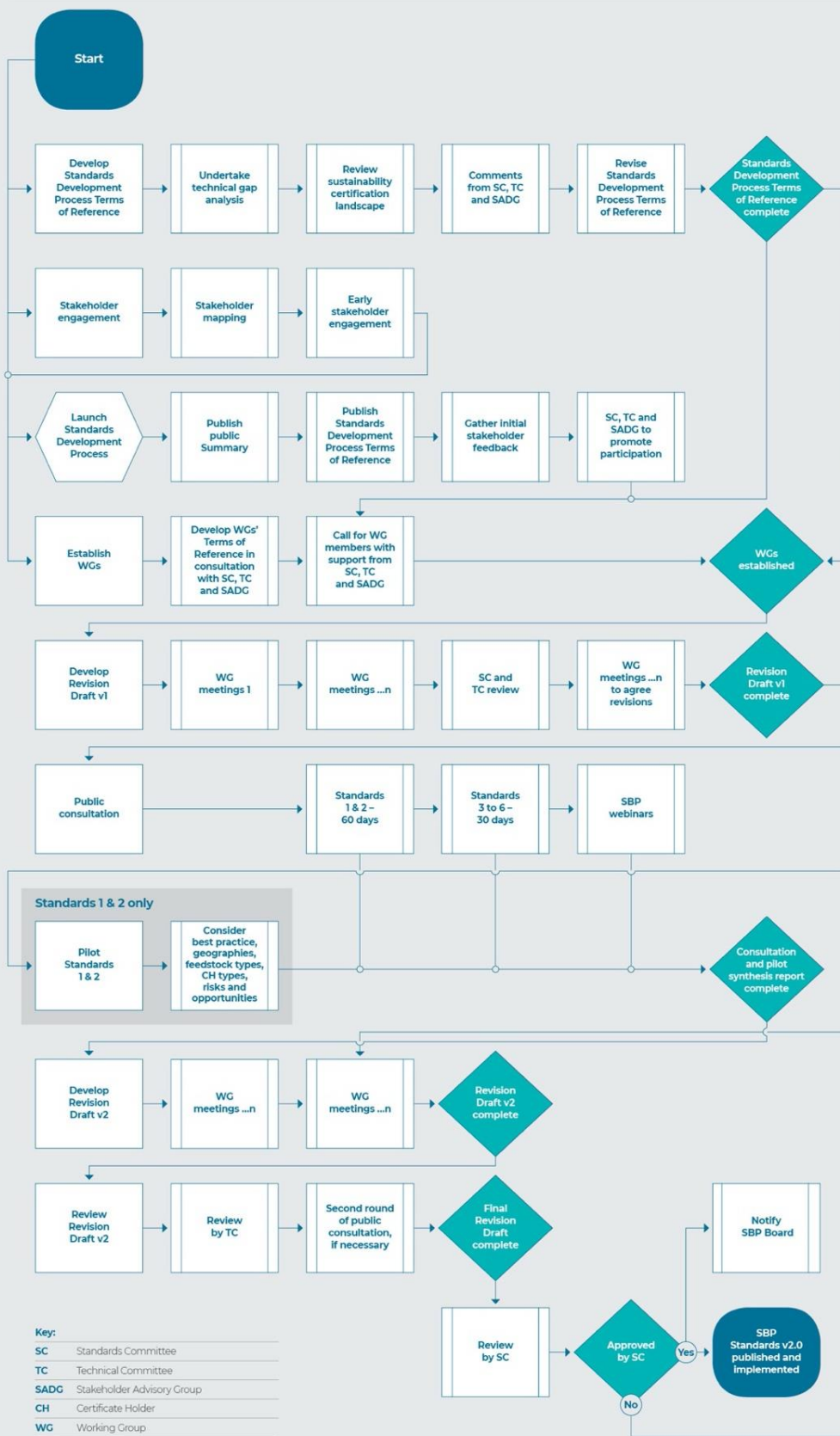


Figure 5 Standards Development Process flowchart

4.3 Planning and project management

The Secretariat will lead the Standards Development Process.

