Compliance with the SBP Framework: Public Summary Report

Preferred by Nature OÜ
Evaluation of FICAP

Fourth Surveillance Audit

Sustainable Biomass Program
sbp-cert.org



Completed in accordance with the CB Public Summary Report Template Version 2.1 and SBP Bridging Requirements for Meeting the Directive EU/2023/2413 (REDIII)

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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Table of contents

1 Overview **3**

2 Audit conclusions **4**

2.1 Certification decision 4
2.2 Open non-conformities and observations 4
2.2 Closed non-conformities 5
2.3 Actions taken by Organisation Prior to Report Finalisation 5
2.4 Notes for the next Audit 5

3 Scope of the audit and SBP certificate **6**

3.1 Description of the company 7
3.2 Site details 7
3.3 Detailed description of the Chain of Custody system and Product Groups 7

4 Specific objective of the audit **8**

5 Evaluation process **9**

5.1 Timing and duration of evaluation activities 9
5.2 Auditor team qualification 9
5.3 Description of evaluation activities 9
5.4 List of forest management units and feedstock suppliers visited 10
5.5 Describe audit sampling methodology used 11
5.6 CB stakeholder engagement 11
5.7 Stakeholder feedback and response 11
5.8 Main strengths and weaknesses of the management system and operations 11
5.9 Summary of evaluation activities for robustness of the Supply Base Evaluation 12
5.10 Summary of evaluation activities for Processing residues and/or Post-consumer feedstock requirements per Standard 2 and EU RED 12
5.11 Summary of evaluation activities for chain of custody system per Standard 4 12
5.12 Summary of evaluation activities for collection and communication of data per Standard 5 12
5.13 Summary of audit findings for competency of involved personnel 12
5.14 Summary of audit findings for GHG methodology per Standard 6 (if applicable) 12

6 Detailed evaluation of BP's Supply Base Evaluation (if applicable) **13**

6.1 Overview of BP's risk assessments and mitigation measures including EU RED scope 13
6.2 CB evaluation of specified risk indicators and mitigation measures 13

1 Overview

Certification Body (CB) Name:	Preferred by Nature OÜ
Primary CB contact for SBP:	Pilar Gorria Serrano
Primary CB contact email:	pgorria@preferredbynature.org
Audit team leader:	Francois Gambier
Audit team members:	Francois Gambier
Name of the Company:	FICAP
Company legal address:	5 Chemin des Deux Clochers, 51110 POMACLE, France
Company contact for SBP:	Thomas FOUASSIER
Company contact email:	tfouassier@pearl-bioenergie.fr
Company website:	
Date of installation:	
SBP Certificate Code:	SBP-08-81
Date of certificate issue:	05 Jan 2023
Date of certificate expiry:	04 Jan 2028
Audit closing meeting date:	27 May 2026
Audit cycle:	Fourth Surveillance Audit

2 Audit conclusions

2.1 Certification decision

Based on the auditor's recommendation and the Certification Body's technical review, the following certification decision is taken:	
Certification decision:	Certification approved
Certification decision by (name of the person):	Kersti Kuum
Date of decision:	14 Aug 2026
Other comments:	N/A

2.2 Open non-conformities and observations

NC number 9049	NC Grading: Minor
Standard:	Instruction Document 5E: Collection and Communication of Energy and Carbon data. v2.1
Requirement:	4.1.3 DTS Transaction shall be registered and shared with the customer in the DTS within 30 calendar days after the actual sales date of the biomass. N/A N/A N/A
Description of Non-conformance and Related Evidence:	
Transactions have not all been recorded within 30 calendar days after the invoice date. For example, all invoices to COGECAB have been entered in the DTS in March 2026, and invoices from 2026 are not recorded yet.	
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:	N/A
Findings for Evaluation of Evidence:	N/A
NC Status:	Open

