



Barbara Strozziiaan 336

1083 HN Amsterdam

The Netherlands

gssbsecretariat@globalreporting.org

GSSB summary of the virtual meeting held on 19 May 2022

Approved by the GSSB on 7 July 2022

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3 **Participants**

4 Present:

Name	Constituency
Judy Kuszewski	Chair
Robyn Leeson	Vice-Chair
Loredana Carta	Labor
Peter Colley	Labor
Giulia Genuardi	Business enterprise
Evan Harvey	Investment institution
Vincent Kong	Business enterprise
Anna Nefedova	Mediating institution
Joseph Martin	Business enterprise
Jennifer Princing	Business enterprise
Corli le Roux	Mediating institution
Gangaa Charan Sharma	Business enterprise
Kim Schumacher	Civil society organization
Kenton Swift	Civil society organization
Michel Washer	Business enterprise

5 In attendance from GRI:

Name	Position
Bastian Buck	Chief of Standards
Harold Pauwels	Director Standards
Mia d'Adhemar	Head Sector Program
Margarita Lysenkova	Manager Sector Program
Gillian Balaban	Sr. Coordinator Governance Relations

6 **List of abbreviations**

GRI	Global Reporting Initiative
GSSB	Global Sustainability Standards Board
SD	Standards Division
TC	Technical committee
DPP	Due Process Protocol
DPAR	Due Process Adherence report
DPOC	Due Process Oversight Committee

7 **Decisions and action items**

8 **Decisions**

9 The GSSB resolved to approve the following:

10 **GSSB Decision 2022.10** Item 01 – [Draft summary GSSB meeting – 28 April 2022](#)

11 **GSSB Decision 2022.11** Item 02 – [GRI Sector Standards Project for Agriculture, Aquaculture and Fishing – Final draft with an effective date of 1 January 2024](#)

13 **GSSB Decision 2022.12** – GSSB resolves to approve that re-exposure of GRI 13: Agriculture, Aquaculture and Fishing Sectors 2022 is not needed

15 **Session 1: Welcome**

16 The Global Sustainability Standards Board (GSSB) Chair Judy Kuszewski (henceforth the Chair) welcomed the GSSB. The Chair presented an overview of the meeting agenda. The GSSB was presented with the following items for approval:

19 Item 01 – [Draft summary GSSB meeting – 28 April 2022](#)

20 Item 02 – [GRI Sector Standards Project for Agriculture, Aquaculture and Fishing – Final draft](#)

21 **Session 2: Standards Division update**

22 The Chief of Standards, Bastian Buck, presented the following points:

- 23 • From 17-19 October, there will be a two-day in-person GSSB meeting in Amsterdam.
- 24 • The biodiversity project, GRI 304, is in the draft development phase. The third TC meeting was held, preparing for the fourth meeting.
- 26 • The PCP is expected to start in the 4th quarter. Colleagues overseeing the project indicate that in-depth discussions are expected. The expert group and GRI staff want to ensure a consistent set of disclosures.
- 29 • We are on schedule to submit this draft to the GSSB after the summer break. Updates on this project will be provided through September, October, and November.
- 31 • The labor Standards review program is a larger effort linked to several existing standards, which might involve the creation of new standards.
- 33 • We are preparing to have a project proposal for the GSSB in July. We have secured the right mix of institutions, and nominations for experts will be formalized with the GSSB.
- 35 • Progress depends on whether this is a phased project or if all the Standards are done simultaneously. The team is working to resolve this issue with the institutions involved, and we

- 37 want a practical proposal from an SD resourcing perspective and the expertise these
38 organizations make available.
- 39 • Two WG meetings for the mining project are completed. A survey screening for likely material
40 topics was conducted, and there are sub-working group meetings underway to elicit detail on
41 likely material topics.
 - 42 • A Standards manager has been appointed to lead the food and beverage project. Working group
43 recruitment will advance in the coming months. After the summer break, we will have a detailed
44 timeline for when the project working group will commence its work.
 - 45 • GRI has announced a collaboration with IFRS Foundation in a meeting with the ISSB technical
46 team in London to look at how to substantiate this collaboration. This will be an important input to
47 discussions of the future work program.
 - 48 • Thanks to our colleagues in the HR department and in the SD that are actively involved in
49 recruitment. We continue to grow the team. However, we are not on schedule to hit the 30 FTE
50 mark by the end of June, but we are making progress.
 - 51 • We will be able to conclude this first phase of hiring for 2022. We will then look to discuss with the
52 leadership of the GRI Foundation how to enable the next phase of hiring in the near term.

53 **Session 3: GRI Sector Standard** 54 **project for Agriculture, Aquaculture** 55 **and Fishing - approval of final** 56 **Standard**

57 Manager Sector Program, Margarita Lysenkova, presented the Agriculture, Aquaculture and Fishing
58 Sector Standard draft for approval by the GSSB. The following points are for consideration:

- 59 • A detailed overview of the changes resulting from the public comment was presented to the
60 GSSB on 17 March 2020.
- 61 • Since then, the SD has worked on finalizing the draft, which included responses from the final
62 round of comments received in the technical review by our WG.
- 63 • Changes made included two updated topic names, the provision of more examples of positive
64 impacts, and additional sector reporting particular to aquaculture and fishing.
- 65 • In line with the previously published Sector Standard, the SD proposes 1 January 2024 as the
66 effective date, allowing for a transition period in which organizations can collect data during the
67 reporting cycle.

