



Item 04 – GRI Sector Standards Project for Oil, Gas, and Coal – Exposure draft for Coal

For GSSB discussion and approval

Date	15 April 2021
Meeting	29 April 2021
Project	Sector Standards for Oil, Gas, and Coal
Description	<p>This document sets out the exposure draft of Sector Standard: Coal, including the explanatory memorandum. These are submitted for GSSB approval for public exposure.</p> <p>If approved, it is proposed that public exposure commence in mid-May and run until the end of July.</p> <p>Please note: This Standard makes references to the GRI Universal Standards. As the Universal Standards are currently under revision, the references in this draft use the names of the Universal Standards as they were at the time of exposure. The names and other references, along with several figures in the introduction and the glossary terms will be updated to align with the version of the Universal Standards to be submitted to the GSSB for approval in May. This content will be update in this Standard prior to release for public exposure.</p>

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.

Background information for the GSSB

The GRI Sectors Standards Project for Oil, Gas and Coal was initiated in 2019, and work on a Sector Standard for oil, gas, and coal commenced following the appointment of a 17-member Working Group in mid-2019.

In addition to the Working Group, a number of experts and stakeholders were engaged in an external peer review in February and March 2020 to gather further input on the draft contents. This peer review involved over 20 participants representing business, civil society, investor and mediating institutions. Peer review feedback reinforced the need to highlight climate change for these sectors. The likely material topics presented were largely confirmed as the correct ones, and the contents were seen as useful from both a reporter's perspective as well as for engagement purposes.

During the course of the project, the GSSB received stakeholder submissions from the oil and gas sector raising concerns about addressing oil, gas, and coal in a combined Sector Standard, indicating a potential impediment to its uptake. These concerns were echoed by the Oil, Gas, and Coal Working Group, and the [GSSB decided](#) in April 2020 to separate coal from the oil and gas contents.

As a consequence, two Sector Standards – one for oil and gas, and one for coal – are being developed under the auspices of Sectors Standards Project for Oil, Gas and Coal. To strengthen the coal expertise, an additional member was appointed to the Working Group, and a program of further research on the impacts of the coal sector has been undertaken by the Standards Division.

The exposure draft for coal incorporates relevant public comment feedback collected to the exposure draft for oil and gas, aligning with these revisions where seen as appropriate by the Working Group.

Preliminary findings on topic and disclosure gaps

It was anticipated that projects for Sector Standards would generate insight on the feasibility of developing reporting requirements, recommendations, and/or guidance for the sector. The work on coal to date has surfaced some topics and disclosures that might result in recommendations to revise or develop new GRI Topic Standards.

All likely material topics included in the exposure draft include at least one Topic Standards disclosure, though a number have been supplemented with additional disclosures from outside the GRI Standards.

As was expected, in a similar vein to oil and gas, Working Group discussions have been largely focused on climate change related topics, namely GHG emissions and Climate adaptation and resilience. There has been a strong recommendation from the Working Group to enhance disclosures within these topics, specifically related to governance, target setting, and organizations' strategic decision-making in the context of the low-carbon transition.

In addition, the topics of Asset integrity and critical incident management, and Land and resource rights did not have clear directly relevant or sufficient Topic Standards disclosures and might result in recommendations to revise existing Topic Standards or develop new ones at the completion of the project.

Public comment

The public comment period for the exposure draft of coal is proposed to commence on 19 May and run until 30 July 2021. This will run in conjunction with the public comment period for agriculture, aquaculture, and fishing.

The primary objective of the public comment period is to test the clarity, feasibility, completeness and relevancy of the content, including:

- Whether the topics that have been identified as likely material for organizations in the coal sector, and the way they are described, accurately reflect the sector's most significant impacts on the economy, environment, and people, including impacts on their human rights; and

- 47 • That the list of disclosures from the GRI Topic Standards and other sources included for each likely
48 material topic are relevant for organizations in the sector to report information about their impacts
49 and approach.
- 50 The public comment will engage stakeholders globally across GRI's key constituencies. All
51 engagement will be undertaken remotely.

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52 Explanatory memorandum

53 This explanatory memorandum sets out the objectives of GRI Sector Standards Project for Oil, Gas,
54 and Coal. It also includes the significant proposals resulting from this project and summarizes the
55 Global Sustainability Standards Board (GSSB)'s involvement and views on development of the draft.

56 Objectives for the project

57 The exposure draft for coal is the second Standard being developed under the GRI Sector Standards
58 Project for Oil, Gas, and Coal. This is a pilot project for the GRI Sector Program.

59 The project aims to identify and describe the sectors' significant impacts and stakeholder expectations
60 from a sustainable development perspective, and provide evidence and authoritative references for
61 these. This will serve as a foundation for increased transparency and more consistent reporting from
62 organizations in the sectors.

63 The project was initiated in 2019 to develop a Sector Standard for oil, gas and coal. As outlined in the
64 GSSB's [Due Process Protocol](#), a multi-stakeholder working group was established to contribute in the
65 development of the Sector Standard.

66 During the course of the project, the GSSB received stakeholder submissions from the oil and gas
67 sector raising concerns about addressing oil, gas, and coal in a combined Sector Standard, indicating
68 a potential impediment to its uptake. These concerns were echoed by the Oil, Gas, and Coal Working
69 Group, and the [GSSB decided](#) in April 2020 to separate coal from the oil and gas contents. As a
70 consequence, this exposure draft focuses on the coal sector only.

71 For more information on the project, consult the [project proposal](#) and [terms of reference](#).

72 The GRI Universal Standards have simultaneously been [under revision](#). The implementation model of
73 the Sector Standards will be incorporated into these revised Universal Standards. The final Universal
74 Standards are expected to be approved in Q2 2021. For the purposes of this exposure draft, draft
75 versions of the Universal Standards are used.

76 Significant proposals

77 An exposure draft for coal has been developed in line with the project objectives set out above.
78 Notable inclusions in this exposure draft are summarized below:

- 79 • **22 topics were identified to be likely material** for organizations in the coal sector (see Table 1).
80 For each likely material topic, the sector's most significant impacts are described and disclosures
81 to report information about the organization's impacts and approach in relation to the topic are
82 listed. All topics list one or more disclosures from the GRI Topic Standards; six topics list
83 additional sector disclosures in addition to Topic Standards disclosures; and 15 topics list
84 additional sector recommendations to supplement Topic Standards disclosures.
85
- 86 • **The Standard emphasizes topics related to climate change**, notably *GHG emissions* and
87 *Climate adaptation and resilience*. Robust disclosure on these topics, specifically related to
88 governance, target setting, and organizations' strategic decision-making related to the low-carbon
89 transition, have been identified as essential for the coal sector. Additional reporting
90 recommendations and disclosures draw from relevant climate reporting frameworks, such as the
91 *TCFD Recommendations of the Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures*.
92
- 93 • **New tailings disclosures are listed** in the topic *Asset integrity and critical incident management*
94 for reporting on integrity of tailings facilities. These disclosures have been developed in line with
95 the *Global Industry Standard for Tailings Management*, launched in 2020 by the International
96 Council on Mining & Metals, United Nations Environment Programme and Principles for
97 Responsible Investment.

- 98 • Additional disclosures are also listed related to topics that deal with **payment transparency and**
 99 **prevention of corruption**, with additional sector disclosures based on the Extractive Industries
 100 Transparency Initiative *EITI Standard 2019*.
 101
- 102 • **Sector Profile** section further outlines the sector’s activities, business relationships, and its
 103 interactions with the global sustainable development agenda, including linkages to the UN
 104 Sustainable Development Goals. A mapping between the likely material topics and the relevant
 105 SDGs is included as part of the larger context in the section *1.2 The sectors and sustainable*
 106 *development*, providing a starting point for organizations that seek to integrate the SDGs into their
 107 reporting.

108 Table 1: Likely material topics included in the draft Sector Standard: Coal

Likely material topic	Disclosures from GRI Topic Standards included for reporting on the topic	Whether additional sector recommendations or disclosures are listed for the topic
1. GHG emissions	<i>GRI 302: Energy 2016</i> <i>GRI 305: Emissions 2016</i>	Additional sector recommendations included for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disclosure MT-3 Management of material topics • Disclosure 305-1 Direct (Scope 1) GHG emissions
2. Climate adaptation and resilience	<i>GRI 201: Economic Performance 2016</i>	Additional sector recommendations included for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disclosure MT-3 Management of material topics • Disclosure 201-2 Financial implications and other risks and opportunities due to climate change Additional sector disclosures
3. Closure and rehabilitation	<i>GRI 402: Labor/Management Relations 2016</i> <i>GRI 404: Training and Education 2016</i>	Additional sector recommendations included for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disclosure 402-1 Minimum notice periods regarding operational changes • Disclosure 404-2 Programs for upgrading employee skills and transition assistance programs Additional sector disclosures
4. Air emissions	<i>GRI 305: Emissions 2016</i> <i>GRI 416: Customer Health and Safety 2016</i>	Additional sector recommendations included for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disclosure 305-7 Nitrogen oxides (NO_x), sulfur oxides (SO_x), and other significant air emissions • Disclosure 416-1 Assessment of the health and safety impacts of product and service categories
5. Biodiversity	<i>GRI 304: Biodiversity 2016</i>	Additional sector recommendations included for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disclosure MT-3 Management of material topics • Disclosure 304-3 Habitats protected or restored

6. Waste	<i>GRI 306: Waste 2020</i>	Additional sector recommendations included for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disclosure 306-3 Waste generated • Disclosure 306-4 Waste diverted from disposal Disclosure 306-5 Waste directed to disposal
7. Water and effluents	<i>GRI 303: Water and Effluents 2018</i>	Additional sector recommendations included for Disclosure 303-2 Management of water discharge-related impacts
8. Economic impacts	<i>GRI 201: Economic Performance 2016</i> <i>GRI 202: Market Presence 2016</i> <i>GRI 203: Indirect Economic Impacts 2016</i> <i>GRI 204: Procurement Practices 2016</i>	Additional sector recommendations included for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disclosure MT-3 Management of material topics • Disclosure 201-1 Direct economic value generated and distributed
9. Local communities	<i>GRI 413: Local Communities 2016</i>	Additional sector recommendations included for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disclosure MT-3 Management of material topics • Disclosure 413-2 Operations with significant actual and potential negative impacts on local communities Additional sector disclosures
10. Land and resource rights	<i>GRI 413: Local Communities 2016</i>	Additional sector recommendations included for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disclosure MT-3 Management of material topics • Disclosure 413-2 Operations with significant actual and potential negative impacts on local communities
11. Rights of indigenous peoples	<i>GRI 411: Rights of Indigenous People 2016</i> <i>GRI 413: Local Communities 2016</i>	Additional sector recommendations included for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disclosure MT-3 Management of material topics • Disclosure 413-1 Operations with local community engagement, impact assessments, and development programs • Disclosure 413-2 Operations with significant actual and potential negative impacts on local communities
12. Conflict and security	<i>GRI 410: Security Practices 2016</i>	Additional sector recommendations included for Disclosure MT-3 Management of material topics

13. Asset integrity and critical incident management	<i>GRI 306: Effluents and waste 2016</i>	Additional sector recommendations included for Disclosure MT-3 Management of material topics Additional sector disclosures
14. Occupational health and safety	<i>GRI 403: Occupational Health and Safety 2018</i>	-
15. Employment practices	<i>GRI 401: Employment 2016</i> <i>GRI 402: Labor/Management Relations 2016</i> <i>GRI 402: Labor/Management Relations 2016</i> <i>GRI 414: Supplier Social Assessment 2016</i>	-
16. Child labor	<i>GRI 408: Child Labor 2016</i>	-
17. Forced labor and modern slavery	<i>GRI 409: Forced or Compulsory Labor 2016</i>	-
18. Non-discrimination and equal opportunity	<i>GRI 202: Market Presence 2016</i> <i>GRI 401: Employment 2016</i> <i>GRI 404: Training and Education 2016</i> <i>GRI 405: Diversity and Equal Opportunity 2016</i> <i>GRI 406: Non-discrimination 2016</i>	-
19. Freedom of association and collective bargaining	<i>GRI 407: Freedom of Association and Collective Bargaining 2016</i>	-
20. Anti-corruption	<i>GRI 205: Anti-corruption 2016</i>	Additional sector disclosures
23. Payments to governments	<i>GRI 201: Economic Performance 2016</i> <i>GRI 207: Tax 2019</i>	Additional sector recommendations included for Disclosure 201-4 Financial assistance received from government Additional sector disclosures
22. Public policy and lobbying	<i>GRI 415: Public Policy 2016</i>	Additional sector recommendations included for Disclosure MT-3 Management of material topics

109 **Relationship to draft Sector Standard: Oil and Gas**

110 Draft Sector Standards for oil and gas, and coal were developed in conjunction until April 2020, with
111 the intention of forming a single Standard. Following a recommendation from the working group, these
112 contents were separated.

113 There are two notable changes in the likely material topics for the coal sector compared to oil and gas
114 - the inclusion of child labor as a likely material topic, and the exclusion of anti-competitive behavior.
115 The exposure draft for coal also has an additional focus on tailings management, which is not relevant
116 for oil and gas organizations outside of oil sands mining.

117 **GSSB involvement and views on the development of this draft**

118 The GSSB appointed a subcommittee of three GSSB members for the Sector Program. The
119 subcommittee was consulted on key conceptual issues on a regular basis.

120 The first (rough) draft of the Sector Standard for oil, gas, and coal – prior to the separation of the
121 contents – was discussed by the GSSB during a virtual meeting on 26 March 2020, and the scope of
122 the project was discussed on 23 April 2020.

123 The GSSB confirmed its support for content of the exposure draft for coal when it voted to approve
124 the draft for public exposure at its meeting on 29 April 2021. The recording of the meetings can be
125 accessed on the GSSB website.

126 **Superseded publications**

127 The GRI Sector Standard: Coal will be relevant for coal organizations previously using the G4 Mining
128 and Metals Sector Disclosures. The content of these Sector Disclosures was not updated as part of
129 the transition from the G4 Guidelines to the GRI Standards.

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130 Introduction

131 GRI Sector Standard: Coal provides information for organizations in the coal sector about their most
132 likely material topics. These topics have been identified as likely material for organizations in the coal
133 sector on the basis of the sector's most significant impacts on the economy, environment, and people,
134 including impacts on their human rights.

135 Sector Standard: Coal also contains a list of disclosures from the GRI Topic Standards and other
136 sources for organizations in the coal sector to report information about their impacts and approach in
137 relation to each likely material topic.

138 Sector Standards are developed using multi-stakeholder expertise, authoritative intergovernmental
139 instruments, and other relevant evidence.

140 This Standard is structured as follows:

- 141 • [Section 1](#) provides a high-level overview of the sector, including its activities, business
142 relationships, sustainability context, and the connections between the Sustainable Development
143 Goals (SDGs) and the likely material topics for the sector.
- 144 • [Section 2](#) outlines the topics that have been identified as likely material for organizations in the
145 coal sector and therefore potentially merit reporting. For each likely material topic, the coal
146 sector's most significant impacts are described and disclosures to report information about the
147 organization's impacts and approach in relation to the topic are listed.
- 148 • [Glossary](#) contains defined terms with specific meaning when used in the GRI Standards.
- 149 • [Bibliography](#) lists the authoritative intergovernmental instruments and other sources used to
150 develop each topic, as well as further resources that may be helpful for reporting on the topic.

151 The rest of this Introduction section offers an overview of the sectors this Standard applies to, an
152 overview of the system of GRI Standards, and further information on using this Standard.

