GRI Standards Alignment Check Services

Terms and Conditions

Disclaimer: GRI Services do not verify, check or pass judgment on the quality of the disclosures within a report nor the process of preparing the disclosures. That responsibility remains with the Reporting Organization and its stakeholders. GRI's Services are not an external assurance engagement, although are complementary. GRI does not carry any legal responsibility for the implementation of the feedback by the organization. The GSSB is an independent operating entity under the auspices of GRI and has sole responsibility for setting globally accepted standards for sustainability reporting and as such has no involvement with the delivery of GRI Services.
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1. GENERAL

This document outlines the Terms and Conditions for GRI Standards Alignment Check Services. This includes the Content Index Service, Management Approach Disclosures Service, Materiality Disclosures Service and SDG Mapping Service.

GRI reserves the right to constantly review and update the Terms and Conditions and Methodology of Services offered. Reporting Organizations are asked to review these documents which are valid at the time of Service performance.

2. SERVICE PERFORMANCE

2.1 Service confirmation

By submitting a completed Sign-up form, the Reporting Organization, or if applicable a third party on behalf of the Reporting Organization, confirms that it agrees with the Terms and Conditions set out herein.

Only reported information based on the GRI Sustainability Reporting Standards (GRI Standards) including a self-declared adherence level (in accordance option: Core or Comprehensive) are eligible for the GRI Standards Alignment Check Services. Reports or reported information prepared in accordance with the GRI Standards must contain a GRI content index including references to GRI Standards disclosures.

2.2 Service application

Submission of Service application

To request for a Standards Alignment Check Service, the following documents must be submitted to GRI, by email to reportservices@globalreporting.org:

- Completed Sign-up form, including agreement with the Methodology and the Terms and Conditions and specification of Service(s) performed
- Near final draft of the reported information with disclosure labels and a GRI content index referencing disclosures from the GRI Standards.

Once all the required documentation has been received in good order, GRI will provide an email confirmation that the Service has been initiated and will indicate the expected date for providing the first feedback. The email confirmation is sent to the main contact during the Service, in line with the timeline for email confirmation: Please also see section 2.3 of this document for more information.

The Services team might request additional information where needed.

Please note that once the Sign-up form has been submitted to GRI, it is no longer possible to cancel the Service or request a refund.

Required documents: Sign-up form

The Sign-up form can be downloaded from the GRI website. By submitting a completed Sign-up form, the Reporting Organization, or if applicable the third party on behalf of the Reporting Organization, confirms that it agrees with the Terms and Conditions and Methodology for the Service(s).

Once the Sign-up form has been submitted to GRI it is no longer possible to cancel the Service or request a refund. In case the completed Sign-up form is submitted by a third party organization on behalf of the Reporting Organization and/or the Service process is managed solely by a third party
organization, the ownership of the feedback GRI Services provide overall remains with the Reporting Organization.

The Reporting Organization and/or third party must submit a fully completed sign-up form, including information on invoicing details. If GRI’s Certificate of Residence, PO number or any other documents or details are required in order to make the payment, this must be clearly indicated on the Sign-up form.

**Required documents: Final Draft of reported materials**

Organizations are required to submit a final or near final version of the relevant reported information.

This implies that the references for each relevant disclosure in the content index are final. The reported information must include a GRI content index with a placeholder for the relevant GRI [organizational mark](#). If the GRI content index is included as a separate document, the reported information would need to include a link or reference to the GRI content index.

If relevant the final draft of the reported materials must also include assurance information. If applicable, a Reporting Organization may indicate in the GRI content index, which disclosures have been externally assured.

The content of the reported information needs to include disclosure labels on all referenced pages for disclosures in the scope of the selected Service(s).

**Disclosure labels**

In the (draft) reported information, all GRI disclosures must be clearly distinguished using disclosure labels.

The use of disclosure labels is not required by the GRI Standards for reports to be in accordance. However, to apply for the GRI Standard Alignment Check Services, the use of disclosure labels is required.

Disclosure labels, for example GRI 102-10, 303-3, Disclosure 102-10, help report readers locate the information that they are looking for. They also give Reporting Organizations more control over the transparency of their reported information, by making their disclosures easier to find. GRI uses the disclosure labels to review that the locations of disclosures, as referenced in the content index, are accurate. Please review our [Methodology](#) document, for more information on disclosure labels.

**Language of the reported information**

GRI accepts reports for GRI Standards Alignment Check Services in any language. Nevertheless, a translation of the related content to English may be required by GRI to perform the Service.