During the Process the Secretariat will engage with the SC, TC and SADG, as well as Certificate Holders (CHs), Certification Bodies (CBs) and SBP's independent Assurance Body, ASI.

The central email address is standardsdevelopment@sbp-cert.org. In addition, key individuals with clear responsibilities for specific parts of the process may provide contact details, as well as email addresses for representatives with responsibility for each key activity set out within the Process.

4.4 Transparency

The Secretariat will designate a specific area of the SBP website for communicating all matters concerning the Standards Development Process, including an overview of the Process, how to get involved, Working Group details and information, stakeholder events and FAQs. The area will act as a repository for all supporting documents, including those listed below:

- Public Summary;
- Terms of Reference;
- Working Groups Terms of Reference;
- Document Development Procedure;
- Current SBP standards;
- Normative Interpretations;
- Revision Draft v0 of Standards 1, 2, 3 and 4;
- Gap Analysis;
- Stakeholder Survey Results;
- Sustainability Certification Landscape;
- Overview of Definitions of Biomass Sustainability Within Key Markets; and
- Draft Theory of Change.

4.5 Stakeholders

Based on the scope of the standards and the desired and intended outcomes, a wide range of stakeholders has been identified and categorised as either internal stakeholder or external stakeholders and peers. These are illustrated in Figure 6.



Figure 6 SBP's stakeholder landscape

The SADG provides a platform for stakeholder input and advice to support the work of the SC in the development, implementation and maintenance of SBP standards and related documents.

Currently there are around 50 SADG members. The number of members of the SADG is unlimited, subject to a maximum of one representative from each organisation. Stakeholders are invited to register their interest in becoming members through the SBP website (<https://sbp-cert.org/about-us/how-we-operate/governance-and-people/stakeholder-advisory-group/>).

The Secretariat will establish three Working Groups (WGs), comprising subject matter experts, to develop the technical content of the standards. The Secretariat will seek balance through multi-stakeholder representation in each WG.

5 Justification of need

5.1 An assessment of priority sustainability issues in scope

Informed by stakeholder feedback and desk-based research, sustainability issues related to forests and other natural landscapes relevant to the scope of SBP were mapped out. The exercise identified a broad range of potential issues for consideration during the Standards Development Process. These will be reviewed by the relevant WG during development of Standards 1 and 2, which will consider the contribution to SBP’s desired and intended outcomes, as well as the relevant best scientific understanding, any relevant international norms and any needs to adapt to local conditions.

The UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) provide a useful framework for considering such issues. Forests and trees, when managed sustainably (for example, as demonstrated through certification at forest or regional level), provide a wide range of beneficial products and services and thereby contribute in numerous ways to meeting the 17 SDGs that countries should strive to achieve (mostly by 2030)¹.

Important sustainability issues and related SDGs potentially in scope for Standards 1 and 2 are illustrated in Figure 7.



Figure 7 Important sustainability issues and related SDGs

¹ FAO, 2018

5.2 Key issues to be considered

The key issues shown in Figure 8 have emerged from consultation with the SC, TC, SADG and CHs. Further, a stakeholder survey, conducted in February 2020, has identified additional issues and topics for consideration in the development of the standards. Some of the key issues and topics were used to inform the drafting of Revision Draft v0. The key issues and full results of the stakeholder survey will be considered by the WGs in the drafting of Revision Draft v1.

Emerging themes and issues			
Structure	Combine Standards 1 and 2	Combine Standards 4 and 5	Review Standards 3 and 6
Content and process	Move to output-based indicators or combination of process and output-based indicators	Identify opportunities for participatory monitoring	Consider transparency/mapping of Supply Base
Impacts	Gathering evidence of achieving intended outcomes	Prioritise revision of criteria and indicators based on outcomes mapped to key/priority issues	
Accessibility	Review style of standards to ensure documents are accessible and easy to use	Move to online reporting platform for audits	Establish capacity building as a fundamental element of the certification system
Independence	Consider rotation of Certification Bodies and lead auditors	Review Certification Body fee relationship with Certificate Holders	

Figure 8 Emerging themes and issues for consideration

5.3 Meeting the expressed needs

SBP's purpose is to facilitate the economically, environmentally and socially responsible use of biomass enabling climate goals to be met. Based on that, SBP's business model is to specialise in the biomass market where we have the expertise to succeed and realise our ambition to be the biomass certification system of choice. We are focused on delivering a certification system that meets our stakeholders' needs and has the desired and intended outcomes that improve the use of natural capital.