153 Sectors this Standard applies to

154 GRI Sector Standard: Coal applies to organizations undertaking the following:

- 155 • Exploration, mining, and processing of thermal and metallurgical coal from underground or open-
156 pit mines.
- 157 • Supply of equipment and services to coal mines, such as drilling, exploration, seismic information
158 services, and mine construction.
- 159 • Storage or transportation of coal, such as slurry pipelines.

160 This Standard can be used by coal organizations of any size or type in any geographic location.

161 Not all topics listed in this Standard may be material for all organizations in the sector. The
162 organization will determine its material topics based on its specific circumstances.

163 When identifying the applicable Sector Standards, an organization should consider its main sector. If
164 the organization has substantial activities across more than one sector, it must use all applicable
165 Sector Standards.

166 Sector classifications

167 Table1 lists industry groupings relevant to the coal sector in the Global Industry Classification
168 Standard (GICS®), Industry Classification Benchmark (ICB), International Standard Industrial
169 Classification of All Economic Activities (ISIC), and Sustainable Industry Classification System
170 (SICS®). The table is intended to assist an organization in identifying whether the Sector Standard:
171 Coal applies to it and is for reference only.

172 Table 1. Industry groupings relevant to the coal sector in other classification systems

Classification system	Classification number	Classification name
GICS®	10102050	Coal & consumable fuels
ICB	60101040	Coal
ISIC	B05	Mining of coal and lignite
SICS®	EM-CO	Coal operations

173 System of GRI Standards

174 This Standard is part of the GRI Sustainability Reporting Standards (GRI Standards). The GRI
 175 Standards enable an organization to report information on its most significant impacts on the
 176 economy, environment, and people, including impacts on their human rights, and how it manages
 177 these impacts.

178 The GRI Standards are structured as a system of interrelated standards that are organized into three
 179 series: Universal Standards, Sector Standards, and Topic Standards.

180 Universal Standards: GRI 101, 102, and 103

181 **Note:** All references to the GRI Universal Standards in this Standard refer to [the drafts] that have
 182 been made available as part of the [review of the Universal Standards]. The GRI Sector Standards
 183 will work in conjunction with the revised Universal Standards. The draft Universal Standards are
 184 subject to the approval of the Global Sustainability Standards Board and may change.

185 *GRI 101: Using the GRI Standards* sets out the requirements that the organization must comply with
 186 to report in accordance with the GRI Standards. The organization begins using the GRI Standards by
 187 consulting *GRI 101*.

188 *GRI 102: About the Organization* contains disclosures that the organization uses to provide
 189 information about its reporting practices and other organizational details, such as activities,
 190 governance, and policies.

191 *GRI 103: Material Topics* provides guidance on how to determine material topics. It also contains
 192 disclosures that the organization uses to report information about its process to determine material
 193 topics, its list of material topics, and how it manages each topic.

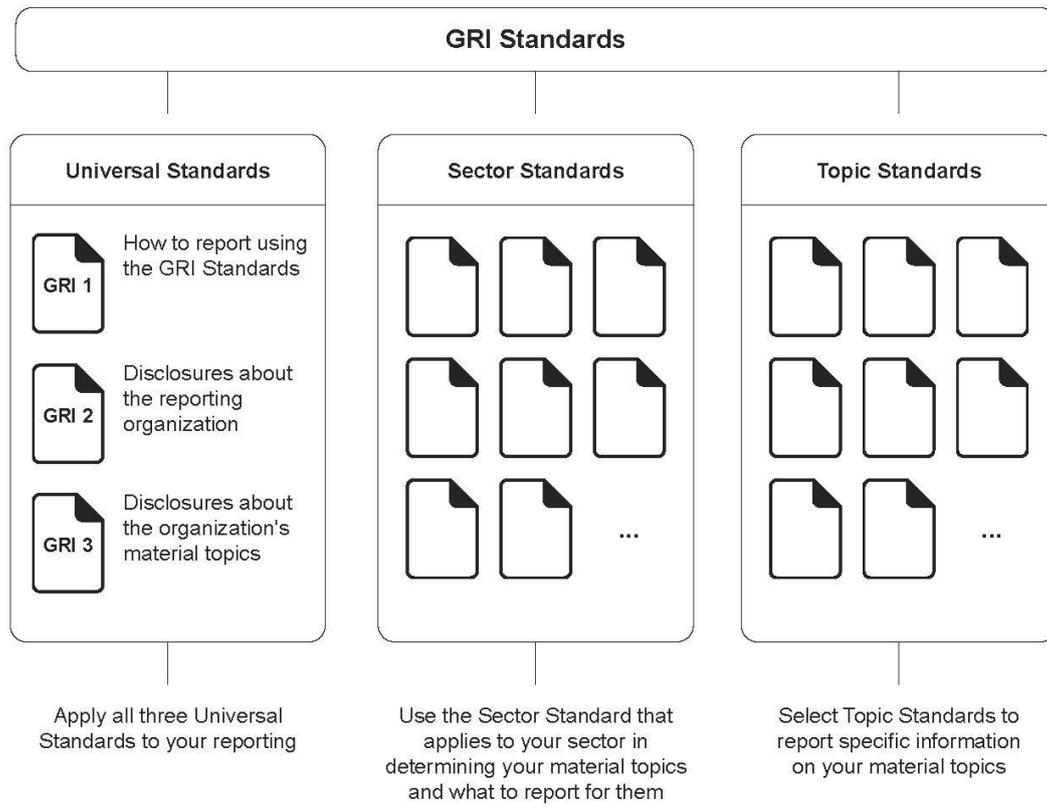
194 Sector Standards

195 The Sector Standards provide information for organizations in a given sector about their most likely
 196 material topics. The organization uses the Sector Standards that apply to its sectors when
 197 determining its material topics and when determining what to report for each material topic.

198 Topic Standards

199 The Topic Standards contain disclosures that the organization uses to report information on its
 200 impacts and approach in relation to particular topics. The organization uses the Topic Standards
 201 according to the list of material topics it has determined using *GRI 103*.

Figure 1. GRI Standards: Universal, Sector, and Topic Standard



202 Using this Standard

203 An organization in the coal sector reporting in accordance with the GRI Standards is required to use
 204 this Standard when determining its material topics and when determining what information to report
 205 for the material topics.

206 Determining material topics

207 Material topics are topics that represent the organization's most significant impacts on the economy,
 208 environment, and people, including impacts on their human rights.

209 An organization in the coal sector is required to use this Standard when determining its material
 210 topics. The organization needs to review each topic described in [Section 2](#) of this Standard and
 211 determine whether it is a material topic for the organization.

212 This Standard helps the organization determine its material topics, but the organization still needs to
 213 determine its material topics based on its specific circumstances. The topics an organization identifies
 214 as material may vary according to specific circumstances, such as its business model; sector;
 215 geographic, cultural, and legal operating contexts; ownership structure; and the nature of its impacts.
 216 [GRI 103: Material Topics](#) provides step-by-step guidance on how to determine material topics.

217 Not all topics listed in this Standard may be material for all organizations in the sectors. If any of the
 218 topics that are included in this Standard have been determined by the organization as not material,
 219 the organization is required to list them in the GRI content index and explain why they are not material
 220 (see [Requirement 7](#) in [Section 3](#) of [GRI 101: Using the GRI Standards](#)).

221 See [Requirement 3 in Section 3 of GRI 101: Using the GRI Standards](#) and [Box 1 in GRI 103: Material](#)
 222 [Topics](#) for more information on using Sector Standards when determining material topics.

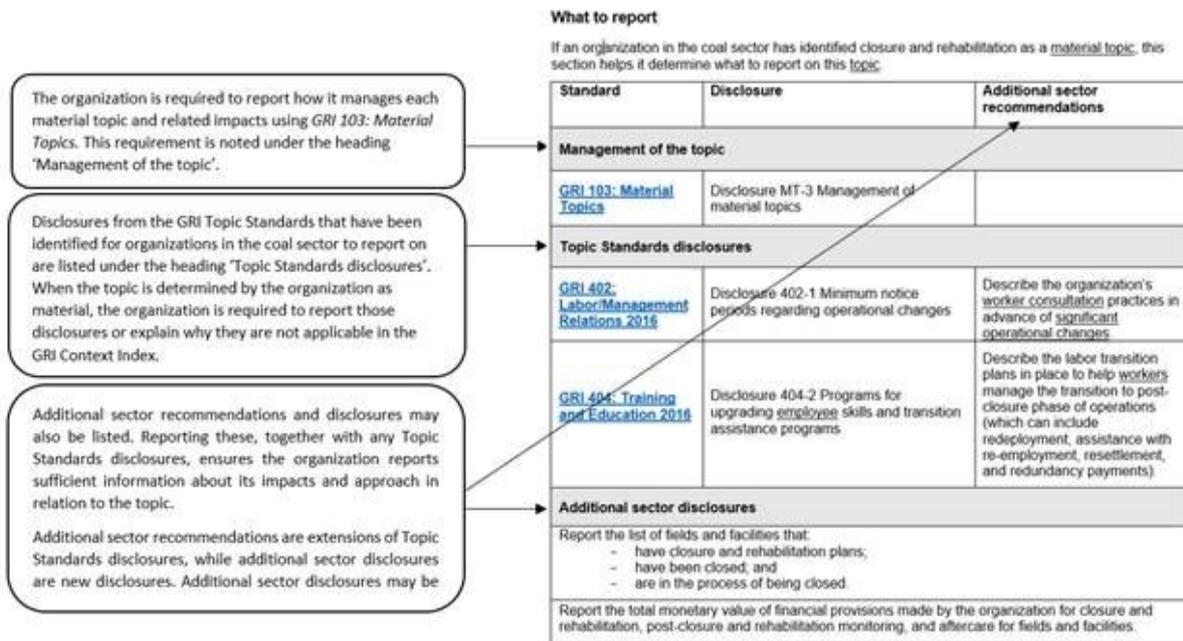
223 Determining what to report

224 When a topic included in this Standard is determined by the organization as material, the Standard
 225 helps the organization identify disclosures to report on its impacts and approach in relation to that
 226 topic.

227 A what to report section is included for each topic in [Section 2](#) of this Standard. What to report
 228 sections list disclosures from the GRI Topic Standards. They may also list additional sector
 229 recommendations and disclosures for the organization to report on, in cases where the Topic
 230 Standards do not provide disclosures, or where the disclosures from the Topic Standards do not
 231 provide sufficient information about an organization's impacts and approach in relation to a topic.
 232 Additional sector disclosures may be based on other sources.

233 Figure 2 illustrates how what to report sections are structured.

234 **Figure 2. Structure of what to report sections**



235 For topics determined by the organization as material, the organization is required to report the
 236 disclosures drawn from Topic Standards listed in the what to report section for that topic. If any
 237 disclosures listed are not relevant for reporting on the organization's impacts and approach in relation
 238 to the topic, then the organization is not required to report these but is required to list them in the GRI
 239 Context Index, provide the 'not applicable' reason for omission and a brief explanation (see
 240 [Requirement 7 in Section 3 of GRI 101: Using the GRI Standards](#)).

241 The additional sector recommendations and disclosures outline additional information that the
 242 organization should report on the topic. An organization should provide sufficient information about its
 243 impacts and approach in relation to each material topic, so that information users can make informed
 244 assessments and decisions about the organization. The additional sector disclosures and
 245 recommendations have been identified as relevant for organizations in the coal sector in relation to
 246 the topic. Reporting on these is encouraged, however, it is not a requirement.

247 When the organization reports the additional sector disclosures, it is required to list them in the GRI
 248 content index.

249 See [Requirement 5 in Section 3 of GRI 101: Using the GRI Standards](#) for more information on using
 250 Sector Standards when identifying disclosures to report on.

251 **Defined terms**

252 Defined terms are underlined in the text of the GRI Standards and hyperlinked to their definitions in
253 the [Glossary](#). The organization is required to apply the definitions in the Glossary.

254 **References and resources**

255 Each GRI Topic Standard includes a list of authoritative intergovernmental instruments and other
256 sources used in developing the Standard, as well as additional resources that can be consulted by
257 organizations on the topic. Additional authoritative instruments and sources used to develop the
258 topics in this Standard, as well as further resources that may be helpful for understanding and
259 reporting on the topic by organizations in the coal sector are listed at the end of the Standard.

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260 1. Sector profile

261 Coal is an abundant and widespread natural resource. Its use dates from ancient history, and coal
262 extraction now represents a large global sector supplying key raw materials for energy generation and
263 metallurgical processes. It is currently a fundamental input in some major industries, notably steel,
264 which accounts for 15% of the use of world coal production.¹ Coal is also used in production of
265 synthetic compounds, such as cement, dye, oil, waxes, pharmaceuticals, and pesticides.

266 Coal organizations are diverse in nature. While some focus on this sole commodity – combining
267 extraction, distribution, and consumption channels under a single ownership – others are large
268 diversified organizations, extracting different commodities or operating across different sectors. Some
269 of the largest organizations in the sector are state-owned enterprises.

270 Coal is still widely used to generate electricity in many countries, though its consumption for this
271 purpose has declined globally since 2013.²

272 1.1 Sector activities and business relationships

273 When determining its material topics, the organization should consider the impacts of both its
274 activities and its business relationships.

275 **Activities**

276 The impacts of an organization vary according to the types of activities it undertakes. The following list
277 outlines some of the key activities of the coal sector. The list is not exhaustive.

278 *Prospecting and exploration:* Surveying of resources through, for example, feasibility assessments,
279 geologic mapping, aerial photography, geophysical measuring, and drilling.

280 *Development:* Design, planning, and constructing a mine, including facilities for coal processing and
281 workers.

282 *Mining:* Coal extraction using surface mining, underground mining, or in-situ techniques.

283 *Processing:* Crushing, cleaning, and processing coal from unwanted materials; processing it into
284 briquettes, liquids, and gas or into coke for steelmaking.

285 *Closure and rehabilitation:* Decommissioning processing facilities, land reclamation and rehabilitation,
286 and closing and sealing waste facilities.

287 *Transportation:* Moving coal to the point of consumption by barge, conveyor belt, train, truck, or ship;
288 or when mixed with oil or water, transported as coal slurry by pipeline.

289 *Storage:* Storing coal at mining sites or import and export terminals.

290 *Sales and marketing:* Trading and customer sales of products for the purpose of, for example, iron
291 and steel production, cement production, electricity production, and manufacturing.

292 **Business relationships**

293 An organization's business relationships include those with business partners, entities in its value
294 chain, including those beyond the first tier, and any other entities directly linked to its operations,
295 products, or services. The following types of business relationships are of particular relevance when
296 identifying the impacts of organizations in the coal sector.

¹ International Energy Agency (IEA), [Coal Information: Overview](#), accessed on 5 April 2021.

² World Economic Forum (WEF), [Chart of the day: Is 2019 the beginning of the end for coal in Europe?](#), accessed on 5 April 2021; International Energy Agency (IEA), [Coal 2019: Analysis and Forecasts to 2024](#), accessed on 5 April 2021.

297 *Joint ventures* are common arrangements, particularly in upstream coal operations, in which
298 organizations share costs, benefits, and liabilities of assets or a project. Even as a non-operating
299 partner, an organization can be involved with negative impacts as a result of a joint venture.

300 *Suppliers and contractors* are used often in the coal sector during certain phases of the project, such
301 as construction, or to provide services. Some of the most significant impacts related to the topics in
302 this Sector Standard involve the supply chain.