It is common practice that Reporting Organizations publish reported information in more than one language version. In such cases, GRI will perform the Service in one language only. It is the responsibility of the Reporting Organization and/or third party to guarantee the correct translation of all disclosures and GRI Standards referenced in the content index and in the final report for any additional language versions of the reported materials not reviewed by GRI. In case GRI has requested changes during the Service process, these changes must also be implemented in the additional language versions.
2.3 Service procedures

Email confirmation and Services performance

All complete Service applications submitted to GRI at ReportServices@globalreporting.org before 10.00 am CET/CEST on a working day will be confirmed on the same working day. GRI Services will start performing the Service(s) on the same working day.

For applications sent to GRI after 10.00 am CET/CEST on a working-day, Reporting Organizations or third party will receive confirmation on when to expect their feedback, in line with the timeline they opted for, during the next working day. GRI Services will start performing the Service on the next working day. For all completed Services applications received during non-working days or public holidays, GRI Services will start performing the Service on the next working day.

For an overview of working days considered by GRI, please contact ReportServices@globalreporting.org.

Invoice

Shortly after the Service has been confirmed, an invoice will be prepared and sent by email to the contact person indicated in the invoicing details section of the Sign-up form. The invoice must be paid in line with the Terms and Conditions and GRI Services Pricing Policy.

Feedback Timelines

All Services are performed in line with the Regular Timeline, unless the Reporting Organization or third party has opted for the Fast Track timeline. The Fast Track timeline is available for an added fee.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Regular Timeline</th>
<th>Fast Track Timeline</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>First Round of</td>
<td>First Round of</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Feedback (in</td>
<td>Feedback (in</td>
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<td>working days)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Subsequent Rounds</td>
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<td>of Feedback (in</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>working days)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content Index Service</td>
<td>8 days</td>
<td>4 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management Approach Disclosures Service</td>
<td>5 days</td>
<td>2 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Materiality Disclosures Service</td>
<td>5 days</td>
<td>2 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDG Mapping Service</td>
<td>8 days</td>
<td>4 days</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

First feedback

According to the Regular Service Timeline, GRI will provide the Reporting Organization with its first feedback within a few working days, depending on the Standard Alignment Check Service the Reporting Organization has opted for. Should the Reporting Organization require to expedite the first feedback, it is possible to request the Fast Track Timeline option. Reporting Organizations and third parties should expect to receive the feedback at the end of working day (CET/CEST time).

Submission of updated reports/ reported information to GRI

After addressing the points raised in the first feedback, the Reporting Organization or their third party representative will provide GRI with an updated version of the (draft) reported information, via email to ReportServices@globalreporting.org.
The review of all updated reports submitted to GRI before 10.00 am CET/CEST on a working day, will start on the same working day.

The review of updated reports sent to GRI after 10.00 am CET/CEST will start on the next working day. The review of updated reports submitted to GRI on a non-working day, will start on the next working day.

GRI’s Services Team working days are from Monday to Friday. GRI’s Services Team observes public holidays in the Netherlands.

**Subsequent feedback(s)**

According to the *Regular Service Timeline*, depending on the Standard Alignment Check Service the Reporting Organization has opted for. Reporting Organizations that opt for the *Fast Track Service Timeline* will receive the second (and subsequent) feedback in line with the expedited timelines, after receipt of the updated documents.

If all of GRI’s requirements for completing the Service have been correctly implemented, GRI will complete the Service by issuing the GRI Services organizational mark. The mark must be accompanied by the relevant statement.

If GRI’s initial requirements for completing the Service have not been implemented in full, GRI will provide the Reporting Organization with a second (or subsequent) round of comments.

The Reporting Organization is required to submit updated versions of the (draft) report until all of GRI’s requirements for completing the Services have been implemented. The process is complete when GRI has no further feedback within the scope of this Service. See the *Methodology* document for details on the scope of the relevant Service.

Reporting Organizations and third parties should expect to receive the feedback at the end of working day (CET/CEST).

**2.4 Formal Conclusion of the Service**

GRI will complete the Service by issuing the GRI Services organizational mark. The mark must be accompanied by the relevant statement.

**Organizational mark**

The Services organizational mark is the formal confirmation that the report of a particular organization has undergone and successfully completed a GRI Service in a particular month and year.

**Use of the Services’ organizational mark**

If, after having received the mark, any changes are made to the elements of the report that are within the scope of the Service, the mark is no longer valid, and the Reporting Organization must remove the mark from the report immediately.

