



Biomass Suppliers List

Supplier Question and Answers Document

Issue 2.2

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1. Background and Policy

1.1 What is the Biomass Suppliers List?

The Biomass Suppliers List is a scheme which ensures that all woodfuel registered on it are from source(s) that are at least 70% sustainable and 100% legal. Once an applicant's application has been approved, they are provided a BSL authorisation reference number which will be in the following format: 'BSLXXXXXXXX-XXXX'. The BSL is a scheme that provides RHI participants with a simple way to demonstrate that their fuel complies with the RHI's standards.

1.2 What are the eligibility criteria?

The RHI Greenhouse Gas (GHG) criteria. Suppliers registering fuel(s) on the List will be required to verify that the emissions from the cultivation, processing and transport of the biomass fuel achieves a saving of at least 60% against the EU fossil fuel average for heat, when used in a boiler which achieves an average of 70% seasonal efficiency (≤ 34.8 g CO₂ per MJ), calculated using the life cycle assessment methodology set out in the European Commission's 2010 report on 'Sustainability requirements for the use of solid and gaseous biomass sources in electricity, heating and cooling SEC 2010 65 Final'¹.

The BSL currently assesses suppliers against the above sustainability criteria and land criteria.

¹<http://eurlex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2010:0011:FIN:EN:PDF>

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1.3 When will the land criteria be in force for RHI Participants?

To allow RHI regulatory amendments to be streamlined and to simplify the introduction of the biomass sustainability criteria, both the greenhouse gas and land criteria were introduced for RHI claimants from 5th October 2015. Please see [Land Criteria Guidance](#) for more information on how to comply with the land criteria.

1.4 Why are those the GHG criteria?

The GHG criteria were consulted on in July 2012² and the finalised criteria were announced in February 2013³. For further information, please contact BEIS.

1.5 What other criteria are there to get on the list?

All applicants must agree to the scheme Terms and Conditions, which include requirements around reporting, agreement to be subject to periodic audits, and the provision of proofs of purchase in the form of invoices or receipts with information about the fuel on them.

²https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/43165/5883-rhi-certainty-performance-cons.pdf

³https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/128679/Gov_response_to_non_domestic_July_2012_consultation_-_26_02_2013.pdf

2. Deciding whether to apply

2.1 How do I know whether I am a Producer, Trader, Producer-Trader or Self Supplier?

The full definitions for these terms are contained in the [Applications and Audit Guidance document](#).

2.2 What is the difference between a raw material and a fuel?

Raw materials are set to undergo further processing (e.g. cutting, drying, chipping) before they are used in a boiler. A fuel is something that will not undergo any further processing before it is used in a boiler.

The BSL is not a list of raw materials, it is a list of fuels, and suppliers of raw materials should not seek to register those raw materials. The BSL has four fuel types: firewood, chip, pellet and briquette.

2.3 I supply roundwood / logs to someone who processes them into chip or cuts and dries them further before use or sale to consumers / traders. Should I register?

No. You are supplying materials which will undergo further processing into fuel before they are used. Unless you are supplying fuels you should not make an application to the BSL. However, those on the list will require you to supply the distance the timber has travelled from the forest.

2.4 I buy in roundwood from another supplier, which I cut and dry for sale to consumers. Am I a Producer, Trader, or

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Producer-Trader, and does the roundwood I buy need to be on the BSL?

You are a Producer-Trader, as you are processing raw materials (the roundwood) into fuel (firewood) and selling that fuel to end consumers. The BSL is a list of fuels, not raw materials, so the raw materials you buy do not need to be BSL registered. You should however be able to demonstrate chain of custody and provide appropriate information associated with your raw materials should you be audited by the BSL Administrator. If you also sell to traders you do not need to also register as a producer, the trader can use your producer/trader emissions to calculate onward trading.

2.5 I am a non-domestic RHI participant, and I buy in roundwood from another supplier and chip them myself for my own use. Am I a self-supplier, and if not, how do I demonstrate sustainability?

Non-domestic RHI participants will have two methods of demonstrating compliance with the forthcoming sustainability criteria:

- (1) Self-reporting directly to Ofgem against the criteria – click [here](#) for more information.
- (2) Sourcing fuel from the BSL.