303 *Customer organizations* use coal to produce heat, energy, or materials. When these organizations
304 burn coal, they generate large amounts of greenhouse gas (GHG) and other air emissions. While
305 customer organizations play a key role in reducing and managing their emissions, organizations that
306 extract coal are increasingly expected to take responsibility for emissions from the combustion of their
307 products and to disclose the related emissions. This Sector Standard therefore includes disclosures
308 on all Scopes of GHG emissions (1, 2, 3) as well as on other environmental and health impacts that
309 occur through product use.

310 **1.2 The sector and sustainable development**

311 Energy is a key driver of economic growth and sustainable development. Coal has been a
312 fundamental source of the world's energy, contributing to economic growth and poverty reduction.
313 Coal represents the largest resource for electricity production, providing over a third of the total
314 supply.³

315 The role of coal remains important in regions or countries where coal is a key source of revenue or a
316 strategic asset that guarantees energy independence. Although the number of people worldwide
317 working in coal mining is not very large,⁴ coal can be the main economic resource of a community. In
318 addition to employment, coal activities can also bring about local economic development, along with
319 infrastructure and services. Most of the world's coal is not traded internationally, but consumed in the
320 same country where it is produced, though some major producing countries export the majority of the
321 coal produced.

322 Meanwhile, coal consumption is declining globally, though in many countries, particularly in Asia, its
323 use is still growing. Burning coal for energy generation is responsible for 40% of all greenhouse
324 gas (GHG) emissions from fossil fuels, representing the main contributor to climate change. In
325 addition, coal has the highest emissions intensity when combusted. Coal typically releases more than
326 twice the amount of GHGs than natural gas per unit of energy produced.⁵

327 The majority of the world's countries has committed to combating climate change, as outlined in the
328 Paris Agreement. Climate change threatens the lives, livelihoods, health, and homes of millions of
329 people. The International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) warns that continuing to consume fossil
330 fuels at the current rate could result in dangerous global temperature increases leading to magnified
331 risks of extreme weather and climate events.⁶ Other reports show that with current policy
332 commitments, the world is indeed heading toward a dangerous 3.2-degree Celsius rise in temperature
333 by 2100.⁷ These projections underline the need to transition to a low-carbon economy based on
334 affordable, reliable, and sustainable energy. Achieving net zero GHG emissions by 2050 is required to
335 limit global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels, which is predicted to pose
336 significantly lower risks to natural and human systems than a warming of 2 degrees Celsius.⁸ Actions
337 taken by high-emitting sectors, such as the coal sector, are essential for this transition. These actions

³ International Energy Agency (IEA), [World Energy Outlook 2020](#), 2020, accessed on 5 April 2021.

⁴ Eight million people are estimated to work in coal mining in the world; see M. Jakob et al., '[The Future of Coal in a Carbon-Constrained Climate](#)', *Nature Climate Change*, vol. 10, no. 8, August 2020.

⁵ Energy Information Administration (EIA), [How much carbon dioxide is produced per kilowatthour of U.S. electricity generation?](#), accessed on 5 April 2021.

⁶ International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), [Global Warming of 1.5°C](#), 2018.

⁷ United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), [Emissions Gap Report 2019](#), 2019.

⁸ International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), [Global Warming of 1.5°C](#), 2018.

338 can include business model changes, investing in renewable energy sources, prioritizing energy-
339 efficient practices, and developing and adopting new technologies and nature-based solutions to
340 remove carbon from the atmosphere.

341 The coal sector faces additional pressure to embark on the transition path as governments and the
342 financial sector implement climate-resilient policies and portfolios, resulting in financial restrictions or
343 divestments from coal. While these policies incentivize decarbonizing the economy, they will also
344 result in decreased employment opportunities for workers in the sector and its supply chains. Many
345 mining communities have few alternative sources of employment, and decline in coal mining can lead
346 to high local unemployment rates. To ensure a just transition, it is essential for governments and
347 organizations to work together. A just transition refers to a fair and equitable pathway through
348 industrial transformation to a sustainable future, that integrates worker-centric public and employer
349 policies and programs to provide a secure and decent future for all workers, their families, and the
350 communities that rely on them. The roadmap to a low-carbon transition will differ between countries
351 according to their context and differing capabilities to respond to and mitigate impacts of climate
352 change.

353 In addition to contributing to climate change, the coal sector generates various negative impacts on
354 the environment and people, including impacts on human rights. These include, for example, water,
355 air, and soil pollution as well as impacts on biodiversity, which can also result in serious health
356 impacts on people. Accidents and working conditions can pose further health and safety risks for
357 workers and local communities. The use of land for sector activities may also lead to disputes, often
358 triggered by issues related to tenure rights, resettlement of local communities, or restricted access to
359 land and natural resources. These impacts are especially relevant for indigenous peoples, who often
360 have a special relationship with land and the natural environment.

361 **Sustainable Development Goals**

362 The United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), part of the 2030 Agenda for
363 Sustainable Development adopted by the 193 United Nations member states, comprise the world's
364 comprehensive plan to achieving sustainable development.

365 Since the SDGs and targets associated with them are integrated and indivisible, coal organizations
366 have the potential to impact all SDGs by either enhancing their positive contributions or avoiding and
367 mitigating negative impacts.

368 While the coal sector contributes to meeting the world's energy demand and thus plays a role
369 in achieving **Goal 7: Affordable and Clean Energy**, extracting and burning coal is the primary
370 contributor to climate change. Climate change can also exacerbate other challenges, such as
371 achieving access to clean water, food security, and poverty reduction. Ensuring access to affordable,
372 reliable, and sustainable energy while mitigating GHG emissions as per **Goal 13: Climate Action** and
373 the necessary transition to a low-carbon economy is one of the sector's greatest challenges.

374 Because the coal sector is in many regions still a central source of employment and income, it makes
375 positive contributions to **Goal 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth** and **Goal 1: No**
376 **Poverty**. Coal operations can also stimulate other economic activity and bring along infrastructure
377 and services to local communities around mining sites. With proper management of environmental
378 impacts caused by coal operations, the sector can thus contribute to **Goal 11: Sustainable cities**
379 **and communities** and **Goal 12: Responsible Consumption and Production**.

380 Table 2 highlights connections between the likely material topics for the coal sector and the SDGs. It
381 is a starting point for organizations that seek to integrate the SDGs into their reporting.

Table 2: Linkages between the likely material topics for the coal sector and the SDGs

Likely material topics	Corresponding Sustainable Development Goals
1. GHG emissions	Goal 13: Climate Action
	Goal 14: Life Below Water
2. Climate adaptation and resilience	Goal 1: No Poverty
	Goal 7: Affordable and Clean Energy
	Goal 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth
	Goal 9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure
	Goal 13: Climate Action
3. Closure and rehabilitation	Goal 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth
	Goal 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities
	Goal 15: Life on Land
4. Air emissions	Goal 3: Good Health and Well-being
	Goal 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities
	Goal 15: Life on Land
5. Biodiversity	Goal 6: Clean Water and Sanitation
	Goal 12: Responsible Consumption and Production
	Goal 14: Life Below Water
	Goal 15: Life on Land
6. Waste	Goal 3: Good Health and Well-being
	Goal 6: Clean Water and Sanitation
	Goal 12: Responsible Consumption and Production
	Goal 15: Life on Land
7. Water and effluents	Goal 6: Clean Water and Sanitation
	Goal 12: Responsible Consumption and Production
	Goal 14: Life Below Water
	Goal 15: Life on Land
8. Economic impacts	Goal 1: No Poverty
	Goal 5: Gender Equality
	Goal 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth
	Goal 9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure
	Goal 10: Reduced Inequalities
9. Local communities	Goal 1: No Poverty
	Goal 3: Good Health and Well-being
	Goal 5: Gender Equality
	Goal 6: Clean Water and Sanitation
	Goal 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions
10. Land and resource rights	Goal 1: No Poverty
	Goal 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities
	Goal 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions

11. Rights of indigenous peoples	Goal 1: No Poverty
	Goal 3: Good Health and Well-being
	Goal 5: Gender Equality
	Goal 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities
	Goal 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions
12. Conflict and security	Goal 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions
13. Asset integrity and critical incident management	Goal 3: Good Health and Well-being
	Goal 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities
14. Occupational Health and Safety	Goal 3: Good Health and Well-being
	Goal 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth
15. Employment practices	Goal 1: No Poverty
	Goal 5: Gender Equality
	Goal 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth
	Goal 10: Reduced Inequalities
16. Child labor	Goal 1: No Poverty
	Goal 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth
	Goal 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions
17. Forced labor and modern slavery	Goal 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth
	Goal 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions
18. Non-discrimination and equal opportunity	Goal 5: Gender Equality
	Goal 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth
	Goal 10: Reduced Inequalities
	Goal 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions
19. Freedom of association and collective bargaining	Goal 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth
	Goal 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions
20. Anti-corruption	Goal 12: Responsible Consumption and Production
	Goal 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions
21. Payments to governments	Goal 1: No Poverty
	Goal 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions
	Goal 17: Partnerships for the Goals
22. Public policy and lobbying	Goal 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions

383 2. Likely material topics

384 The following section outlines the likely material topics for the coal sector. Each topic describes the
385 most significant impacts related to topic and list disclosures that have been identified as relevant for
386 reporting on the topic by the sector. The organization needs to review each topic in this section and
387 determine whether it is material for it to report on.

388 2.1 GHG emissions

389 **Greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions comprise air emissions that contribute to climate change,**
390 **such as carbon dioxide and methane. This topic covers direct and energy indirect GHG**
391 **emissions (Scope 1 and Scope 2) related to an organization's activities, as well as other**
392 **indirect GHG emissions (Scope 3) related to the end use of an organization's products.**

393 Greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions are the single biggest contributor to climate change, the impacts of
394 which are occurring at an accelerating rate. Studies show that approximately half of the total
395 anthropogenic carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions from 1750 onwards have occurred in the last 40 years,
396 mostly due to increased use of fossil fuels, including coal.⁹ Although the energy efficiency of
397 production has improved, increased energy demand has caused a rise in global GHG emissions, the
398 majority of which originates from combustion of fossil fuels.¹⁰

399 Besides CO₂, coal operations also cause the emission of another powerful GHG: methane (CH₄). This
400 GHG has a significantly higher global warming potential than CO₂, when considering its impact over
401 100 years, one ton of CH₄ is equivalent to 28 to 36 tons of CO₂.¹¹ The energy sector has been
402 identified as the second-largest source of anthropogenic CH₄ emissions. Recent measurements
403 indicate that available figures on CH₄ emissions from energy could be underestimates. Other GHG
404 emissions related to coal extraction and use include nitrous oxide (N₂O) and ozone (O₃).

405 Activities related to coal mining and processing consume significant amounts of energy. Unless they
406 are powered by renewable energy sources, these operations generate CO₂ emissions. These are
407 classified as direct (Scope 1) GHG emissions for activities owned or controlled by the organization or
408 energy indirect (Scope 2) GHG emissions for activities that result from purchased or acquired
409 electricity consumed by the organization.

410 The amount of energy used in coal mining depends on several factors, such as the method of mining,
411 mine depth, geology, mine productivity, and degree of refining required. Activities among the most
412 energy-consuming include transportation, exploration activities, drilling, excavation, extraction,
413 grinding, crushing, milling, pumping, and ventilation processes. Extraction and transportation in
414 underground mines might require more energy than surface mining due to, for example, greater
415 requirements for hauling, ventilation, and water pumping. Closure and rehabilitation activities are also
416 a source of GHG emissions.

417 Coal mines are also a source of CH₄ emissions, which are produced during the process of coal
418 formation and released to the atmosphere during and after the mining process. Coal mine methane
419 (CMM) can be released via degasification systems and ventilation air from underground coal mines,
420 seepage from abandoned or closed mines through vent holes or cracks in the ground, coal seams of
421 surface mines, and fugitive emissions from storage and transportation. Underground mines are
422 responsible for the majority of Scope 1 coal CH₄ emissions due to the higher gas content of deeper
423 seams.

⁹ Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), [Climate Change 2014: Synthesis Report](#), 2014.

¹⁰ International Energy Agency (IEA), [Market Report Series: Energy Efficiency 2018](#), accessed 5 April 2021; [CO₂ Emissions from Fuel Combustion: Highlights](#), 2018.

¹¹ Greenhouse Gas Protocol, [Global Warming Potential Values](#); International Energy Agency (IEA), [Methane tracker 2020](#), accessed 5 April 2021.

424 For coal, end-use activities are responsible for the most significant GHG emissions, which are
 425 classified as part of other indirect (Scope 3) GHG emissions. Coal is a carbon-intensive fuel, and its
 426 combustion generates the single largest source of global CO₂ emissions. These emissions mostly
 427 originate from electricity and heat generation, steel production, and cement manufacturing.

428 **What to report – GHG emissions**

429 If an organization in the coal sector has identified GHG emissions as a material topic, this section
 430 helps it determine what to report on this topic.

	Disclosure	Additional sector recommendations
Management of the topic		
GRI 103: Material Topics	Disclosure MT-3 Management of material topics	When reporting on goals and targets, report: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Report the <u>scopes of GHG emissions</u> (1, 2, 3) and the activities and business relationships to which the goals and targets apply. - Report how the goals and targets are set and which instruments and mandatory legislation the goals and targets are based on or aligned with. - Report the <u>baseline</u> for setting goals and targets and the timeline for achieving them.
Topic Standards disclosures		
<u>GRI 302: Energy 2016</u>	Disclosure 302-1 Energy consumption within the organization	
	Disclosure 302-2 Energy consumption outside of the organization	
	Disclosure 302-3 Energy intensity	
<u>GRI 305: Emissions 2016</u>	Disclosure 305-1 Direct (Scope 1) GHG emissions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Report the percentage of direct (Scope 1) methane emissions. - Report the breakdown of gross direct (Scope 1) GHG emissions by type of source (stationary combustion, process, fugitive). <p><i>Note: This recommendation is based on the guidance to clause 2.2.5.3 in GRI 305: Emissions 2016.</i></p>
	Disclosure 305-2 Energy indirect (Scope 2) GHG emissions	

	Disclosure 305-3 Other indirect (Scope 3) GHG emissions	
	Disclosure 305-4 GHG emissions intensity	
	Disclosure 305-5 Reduction of GHG emissions	

431 **Resources and references**

432 [GRI 302: Energy 2016](#) and [GRI 305: Emissions 2016](#) list authoritative intergovernmental instruments
433 and other sources relevant to reporting on this topic.

434 The additional intergovernmental instruments and references used to develop this topic description as
435 well as further resources that may be helpful for understanding and reporting on the topic by the coal
436 sector are listed on in the Bibliography on page 69.

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437 2.2 Climate adaptation and resilience

438 **Climate adaptation and resilience refer to how an organization adjusts to current and**
439 **anticipated climate-related risks, as well as how it contributes to the ability of societies and**
440 **economies to withstand impacts from climate change. This topic covers an organization's**
441 **strategy in relation to the transition to a low-carbon economy and the impacts of that**
442 **transition on workers and local communities.**

443 Signatories of the Paris Agreement have committed to keeping global warming 'well below 2 degrees'.
444 Yet the maximum amount of fossil fuels that can be burned while remaining within that limit – the
445 global carbon budget – is far lower than the proven reserves that organizations could be extracted.
446 This puts pressure on producers to modify their business models, establish carbon emissions targets,
447 create carbon sinks, and diversify away from fossil fuels.

