

Public Summary – Board Meeting 11 Stichting DBC

Board Meeting 11 was held on April 18th, 2017 with all Board members participating. The Board members are individual representatives of Engie, Nuon/Vattenfall, RWE and Uniper. Stichting Natuur & Milieu was absent with notice. A representative of CKade participated as the secretariat to the meeting.

Stichting DBC (or DBC Foundation; hereafter referred to as DBC) was established under the Covenant 'Duurzaamheid Biomassa' (Biomass Sustainability) of the Dutch Energy Agreement. The objective of DBC is to promote and accomplish certification of small forest owners (defined as smaller than 500 ha) in North-America to support the agreed growth paths in the Covenant for reaching 100% FSC- or equivalent certification of woody biomass. The Covenant demands that the energy companies, with the environmental organizations, participate in DBC to achieve the objective.

DBC, its Board members, and all other people and companies in any way directly involved, acknowledge and understand that their collaborative activities must at all times be undertaken with an understanding of the importance of compliance with all applicable laws and regulations, including but not limited to laws and regulations relating to antitrust and competition. These laws are intended to preserve and promote free, fair and open as well as effective competition. Failure to abide by these laws can potentially have extremely serious consequences for DBC, its board members and its member organizations.

DBC discussed an email it had received from Stichting Natuur & Milieu (17 April 2017) informing on the outcomes of a first consultation with the NGOs about the Stimulation Program. It reports that the NGOs experience the procedures of the Covenant as insufficiently transparent, fair and open and do not experience the necessary willingness with E-companies to solve existing disputes. Natuur en Milieu proposes to pause its activities with DBC, pending the government coalition negotiations with regards to coal-fired power plants and approval by the NGOs of DBC. The latter is made dependent on the solutions for the sawdust dispute and the acceptance of certification schemes. The Board is unanimous in expressing its great disappointment with the content and tone of voice of the email. It has been two years since the signing of the Covenant by all parties. Continuous and intense discussions have taken place since to ensure effective implementation of the Covenant and to develop a constructive relationship with Natuur en Milieu and the other NGOs. The email implies these efforts have been to no avail. The Board decides to put on hold its efforts of seeking collaboration with the NGOs within DBC.

The Board discussed the draft legal review of the Stimulation Program that was made in accordance with the Anti-Trust Compliance Policy Statement and asks for a summary to complete the review. Elizabeth Woodworth (Wood&Co Consulting) was called into the meeting to report on the initial findings of the data research study on the North-American forest sector and small forest owners. This study aims to yield important insights to tailor any future activities under the Stimulation Program and the results are expected in June 2017.

The Board approves and adopts an update of the Internal Regulation. It has also taken note of the Annual Report 2016 that was produced in accordance with Article 7 of the Covenant and has no further comments.

The next Board meeting is scheduled for June 19, 2017.