At the start of the Standards Development Process, each WG will familiarise itself with the Standards Development Process ToR and those of the relevant WG and commence a review of the relevant Revision Draft v0, if appropriate. Each WG must ensure that its scope and outputs will deliver on SBP's purpose and ensure that the desired and intended outcomes and impacts are achievable.

Each WG will prioritise the potential needs and agree the justified needs that the standards aim to meet. If necessary, additional needs will be documented in an updated Standards Development Process ToR, prior to development of Revision Draft v1.

Building on the public consultation and, where appropriate, pilot activities, each WG will work to ensure that any revisions are made to further support the delivery of the agreed needs.

5.4 Other standards that meet all or part of the expressed need

FSC and PEFC, including PEFC-endorsed schemes (for example, SFI), are SBP-approved Forest Management Schemes and SFI is an SBP-approved Chain of Custody Scheme.

The Secretariat will ensure that during the Standards Development Process a review of other certification systems and their potential recognition is conducted, whilst considering SBP's purpose. The Secretariat will seek to engage stakeholders to understand their views on best practice in consideration of other schemes.

Additional certification systems to be considered may include:

- Better Biomass
- EN-Plus
- GoodChips
- Green Gold Label
- ISCC
- REDcert
- RSB
- SURE

5.5 Sustainability definitions in key markets

The Secretariat will provide an Overview of Definitions of Biomass Sustainability Within Key Markets to the WGs, in particular to WG A as part of the initial inputs to Revision Draft v1. The intention is to support the WGs in ensuring that SBP is able to help those markets deliver on their climate goals.

6 Social, environmental and economic outcomes

Based on the current standards, SBP has identified six key impacts that define the desired and intended outcomes from implementation of its certification system, see Figure 9.



Figure 9 Six key impacts

Those desired and intended outcomes and impacts will be reviewed and updated by the Secretariat during development of a Monitoring and Evaluation system that is compliant with the ISEAL Impacts Code and the development of the standards.

SBP's purpose links the sustainable use of biomass with meeting climate goals. It is well-recognised that combating climate change and achieving sustainable development are dependent on one another.

SBP has identified eight SDGs that are of most relevance and where we can help increase positive impacts and reduce negative ones, see Figure 10.



Figure 10 Connecting with SDGs

7 Assessment of risks and mitigation

7.1 Risks to achieving outcomes

A number of risks to achieving our desired and intended outcomes may be identified. Those will be evaluated during development of the Monitoring and Evaluation system and development of the standards.

Examples include (but are not limited to):

- Failure of SBP to meet key market definitions of biomass sustainability;
- Cost of demonstrating compliance with sustainability requirements becoming a barrier to SBP certification; and
- Regulatory change.

7.2 Unintended consequences from implementation

Possible unintended consequences of the implementation of Standards 1 and 2 may include:

- Compliance costs and complexity too high for some new target CHs;
- Reduced income of CH due to lower productivity or limited expansion;
- Increase in primary feedstock demand; and
- Constraints on use of certain feedstock material.

Unintended consequences will be formally identified during the development of the Monitoring and Evaluation system and development of the standards.

7.3 Possible corrective actions

Corrective actions in response to identified risks to achieving intended outcomes and potential unintended consequences will be mapped during the development of the Monitoring and Evaluation system and development of the standards.

8 Developing Revision Draft v0 of Standards 1 to 4

To support the WGs in the development of Revision Draft v1 for Standards 1 to 4, the Secretariat has developed a Revision Draft v0 of those standards.

The following elements have fed into the development of Revision Draft v0:

- Collation of Standards 1 and 2 into one document;
- General comments from other certification systems and SBP stakeholders;
- Gap analysis of the standards;
- Feedback from stakeholders on key elements of current standards requiring revision; and
- Identification of potential new content.

