

FOBAS Bulletin

18th April 2023

Decision pathways for biofuel procurement

With the drive towards a decarbonised future gaining momentum, shipping has seen an increasing interest in renewable fuels, in particular biofuels such as FAME (Fatty Acid Methyl Esters). Biofuels are increasingly being considered as a possible interim transitional solution, as a 'can do now' solution to reduce overall CO₂ impact before other net zero-carbon fuels become widely available for maritime operations. They do not require much, if any, significant adjustments to the existing supply chain infrastructure and the machinery on board. Depending on the type of biofuel, they can be considered as a 'drop-in' fuel.

With this increasing interest, ship operators are seeking support in the selection and decision process, which requires some key steps to be taken, especially at the procurement stage; in response, FOBAS has developed a simple flowchart (below in annex A) to guide ship operators in the steps needed to be considered for when selecting a marine biofuel and providing the areas that we can apply our experience on the subject in support.

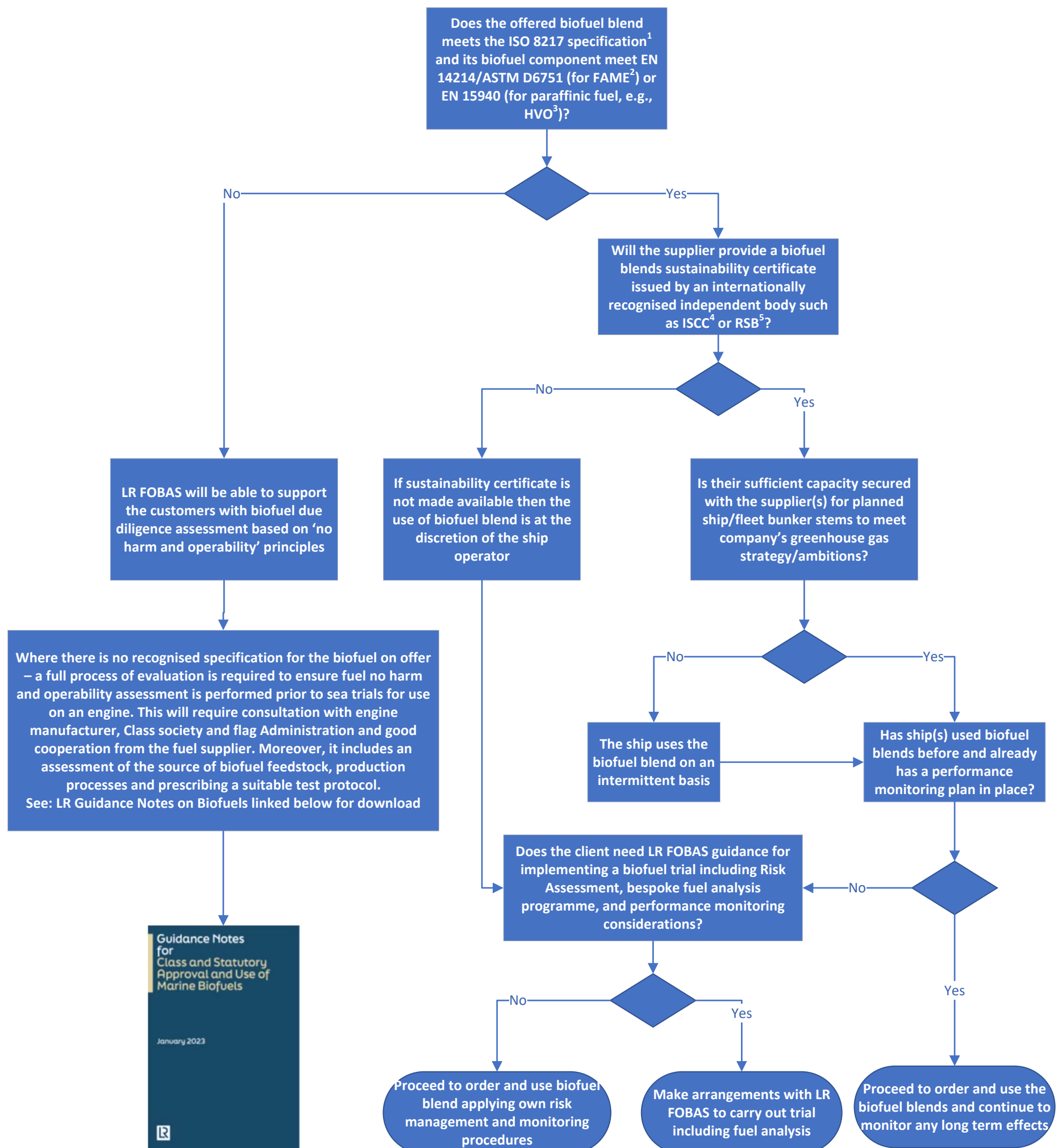
The primary consideration from the buyer's perspective is to establish if the biofuel blend on offer complies with the internationally recognised quality standards. Moreover, what information is available from fuel supplier regarding overall sustainability of the biofuel component present in the overall blend. In the absence of the aforementioned information, the procurement path is unlikely to be straightforward, requiring biofuel to go through a comprehensive assessment programme to ensure fuel is safe to use onboard.

We trust you will find this flowchart useful and as stated therein, LR FOBAS is there to support you to meet your greenhouse gas strategy and safe ship operations by ensuring we provide advisory support and a comprehensive fuel testing service.

If you require any further information about this Bulletin, please contact us at fobas@lr.org or speak to one of our consultants on +44 (0)330 414 1000 (Southampton UK), +44 (0)1642 440991 Redcar (UK), +65 3163 0888 (Singapore), +30 211 990 7732 (Greece). For anything urgent, please contact us via our out of office number, +44 (0)1642 425660.

Annex A

Ship operators decision pathway for biofuel procurement



1 – LR FOBAS (Fuel Oil Bunker Advisory Services) participates in the ISO working group TC 28/SC4/WG6 which is currently revising the ISO 8217 standard and is therefore mindful of the further inclusion of drop-in sustainable fuels being accepted by ISO in the 2024 edition - so can provide an informed guidance to client specifically seeking to determine whether a product on offer is within the remit of the standard
 2 – FAME – Fatty Acid Methyl Ester (The most common biofuel blend component available in the maritime bunker industry)
 3 – HVO – Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (a well refined distillate product)
 4 – ISCC – International Sustainability and Carbon Certification
 5 – RSB – The Roundtable on Sustainable Biomaterials