2.2 Closed non-conformities

NC number 9048	NC Grading: Observation
Standard:	SBP Standard 4: Chain of Custody v2.0
Requirement:	4.1 The SBP-certified Organisation shall ensure that all transactions of material included in its SBP product group schedule can be traced at least one step upstream and one step downstream from itself, and that all material is accounted for whilst under its legal ownership. N/A N/A
Description of Non-conformance and Related Evidence:	
During the audit, the organisation corrected a few items from the SBR: • Instruction document 5E V2-0 was ticked instead of V2-1, • For primary feedstock, Regional Risk Assessment (RRA) was ticked whereas the organisation is not using SBP's RRAs (they are using RED II risk assessments for France and Wallonia), • "Share of SBP-recognised system claim for processing residues" was not filled. All the information was corrected in the SBR by the organisation before the closing meeting.	
Timeline for Conformance:	N/A
Evidence Provided by Company to close NC:	N/A
Findings for Evaluation of Evidence:	N/A
NC Status:	Closed

2.3 Actions taken by Organisation Prior to Report Finalisation

None.

2.4 Notes for the next Audit

None.

3 Scope of the audit and SBP certificate

Scope item	Check all that apply to the Certificate scope
Primary activity	Biomass Producer
Secondary activity	
Approved Standards	SBP Standard 2: Feedstock Verification v2.0; SBP Standard 4: Chain of Custody v2.0; SBP Standard 5: Collection and Communication of Data v2.0; Instruction Document REDII: Bridging requirements of the SBP scheme for meeting REDII. v1.2; Instruction Document 5E: Collection and Communication of Energy and Carbon data. v2.1
Product Group IDs	☒ Forest feedstock (1A) ☐ Trees outside forest (TOF) - Urban and landscape feedstock (2A) ☐ Trees outside forest (TOF) - Agricultural land feedstock (3A) ☒ Processing residues feedstock (4A) ☒ Post-consumer feedstock (5A) ☐ Other (please specify)
SBP Feedstock types	☐ SBP Compliant; ☒ SBP Controlled
Includes Supply Base Evaluation (SBE)	No
Includes EU RED Scheme	Yes
Includes EU RED Supply Base Evaluation (SBE)	No
Products	WB 1.2 Steam exploded pellets, WB 2.1 Wood chips
Feedstock origin (countries):	France
SBP-endorsed Regional Risk Assessments used: **Public link:** https://sbp-cert.org/documents/standards-documents/risk-assessments/	Not applicable
Chain of custody system	☐ Physical separation ☒ Mass balance
Outsourcing	Yes
Changes in the scope	France has EU REDII grand fathering clause, which the Organisation uses. Outsourcing is now included in scope for storage.

3.1 Description of the company

Guidance: Please describe the type, structure and operations of the company including its role in the supply chain, its inputs and outputs as they related to SBP Standards.

FICAP is quite recently (2018) established pellet mill with quite unique production of green (black) pellets using the vapor cracking system and the ordinary white pellet. The organisation is able to produce both domestic and industrial pellets as well as traditional or black pellets. The production capacity is 120.000 t per year. There is a CHP plant just next to the pellet mill which is owned by sister company. This CHP plant supply the pellet production with electricity, heat/steam and also sell energy to external customers within the area. The feedstock used in the pellet production is all primary feedstock (in form of roundwood or chips) originating from France with very small sourcing from Belgium due to the geographical proximity. Both softwood and hardwood species are used in the production. All the energy is delivered from CHP plant as mentioned above, and this CHP plant is using secondary and tertiary feedstock. The pellet mill source some material as PEFC controlled sources.

3.2 Site details

Legal entity name	Address	Site Activity	Visited during the audit
FICAP	14 Chemin du Boucher Lambert, 51110 Pomacle, France	Pellet mill	☒
Transports Clément	Moulin de l'Achut, 08310 Juniville, France	Outsourced storage	☒

3.3 Detailed description of the Chain of Custody system and Product Groups

Guidance: Please describe the operation of the CoC system including details of the mass balance management and a list of established Product Groups.