Note: Instruction Document 5E: Collection and Communication of Energy and Carbon Data, published in November 2019, will be used by WG C to inform the development of Draft v1 of Standard 5. The current Standard 6, published in March 2015, will be used by WG C to inform development of Revision Draft v1 of the standard.

9 Stakeholder events

9.1 Purpose

The Standards Development Process will be formally launched on 20 May 2020 via a webinar to which all stakeholders are invited to attend.

In addition, a series of stakeholder events will be used to communicate the Standards Development Process and encourage wider engagement by key stakeholders during the Process. Prior to the launch event, we encouraged internal stakeholders (including the SC, TC, SADG and CHs) to engage with their contacts to promote wide participation.

It is envisaged that the Secretariat will use the launch as a way of encouraging further stakeholder participation and capturing any significant stakeholder concerns. Where a legitimate stakeholder concern is identified, the Secretariat will engage with the relevant stakeholder organisations and individuals and ensure representations are made to the relevant WG. This will help to ensure that Revision Draft v1 of the standards has been developed to reflect key issues and reduce the probability of major changes during the development of Revision Draft v2. Should there be substantive changes between Revision Drafts v1 and v2, a second round of public consultation (30 days) will be necessary.

9.2 Key elements of the stakeholder events

Early stakeholder engagement

Every effort will be made to ensure engagement with stakeholders, particularly before the proposed events. The Secretariat will work with internal stakeholders to seek engagement with under-represented and disadvantaged or directly affected stakeholders.

Geographic reach

The launch webinar is to be held at a time convenient for the majority of geographies with an interest in the sector. There will be additional webinar events to supplement the public consultation stage and these will be arranged to allow specific regional focus on, for example, North America, Europe, Russia and Asia. Event materials will be made available as a pre-read at least two weeks prior to each event.

Transparency

As mentioned above, the Standards Development Process will have a designated area of the SBP website, which will hold all relevant communications and supporting materials and documentation.

10 Establishing the Working Groups

As stated above, the Secretariat will appoint WG Chairs and establish the WGs such that they comprise a balance of subject matter experts and interested parties. The WGs will develop the technical content of each of the standards, as well as make recommendations to SBP and/or other WGs. The SC, TC, and SADG will be consulted during the process of selecting the WGs' members.

Three Working Groups will be established:

- Working Group A for Standards 1 and 2
- Working Group B for Standards 3 and 4
- Working Group C for Standards 5 and 6

Each WG will abide by the Standards Development Process ToR and the WG ToR during development of the technical content of the standards. Decision making will be based on consensus, as set out in the WG ToR.

The Secretariat will ensure that the WGs are formally established during Q2 2020, after the official launch.

10.1 Establishing Terms of Reference for each the WGs

The Secretariat has developed a ToR for each of the WGs. The WG ToR are in line with the Standards Development Process ToR and include the following:

- Objective and scope of the WG;
- Overall process that the WG will follow in developing the standard;
- Membership, roles and responsibilities of the WG;
- Overall indicative timeline;
- Working methods of the WG; and
- Decision making process, including for achieving consensus.

11 Developing Revision Draft v1 of Standards 1 and 2

Following the development of Revision Draft v0 by the Secretariat, the WG will begin work by Q3 2020. It is proposed that the WG will finalise Revision Draft v1 by Q2 2021.

WG A will undertake a review of Revision Draft v0 and through a series of meetings and other activities work to develop a Revision Draft v1 of the standards, in line with the Standards Development Process ToR. The SC and TC will be asked for comment and the SADG will be kept informed during this stage. Once complete, Revision Draft v1 will be published on the SBP website.

12 Developing Revision Draft v1 of Standards 3 to 6

WG B will undertake a review of Revision Draft v0 and through a series of meetings and other activities work to develop a Revision Draft v1 of Standards 3 and 4, in line with the Standards Development Process ToR.

As set out above in section 8, WG C will draw on Instruction Document 5E: Collection and Communication of Energy and Carbon Data and the current Standard 6 to inform the development of Draft v1 of Standards 5 and 6.

The SC and TC will be asked for comment and the SADG will be kept informed during this stage. Once complete, Revision Draft v1 will be published on the SBP website.

