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Item 02 – Draft summary of the GSSB meeting held on 23 September 2021

For GSSB approval

Date	7 October 2021
Meeting	21 October 2021
Description	This document presents the summary of the GSSB virtual meeting held on 23 September 2021.

This document has been prepared by the GRI Standards Division and is made available to observers at meetings of the Global Sustainability Standards Board (GSSB). It does not represent an official position of the GSSB. Board positions are set out in the GRI Sustainability Reporting Standards. The GSSB is the independent standard setting body of GRI. For more information visit www.globalreporting.org.

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2 Participants

3 Present:

Name	Constituency
Judy Kuszewski	Chair
Robyn Leeson	Vice-Chair
Peter Colley	Labor
Giulia Genuardi	Business enterprise
Evan Harvey	Investment institution
Joseph Martin	Business enterprise
Jennifer Princing	Business enterprise
Corli le Roux	Mediating institution
Gustavo Sinner	Mediating institution
Kenton Swift	Civil society organization
Michel Washer	Business enterprise

4 Apologies:

Name	Constituency
Loredana Carta	Labor
Vincent Kong	Business enterprise
Rama Krishnan Venkateswaran	Investment institution
Kim Schumacher	Civil society organization

5 In attendance from GRI:

Name	Position
Bastian Buck	Chief of Standards
Elodie Chêne	Manager

6 List of abbreviations

GRI	Global Reporting Initiative
GSSB	Global Sustainability Standards Board
SD	Standards Division

7 Decisions and action items

8 Decisions

9 **GSSB Decision 2021.21** The GSSB resolved to approve [Item 02 – GRI Topic Standard Project for](#)
10 [Biodiversity](#) – Final Project Proposal.

11 Session 1: Welcome

12 The Global Sustainability Standards Board (GSSB) Chair Judy Kuszewski (henceforth the Chair)
13 welcomed the GSSB and presented an overview of the meeting agenda.

14 The GSSB was presented with [Item 01 – Draft summary of the GSSB meeting held on 17 June](#) for
15 approval.

16 Approval has been postponed until the next GSSB meeting, as there were insufficient members to
17 reach a quorum.

18 Session 2: Update from Standards

19 Division

20 The GSSB was presented with the launch schedule for Universal Standards and *GRI 11: Oil and Gas*
21 *Sector 2021*. The Chief of Standards Bastian Buck highlighted the following points:

- 22 • Universal Standards will be launched on 5 October 2021. The event includes a social media
23 campaign and collateral development, including all supporting documents and culminating in
24 the launch event hosting key speakers.
- 25 • The *GRI 11: Oil and Gas Sector 2021* will be promoted in the weeks preceding the launch
26 later in October.
- 27 • A technical briefing session for Universal Standards and *GRI 11: Oil and Gas Sector 2021* will
28 occur later in October.
- 29 • Universal Standards and *GRI 11: Oil and Gas Sector 2021* will be translated into ten
30 languages, accompanied by regional events hosted by GRI to introduce the contents.
31 Spanish will be the first language launched in January 2021.
- 32 • The complete set of GRI Standards will be available on the GRI website in a new format as
33 part of an updated publishing system designed to streamline the publishing process.

35 Two sector projects, namely, agriculture, aquaculture, and fishing, and coal, are also nearing
36 completion. The following points regarding their progress were raised:

- 37 • Regional participation was leveraged, and public comment has been received on the two
38 sector projects' exposure drafts.
- 39 • 53 Substantive public comment submissions were received for agriculture, aquaculture, and
40 fishing project. The outcome of the public comment phase is successful in terms of providing
41 input to complete the project.
- 42 • Public comment for agriculture, aquaculture, and fishing sector project has provided
43 constructive feedback that enhances the overall Sector Standard.
- 44 • The Sector Standard project for agriculture, aquaculture, and fishing will follow a timeline
45 culminating with a draft presentation to the GSSB in March-April 2022.
- 46 • In the coal Sector Standard project, there was coverage of GRI in various media publications
47 regarding the opportunity to comment on the exposure draft.
- 48 • 29 Substantive public comment submissions were received for the coal Sector Standard
49 project.
- 50 • The Sector Standard project for coal has advanced due to its close tie with the *GRI 11: Oil
51 and Gas Sector 2021*. It will follow a timeline culminating with a draft presentation to the
52 GSSB in January-February 2022.

53 The upcoming Sector Standard project for mining posted a call to assemble a working group and has
54 received 30 applications to date. Applications close on 26 September 2021. Applicants will be
55 evaluated regarding their suitability to contribute to the working group. An update will be provided in
56 the following GSSB meeting regarding this point.

57 **Session 3: Approval project proposal** 58 **for GRI Topic Standard project for** 59 **biodiversity**

60 Elodie Chêne presented the final project proposal for approval to the GSSB [Item 02 – GRI Topic](#)
61 [Standard project for biodiversity](#). The following points regarding the project were raised:

- 62 • The proposed timeline reflects the expectation to revise the standard in 12 months.
- 63 • After approval, a proposed list of technical committee members will be made available for
64 GSSB approval at the next meeting in October.
- 65 • There are continued talks with experts and outreach activities in the coming weeks to confirm
66 the membership for GSSB consideration. The aim is to convene the technical committee
67 before the end of the year.

- 68 • An exposure draft is anticipated to be submitted to the GSSB in March 2022. Public
69 consultation to follow in the period April-May 2022.
- 70 • Public consultation will coincide with the CBD COP, where the Post-2020 Biodiversity
71 Framework is to be adopted. The intention is to align the final content of the standard with the
72 goals of the Convention on Biological Diversity.
- 73 • The time frame also aligns with CDPs initiative to develop biodiversity reporting metrics and
74 EFRAGs process to develop the biodiversity standard.

75 The Chief of Standards added the following considerations concerning the biodiversity project and
76 other work carried out by related organizations:

- 77 • Various organizations have projects underway or have initiated projects at about the same
78 time frame as the GRI Topic Standard project for biodiversity. However, it is important to note
79 that there are differences in approach regarding the various initiatives.
- 80 • The Development of the EU standards under the mandate of the European Commission that
81 was given to EFRAG has precipitated discussions on how to incorporate these interests to
82 develop GRI Standards.
- 83 • Aligning the project with EU and CDP initiatives is key to harmonizing the process to
84 contribute to the project's overall consolidation.

85 **Vote on final approval**

86 The Chair called for an electronic vote to approve the final project proposal for the GRI Topic
87 Standard project for biodiversity.

88 Table 1. GSSB summary of votes on approval of GRI Topic Standard project for biodiversity.

GSSB member	Vote
Corli le Roux	In favor
Evan Harvey	In favor
Giulia Genuardi	In favor
Gustavo Sinner	In favor
Jennifer Princing	In favor
Joseph Martin	In favor
Judy Kuszewski	In favor
Kent Swift	In favor
Kim Schumacher	—*

Loredana Carta	—*
Michel Washer	In favor
Peter Colley	In favor
Rama Krishnan Venkateswaran	—*
Robyn Leeson	In favor
Vincent Kong	In favor
* GSSB member absent for the vote.	

89 **Session 4: Any other business and**
90 **close of the meeting**

91 The Chair updated the GSSB regarding a formal request from UNICEF and supporting co-signatories
92 urging the GSSB to consider addressing children's rights in forthcoming standards projects. As the
93 next phase of human rights work is underway, the timing of this request is apt to incorporate it into a
94 forthcoming agenda.

95 No other business was raised, and the Chair closed the public meeting at 15.00 Central European
96 Summer Time (CEST).