68 The GSSB had the following questions and comments regarding the new Sector Standard:

69 **GSSB:** How has the SD considered the relationship between the latest Sector Standard and the
70 biodiversity Topic Standard's development?

71 **SD:** One WG member participates in the biodiversity project, which provides some overlap. We
72 have been in discussions with colleagues on issues of common interest but cannot respond
73 until the completion of the biodiversity project and how these could be incorporated in a later
74 update of the Sector Standard.

75 **GSSB:** The issue of Topic Standards needing revision after the publication of a Sector Standard is an
76 aspect that will be more prevalent in the Standards that follow.

77 **SD:** The issue is acknowledged. We can now advance beyond the Sector program's pilot projects,
78 which adds pressure on the system and the different parts of the modular Standards
79 structure. This provides the initiative to update existing Standards or develop new Standards.
80 Expanding our Standards means that we can scale our Sector and Topic teams, which we
81 continue to address with increasing resources. The Sector Standards also work as designed
82 by providing priorities for topic updates or development.

83 The Chair, on behalf of the GSSB, acknowledged the stakeholder involvement and thanked the SD
84 for their contributions to the project. The Chair further discussed the steps required in the DPP, and
85 the Chief of Standards confirmed its adherence to the due process.

86 **Vote on final approval**

87 Table 1. GSSB summary of votes.

GSSB member	Approval	Approval without re-exposure
Anna Nefedova	In favor	In favor
Corli le Roux	In favor	In favor
Evan Harvey	In favor	In favor
Ganga Charan Sharma	In favor	In favor
Giulia Genuardi	In favor	In favor
Jennifer Princing	In favor	In favor
Joseph Martin	In favor	In favor
Judy Kuszewski	In favor	In favor
Kent Swift	In favor	In favor
Kim Schumacher	In favor	In favor
Loredana Carta	In favor	In favor

Michel Washer	In favor	In favor
Peter Colley	In favor	In favor
Robyn Leeson	In favor	In favor
Vincent Kong	In favor	In favor
Total in favor	15	15

88 **Session 4: Presentation by Mercy for**
89 **Animals**

90 The GSSB frequently welcomes external stakeholder input for the GSSB work program 2023-2025 on
91 various topics of interest to international standard setting. The Chair welcomed Zoë Sigle, global
92 corporate engagement manager at Mercy for Animals. The following points were presented to the
93 GSSB:

- 94 • Mercy for Animals is a global non-profit animal farm protection organization based in the United
95 States. It is known for its undercover investigations to improve animal welfare standards in the
96 supply chain.
- 97 • Regarding the GSSB, Mercy for Animals is interested in contributing insights to animal health and
98 welfare Topic Standards.
- 99 • The use of animals in the supply chain is ubiquitous: 1.2-2.7 trillion aquatic animals are used for
100 feed, over 60 billion land animals are used for food, and over 192 million animals are used for
101 scientific research.
- 102 • Focusing on the five freedoms of animal well-being is critical. These include; 1. Freedom from
103 hunger, malnutrition, and thirst; 2. Freedom from fear and distress; 3. Freedom from heat stress
104 and discomfort; 4. Freedom from pain, injury, and disease; 5. Freedom to express normal
105 behavioral patterns.
- 106 • Business considerations include how animal welfare, corporate procurement policies, and
107 external stakeholder responses influence one another.
- 108 • The caged confinement of laying hens is a key work area at Mercy for Animals and relevant to the
109 GSSB.
- 110 • While several national and regional governments have taken steps to improve the welfare of
111 laying hens, investors are increasingly acknowledging the risks associated with the mistreatment
112 of animals, including in regulations, the market, and corporate reputation.
- 113 • Over 120 global companies have adopted cage-free egg commitments in their supply chains, in
114 sectors such as food services, hospitality, food manufacturers, restaurants, and retailers.

- 115 • The increasing prevalence of meaningful public commitments to animal welfare and global
116 progress reporting are steps in the right direction.
- 117 • Regarding GRI Topic Standards, Mercy for Animals recommends that more corporate attention
118 be given to animal welfare in supply chains, creating species-specific standards, and establishing
119 more quantitative reporting of inputs that aim to meet the five freedoms.
- 120 • Key areas are expanding existing collaboration areas between companies and NGOs,
121 acknowledging the scale and severity of animal suffering, and raising public concern for bills,
122 statutes, and regulations.

123 Following a brief conversation among GSSB members about how existing GRI Standards in the
124 Sector and Topic programs address animal welfare concerns, the Chair thanked Mercy for Animals
125 for their input.

126 **Session 5: Any other business and** 127 **close of the meeting**

128 No other business was raised, and the Chair closed the public meeting at 14.08 Central European
129 Time (CET).