448 Since coal emits the largest amount of carbon dioxide (CO₂) and has the highest intensity of
449 emissions per unit of energy among fossil fuels (see [GHG emissions](#)), burning coal is likely to be the
450 first activity governments seek to suppress in fulfilling their commitments under the Paris Agreement.
451 Since its peak consumption in 2013, the energy transition has commenced and total consumption of
452 coal has been declining.¹²

453 This transition presents high risks for organizations, workers, and local communities reliant on coal
454 operations. As the market for coal shrinks, some organizations will be forced to close operations,
455 impacting their financial viability. Workers are faced with challenges related to their employability and
456 finding desirable re-employment. Coal mining regions may end up with environmental legacy costs
457 related to asset closure as well as significant reductions of economic activity that lead to lower tax
458 revenues and depopulation.

459 In 2040, coal use as a share of total global energy use could vary between an estimated 20% and
460 10% depending on the policy scenario.¹³ The transition will also be unequal across countries, as
461 some countries are much more dependent on coal for electricity generation than others. Similarly,
462 while alternatives are available for energy generation, steelmakers still lack a feasible alternative for
463 coal, so their transition might take longer. Technological solutions for burning coal without emitting
464 CO₂ (e.g., through carbon capture and storage or utilization) are being tested, but the technology has
465 not progressed at the rate necessary to meet the required emissions reductions to limit global
466 warming to levels committed to in the Paris Agreement, and new investment is scarce.¹⁴

467 Many coal operations will face closure, but others are expected to remain operational for decades.
468 Which remain operational longer will depend on technological, geographic, and political factors.
469 Organizations are at risk of owning stranded assets or pieces of physical capital that become
470 drastically reduced in value by the transition, leading to write-offs. Organizations may mitigate these
471 risks by diversifying away from coal, investing in technological solutions, and focusing on market
472 segments expected to remain operational longer.

473 A just transition to a low-carbon economy requires recognizing the different levels of dependence on
474 coal by regions and countries and the need to create quality jobs for persons affected. Examples of
475 potential actions from coal organizations to ensure a just transition include providing plenty of notice
476 of closures, collaborating with governments and unions, retraining and redeploying workers, and
477 providing alternate investments in affected communities. Meaningful, early consultations with
478 stakeholders and communities have proven crucial (see [Closure and rehabilitation](#)).

¹² International Energy Agency (IEA), [Coal Information: Overview](#), accessed on 5 April 2021.

¹³ The share of coal in the energy mix was 27% in 2018. International Energy Agency (IEA) uses two policy scenarios for forecasting the use of coal: under the Current Policy Scenario (assuming no change in policies), this share will be reduced to 20% in 2040; under the Sustainable Development Scenario (assuming policies compatible with the Paris Agreement), the share will be reduced to 10% in 2040. [World Energy Outlook 2019](#), accessed 5 April 2021.

¹⁴ International Energy Agency (IEA), [World Energy outlook 2018](#), accessed 5 April 2021.

479 The transition can also bring along opportunities to reinvigorate economic activity and provide new
 480 employment opportunities and skills development.

481 **What to report**

482 If an organization in the coal sector has identified climate adaptation and resilience as a material
 483 topic, this section helps it determine what to report on this topic.

Standard	Disclosure	Additional sector recommendations
Management of the topic		
GRI 103: Material Topics	Disclosure MT-3 Management of material topics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Report the level and function within the organization that has been assigned responsibility for managing climate change-related impacts. - Describe the board’s oversight to manage climate-change related impacts. - Report whether responsibility to manage climate change-related impacts is linked to performance assessments or incentive mechanisms, including in the <u>remuneration policies for highest governance body members and senior executives</u>. - Describe any commitments, policies, and actions taken to mitigate the impacts of the transition to a low-carbon economy on workers and communities.
Topic Standards disclosures		
GRI 201: Economic Performance 2016	Disclosure 201-2 Financial implications and other risks and opportunities due to climate change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Describe the climate change-related scenarios used to assess the resilience of the organization’s strategy, including a 2-degree or lower scenario. - Describe how the climate-change related scenarios affect or could affect the organization’s operations or revenue, including potential write-offs and early closure of existing assets. - Report the coal production volumes for the reporting year and projected volumes for the next five years. - Report the estimated reserves and potential emissions from these reserves. - Report the percentage of capital expenditure (CapEx) allocated to investments in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o prospecting and exploration of new reserves; o low-carbon technology; o energy from renewable sources. - Report investments in nature-based solutions for climate mitigation and technologies to

		<p>remove CO₂; and net captured value of CO₂ removed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Report diversification of operations away from a reliance on sales and transport of coal.
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Additional sector disclosures

Describe the organization's approach to public policy advocacy on climate change, including:

- the organization's stance on issues related to climate change;
- any differences between the organization's lobbying positions and any stated policies, goals, or other public positions;
- a list of industry and other membership associations and national or international organizations participating in public policy advocacy on climate change in which the organization has a significant role.

Note: The last disclosure is related to [SPP-7 Membership associations](#). If the information reported by the organization in SPP-7 covers the membership associations requested by this disclosure, the organization can provide a reference to this information.

484 Resources and references

485 [GRI 201: Economic Performance 2016](#) lists authoritative intergovernmental instruments and other
486 sources relevant to reporting on this topic.

487 The additional intergovernmental instruments and references used to develop this topic description as
488 well as further resources that may be helpful for understanding and reporting on the topic by the coal
489 sector are listed on in the Bibliography on page 69.

490 2.3 Closure and rehabilitation

491 **At the end of commercial use, organizations are expected to close assets and facilities and**
492 **rehabilitate operational sites. The planning and execution of this phase should take**
493 **environmental as well as socioeconomic impacts into consideration. This topic covers an**
494 **organization’s approach to closure and rehabilitation, including impacts on the environment,**
495 **local communities, and workers.**

496 Potential impacts of coal mining following closure include soil and water contamination, changes to
497 landforms, and disturbance of biodiversity and wildlife. Closure can also lead to lasting socioeconomic
498 consequences for [local communities](#). Closure often requires planning that begins in the early phases
499 of a project’s lifecycle in order to anticipate potential impacts. Failure to close assets and rehabilitate
500 sites effectively can render land unusable for other productive uses due to the presence of toxic
501 materials or contamination. It can also result in health and safety hazards.

502 Environmental impacts from the closure of surface and underground mining can differ. For example,
503 surface mining requires more land use and more substantial rehabilitation, whereas abandoned
504 underground mines may emit coal mine methane even after active mining has ceased, contributing to
505 [GHG emissions](#).

506 Over the course of a coal mining project, communities may come to depend on the sector’s activities
507 for jobs, income, royalties, tax payments, charitable donations, and other benefits (see also [Payments](#)
508 [to governments](#)). This can lead to negative impacts on the economy and people once the project
509 ends. For example, insufficient notice of closure or lack of adequate planning for economic
510 revitalization, social protection, and labor transition can hinder the transition of workers and local
511 communities to a post-closure phase and cause retrenchment, economic downturn, and social unrest.
512 Without clearly assigned responsible parties or allocated funds, closed coal mines can also leave
513 behind legacy environmental issues and financial burden for local communities and governments.

514 Closure and rehabilitation of coal operations can also create employment and business opportunities.
515 This can involve an influx of additional workers for an extended period of time. The arrival of workers
516 from the surrounding areas or through a fly-in-fly-out approach during this phase can, in turn,
517 exacerbate other pressures on the environment.

518 Closure and rehabilitation of coal mining operations should result in a stable and sustainable
519 ecosystem, compatible with planned post-closure land use. Activities can include stabilization of
520 open-pit or underground workings and removal or conversion of infrastructure to ensure safety of
521 people; rehabilitation of waste rock stockpiles and tailings facilities to control erosion and land
522 degradation; management of waste, surface water, and groundwater quality issues resulting from
523 abandoned rock drainage, waste rock, and leaching from tailings (see also [Waste](#) and [Water and](#)
524 [effluents](#)); and post-closure monitoring.

525 The need to reduce GHG emissions and to transition to a low-carbon economy (see [Climate](#)
526 [adaptation and resilience](#)) is leading to more frequent closures. These are less likely to be
527 counterbalanced by openings, as has been the case in the past. In areas where employment largely
528 derives from coal activities, mitigating significant socioeconomic impacts requires collaboration
529 between local and national governments, coal organizations, workers, and unions to ensure a just
530 transition.

531 **What to report**

532 If an organization in the coal sector has identified closure and rehabilitation as a material topic, this
 533 section helps it determine what to report on this topic.

Standard	Disclosure	Additional sector recommendations
Management of the topic		
GRI 103: Material Topics	Disclosure MT-3 Management of material topics	
Topic Standards disclosures		
GRI 402: Labor/Management Relations 2016	Disclosure 402-1 Minimum notice periods regarding operational changes	Describe how workers are consulted in advance of <u>significant operational changes</u> .
GRI 404: Training and Education 2016	Disclosure 404-2 Programs for upgrading employee skills and transition assistance programs	Describe the labor transition plans in place to help workers manage the transition to post-closure phase of operations (which can include redeployment, assistance with re-employment, resettlement, and redundancy payments).
Additional sector disclosures		
Report the organization's operations that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - have closure and rehabilitation plans; - have been closed; - are in the process of being closed. 		
Report the total monetary value of financial provisions made by the organization for closure and rehabilitation, including post-closure and rehabilitation monitoring, and aftercare.		

534 **Resources and references**

535 [GRI 402: Labor/Management Relations 2016](#) and [GRI 404: Training and Education 2016](#) list
 536 authoritative intergovernmental instruments and other sources relevant to reporting on this topic.

537 The additional intergovernmental instruments and references used to develop this topic description as
 538 well as further resources that may be helpful for understanding and reporting on the topic by the coal
 539 sector are listed on in the Bibliography on page 69.

540

2.4 Air emissions

541 **Air emissions include pollutants that can have negative impacts on air quality, ecosystems,**
 542 **and human and animal health. This topic covers impacts from emissions of sulfur oxides**
 543 **(SO_x), nitrogen oxides (NO_x), particulate matter (PM), volatile organic compounds(VOC),**
 544 **carbon monoxide(CO), and heavy metals, such as lead, mercury, and cadmium.**

545 In addition to greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, coal is significant sources of anthropogenic air
 546 emissions classified as pollutants. Globally, air pollution causes acute health problems and millions of
 547 deaths annually¹⁵ by contributing to heart and lung diseases, strokes, respiratory infections, and
 548 neurological damage. Children, the elderly, and the poor are disproportionately affected, as are
 549 communities adjacent to operations.

550 The emission of pollutants also has impacts on ecosystems. For example, nitrogen emissions and
 551 mercury that enter the oceans or waterways can impact marine life. They are also a major cause of
 552 ground-level ozone – commonly known as smog – which can lead to or worsen respiratory illnesses.
 553 Sulfur oxides can lead to acid rain and increase ocean acidification. Further adverse effects from acid
 554 rain and ground-level ozone include degradation of water, soil, flora, and fauna, and impairment of
 555 their ability to function and grow.

556 Air emissions from coal operations include CO, NO_x, PM from coal dust, and SO₂. These emissions
 557 can occur from evaporation from tailings ponds or waste areas; fugitive dust emissions from drilling,
 558 blasting, storage, transportation, loading, and unloading; refining and processing activities; and
 559 transportation of supplies and products. Emissions related to product use include NO_x, PM, SO₂,
 560 arsenic, cadmium, lead, mercury, selenium, and other heavy metals.

561 In addition to their impacts on climate change (see [GHG emissions](#)), air emissions from burning coal
 562 in power plants or industrial processes can also have negative impacts on people. Outdoor air
 563 pollution causes millions of deaths every year, and burning coal is a major source of this pollution.
 564 These emissions are caused by organizations in other sectors, such as utilities and steel, but their
 565 impacts can often be directly linked to the coal sector.

566 What to report

567 If an organization in the coal sector has identified air emissions as a material topic, this section helps
 568 it determine what to report on this topic.

Standard	Disclosure	Additional sector recommendations
Management of the topic		
GRI 103: Material Topics	Disclosure MT-3 Management of material topics	
Topic Standards disclosures		
GRI 305: Emissions 2016	Disclosure 305-7 Nitrogen oxides (NO _x), sulfur oxides (SO _x), and other significant air emissions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Report particulate matter (PM) emissions from coal dust separately from total PM. - Report carbon monoxide (CO) emissions.

¹⁵ World Health Organization (WHO), [Ambient Air Pollution: A Global Assessment of Exposure and Burden of Disease](#), 2016.

GRI 416: Customer Health and Safety 2016	Disclosure 416-1 Assessment of the health and safety impacts of product and service categories	Describe actions taken to improve product quality to reduce air emissions.
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569 **Resources and references**

570 [GRI 305: Emissions 2016](#) and [GRI 416: Customer Health and Safety 2016](#) list authoritative
 571 intergovernmental instruments and other sources relevant to reporting on this topic.

572 The additional intergovernmental instruments and references used to develop this topic description as
 573 well as further resources that may be helpful for understanding and reporting on the topic by the coal
 574 sector are listed on in the Bibliography on page 69.

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575

2.5 Biodiversity

576 **Biodiversity not only has intrinsic value, but is also vital to climate, human health and well-**
577 **being, food security, and economic prosperity. This topic covers impacts on biodiversity,**
578 **including on plant and animal species and genetic diversity.**

579 Coal operations typically require large-scale infrastructure development, which have direct, indirect,
580 and cumulative impacts on biodiversity in the short and long term. Due to the scale and long lifespans
581 of coal projects, impacts can occur well beyond a project's temporal and geographical parameters,
582 including after closure and rehabilitation. Direct impacts include air, soil, and water contamination,
583 deforestation, soil erosion, and sedimentation of waterways. Other impacts include habitat
584 fragmentation and conversion, the introduction of invasive species and pathogens, and species
585 mortality.

586 Impacts on biodiversity can result from land clearance for pits, access routes, and progressive
587 expansion into new areas; habitat fragmentation from access roads and other linear infrastructure;
588 disruption of surface water, wetland, and groundwater ecosystems; and effluent discharges,
589 groundwater, or surface stream contamination from acidic water, coal tailings ponds, or overburden
590 piles.

591 Different mining methods present distinct risks for biodiversity. Open-pit mines generate more severe
592 impacts than underground mines due to progressive deepening and widening of the mining site,
593 increasing affected areas over time. Coal resources can also be located in sensitive ecosystems or
594 areas with high biodiversity value, which can exacerbate impacts on biodiversity. In addition,
595 increased human settlement around operational sites can have impacts through opening of routes to
596 previously inaccessible areas, adding stress and contributing to cumulative impacts within the
597 landscape.

598 Coal activities can contribute to cumulative impacts on biodiversity. For example, habitat
599 fragmentation caused by the presence of a mining site can be compounded by land use change from
600 agricultural operations. Extensive land use requirements for open-pit mining can also contribute to
601 GHG emissions and climate change, namely through land use change resulting in removal of carbon
602 sinks. Climate change, in turn, is expected to affect all aspects of biodiversity – including individual
603 organisms, populations, species distribution, and ecosystem composition and function – and the
604 impacts are anticipated to become more severe as temperatures increase.