If you are buying in raw materials from another supplier and processing those raw materials into fuel, you are not a self-supplier and cannot register on the BSL as a self-supplier. If you wish to use the BSL to demonstrate compliance with the sustainability criteria, you are able to register on the BSL as a producer-trader as you are processing raw materials into fuel for use by an end consumer (in this case yourself). You do not need to be listed on the online BSL for consumers to find a supplier if you do not wish to (select the opt-out within the application form), and will not need provide proof of purchase in the form of receipts or invoices, but for the purposes of demonstrating compliance to Ofgem once the RHI Biomass Sustainability regulations come into force, you are asked to retain proof that the fuel they are using is authorised on the BSL,

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and are recommended to keep this in the form of a log (within or alongside the existing RHI fuel records which you are already required to retain) showing your BSL authorisation mark, number, fuel type, quantity or volume produced in tonnes/kg/m³/net heat/gross heat (on an ongoing basis), and moisture content (% on a wet basis).

2.6 I have my own woodland and process this timber myself for use in my own boiler. However, I also purchase extra roundwood and process this myself to supplement my own supply. Am I still a Self-Supplier?

As set out above, if you are processing raw materials (roundwood) bought in from elsewhere into fuel, and wish to use the BSL to demonstrate compliance with the sustainability criteria (as opposed to self-reporting to Ofgem), then you should register as a producer-trader. You can include the timber you source from your own woodland as a raw material within this application, and do not need to do a separate self-supplier application.

You should keep records of all timber you process including the quantity that is your own.

2.7 I want to become a Producer. Producer, Producer-Trader or Producer-Trader who plans to claim RHI for burning some of the fuel I produce / trade. Do I need to register as a Self-Supplier as well?

You can register as a Self-Supplier as well for that, but you don't need to. There will still be reporting requirements to Ofgem for the fuel you burn yourself so as to demonstrate compliance, once the RHI Biomass Sustainability regulations come into force. You will need to retain proof that the fuel is authorised on the BSL, and you are recommended to keep this in the form of

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a log (within or alongside the existing fuel records which a Producer-Trader / Trader is already required to retain) showing:

- BSL authorisation mark
- BSL authorisation number
- Fuel type
- Quantity or volume produced in tonnes/kg/m3/net heat/gross heat (on an ongoing basis)
- Moisture content (% on a wet basis)

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3. Applications Process

3.1 How do I apply?

Please visit <http://www.gov.uk/register-biomass-supplier>

Further information can be found in the [Applications and Audit Guidance document](#).

3.2 What do I do if I cannot apply online / do not have internet access?

We can accommodate this but it may take a little longer than applying online. Contact the BSL Helpdesk for further guidance and support.

3.3 How do I get in touch with you?

You can contact the BSL Administrator via telephone or email:

Phone: 01684 215253

Email: bslhelpdesk@woodsure.co.uk

3.4 What does it cost to join the list?

The fees to apply and ongoing costs to be authorised on the BSL vary depending on what supplier type you are and whether you are a company. The breakdown of the fees is in the [Application and Audit Guidance document on the BSL website](#).

3.5 How long will my application take?

Further information regarding timescales can be found in the [Applications and Audit Guidance document](#).

3.6 In a supply chain, is there a particular order in which the Producer and the Trader should register?

If you are a Producer, registering early will mean Traders applying subsequently can indicate to us that they are sourcing fuel from you, and that way they will have to provide less information. This may save you receiving similar queries from multiple Traders.

For Traders, while we recommend applying early, you may wish to consider encouraging your Producer(s) to register first. Alternatively, you can register all the information yourself⁴ but you will likely need to source some of it from the Producer, and be able to grant our auditors access to the Producer if requested.

3.7 What if I'm part of a complex supply chain?

- National brands. If you act as a 'brand name' national Trader, never actually handling the fuel yourself, you will still need to register each fuel and depot that you use, in order to be issued with the Mark for each fuel.
- Multi-link supply chains: We are open to applications from any commercial model. The simple proviso is that the company / companies in the supply chain who should apply are those who can provide all the required information, control changes to it, report periodically, and grant full audit access on request by the BSL Administrator. Remember that

⁴ A greenhouse gas calculation using the B2C2 calculator (<https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/publications-and-updates/uk-solid-and-gaseous-biomass-carbon-calculator>) or equivalent will be required if you choose to do this. You should obtain the information that you need from your producer.

anyone advertising or selling to the end customer will need to be licensed directly by the BSL Administrator to use the Mark.

3.8 What fuels are covered?

- Pellets – virgin
- Pellets – waste
- Pellets – waste virgin blend
- Briquettes – virgin
- Briquettes – waste
- Briquettes – waste virgin blend
- Chip – virgin naturally seasoned
- Chip – virgin force dried
- Chip – waste
- Chip – waste virgin blend
- Firewood – virgin naturally seasoned
- Firewood – virgin force dried
- Firewood – waste
- Firewood – waste virgin blend

3.9 Some of the raw materials are naturally seasoned and some force dried – which fuel type should I select?

If any proportion of the fuel's raw materials is to be force dried, then you should select a force dried fuel type. You will then be able to enter how much is naturally seasoned and how much is force dried.