The Organisation has a PEFC credit system in place, all the received material is either PEFC certified or PEFC controlled sources and therefore physical separation is not required. The claim period is set for 12 months, credit account is maintained, material at the reception is recorded in the system, the certified material is ordered as such and supplier declare the certified status on the invoice. In 2023 the Organisation has developed procedures for EU REDII communication of biomass including mass balance system. The Organisation only count material which originates from France as REDII compliant. The mass balance system has a 3 months fixed balancing period for primary feedstock and a 3 months fixed balancing period for processing and post consumer feedstock.

4 Specific objective of the audit

The specific objective of this evaluation was to confirm that the Biomass Producer's management system can ensure that all requirements of the specified SBP Standards are implemented across the entire scope of certification.
This is the fourth annual evaluation of the SBP system.

The scope of the evaluation covered:
- Review of the BP's management procedures, including requirements designated in the applicable SBP;
- Standards and Instruction Documents;
- Interviews with responsible staff;
- Review of the records, calculations and conversion coefficients;
- GHG data collection analysis
- Evaluation of compliance with the SBP Framework for meeting EU RED (REDII) requirements
- Review of the production processes, site visits;
- Stakeholder Engagement Plan;
- Business integrity.

- Review of the BP's management procedures;
- Interviews with responsible staff;
- Review of the records, calculations and conversion coefficients;
- GHG data collection analysis;
- Evaluation of the Supply Base Report
- Evaluation of the SAR document for pellet production.
- Storage and suppliers visits

5 Evaluation process

5.1 Timing and duration of evaluation activities

Audit Level of Effort (LoE)		
Activity	**Auditors**	**Auditor hours**
1. Preparation	Francois Gambier	9.0
2. On-site (excl. travel time)	Francois Gambier	12.0
3. Report writing	Francois Gambier	16.0

5.2 Auditor team qualification

Auditor qualification		
Auditor name	**Role**	**Qualification**
Francois Gambier	Auditor	François holds a Master's degree in wood engineering from ENSTIB (France) and a PhD in wood and fibre sciences from the Université de Lorraine (France). He is a qualified auditor for FSC CoC and PEFC CoC certifications since 2022, SBP auditor since 2023, PEFC RED since 2025. He is Supply Chain Specialist at Preferred by Nature since 2023.

5.3 Description of evaluation activities

The audit was carried out as an onsite audit in FICAP production site. Prior to the audit it was clarified that Standard 1 and SDE+ was still excluded from the scope of the company certificate.

The on-site audit took place on 26th and 27th May 2026, started with opening meeting where the auditor and participants introduced themselves, provided information about audit plan, scope, overlaps between REDII and SBP, methodology, auditor qualification, confidentiality issues, and assessment methodology.

After the opening meeting the auditor went through all applicable requirements of the SBP standards nr. 2, 4 and 5, Version 2 and instruction document 5E and REDII bridging document covering input classification, existing chain of custody system, management system, CoC, recordkeeping/mass balance requirements, emission and energy data and categorization of input and verification of SBP-controlled feedstock. During the process, overall responsible person for SBP system and other staff were interviewed. During the afternoon of the first day a visit of the pellet plant was conducted including the storage of feedstock, reception of material, laboratory and biomass storage site. Interviews during the round-tour were conducted with responsible staff. More detail interview was held with material receiver who demonstrated what they control and demonstrated the origin control process.
During the second day, a review of the the company´s SARs and mass balance system was perform before a sample of suppliers of secondary/tertiary feedstock were visited with the intention of assuring that the company have correct control measures in place

The audit ended with a closing meeting during which the auditor explained timelines.

5.4 List of forest management units and feedstock suppliers visited

☐ N/A – No forest sites or suppliers visited during this evaluation

Site name
Suez RVB (Livry-Louvercy)
Site location
Broyage Nord Est, La Noue de Billy, 51400 Livry-Louvercy, France
Site description
Post-consumer materials collector, on behalf of Suez RVB
Rationale and focus of visit
Common type of suppliers of the Organisation: a waste supplier
Description of audit activity
Visit of the post-consumer materials collecting site