605 The coal sector has participated in developing a mitigation hierarchy tool, which can be used to limit
606 and manage negative impacts on biodiversity and ecosystems. The tool presents a prioritized
607 sequence of measures for the sustainable management of natural resources, with preventive actions
608 taking precedence over remediation. Priority is given to avoidance and, where avoidance is not
609 possible, to minimization of impacts. Only at the point that all preventative steps are adopted should
610 remediation measures be used, including rehabilitation or restoration of degradation or damage, and
611 offsetting residual impacts remain after all other measures have been applied.¹⁶

¹⁶ Cross Sector Biodiversity Initiative (CSBI), [A cross sector guide for implementing the Mitigation Hierarchy](#), 2015.

612 **What to report**

613 If an organization in the coal sector has identified biodiversity as a material topic, this section helps it
 614 determine what to report on this topic.

Standard	Disclosure	Additional sector recommendations
Management of the topic		
GRI 103: Material Topics	Disclosure MT-3 Management of material topics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Describe any commitments to achieving no net loss or net gain to biodiversity on operational sites, and report whether these commitments apply to existing or future operations, and whether they also apply to operations beyond areas of <u>high biodiversity value</u>. - Report whether application of the mitigation hierarchy has informed actions to manage the topic and related impacts.
Topic Standards disclosures		
<u>GRI 304: Biodiversity 2016</u>	Disclosure 304-1 Operational sites owned, leased, managed in, or adjacent to protected areas and areas of high biodiversity value outside protected areas	
	Disclosure 304-2 Significant impacts of activities, products, and services on biodiversity	
	Disclosure 304-3 Habitats protected or restored	Describe how the application of the mitigation hierarchy has resulted in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>areas protected</u> through avoidance measures or through offset measures; - <u>areas restored</u> through on-site restoration measures or through offset measures.
	Disclosure 304-4 IUCN Red List species and national conservation list species with habitats in areas affected by operations	

615 **Resources and references**

616 *GRI 304: Biodiversity 2016* lists authoritative intergovernmental instruments and other sources
 617 relevant to reporting on this topic.

618 The additional intergovernmental instruments and references used to develop this topic description as
 619 well as further resources that may be helpful for understanding and reporting on the topic by the coal
 620 sector are listed on in the Bibliography on page 69.

621 2.6 Waste

622 **Waste refers to anything that a holder discards, intends to discard, or is required to discard.**
623 **When inadequately managed, waste can have significant negative impacts on the environment**
624 **and human health, often extending beyond locations where waste is generated and discarded.**
625 **This topic covers impacts from waste, including as a result of construction and remediation**
626 **activities from active and inactive sites.**

627 Waste impacts from coal activities can include contamination of surface water, groundwater, and food
628 sources with chemicals and heavy metals. Further effects can be loss of land productivity and
629 erosion. Certain wastes require particularly robust management due to their type or volume. In remote
630 areas with limited waste disposal methods, waste impacts can be more severe or harder to monitor.

631 The largest waste stream from coal operations comprises overburden, rock waste, and tailings. Often
632 produced in large quantities, these wastes can also contain toxic or noxious substances, including
633 heavy metals. Effective waste management and minimization are therefore critical for protecting local
634 communities and preventing damage to the environment.

635 Overburden from surface mining is usually stored on adjacent undisturbed land until it can backfill the
636 pit once mining is complete. Disposal options are limited for some surface mining techniques, such as
637 mountain-top removal, since the overburden cannot be returned to the pit. In these cases, the
638 disposal method consists of adjacent valley filling, which can lead to various environmental and
639 biodiversity impacts, such as burial of waterways and concentration of noxious substances harmful to
640 ecosystems and humans (see also [Water and effluents](#)).

641 Rock waste and coarse tailings are usually managed on heaps or disposed in constructed waste rock
642 dumps or former open-pit operations. Associated environmental impacts concern air pollution from
643 dust from these dumps, which wind or rainwater can carry to affect air quality, watercourses, or lands.

644 Coal slurry waste from mining and processing is generally discarded into ponds, filtered, stored in
645 heaps, or disposed of in underground voids. Surface tailing storage facilities can cover vast areas and
646 be contained by tailings dams. Tailings without harmful substances can be drained and stored until
647 being reshaped and covered with soil and vegetated. However, tailings pose a health risk for local
648 communities when they contain heavy metals, cyanide, chemical-processing agents, sulfides, or
649 suspended solids that can pollute the environment, including groundwater and surface water
650 (incidents related to tailings facilities are discussed in [Asset integrity and critical incident](#)
651 [management](#)).

652 Other typical wastes from coal operations include waste oils and chemicals, spent catalysts, solvents
653 and other industrial wastes, as well as packaging and construction wastes.

654 The nature and quantity of generated waste often requires management beyond the productive phase
655 of a mining operation. At the end of a coal exploration or extraction project, [closure and rehabilitation](#)
656 can also yield significant waste, which can have lasting environmental and socioeconomic
657 consequences.

658 **What to report**

659 If an organization in the coal sector has identified waste as a material topic, this section helps it
 660 determine what to report on this topic.

Standard	Disclosure	Additional sector recommendations
Management of the topic		
GRI 103: Material Topics	Disclosure MT-3 Management of material topics	
Topic Standards disclosures		
<u>GRI 306: Waste 2020</u>	Disclosure 306-1 Waste generation and significant waste-related impacts	
	Disclosure 306-2 Management of significant waste-related impacts	
	Disclosure 306-3 Waste generated	Report a breakdown of the composition of waste by the following waste streams: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - overburden; - rock waste; - tailings.
	Disclosure 306-4 Waste diverted from disposal	Report a breakdown of the composition of waste by the following waste streams: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - overburden; - rock waste; - tailings.
	Disclosure 306-5 Waste directed to disposal	Report a breakdown of the composition of waste by the following waste streams: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - overburden; - rock waste; - tailings.

661 **Resources and references**

662 [GRI 306: Waste 2020](#) lists authoritative intergovernmental instruments and other sources relevant to
 663 reporting on this topic.

664 The additional intergovernmental instruments and references used to develop this topic description as
 665 well as further resources that may be helpful for understanding and reporting on the topic by the coal
 666 sector are listed on in the Bibliography on page 69.

667

2.7 Water and effluents

668 **Recognized by the United Nations as a human right, access to fresh water is essential for**
669 **human life and wellbeing. The amount of water withdrawn and consumed by an organization**
670 **and the quality of its discharges can have impacts on ecosystems and people.**

671 Coal activities can have impacts on the availability and quality of water resources, which can in turn
672 have impacts on ecosystems and water users. The coal sector's widespread use of water in
673 operations can reduce water availability for local communities and other sectors that also rely on the
674 resource. Certain mining methods can involve substantive vegetation clearance and land use
675 changes, which can also lead to erosion and sediments flows. Alterations in water flows and
676 increased sedimentation affect water quality and aquatic and terrestrial habitats.

677 Water in coal mining is used for cooling and cutting in mines; dust suppression in mining and hauling;
678 washing to improve coal quality; re-vegetation of surface mines; and long-distance transportation of
679 coal slurry. The amount of water needed for operations depends on whether mining occurs on the
680 surface or underground as well as on operational efficiency. The amount of water withdrawn also
681 varies according to the ability to substitute water, water quality, reservoir characteristics, and recycling
682 infrastructure.

683 The coal sector's impacts on water additionally depends on the quantity of water resources in the
684 local context; where water is scarce, the sector has a greater impact. A large proportion of the world's
685 coal resources are found in areas that are arid or experience water stress. In such areas, the sector's
686 activities are likely to increase competition for water with other demands – such as for household use
687 and fishing, aquaculture, or agriculture activities – and exacerbate tensions between as well as within
688 sectors or local communities. Droughts, floods, and other extreme weather events related to climate
689 change will likely pose more challenges related to water availability and quality.

690 Coal activities can have significant impacts on the quality of surface water and groundwater, which
691 can translate into long-term implications for ecosystems and biodiversity, spread waterborne
692 diseases, cause health and development problems for humans, and impair food chain productivity.
693 These impacts can occur from leaching from tailings, failure of tailings facilities, and acid mine
694 drainage, which involves acidic water containing heavy metals. Underground operations might also
695 disrupt or contaminate aquifers. Transportation accidents and related coal spills can result in
696 waterways and wetlands being contaminated with harmful materials, such as arsenic, lead, mercury,
697 and sulfur compounds.

698 **What to report**

699 If an organization in the coal sector has identified water and effluents as a material topic, this section
700 helps it determine what to report on this topic.

Standard	Disclosure	Additional sector recommendations
Management of the topic		
GRI 103: Material Topics	Disclosure MT-3 Management of material topics	

Topic Standards disclosures		
GRI 303: Water and Effluents 2018	Disclosure 303-1 Interactions with water as a shared resource	
	Disclosure 303-2 Management of water discharge-related impacts	Describe actions taken to prevent or manage impacts from acid mine drainage.
	Disclosure 303-3 Water withdrawal	
	Disclosure 303-4 Water discharge	
	Disclosure 303-5 Water consumption	

701 **Resources and references**

702 [GRI 303: Water and Effluents 2018](#) lists authoritative intergovernmental instruments and other
703 sources relevant to reporting on this topic.

704 The additional intergovernmental instruments and references used to develop this topic description as
705 well as further resources that may be helpful for understanding and reporting on the topic by the coal
706 sector are listed on in the Bibliography on page 69.

707 2.8 Economic impacts

708 **An organization's activities can have impacts on the economic conditions of its stakeholders**
709 **and on economic systems through, for example, revenues and other payments, hiring, and**
710 **procurement. Infrastructure investments and services supported by an organization can also**
711 **have impacts on a community's well-being and long-term development. This topic covers**
712 **economic impacts at local, national, and global levels.**

713 Coal activities can be an important source of investment and income for local communities, countries,
714 and regions. Actual impacts vary according to the scale of operations, stimulation of other economic
715 activity, and effectiveness of management of coal-related revenues by local governments. In some
716 resource-rich countries, a significant amount of the gross domestic product is derived from
717 investments in the development of coal resources and revenues from mining. However,
718 mismanagement of these revenues can harm economic performance and lead to macroeconomic
719 instability and distortions (see [Payments to governments](#) and [Anti-corruption](#)). Economies dependent
720 on finite resources can also be vulnerable to commodity price and production fluctuations.

721 The coal sector can have positive impacts on communities, countries, and regions through royalty
722 payments, taxes, and wealth creation. Investments by coal organizations in the development of
723 enabling infrastructure, such as public power utilities to improve access to energy, can benefit local
724 communities. Coal activities can also stimulate economies and create local employment, with well-
725 paid jobs in the coal sector potentially resulting in increased purchasing power. Skills development of
726 local communities through education and training can also help increase access to jobs in the sector.
727 Positive impacts on local businesses can result from local procurement of products and services as
728 well as from supplier development.

729 The extent to which local communities benefit from the coal sector's presence depends on existing
730 development and industrialization levels and the community's capacity to offer qualified workers for
731 the new employment opportunities. In addition, the net employment impacts depend on how
732 employment by the sector affects existing jobs in other sectors. These impacts can also be affected
733 by an organization's [employment practices](#). For example, a fly-in-fly-out work approach can offset
734 pressures associated with influxes of people in small communities while still supplying workers to fill
735 positions. However, this approach reduces employment opportunities available to local communities,
736 thus detracting from potential economic benefits.

737 Introduction of new coal activities can also generate negative impacts on local communities, including
738 competition over jobs and economic disparity; vulnerable groups, including women, are often
739 disproportionately affected (see also [Local communities](#)). An influx of external workers can increase
740 pressure on housing, infrastructure, and public services. Other potential negative impacts include
741 environmental legacy costs related to, for example, contamination, incidents, or lack of proper
742 rehabilitation after closure (see also [Closure and rehabilitation](#)).

743 Governments and regions with coal resources currently face the risk of stranded assets due to stricter
744 climate policies and technological developments driving the transition to a low-carbon economy (see
745 [Climate adaptation and resilience](#)). The transition is expected to result in significant reductions in coal
746 mining, making communities and countries that depend on the sector's revenues or employment
747 vulnerable to resulting economic downturn. In these cases, collaboration between local and national
748 governments and organizations in the coal sector is essential to ensure a just transition.

749 **What to report**

750 If an organization in the coal sector has identified economic impacts as a material topic, this section
 751 helps it determine what to report on this topic.

Standard	Disclosure	Additional sector recommendations
Management of the topic		
GRI 103: Material Topics	Disclosure MT-3 Management of material topics	Describe the organization’s approach to providing local procurement and employment opportunities, including training programs.
Topic Standards disclosures		
<u>GRI 201: Economic Performance 2016</u>	Disclosure 201-1 Direct economic value generated and distributed	Report direct economic value generated and distributed by project.
<u>GRI 202: Market Presence 2016</u>	Disclosure 202-1 Ratios of standard entry level wage by gender compared to local minimum wage	
	Disclosure 202-2 Proportion of senior management hired from the local community	
<u>GRI 203: Indirect Economic Impacts 2016</u>	Disclosure 203-1 Infrastructure investments and services supported	
	Disclosure 203-2 Significant indirect economic impacts	
<u>GRI 204: Procurement Practices 2016</u>	Disclosure 204-1 Proportion of spending on local suppliers	

752 **Resources and references**

753 [*GRI 201: Economic Performance 2016*](#) and [*GRI 202: Market Presence 2016*](#) list authoritative
 754 intergovernmental instruments and other sources relevant to reporting on this topic.

755 The additional intergovernmental instruments and references used to develop this topic description as
 756 well as further resources that may be helpful for understanding and reporting on the topic by the coal
 757 sector are listed on in the Bibliography on page 69.

758

2.9 Local communities

759 **Local communities can comprise individuals or groups of individuals living and/or working in**
760 **areas that are affected or that could be affected by an organization’s activities. An organization**
761 **is expected to conduct community engagement to understand the vulnerabilities of local**
762 **communities and how they might be affected by the organization’s activities. This topic covers**
763 **socioeconomic, cultural, health, and human rights impacts on local communities.**

764 Coal organizations can have positive impacts on local communities through employment, local
765 procurement, and local taxes (see also [Economic impacts](#), [Employment practices](#) and [Payments to](#)
766 [governments](#)). Organizations in the sector can also benefit local communities through community
767 development programs and providing access to infrastructure and services, including access to
768 energy, if the services and infrastructure are designed with community needs in mind.

769 The coal sector’s activities can also lead to negative impacts on communities. For example, land use
770 requirements for activities or transportation and distribution of products, influxes of people seeking
771 employment and economic opportunities, environmental degradation, and use of natural resources for
772 sector activities can all cause negative impacts. Types and significance of impacts commonly
773 associated with the sector vary according to the characteristics and context of the local community.

774 Land use requirements can cause displacement and loss of access to land, water and other natural
775 resources (see [Land and resource rights](#)). Land use for coal mining can compete with other land
776 uses, such as farming, fishing, or recreation. Displacement can additionally impact human rights of
777 individuals in local communities. The sector’s land use may also result in damage to cultural heritage
778 sites, which can lead to loss of culture, tradition, or cultural identity. Such damage especially affects
779 indigenous peoples. Decreased availability of resources can have more severe impacts on women,
780 who are often responsible for obtaining water, food, and fuel.

781 The arrival of workers from the surrounding areas or through a fly-in-fly-out work approach during
782 construction or expansion of a coal mine might lead to greater economic inequality within the local
783 community. There may be an increase in activities that compromise social order, such as substance
784 abuse, gambling, and prostitution, specifically affecting vulnerable groups. The influx of predominantly
785 male migrant workers can also change the social dynamics of the local community. This impacts
786 women in particular, as it can lead to a rise in sexual violence and trafficking as well as sexually
787 transmitted diseases (see also [Rights of indigenous peoples](#)). The sector has also been linked to
788 domestic and gender-based violence, both on mining sites and in local communities. In-migration of
789 workers can also introduce new communicable diseases and increase pressure on local services and
790 resources.