13 Public consultation for Standards 1 to 6

In addition to the stakeholder engagement activities mentioned above, the public consultation stage will provide a formal process for stakeholders to provide feedback on Revision Draft v1 of all standards, specifically whether the standards meet the Standards Development Process ToR and any other related concerns stakeholders may have. The Secretariat intends to conduct the public consultation in Q1 2021 once Revision Draft v1 of all standards are finalised.

Formal public consultation

The formal public consultation will follow the procedure set out in the DDP.

Standards 1 and 2 will undergo a 60-day public consultation, which will include an online questionnaire, with the opportunity for additional commentary. The SC and TC will be consulted and the SADG will be kept informed during this stage.

Standards 3 to 6 will undergo a 30-day public consultation, which will include an online questionnaire, with the opportunity for additional commentary. The SC and TC will be consulted and the SADG will be kept informed during this stage.

Consultation webinars

As mentioned above, the public consultation stage will be supplemented by a series of webinars.

Transparency and responding to feedback

The Secretariat will analyse stakeholder feedback and, when appropriate, publish on its website a response to consultation, which will present the feedback received and SBP's response. All feedback will be anonymised.

14 Pilot

14.1 Testing Revision Draft v1

The Secretariat shall test through piloting the impact and applicability of Revision Draft v1 of standards 1 and 2. WG A will consider during planning of the pilot the following objectives and revise as necessary:

- To validate that the desired and intended outcomes of the standards can be achieved and are aligned with the purpose of SBP; and
- To test the feasibility, applicability and auditability of the standards.

The Secretariat intends to conduct the pilot in parallel with the public consultation, once Revision Draft v1 has been finalised.

The pilot testing will give consideration to best practice, geographies, types of feedstock, types of CHs, and related risks and opportunities for both current operational circumstances and future possible scenarios.

14.2 Consultation and pilot synthesis report

Stakeholder comments and pilot outputs will be collated. The results will be analysed and findings and recommendations summarised in a consultation and pilot synthesis report, which will be produced and published by the Secretariat. The WGs will seek the views of the SC and TC on the consultation and pilot synthesis report for Standards 1 and 2 and determine what, if any, revisions are required to Revision Draft v1 of the standards. The SADG will be kept informed of progress.

15 Developing Revision Draft v2

For all standards, the respective WG will develop Revision Draft v2. It is currently envisaged that Revision Draft v2 of Standards 1 and 2 will be developed during Q2 and Q3 2021, whilst Revision Draft v2 of Standards 3 to 6 will be developed during Q1 and Q2 2021.

16 Review

The TC will review and comment on Revision Draft v2 of the standards taking into consideration any comments from the WGs, the response to consultation, results of piloting and other relevant information.

If there are no significant revisions needed at this stage Revision Draft v2 becomes the Final Revision Draft of the respective standard. Alternatively, if there are significant changes between Revision Draft v1 and Revision Draft v2 of a standard, a second round of public consultation may be necessary, followed by the production of a Final Revision Draft.

17 Approval and implementation

17.1 Approval

The SC will review and determine whether or not to approve the Final Revision Draft. In coming to its decision, the SC must satisfy itself that the following have been met:

- the DDP; and
- the ISEAL Code of Good Practice for Setting Social and Environmental Standards.

17.2 Implementation

The Secretariat will notify the Board of the SC's decision and promptly announce the new standards via various communications routes to all stakeholders. In particular, any transition periods and implementation dates will be clearly communicated. All documentation will be published on the SBP website.

Annex 1: Acronyms

AFF	American Forest Foundation
BP	Biomass Producer
CB	Certification Body
CH	Certificate Holder
FSC	Forest Stewardship Council
GHG	Greenhouse Gas
ISEAL	International Social and Environmental Accreditation and Labelling Alliance
ISCC	International Sustainability & Carbon Certification
PEFC	Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification
RSB	Roundtable on Sustainable Biomaterials
SADG	Stakeholder Advisory Group
SC	Standards Committee
SBE	Supply Base Evaluation
SBP	Sustainable Biomass Program
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SURE	Sustainable Resources Verification Scheme
SFI	Sustainable Forestry Initiative
TC	Technical Committee
ToR	Terms of Reference
UN	United Nations
WG	Working Group

Annex 2: Roles of SC, TC and SADG

The roles of the SC, TC and SADG are highlighted on the Standards Development Process flowchart in Figures 11 and 12.