The organizational mark shall be included on the first page of the GRI content index of the final version of the report without further amendment.

Use of the mark in any other location of the report, on the website or other communications is not permitted. The mark can be used both electronically and in print, provided that the two versions of the report are identical. The mark can be used in a translated version of the report provided that the content of the two versions of the report is identical and the statement for the Service reflects the language version of the report that completed the Service.
Changes to the organizational mark are not allowed and it should be included in the report “as is”. Other terms of use are available in the GRI Trademarks and Copyright Policy.

**Statement**
The statement communicates how the GRI Services Team has reviewed certain aspects of the sustainability reported information, in line with the methodology of each Service. The statement must be placed on the same page where the organizational mark is included. The statement is the official communication on how the Service was performed on the report. Reporting Organizations are requested to include this wording to clarify the scope of the Service and to avoid any additional explanations on the methodology of each Service in the body of the report. In case the Reporting Organization plans to use the organizational mark in a translated version of the report, the statement for the Service should be expanded to mention the language version of the report that completed the Service.

Below are the statements that correspond to each Service. The Reporting Organization is required to include the relevant statement in the report, together with the GRI organizational mark.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Statement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Content index Service</td>
<td>For the GRI Content Index Service, GRI Services reviewed that the GRI content index is clearly presented and the references for all disclosures included align with the appropriate sections in the body of the report.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management Approach Disclosures Service</td>
<td>For the Management Approach Disclosures Service, GRI Services reviewed that the GRI content index is clearly presented and the references for management approach disclosures align with appropriate sections in the body of the report.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Materiality Disclosures Service</td>
<td>For the Materiality Disclosures Service, GRI Services reviewed that the GRI content index is clearly presented and the references for Disclosures 102-40 to 102-49 align with appropriate sections in the body of the report.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDG Mapping Service</td>
<td>For the SDG Mapping Service, GRI Services reviewed that the GRI disclosures included in the content index are appropriately mapped against the SDGs.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reporting Organizations may also include the statement about GRI Services on their website in the following manner:

- The Content Index Service was performed on the <<insert language>> version of the <<title of the report>> report in <<month and year when the Service was performed>>. GRI confirmed that the disclosures are correctly located in both the GRI content index and in the text of the final report.
- The Management Approach Disclosures Service was performed <<insert language>> version of the <<title of the report>> report in <<month and year when the Service was performed>>. For this Service GRI confirmed that management approach disclosures are correctly these disclosures are correctly located in both the GRI content index and in the text of the final report.
- The Materiality Disclosures Service was performed <<insert language>> version of the <<title of the report>> report in <<month and year when the Service was performed>>. For this Service, GRI confirmed that the Disclosures 102-40 to 102-49 are correctly are correctly located in both the GRI content index and in the text of the final report.
- The SDG Mapping Service was performed on the <<insert language>> version of the <<title of the report>> report in <<month and year when the Service was performed>>.
performed>>. For this Service, GRI confirmed that the SDGs are correctly linked to GRI disclosures in the GRI Content Index.

The Reporting Organization should include the language of the report, title of the report and the month and year when the Service was performed on the statement. As an example, please refer to the sample statement below:

Example website statement
“The SDG Mapping Service was performed on the English version of the 2019 Sustainability report in August 2020. For this Service GRI confirmed that the SDGs are correctly linked to GRI disclosures in the GRI Content Index.”

The above statements may be translated in the local language as long as the translated content reflects the original statement.

2.5 Language related to GRI, the GRI standards, GRI Services

As part of the Standards Alignment Check Services, the reported information is also reviewed for inappropriate, unclear or confusing language related to GRI, the GRI Services, the scope of the GRI Services, the GRI Standards. The Reporting Organization is asked to remove such language from the reviewed content. The below, non-exhaustive, list includes examples of inappropriate wording:

- The report has been certified according to the GRI Standards
- GRI has verified/certified the report
- GRI has verified/confirmed the in-accordance option Comprehensive
- The GRI Service was performed for the Comprehensive in accordance option
- The report was submitted for the Service at in accordance option Core
- The report has received classification ‘Core’
- The report follows the Core/Comprehensive application level of the Standards
- The report has been rated by GRI
- This Service guarantees alignment with the GRI Standards
- The GRI Index
- The GRI Standards Table
- The Reporting Organization has used the G4 Standards
- The Reporting Organization has used the Global Reporting Initiative Standards Guidelines

For more information about referring to GRI and its branded material, as well as using the GRI Organizational Mark for Services, please consult the GRI Trademarks and Copyright Policy.