791 Organizations can have further impacts on community health, safety, and well-being due to air, soil,
792 and water pollution; increased levels of noise and light; waste streams and leaks; and dust. Incidents,
793 such as explosions, fires, mine collapses, spills, and tailings dams failures, can threaten the safety of
794 local communities (see also [Asset integrity and critical incident management](#)). Increased traffic to
795 operational sites can pose additional road accident hazards.

796 When operating in areas of pre-existing conflict or where negative impacts from coal activities are left
797 unattended, conflicts can arise or become exacerbated (see also [Conflict and security](#)).

798 Effective local community engagement can contribute to better management of the social impacts of
799 coal projects. If organizations in the coal sector overlook or poorly execute such engagement,
800 community concerns might not be understood or addressed, which can exacerbate existing impacts
801 or create new ones.

802 **What to report**

803 If an organization in the coal sector has identified local communities as a material topic, this section
 804 helps it determine what to report on this topic.

Standard	Disclosure	Additional sector recommendations
Management of the topic		
GRI 103: Material Topics	Disclosure MT-3 Management of material topics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Describe the means for identifying and engaging with local communities. - List the vulnerable groups that the organization has identified. - List any collective or individual rights that the organization has identified to be of particular concern to the local communities. <p><i>Note: These recommendations are based on the guidance to clause 1.1 in GRI 413: Local Communities 2016.</i></p>
Topic Standards disclosures		
<u>GRI 413: Local Communities 2016</u>	Disclosure 413-1 Operations with local community engagement, impact assessments, and development programs	
	Disclosure 413-2 Operations with significant actual and potential negative impacts on local communities	Describe significant impacts on the health of local communities as a result of <u>exposure</u> to pollution caused by the organization's operations or use of hazardous substances.
Additional sector disclosures		
Report the number and description of disputes from local communities, including actions taken and outcomes of the actions.		

805 **Resources and references**

806 [GRI 413: Local Communities 2016](#) lists authoritative intergovernmental instruments and other sources
 807 relevant to reporting on this topic.

808 The additional intergovernmental instruments and references used to develop this topic description as
 809 well as further resources that may be helpful for understanding and reporting on the topic by the coal
 810 sector are listed on in the Bibliography on page 69.

811 2.10 Land and resource rights

812 **Land and resource rights encompass the rights to use, manage and control land, fisheries,**
813 **forests, and other natural resources. Organizations can have impacts on the availability and**
814 **accessibility of these to local communities and other users. This topic covers impacts from an**
815 **organization's use of land and natural resources on human rights and tenure rights, including**
816 **from resettlement of local communities.**

817 Coal operations require access to land for prospecting, exploration, mining, coal and waste storage,
818 processing, transportation, and distribution of products. This can sometimes lead to displacement of
819 other land users, restricted access to resources and services, and resettlement. Impacts from land
820 use vary according to methods of extraction, resource location, processing required, and
821 transportation methods. For example, displacement is more often associated with open-pit mining
822 than underground coal mining.

823 Unclear rules regarding tenure rights to access, use, and control land often cause disputes, economic
824 and social tensions, and conflict. Insufficient consultation with, and inadequate compensation to,
825 affected communities can also exacerbate tensions and conflict. For example, the relationship
826 between subsurface (i.e., mineral) rights and surface (i.e., land) rights might be unclear; formal
827 statutory tenure rules might overlap or conflict with traditional customary rules; legitimate rights may
828 not be recognized or enforced; or people may lack formal documentation of their rights to land.
829 Community consultations may also fail to include all affected members. Women, for example, are
830 often excluded from decision-making processes related to the development a new project.

831 Organizations may provide local communities with monetary compensation or land that is equivalent
832 to lost assets. However, determining the value of local communities' lost access to the natural
833 environment is complex. It requires considerations of income-generating activities, human health, and
834 non-material aspects of quality of life. The amount of compensation provided may therefore not be
835 equivalent to the loss suffered. In some cases, customary titleholders to the land may not be
836 compensated at all or may only be compensated for crops they were cultivating on the land rather
837 than also for the land itself.

838 Involuntary resettlement of local communities can have impacts on people's livelihoods and human
839 rights. These impacts can be exacerbated for vulnerable groups. Involuntary resettlement can involve
840 physical displacement (e.g., relocation or shelter loss) and economic displacement (e.g., loss or
841 access to assets). Involuntary resettlement typically requires more extensive engagement between
842 organizations and local communities. Impacts of resettling communities can be exacerbated by a
843 flawed process or lack of transparency, for example, in the absence of free, prior, and informed
844 consent (FPIC), specifically for indigenous peoples.

845 Community members resisting resettlement can also face threats and intimidation, as well as violent,
846 repressive, or life-threatening removal from lands by security forces or government agents (see also
847 [Conflict and security](#)).

848 **What to report**

849 If an organization in the coal sector has identified land and resource rights as a material topic, this
 850 section helps it determine what to report on this topic.

Standard	Disclosure	Additional sector recommendations
Management of the topic		
GRI 103: Material Topics	Disclosure MT-3 Management of material topics	Describe how the organization seeks to ensure meaningful engagement with vulnerable groups, including how it ensures safe and equal gender participation. <i>Note: This recommendation is related to SE-1 Approach to stakeholder engagement. If the information reported by the organization in SE-1 describes how it seeks to ensure meaningful engagement with vulnerable groups, the organization can provide a reference to this information.</i>
Topic Standards disclosures		
GRI 413: Local Communities 2016	Disclosure 413-1 Operations with local community engagement, impact assessments, and development programs	
	Disclosure 413-2 Operations with significant actual and potential negative impacts on local communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Report the locations of operations or facilities which necessitated involuntary resettlement or where such resettlement is ongoing. For each location, describe how peoples' livelihoods and human rights were affected as a result of the resettlement, and any remedy provided. (For example, describe the impacts on people's customary rights, cultural rights, and access to economic resources and services as a result of the resettlement, and any remedy provided.) - Describe the process for providing remediation to local communities subject to involuntary resettlement, such as the process for establishing compensation for loss of assets or other assistance to improve or restore standards of living or livelihoods.

851 **Resources and references**

852 [*GRI 413: Local Communities 2016*](#) lists authoritative intergovernmental instruments and other sources
 853 relevant to reporting on this topic.

854 The additional intergovernmental instruments and references used to develop this topic description as
 855 well as further resources that may be helpful for understanding and reporting on the topic by the coal
 856 sector are listed on in the Bibliography on page 69.

857

2.11 Rights of indigenous peoples

858 **Indigenous peoples are considered a vulnerable group that could experience negative impacts**
859 **as a result of an organization’s activities more severely than the general population.**
860 **Indigenous peoples have both collective and individual rights, as set out in United Nations**
861 **Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and other international human rights**
862 **instruments. This topic covers impacts on the rights of indigenous peoples.**

863 The coal sector can have impacts on indigenous peoples that are often connected with sociocultural
864 factors, such as their cultural heritage and special relationship with land. Development of coal
865 activities can present positive economic impacts through, for example, employment opportunities and
866 community development programs but the sector’s activities can also disrupt indigenous peoples’
867 cultural, spiritual, and economic ties to their lands or natural environments, compromise their rights
868 and well-being, and cause displacement (see also Land and resource rights). Availability of and
869 access to water, as a key concern for indigenous communities, can also be impacted. Considering
870 many indigenous peoples’ distinct relationship with and dependence on nature, the sector’s role as a
871 major contributor to climate change exacerbates impacts on the environment.

872 The collective and individual rights of indigenous peoples are recognized in international instruments.
873 Indigenous peoples also often have a special legal status in national legislation, and/or can be
874 customary or legal owners of lands to which organizations in the coal sector are granted use rights by
875 governments. As such, before initiating development projects that require resettlement or have
876 potential impacts on lands or resources used or owned by indigenous peoples, organizations are
877 expected to seek free, prior, and informed consent (FPIC) from indigenous peoples. This right is
878 recognized in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and allows
879 indigenous peoples to give or withhold consent to a project that may affect them or their territories as
880 well as to negotiate project conditions. However, some national governments might not recognize or
881 enforce indigenous land rights or indigenous peoples’ rights to consent. Documented cases show
882 absence of good faith consultations as well as undue pressure and harassment toward indigenous
883 peoples to accept projects; opposition to such projects has in some cases led to violence and death
884 (see also Conflict and security). Organizations in the coal sector and indigenous peoples regularly
885 have disputes and conflicts over land ownership and rights.

886 The sector can further undermine social cohesion, welfare, and safety of indigenous communities
887 through tension created by the influx of foreign workers, risks of prostitution and forced labor, violence
888 against women, and increased exposure to communicable diseases (see also Local communities).
889 Negative socioeconomic impacts from coal mining projects often affect indigenous women more than
890 men.

891 **What to report**

892 If an organization in the coal sector has identified rights of indigenous peoples as a material topic, this
893 section helps it determine what to report on this topic.

Standard	Disclosure	Additional sector recommendations
Management of the topic		
GRI 103: Material Topics	Disclosure MT-3 Management of material topics	Describe the mutually accepted process to incorporate the right to free, prior, and informed consent (FPIC) and other rights as set out in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the International Labour Organization Convention 169 ‘Indigenous and Tribal Peoples’.

		Describe how the organization seeks to ensure meaningful engagement with indigenous peoples, including how it ensures safe and equal gender participation. <i>Note: this recommendation is related to SE-1 Approach to stakeholder engagement. If the information reported by the organization in SE-1 describes the means for ensuring equal and safe gender participation, the organization can provide a reference to this information.</i>
Topic Standards disclosures		
GRI 411: Rights of Indigenous Peoples 2016	Disclosure 411-1 Incidents of violations involving rights of indigenous peoples	
GRI 413: Local Communities 2016	Disclosure 413-1 Operations with local community engagement, impact assessments, and development programs	Describe the process for identifying and implementing <u>community development programs</u> for indigenous peoples, such as providing training and access to jobs, providing supply opportunities and benefit-sharing contracts, or implementing an indigenous employment strategy.
	Disclosure 413-2 Operations with significant actual and potential negative impacts on local communities	List the locations of operations where indigenous peoples are present or affected by ongoing coal activities.

894 **Resources and references**

895 [GRI 411: Rights of Indigenous Peoples 2016](#) and [GRI 413: Local Communities 2016](#) list authoritative
896 intergovernmental instruments and other sources relevant to reporting on this topic.

897 The additional intergovernmental instruments and references used to develop this topic description as
898 well as further resources that may be helpful for understanding and reporting on the topic by the coal
899 sector are listed on in the Bibliography on page 69.

900 2.12 Conflict and security

901 **An organization's activities may trigger conflict, or they may be located in areas facing conflict**
902 **situations. An organization's use of security personnel or reliance on national security forces**
903 **in conflict situations can have negative impacts and needs to be carefully managed to ensure**
904 **that the human rights of local communities and other third parties are respected. This topic**
905 **covers the organization's security practices and its approach to operating in areas of conflict.**

906 Many organizations in the coal sector operate in regions and situations of conflict. Pre-existing
907 conflicts are common when, for example, organizations operate in countries characterized by political
908 and social instability. The risk of human rights abuses is heightened in areas of conflict.

909 Conflict can also be caused by the presence of coal activities. These conflicts can be triggered by
910 poor engagement with or exclusion of local communities and indigenous peoples from decision-
911 making processes; uneven distribution of economic benefits; negative impacts, such as environmental
912 pollution or reduced access to resources seen as disproportionate to the benefits received; or
913 disputes over use of scarce resources. Conflict can also be triggered by mismanagement of coal-
914 related revenues by public officials for individual gains at the expense of local interests (see also [Anti-](#)
915 [corruption](#)).

916 Organizations in the coal sector may use security personnel to protect their assets or ensure their
917 workers' safety. Security personnel may take action against community members, including when
918 they are protesting projects or protecting their lands. These actions can violate human rights, such as
919 rights to freedom of association and freedom of speech, as well as lead to violence, injuries, or
920 deaths. Security contractors may also be connected to military or paramilitary groups.

921 Security may be provided by host government police or military forces. In such cases, organizations in
922 the coal sector might be involved with negative human rights impacts as a result of their business
923 relationships with these military and security forces, over whose actions they have limited control.
924 When coal projects are endorsed by local governments but remain disagreeable to local communities,
925 the use of private military or security forces may increase tensions and exacerbate the power
926 imbalance between companies and local communities.

927 Effectively addressing such negative impacts involves assessing security risks, which includes
928 engaging with stakeholders, and working with security providers to ensure human rights are
929 respected. This may also help organizations improve safety and security in local communities
930 through, for example, facilitating communication between government security forces and local
931 communities and supporting efforts to address other sources of conflict.

932 **What to report**

933 If an organization in the coal sector has identified conflict and security as a material topic, this section
 934 helps it determine what to report on this topic.

Standard	Disclosure	Additional sector recommendations
Management of the topic		
GRI 103: Material Topics	Disclosure MT-3 Management of material topics	List the organization's significant operations in areas of conflict.
Topic Standards disclosures		
<u>GRI 410: Security Practices 2016</u>	Disclosure 410-1 Security personnel trained in human rights policies or procedures	

935 **Resources and references**

936 [GRI 410: Security Practices 2016](#) lists authoritative intergovernmental instruments and other sources
 937 relevant to reporting on this topic.

938 The additional intergovernmental instruments and references used to develop this topic description as
 939 well as further resources that may be helpful for understanding and reporting on the topic by the coal
 940 sector are listed on in the Bibliography on page 69.

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941 2.13 Asset integrity and critical incident management

942 **Asset integrity and critical incident management deal with prevention and control of incidents**
 943 **that can lead to fatalities, injuries or ill health, environmental impacts, and damage to**
 944 **communities and infrastructure. This topic covers impacts from such incidents and an**
 945 **organization’s approach to critical incident management.**

946 Critical incidents in the coal sector can have catastrophic consequences on workers, local
 947 communities, and the environment, as well as cause damage to the organization’s assets. In addition
 948 to fatalities and injuries, these incidents can cause economic loss, conflict, threats to livelihoods,
 949 compromised food safety and security, social disruption, cultural erosion, litigation stress,
 950 environmental degradation, and direct species mortality. Incidents that cause methane and other
 951 GHG emissions, such as gas and coal dust explosions, also contribute to climate change.

952 Critical incidents related to coal mining include mine collapses, poisonous gas leaks, dust explosions,
 953 stope collapses, fires, mining-induced seismicity, floods, vehicle collisions, and mechanical errors due
 954 to improperly operated or malfunctioning equipment (see also [Occupational health and safety](#)). Coal
 955 fires can release fly ash and smoke containing GHG emissions and toxic chemicals that can enter
 956 food chains.

957 Other critical incidents involve failures related to tailings management. Poor management or design of
 958 tailing facilities can lead to leaks or collapses, with severe impacts on local communities, livelihoods,
 959 infrastructure, and the environment. Failures can be due to poor water management, overtopping,
 960 foundation or drainage failure, erosion, and earthquakes. Impacts become more severe when tailings
 961 also contain high levels of bioavailable metals or hazardous chemicals. Incidents related to spills and
 962 leaks of coal slurry ponds and tailings pipelines can also cause significant damage.