Standard Revision Process Outline – SC and TC involvement

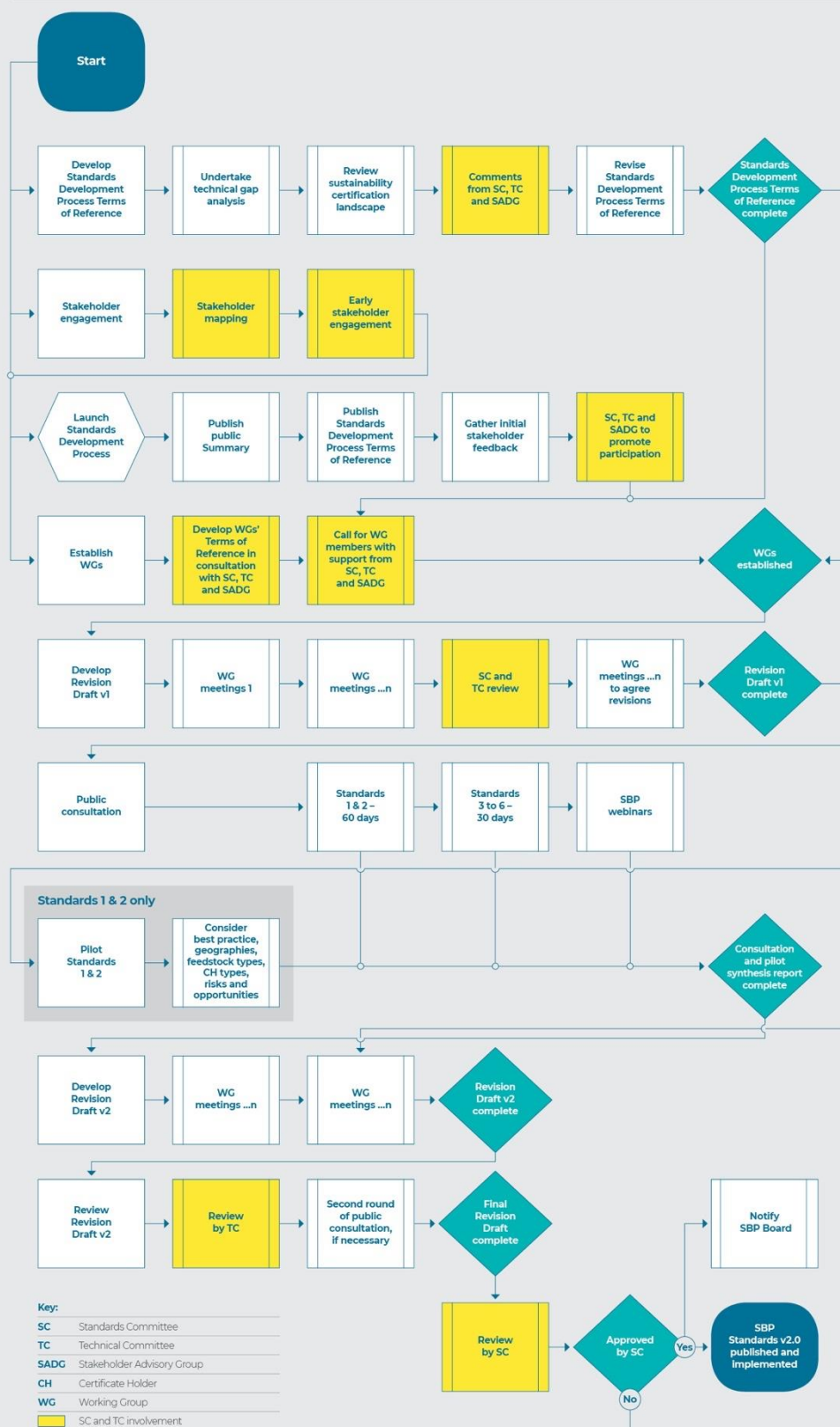


Figure 11 SC and TC roles in Standards Development Process