3.10 Can I use waste or waste blend?

Waste and / or waste blend is acceptable as a fuel but you still need to apply to the BSL Administrator in the same manner as for other fuels. There may be additional evidence requirements at the application stage, and specific periodic reporting requirements in relation to waste.

3.11 How do I measure the volumes of raw materials and fuel that are requested in the application process?

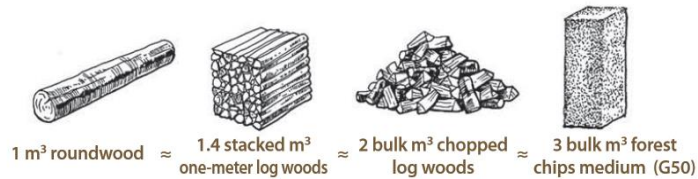


Image courtesy 'The Wood Fuels Handbook' by AEBIOM

http://www.aebiom.org/IMG/pdf/WOOD_FUELS_HANDBOOK_BTC_EN.pdf⁵

Raw materials

- Roundwood can be in tonnes or in cubic metres. M³ are always estimated as per the Forestry Commission blue book.
- Chip and sawdust – loose (not compressed) m³. This can be measured using a bucket with a known m³ or lorry with a known volume.
- Waste wood – volume should rarely be used; weight is a more acceptable measure.

Fuel

- Firewood – you should quote m³ in loose cubic metres, not stacked. This should be measured using a bucket with a known m³ or lorry with a known volume
- Chip – loose (not compressed) m³. This can be measured using a bucket with a known m³ or lorry with a known volume

⁵ Caution: Although The Woodfuels Handbook is a very useful document, the timber densities it contains are based on European averages. We would recommend that you use densities from the country your timber is sourced from for example, Forestry Commission for those in the UK.

- Pellet and briquette – volume should rarely be used; weight is a more acceptable measure as the product is homogenised and moisture content controlled.

3.12 Are non-UK-based applicants treated equally to UK-based applicants?

Yes. Access to the list for both UK and non-UK-based applicants is treated equally. The criteria are exactly the same.

3.13 Where do I find the B2C2 calculator?

<https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/publications-and-updates/uk-solid-and-gaseous-biomass-carbon-calculator>

3.14 How do I use the B2C2 calculator?

The Ofgem website contains both the calculator and associated guidance document: <https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/publications-and-updates/uk-solid-and-gaseous-biomass-carbon-calculator>

3.15 What if a member of the supply chain (e.g. a Trader) purchases authorised fuel from another member of the supply chain (e.g. a Producer), which subsequently has its authorisation revoked?

This would represent a material change to the fuel that the Trader was authorised for under BSL, and the Trader must therefore contact the BSL Administrator and apply for new authorisation reflecting where they will in future be procuring their fuel from.

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3.16 What will the effect be of the introduction of the Land criteria?

Traders, Producers and Producer-Traders that source virgin and/or virgin-waste blend timber will be required to comply with the Land Criteria from 6th July 2015. Please read the [Land criteria guidance](#) for further information on how to comply.

3.17 When do the Land Criteria come in?

BSL authorised fuels will be required to be compliant with the land criteria from 6th July 2015. RHI claimants will be required to comply from 5th October 2015. Please see the [land criteria guidance](#) for more information on how to ensure your fuel is compliant.

Version Control

Issue No.	Amendment Details	Date
1.0	Final Version Published	30.04.2014
1.1	Minor amendment made to explain origin of the Land Criteria	06.05.2014
1.2	Addition of question regarding Suppliers who also wish to burn some of their own fuel	23.05.2014
1.3	Document layout changes, and addition of information about raw materials	10.06.2014
1.4	Addition of questions regarding DECC consultation	16.06.2014
1.5	Typographical adjustments	26.06.2014
1.6	Update on DECC consultation, further information on BSL Authorised Mark and launch date for public facing list of fuels	13.08.2014
1.7	Consumer-focussed questions removed to a separate document, this document re-titled to specify that it is the Supplier Q&A	24.09.2014
1.8	1.3 and 3.17 updated to reflect expectation that regulations will apply from autumn 2015	17.11.2014
1.9	Updated land criteria information: 1.2, 1.3, 3.16, 3.17	09.04.2015
2.0	Updated to include reference to BSL fees in section 3.4	29.12.2016
2.1	Updated 3.12 Are non-UK-based applicants treated equally to UK based applicants?	17.01.2018
2.2	New administrator updated	01.07.2021