2.6 Notification of reports to GRI

According to GRI 101: Foundation 2016, clause 3.4 on “Notification of reports”, Reporting Organizations are required to inform GRI of the use of the GRI Standards and the claim it has made in the report or other published material, via the Report Registration System or by sending GRI this form, once the report is published.

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1 Please refer to GRI 102: General Disclosures 2016, Disclosure 102-54
2 Please refer to GRI 102: General Disclosures 2016, Disclosure 102-55. Variations of this are possible as long as GRI content index is included in the title
As part of the Service and to aid in completing the requirement according to GRI 101: Foundation 2016, clause 3.4 on “Notification of reports”, GRI will create an entry in the registration system for the draft sustainability report and, where necessary, an account for the contact person of the Reporting Organization that will proceed with the report registration process or third party that will add the report’s information for the Reporting Organization to verify. More information can be found on the Guide to register a GRI Standards report.

Main contacts for the Service, will receive a reminder from GRI to register the report, after the report is published. GRI will only register the first name, last name and email of the official contact person responsible for the content of the report in line with GRI 101: Foundation 2016, clause 3.4 on “Notification of reports”. This contact information will be viewable within the Report Registration system. GRI will not internally process this information for any purpose outside of report registration.

3. FEES & PAYMENT CONDITIONS

Please view the GRI Services Pricing Policy for information and conditions that apply.

4. CONFIDENTIALITY

When carrying out the Service, GRI will require access to unpublished reports and reported information. As a result, GRI will be in possession of information that is confidential and of strategic importance to the Reporting Organization (“Confidential Information”). Without limiting the generality of the foregoing, GRI will:

• not disclose or discuss the Confidential Information, in whole or in part, with any person other than employees or representatives of GRI to the extent required to perform the Service;
• if and when requested, immediately return all hard or digital copies of the Confidential Information to a person nominated by the Reporting Organization or their representatives or destroy or delete the same as requested.

There shall be no obligation of confidentiality with respect to any information that (a) is required to be disclosed by GRI by any law, regulation, judicial or administrative process, or in accordance with applicable professional standards or rules, or in connection with litigation or arbitration pertaining to the Service;
(b) is or becomes publicly available other than as the result of a disclosure in breach hereof;
(c) becomes available to GRI on a non-confidential basis from a source that GRI believes is not prohibited from disclosing such information to GRI; or
(d) is already known by GRI without any obligation of confidentiality with respect thereto.

GRI acknowledges that disclosure of any Confidential Information in breach of the aforementioned provisions may give rise to irreparable injury to the Reporting Organization. GRI agrees that the Reporting Organization may seek injunctive relief against the breach or threatened breach of the foregoing undertakings in addition to any other legal remedies which may be available to the Reporting Organization.

In no event shall GRI or their respective personnel be liable to the Reporting Organization for any loss of use, data, goodwill, revenues, or profits or any consequential, special, indirect, incidental, punitive or exemplary loss, damage or expense as a result of using the Service.
This agreement and all connected rights and obligations shall be governed by and construed in accordance with Dutch law. All disputes arising in connection with this agreement shall be finally settled by means of arbitration under the Rules of the Nederlands Arbitrage Instituut (Netherlands Arbitration Institute), by one or more arbitrators appointed in accordance with such rules. The place of arbitration shall be Amsterdam, the Netherlands. The arbitration procedure shall be conducted in the English language. The arbitration court shall decide in accordance with the rules of law.

5. COMMUNICATION WITH GRI

5.1. Communication with GRI as a GRI Services Client

Reporting Organizations that sign-up for GRI Services provide GRI with a contact person, in the sign-up form, that is the main contact person during the course of the Service. As a benefit of receiving a Service from GRI, designated contact persons for the Reporting Organizations may receive communications such as but not limited to: Information on how to improve the current or future reports, other Services that they may benefit from to improve their future report, customer satisfaction surveys related to the Service or information to help the Reporting Organization notify GRI Standards for their report. These communications can happen during this Service, as a follow-up of the Service or after the Service is completed. If at any point, the Reporting Organization and designated contact person would not like to benefit from these communications and would like to stop receiving these messages, they can let GRI Services Team know via email at: reportServices@globalreporting.org.

6. CONTACT

Any questions or comments should be sent to GRI’s Services Team by email at reportServices@globalreporting.org.