Standard Revision Process Outline – SADG involvement

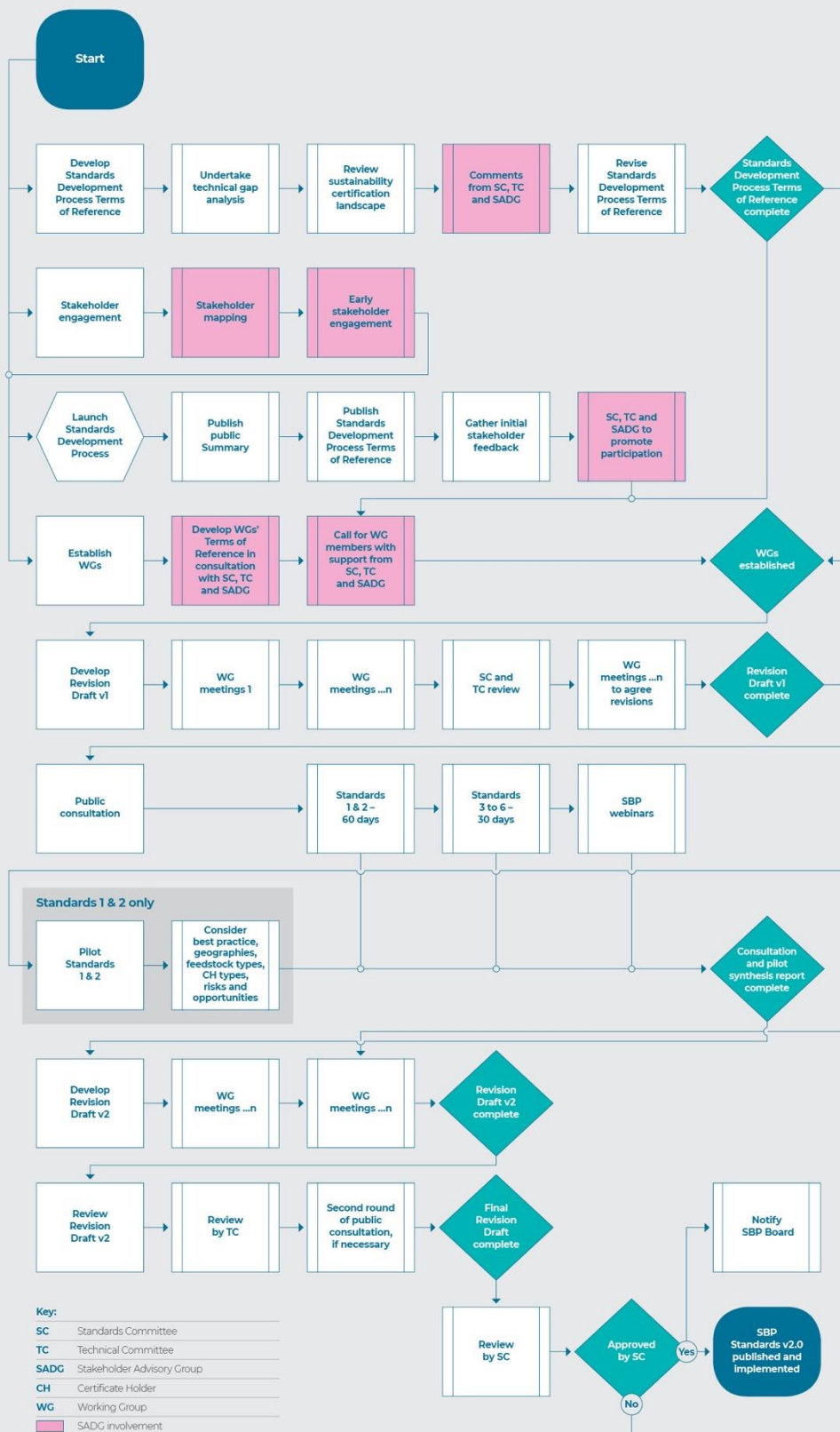


Figure 12 SADG role in Standards Development Process