963 Critical incident risks can be identified and anticipated through implementation of a critical control
 964 management approach, which addresses the sources or factors likeliest to lead to potential incidents.
 965 Organizations can mitigate their impacts through measures that ensure emergency preparedness and
 966 response. This includes effective communication with local communities to mitigate exposure to
 967 pollution and other impacts during emergencies (see also [Local communities](#)). Effective critical control
 968 management can also limit impacts associated with natural calamities and extreme weather events,
 969 which are likely to increase in frequency and intensity due to climate change.

970 **What to report**

971 If an organization in the coal sector has identified asset integrity and critical incident management as
 972 a material topic, this section helps it determine what to report on this topic.

Standard	Disclosure	Additional sector recommendations
Management of the topic		
GRI 103: Material Topics	Disclosure MT-3 Management of material topics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Report whether the organization complies with the Global Industry Standard on Tailings Management (GISTM) and, if so, provide a link to the latest information disclosed in line with GISTM Principle 15. - Describe the actions taken to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o manage impacts from tailings facilities throughout the lifecycle, including closure and post-closure;

		○ prevent catastrophic failures of tailings facilities. ¹⁷
Topic Standards disclosures		
GRI 306: Effluents and waste 2016	Disclosure 306-3 Significant spills	
Additional sector disclosures		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - List the organization's tailings facilities. - For each tailings facility, report the following information: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • description of the tailings facility; • operational status (active, inactive, closed, etc.); • Dam Failure Consequence Classification, in line with the GISTM; • date and main findings from the latest risk assessment. <p><i>Note: If the organization has already reported this information as specified in the additional sector recommendation to MT-3 listed above, the organization can provide a reference to this information.</i></p>		
Describe the organization's emergency preparedness and response programs and plans.		

973 **Resources and references**

974 [GRI 306: Effluents and Waste 2016](#) lists authoritative intergovernmental instruments and other
975 sources relevant to reporting on this topic.

976 The additional intergovernmental instruments and references used to develop this topic description as
977 well as further resources that may be helpful for understanding and reporting on the topic by the coal
978 sector are listed on in the Bibliography on page 69.

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¹⁷ The terms 'tailings facility' and 'catastrophic failure' are so defined in ICMM, UNDP, PRI, [The Global Industry Standard on Tailings Management](#), 2020.

979 2.14 Occupational health and safety

980 **Healthy and safe working conditions are recognized as a human right. Occupational health**
981 **and safety involves prevention of physical and mental harm to workers and promotion of**
982 **workers' health. This topic covers impacts related to workers' health and safety.**

983 Many of the work-related hazards in the coal sector are associated with key processes in exploration
984 and mining phases, such as working with heavy machinery and exposure to or handling of explosive,
985 flammable, poisonous, or harmful substances. Despite the sector's efforts to eliminate work-related
986 hazards and improve safety, exposure to these hazards has resulted in higher fatality rates than in
987 many other sectors.

988 Other hazards to workers' health and safety can result from working in confined spaces or isolated
989 locations, long working hours, and the type of physical, often repetitive, labor involved. Work-related
990 hazards vary according to the extraction method. For example, workers in underground mines can be
991 exposed to more health and safety risks due to challenging working conditions and confined
992 environments.

993 The coal sector extensively uses suppliers to perform what can amount to major parts of projects.
994 Suppliers are often subject to lower occupational health and safety standards than employees.
995 Suppliers can also have higher accident and fatality rates, which can be due to suppliers undertaking
996 the most dangerous jobs. They might also not be covered by the coal organization's occupational
997 health and safety management system, be less familiar with the workplace and the organization's
998 safety practices, or be less committed to those practices.

999 Hazards associated with the coal sector with a potential to result in injury include transportation
1000 incidents, which are a common source of fatalities and injuries. These can occur when workers and
1001 equipment are transported to and from mining sites, sometimes over long distances along dangerous
1002 routes. Fires and explosions are another major hazard (see also [Asset integrity and critical incident](#)
1003 [management](#)), which can originate from coal dust and flammable gases, such as methane during coal
1004 extraction, transportation, and processing. Electrical hazards can be associated with high-voltage
1005 systems or equipment used in mining sites.

1006 Incidents categorized as 'struck-by', 'caught-in', or 'caught-between' can involve falling equipment or
1007 structures, faulty operation of heavy machinery, or malfunctioning of electrical, hydraulic, or
1008 mechanical installations. Workers can also be at risk of falls, slips, and trips, such as when workers
1009 access working areas or equipment located high above the ground or via underground walkways,
1010 which can be obstructed, wet, or sloped.

1011 Hazards associated with the sector with a potential to result in ill health include exposure to airborne
1012 respirable dust, which can lead to obstructive or debilitating lung illnesses such as asthma, cancer,
1013 and pneumoconiosis. Free crystalline silica released during processes that use or produce sand, such
1014 as coal extraction, can cause lung cancer and silicosis. Coal dusts are also associated with coal
1015 workers' pneumoconiosis. In addition, exposure to hydrogen sulfide released by coal seams can lead
1016 to incapacitation or death. Concentration of gases such as carbon monoxide, methane, and nitrogen
1017 in confined spaces can create poisonous environments, which can lead to asphyxiation.

1018 Physical hazards in the sector include extreme temperatures, which can cause fatigue and body
1019 stress reactions, as well as harmful levels of carcinogenic radiation from industrial processing and
1020 harmful levels of machinery noise. Workers can also suffer impaired hearing and musculoskeletal
1021 disorders due to ergonomic-related hazards, such as vibration.

1022 Biological hazards faced by many coal workers include exposure to viruses present in the local
1023 community that cause communicable diseases or bacteria as a result of poor hygiene and quality of
1024 water or food.

1025 Hazards related to work organization and psychosocial well-being due to common [employment](#)
1026 [practices](#) in the sector, such as the use of fly-in-fly-out work organization, can increase risks of
1027 fatigue, strain, or stress, and affect physical, psychological, and social health. These hazards include
1028 expatriation, rotational work, long shifts, irregular or odd working hours, and work that is solitary or
1029 monotonous. Workers can also suffer psychological reactions, such as post-traumatic stress disorder
1030 due to, for example, being involved in a major incident. Gender imbalance can contribute to stress,
1031 discrimination, or sexual harassment (see also [Non-discrimination and equal opportunity](#)).

1032 **What to report**

1033 If an organization in the coal sector has identified occupational health and safety as a material topic,
 1034 this section helps it determine what to report on this topic.

Standard	Disclosure	Additional sector recommendations
Management of the topic		
GRI 103: Material Topics	Disclosure MT-3 Management of material topics	
Topic Standards disclosures		
<u>GRI 403: Occupational Health and Safety 2018</u>	Disclosure 403-1 Occupational health and safety management system	
	Disclosure 403-2 Hazard identification, risk assessment, and incident investigation	
	Disclosure 403-3 Occupational health services	
	Disclosure 403-4 Worker participation, consultation, and communication on occupational health and safety	
	Disclosure 403-5 Worker training on occupational health and safety	
	Disclosure 403-6 Promotion of worker health	
	Disclosure 403-7 Prevention and mitigation of occupational health and safety impacts directly linked by business relationships	
	Disclosure 403-8 Workers covered by an occupational health and safety management system	
	Disclosure 403-9 Work-related injuries	
	Disclosure 403-10 Work-related ill health	

1035 **Resources and references**

1036 [*GRI 403: Occupational Health and Safety 2018*](#) lists authoritative intergovernmental instruments and
 1037 other sources relevant to reporting on this topic.

1038 The additional intergovernmental instruments and references used to develop this topic description as
 1039 well as further resources that may be helpful for understanding and reporting on the topic by the coal
 1040 sector are listed on in the Bibliography on page 69.

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2.15 Employment practices

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Employment practices refer to an organization’s approach to job creation, terms of employment and working conditions for its workers. This topic also covers the employment and working conditions in an organization’s supply chain.

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Employment opportunities generated by the coal sector, either directly or through suppliers, can have positive socioeconomic impacts on communities, countries, and regions. The sector can offer well-paid opportunities for skilled workers. However, employment practices in the sector are also associated with a number of negative impacts related to working conditions, use of contract labor and disparities in working conditions, inadequate labor-management consultations, and job security.

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Many jobs in the sector have rigorous shift patterns to ensure continuity of operations around the clock, sometimes requiring overtime employment and night shifts, which can cause high fatigue levels and augment risks related to [occupational health and safety](#) and [critical incidents](#). An organization can also use fly-in-fly-out work arrangements, in which workers are flown to the site of operations for a number of weeks at a time and often required to work extended shifts. Irregular work shifts and schedules and time spent away from families can have further psychosocial impacts on workers.

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Various activities are commonly outsourced to suppliers. This is prevalent during peak periods, such as construction or maintenance works, or for specific activities, such as drilling, catering, transportation, and security. By outsourcing activities and using workers employed through suppliers, organizations in the coal sector may seek to reduce their labor costs and circumvent collective agreements that would otherwise benefit workers in direct employment (see also [Freedom of association and collective bargaining](#)).

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Compared to employees workers who have an employment relationship with the organization, agency workers commonly receive less favorable employment conditions, lower compensation, and less training. They also have higher accident rates and less job security than directly employed workers. They might lack social protection and access to grievance mechanisms. Workers beyond the first tiers of business relationships in the organization’s supply chain may be subject to low standards for working conditions, exposing organizations in the coal sector human rights violations through their business relationships (see also [Forced labor and modern slavery](#)).

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Employment terms can also vary significantly for local workers, expatriates (e.g., temporary coal workers who are brought in by employers), migrant workers, and contractors. Remuneration might be unequal, and benefits, such as bonuses, housing allowances, and private insurance plans, might only be offered to expatriates. Lack of relevant skills, knowledge, or accessible training programs can restrict local communities from accessing employment opportunities created by the sector in the first place (see also [Economic impacts](#)).

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Job security is another concern the coal sector faces. For example, closures (see [Closure and rehabilitation](#)) or coal price drops can be sudden, leading to job losses. Low job security is compounded by automation and changing business models, such as changes triggered by the transition to a low-carbon economy. If organizations fail to offer workers timely skills development measures, improving their employability in other sectors, they can face underemployment or unemployment.

1081 **What to report**

1082 If an organization in the coal sector has identified employment practices as a material topic, this
 1083 section helps it determine what to report on this topic.

Standard	Disclosure	Additional sector recommendations
Management of the topic		
GRI 103: Material Topics	Disclosure MT-3 Management of material topics	
Topic Standards disclosures		
<u>GRI 401: Employment 2016</u>	Disclosure 401-1 New employee hires and employee turnover	
	Disclosure 401-2 Benefits provided to full-time employees that are not provided to temporary or part-time employees	
	Disclosure 401-3 Parental leave	
<u>GRI 402: Labor/Management Relations 2016</u>	Disclosure 402-1 Minimum notice periods regarding operational changes	
<u>GRI 404: Training and Education 2016</u>	Disclosure 404-1 Average hours of training per year per employee	
	Disclosure 404-2 Programs for upgrading employee skills and transition assistance programs	
<u>GRI 414: Supplier Social Assessment 2016</u>	Disclosure 414-1 New suppliers that were screened using social criteria	
	Disclosure 414-2 Negative social impacts in the supply chain and actions taken	

1084 **Resources and references**

1085 [*GRI 401: Employment 2016*](#), [*GRI 402: Labor/Management Relations 2016*](#), [*GRI 404: Training and*](#)
 1086 [*Education 2016*](#), and [*GRI 414: Supplier Social Assessment 2016*](#) list authoritative intergovernmental
 1087 instruments and other sources relevant to reporting on this topic.

1088 The additional intergovernmental instruments and references used to develop this topic description as
 1089 well as further resources that may be helpful for understanding and reporting on the topic by the coal
 1090 sector are listed on in the Bibliography on page 69.

I 091

2.16 Child labor

I 092 **Child labor is defined as work that ‘deprives children of their childhood, their potential and**
I 093 **their dignity, and that is harmful to their physical or mental development including by**
I 094 **interfering with their education’. Freedom from child labor is a fundamental human right.**

I 095 Around one million children between ages five and 17 are estimated to be engaged in artisanal and
I 096 small-scale mining and quarrying activities.¹⁸ Coal is identified as produced with the use of child labor
I 097 in several countries, including Afghanistan, Colombia, Mongolia, Pakistan and Ukraine.¹⁹

I 098 Coal mining activities are dangerous to children in various ways. Children face multiple hazards in
I 099 coal mines, such as severe accidents and injuries, falling rocks, explosions, fires, and collapse of
I 100 mine walls (see also [Occupational health and safety](#)). Other impacts can result from working in
I 101 remote areas with limited access to schools and social services. If there is no family or community
I 102 support, the conditions may also foster alcohol abuse, drugs, and prostitution.

I 103 Coal organizations interact with a high number of suppliers and customers, including in countries with
I 104 low enforcement of human rights. Organizations can be linked to child labor by business relationships
I 105 in their supply chains, such as during facilities construction. Risks of child labor in the coal sector are
I 106 often found in artisanal and small-scale mining, with more prevalence in the informal sector and
I 107 remote areas. Child labor is also more frequent in areas affected by armed conflict (see also [Conflict](#)
I 108 [and security](#)).

I 109 Other impacts on children’s rights and well-being can result from the coal sector’s impacts on the local
I 110 communities as well as from organization’s employment practices. These can include parents’
I 111 working conditions, long hours, shift work, and fly-in-fly-out practices (see also [Employment](#)
I 112 [practices](#)).

I 113 **What to report**

I 114 If an organization in the coal sector has identified child labor as a material topic, this section helps it
I 115 determine what to report on this topic.

Standard	Disclosure	Additional sector recommendations
Management of the topic		
GRI 103: Material Topics	Disclosure MT-3 Management of material topics	
Topic Standards disclosures		
GRI 408: Child labor 2016	Disclosure 408-1 Operations and suppliers at significant risk for incidents of child labor	

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¹⁸ UNICEF, [Children’s rights and the mining sector](#), 2015; International Labour Organisation (ILO), [Global Estimates of Child Labour – Results and Trends 2012-2016](#), 2017.

¹⁹ U.S. Department of Labor, [2020 List of Goods Produced by Child Labor or Forced Labor](#), 2020.

<p><u>GRI 414: Supplier Social Assessment 2016</u></p>	<p>Disclosure 414-1 New suppliers that were screened using social criteria</p> <p><i>Note: This disclosure is also listed in 2.15 Employment practices. If the organization has identified employment practices as a material topic and has already reported this disclosure, the organization can provide a reference to this information.</i></p>	
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1116 **Resources and references**

1117 [GRI 408: Child labor 2016](#) and [GRI 414: Supplier Social Assessment 2016](#) list authoritative
 1118 intergovernmental instruments and other sources relevant to reporting on this topic.

1119 The additional intergovernmental instruments and references used to develop this topic description as
 1120 well as further resources that may be helpful for understanding and reporting on the topic by the coal
 1121 sector are listed on in the Bibliography on page 69.

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1122 2.17 Forced labor and modern slavery

1123 **Forced labor is work or service which is exacted under the menace of penalty and for which a**
 1124 **person has not offered themselves voluntarily. Freedom from forced labor is a fundamental**
 1125 **right at work. This topic covers impacts and expectations of organizations in relation to forced**
 1126 **labor and modern slavery.**

1127 Coal has been identified as a product at risk of being produced by forced labor or modern slavery in
 1128 several countries, including North Korea, Pakistan, and China.²⁰ Organizations in the coal sector
 1129 interact with a large number of suppliers, including in countries characterized by low rates of
 1130 enforcement of human rights. This can increase the likelihood of using suppliers that do not adhere to
 1131 rights at work or relevant codes of conduct, leaving supply chains vulnerable to human rights
 1132 violations, including incidences of modern slavery.