Site name
BOIS NEGOCE ENERGIE
Site location
Broyage Nord Est, La Noue de Billy, 51400 Livry-Louvercy, France
Site description
Post-consumer materials collector, on behalf of BOIS NEGOCE ENERGIE
Rationale and focus of visit
Common type of suppliers of the Organisation: a waste supplier
Description of audit activity
Visit of the post-consumer materials collecting site

Site name
Scierie Huberlant
Site location
Route de Cauroy-lès-Hermonville, 51220 Cormicy, France
Site description
Sawmill
Rationale and focus of visit

common type of suppliers of the Organisation: a sawmill
Description of audit activity
Visit of production facility of processing residues supplier

Site name
Bi-Vert
Site location
Rue des Epines ZI de Rouvroy Morcourt, 02100 Rouvroy, France
Site description
Post-consumer materials collector
Rationale and focus of visit
common type of suppliers of the Organisation: a waste supplier
Description of audit activity
Visit of the post-consumer materials collecting site

5.5 Describe audit sampling methodology used

When preparing to the audit and during on-site work a sampling has been implemented, based on the following criteria: • full review of procedures; • full review of training records; • sample review of information related to suppliers (invoices, delivery notes, self-declarations, suppliers audits); • interviews with staff to evaluate theoretical and practical experience of intended approaches implementation; • one contracted storage site out of 2 was visited on-site, being the only used storage site at the audit time; • sample of DTS transactions. For the suppliers of processing residues and post-consumer feedstock a sampling of square root of the number of suppliers (15) was implemented. In total 4 suppliers were evaluated on-site.

5.6 CB stakeholder engagement

☒ N/A – Certification Body stakeholder consultation not applicable for this evaluation

Guidance: Please specify the number and types of stakeholders engaged, method of engagement and its outcomes.

5.7 Stakeholder feedback and response

☒ N/A – Certification Body stakeholder consultation not applicable for this evaluation

5.8 Main strengths and weaknesses of the management system and operations

Strengths:

The BP has very modern technology and all the internal processes are on a very high level. The whole production is a closed circle, sourcing energy from next door CHP and reverting the residue stream back. The BP has a good control over the production continuously monitoring the material flow, moisture, energy used etc.

Weaknesses: Complex production and supplying flow may require in the future more dedicated capacity for the management system maintenance and monitoring of data flows.

5.9 Summary of evaluation activities for robustness of the Supply Base Evaluation

☒ N/A – Standard 1 not in the scope of the evaluation

5.10 Summary of evaluation activities for Processing residues and/or Post-consumer feedstock requirements per Standard 2 and EU RED

A sample of all processing residues suppliers of the organisation was done, resulting in a visit to 4 suppliers where it was concluded that feedstock is not intentionally produced and that there is no risk of mixing with other material.

5.11 Summary of evaluation activities for chain of custody system per Standard 4

The organisation has implemented a mass balance system with biomass (wood chips) in the scope of their certificates. The process covers trade of biomass with physical possession. Valid PEFC system description and other documents exist. As a biomass producer they buy wood chips and sell to end-users or use in the pellet mill. Each load is registered the feedstock is tracked until delivery.

5.12 Summary of evaluation activities for collection and communication of data per Standard 5

The BP collects information related to feedstock, countries of origin, distances and energy consumption during the production on a regular basis. The most operational specific data were used. The data is registered for various production possibilities (white or green pellets). In case of estimated values, the calculations and sources of information were justified. The BP summaries data in the SAR report as required by ID 5E. SBP-REDII sustainability data is collected as specified in SBP REDII Bridging Document.

5.13 Summary of audit findings for competency of involved personnel

The BP has a well qualified personnel and the SBP responsible person show a good understanding of the system and standard requirements.

5.14 Summary of audit findings for GHG methodology per Standard 6 (if applicable)

☒ N/A – Standard 6 not in the scope

6 Detailed evaluation of BP's Supply Base Evaluation (if applicable)

☒ N/A – Supply Base Evaluation not in the scope of the evaluation

6.1 Overview of BP's risk assessments and mitigation measures including EU RED scope

N/A

6.2 CB evaluation of specified risk indicators and mitigation measures