1133 Coal organizations can contribute to occurrences of modern slavery through joint ventures and other
 1134 business relationships, including state-owned enterprises in countries where regular human rights
 1135 standards violations occur.

1136 Documented cases of human rights violations throughout the supply chain concern activities such as
 1137 coal shipping and construction. Low-skilled migrant workers can also face higher risks of modern
 1138 slavery when dealing with third-party employment agencies, such as those who have been found to
 1139 overcharge workers for visas and flights or to demand recruitment costs be paid by employees rather
 1140 than employers.

1141 What to report

1142 If an organization in the coal sector has identified forced labor and modern slavery as a material topic,
 1143 this section helps it determine what to report on this topic.

Standard	Disclosure	Additional sector recommendations
Management of the topic		
GRI 103: Material Topics	Disclosure MT-3 Management of material topics	
Topic Standards disclosures		
GRI 409: Forced or Compulsory Labor 2016	Disclosure 409-1 Operations and suppliers at significant risk for incidents of forced or compulsory labor	

²⁰ United States Department of Labor, [2020 List of Goods Produced by Child Labor or Forced Labor](#), 2020; Walk Free Foundation, [The Global Slavery Index 2018](#), 2018.

<p>GRI 414: Supplier Social Assessment 2016</p>	<p>Disclosure 414-1 New suppliers that were screened using social criteria</p> <p><i>Note: This disclosure is also listed in 2.15 Employment practices. If the organization has identified employment practices as a material topic and has already reported this disclosure, the organization can provide a reference to this information.</i></p>	
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I 144 **Resources and references**

I 145 [GRI 409: Forced or Compulsory labor 2016](#) and [GRI 414: Supplier Social Assessment 2016](#) list
I 146 authoritative intergovernmental instruments and other sources relevant to reporting on this topic.

I 147 The additional intergovernmental instruments and references used to develop this topic description as
I 148 well as further resources that may be helpful for understanding and reporting on the topic by the coal
I 149 sector are listed on in the Bibliography on page 69.

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1150 **2.18 Non-discrimination and equal opportunity**

1151 **Freedom from discrimination is a human right and a fundamental right at work. Discrimination**
 1152 **can impose unequal burdens on individuals or deny them opportunities instead of treating**
 1153 **them fairly and on the basis of individual merit. This topic covers impacts from discrimination**
 1154 **and practices related to diversity, inclusion, and equal opportunity.**

1155 The conditions, locations, and types of work associated with the coal sector can set a barrier for entry
 1156 to the sector, hinder employee diversity, and result in discrimination. Discriminatory practices can
 1157 impede access to jobs and career development, as well as lead to unequal treatment, remuneration,
 1158 and benefits.

1159 Discrimination has been documented in the coal sector concerning race, color, sex, gender, religion,
 1160 national extraction, and worker status. For example, jobseekers from local communities are
 1161 sometimes excluded from the hiring process because of a recruitment system bias that favors a
 1162 dominant ethnic group or utilizes expatriate workers. Compared to expatriates, local workers might
 1163 receive significantly lower pay for equal work. The sector’s widespread use of contract workers, often
 1164 with differing terms of employment, can also be a source of discrimination.

1165 The coal sector is characterized by a significant gender imbalance. In many countries, the percentage
 1166 of women working in this sector is significantly lower than the proportion of women working in other
 1167 sectors. Women are also significantly underrepresented in senior management positions. One of the
 1168 causes of this imbalance is that fewer women graduate with degrees pertinent to the sector, such as
 1169 in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. Other barriers for women and primary
 1170 caregivers include lack of parental leave arrangements and childcare facilities at mining sites, long
 1171 work hours, and fly-in-fly-out work arrangements. Social or cultural customs and beliefs and biases
 1172 can also limit women’s access to jobs in this sector or prevent them from taking on specific roles. In
 1173 addition, some resource-rich countries have laws that prevent women from working in hazardous or
 1174 arduous occupations.

1175 The coal sector has also been linked to domestic and gender-based violence, both at sites of
 1176 operation and within local communities near operations. Male-dominated cultures, imbalanced gender
 1177 distribution, and gendered organizational norms have been identified as factors that contribute to the
 1178 likelihood of sexual harassment in such contexts.

1179 Understanding how specific groups may be subject to discrimination in the different locations where
 1180 an organization operates can help the organization in effectively addressing discriminatory practices,
 1181 for example, by providing specific training to workers on how to prevent discrimination and create a
 1182 respectful workplace.

1183 **What to report**

1184 If an organization in the coal sector has identified non-discrimination and equal opportunity as a
 1185 material topic, this section helps it determine what to report on this topic.

Standard	Disclosure	Additional sector recommendations
Management of the topic		
GRI 103: Material Topics	Disclosure MT-3 Management of material topics	

Topic Standards disclosures		
GRI 202: Market Presence 2016	Disclosure 202-1 Ratios of standard entry level wage by gender compared to local minimum wage <i>Note: This disclosure is also listed in 2.8 Economic impacts. If the organization has identified economic impacts as a material topic and has already reported this disclosure, the organization can provide a reference to this information.</i>	
	Disclosure 202-2 Proportion of senior management hired from the local community <i>Same note as above applies.</i>	
GRI 401: Employment 2016	Disclosure 401-3 Parental leave <i>Note: This disclosure is also listed in 2.15 Employment practices. If the organization has identified employment practices as a material topic and has already reported this disclosure, the organization can provide a reference to this information.</i>	
GRI 404: Training and Education 2016	Disclosure 404-1 Average hours of training per year per employee <i>Same note as above applies.</i>	
GRI 405: Diversity and equal opportunity 2016	Disclosure 405-1 Diversity of governance bodies and employees	
	Disclosure 405-2 Ratio of basic salary and remuneration of women to men	
GRI 406: Non-discrimination 2016	Disclosure 406-1 Incidents of discrimination and corrective actions taken	

1186 **Resources and references**

1187 [GRI 401: Employment 2016](#), [GRI 404: Training and Education 2016](#), [GRI 405: Diversity and equal](#)
1188 [opportunity 2016](#), and [GRI 406: Non-discrimination 2016](#) list authoritative intergovernmental
1189 instruments and other sources relevant to reporting on this topic.

1190 The additional intergovernmental instruments and references used to develop this topic description as
1191 well as further resources that may be helpful for understanding and reporting on the topic by the coal
1192 sector are listed on in the Bibliography on page 69.

1193 2.19 Freedom of association and collective bargaining

1194 Freedom of association and collective bargaining are fundamental rights at work. They include
1195 the rights of employers and workers to form, join, and run their own organizations without
1196 prior authorization or interference, and to collectively negotiate working conditions and terms
1197 of employment. This topic covers impacts resulting from violations of freedom of association
1198 and collective bargaining.

1199 Workers' rights to organize and to take collective action are essential for improving working conditions
1200 in the coal sector, including conditions relating to [occupational health and safety](#), wages, and job
1201 security. These rights can also enable public scrutiny about the sector's governance and practices,
1202 and help reduce social inequality.

1203 Many jobs associated with the sector have traditionally been represented by trade unions and
1204 covered by collective bargaining agreements, which are negotiated by national, regional, or global
1205 sectoral federations and associations. However, some coal resources are located in countries where
1206 these rights are restricted. Workers in such locations face risks when seeking to join trade unions and
1207 engage in collective bargaining. Even in countries where unions are legal, restrictions might exist that
1208 prevent effective worker representation, and workers who join unions may face intimidation or unfair
1209 treatment.

1210 Documented cases of interference with freedom of association and collective bargaining include
1211 detention of managers and employees; invasion of privacy; not adhering to collective agreements;
1212 prevention of union access to workplaces in order to assist workers; refusal to bargain in good faith
1213 with workers' chosen unions; threats, harassment, forced disappearance, violence, and deaths; unfair
1214 dismissal of trade union members and leaders; and unilateral cancellation of collective bargaining
1215 agreements.

1216 Contract workers, who are widely used in these sectors, are often excluded from the scope of
1217 collective bargaining agreements, which can leave them with reduced benefits and worse working
1218 conditions (see also [Employment practices](#)).

1219 Freedom of association and civic space

1220 Freedom of association and peaceful assembly are fundamental human rights. These rights entail
1221 that both workers, through their trade unions, as well as citizens, through independent civil society,
1222 have the freedom to speak about the sector's policies and organizations' practices without
1223 interference. Restrictions imposed on civic space – the environment that enables civil society to
1224 contribute to decisions that affect individual lives – can limit citizens' ability to engage in public debate
1225 about the sector's policies and organizations' practices.

1226 **What to report**

1227 If an organization in the coal sector has identified freedom of association and collective bargaining as
 1228 a material topic, this section helps it determine what to report on this topic.

Standard	Disclosure	Additional sector recommendations
Management of the topic		
GRI 103: Material Topics	Disclosure MT-3 Management of material topics	
Topic Standards disclosures		
<u>GRI 407: Freedom of Association and Collective Bargaining 2016</u>	Disclosure 407-1 Operations and suppliers in which the right to freedom of association and collective bargaining may be at risk	

1229 **Resources and references**

1230 [*GRI 407: Freedom of Association and Collective Bargaining 2016*](#) lists authoritative intergovernmental
 1231 instruments and other sources relevant to reporting on this topic.

1232 The additional intergovernmental instruments and references used to develop this topic description as
 1233 well as further resources that may be helpful for understanding and reporting on the topic by the coal
 1234 sector are listed on in the Bibliography on page 69.

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2.20 Anti-corruption

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Anti-corruption refers to how an organization manages the potential of being involved in corruption. Corruption refers to practices such as bribery, facilitation payments, fraud, extortion, collusion, money laundering, and the offer or receipt of an inducement to do something that is dishonest or illegal. This topic covers impacts related to corruption and expectations of organizations in relation to contract and ownership transparency.

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Corruption in the coal sector has been linked to various negative impacts, such as misallocation of resource revenues, damage to the environment, abuse of democracy and human rights, and political instability. Corruption can lead to diversion of resource revenues from public needs, such as infrastructure or basic services, which can have severe impacts, especially in countries with high levels of poverty. This can lead to increased inequalities and conflicts over coal resources.

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Factors increasing the likelihood of involvement with corruption include frequent interaction between coal organizations and politically exposed persons, such as government officials appointed to govern a country's natural resources for licenses and other regulations. The sector's international reach along with complex transactions and flows of money can further enable corruption.

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Corruption in the coal sector can occur throughout the value chain, with practices that aim to:

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- influencing decision-making processes in order to extract resources;
- avoiding environmental requirements;
- shaping policies and rules; or influence protection of land rights and land access restrictions affecting livelihoods of local communities and indigenous peoples;
- gaining preferential terms or license approvals;
- gaining favorable treatment or confidential information in the bidding process for exploration and production rights; or for avoiding specific requirements, potentially resulting in awarding licenses or contracts to less qualified organizations or securing contracts at inflated prices;
- influencing environmental, social, and other regulations as well as enforcement of these regulations, as they relate to impact assessment processes or consultation with local communities;
- incentivizing suppliers of equipment, products, and services to secure contracts by using bribes and kickbacks to, for example, cover up fraud or to get a waiver of regulations or quality requirements for products and services;
- gaining favorable treatment in relation to taxes and other government levies, such as royalties and import duties, to deny the state revenue, or to divert payments to private beneficiaries instead;
- blocking unfavorable legislation, including environmental policies or pollution taxes (see also [Public policy and lobbying](#)).

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To combat corruption and prevent the negative impacts that stem from it, organizations are expected by the marketplace, international norms, and stakeholders to demonstrate their adherence to integrity, governance, and responsible business practices.

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Transparency of contracts and ownership structures

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Publication of government contracts is a growing practice that is now an international norm in the extractive industries. The practice is endorsed by organizations such as the United Nations (UN), International Monetary Fund (IMF), International Finance Corporation (IFC), International Bar Association, and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). Contracts governing the extraction of oil and gas resources are commonly devised by governments and organizations on behalf of citizens or local communities without public oversight. Due to the long-term horizons and widespread impacts of projects, fair terms for sharing risk and rewarding benefits, including those related to a just transition, are particularly important. Contract transparency helps local communities hold governments and organizations accountable for their negotiated terms and obligations. It also helps create a level playing field that enables governments to negotiate for better deals.

1286 Lack of transparency about ownership structures can make it difficult to determine who benefits from
 1287 financial transactions in the sector. Beneficial ownership transparency has been identified as a
 1288 significant opportunity to deter conflicts of interest, [corruption](#), tax avoidance and evasion.

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 1290 International Monetary Fund (IMF), *Fiscal Transparency Initiative: Integration of Natural Resource Management Issues*, 2019.
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1292 **What to report**

1293 If an organization in the coal gas sector has identified anti-corruption as a material topic, this section
 1294 helps it determine what to report on this topic.

Standard	Disclosure	Additional sector recommendations
Management of the topic		
GRI 103: Material Topics	Disclosure MT-3 Management of material topics	
Topic Standards disclosures		
GRI 205: Anti-corruption 2016	Disclosure 205-1 Operations assessed for risks related to <u>corruption</u>	
	Disclosure 205-2 Communication and training about <u>anti-corruption</u> policies and procedures	
	Disclosure 205-3 <u>Confirmed incidents of corruption</u> and actions taken	
Additional sector disclosures		
Describe the organization’s policy on contract transparency and provide a link to publicly available contracts and licenses. If a contract or a license is not publicly available, explain the reasons why and report any actions taken by the organization to overcome any barriers to publication. <i>Note: This disclosure is based on EITI Standard 2019, Requirement 2.4. Contracts.</i>		
List the beneficial owners within the organization’s structure and explain how the organization identifies the beneficial owners of business partners, including joint ventures and suppliers. <i>Note: This disclosure is based on EITI Standard 2019, Requirement 2.5. Beneficial ownership c. and f.</i>		

1295 **Resources and references**

1296 [GRI 205: Anti-corruption 2016](#) lists authoritative intergovernmental instruments and other sources
 1297 relevant to reporting on this topic.

1298 The additional intergovernmental instruments and references used to develop this topic description as
 1299 well as further resources that may be helpful for understanding and reporting on the topic by the coal
 1300 sector are listed on in the Bibliography on page 69.

I 301 2.21 Payments to governments

I 302 **Lack of transparency about payments to governments can contribute to inefficient**
I 303 **management of public funds, illicit financial flows, and corruption. This topic covers impacts**
I 304 **from an organization's practices related to payments to governments, and expectations of**
I 305 **organizations in relation to transparency regarding such payments.**

I 306 Organizations in the coal sector deal with a large number of complex financial transactions subject to
I 307 a variety of payments to governments. These include taxes; commodity trading revenues; production
I 308 rights; royalties; signature, discovery, and production bonuses; and other payments.

I 309 Transparency about payments to governments can demonstrate the economic importance of the coal
I 310 sector to the host countries, and enable informed decision-making and public debate. Insufficient
I 311 transparency of these payments can impede detection of misallocation of revenues and corruption. In
I 312 the absence of contract transparency, transparency about taxes and other payments can offer
I 313 valuable insights into the terms of contracts and can help governments increase their accountability
I 314 and strengthen revenue collection and management.

I 315 Taxes, royalties, and other payments from organizations in the coal sector can amount to an
I 316 important source of investment and income for local communities, countries, and regions (see
I 317 Economic impacts). Coal organizations are often subject to paying royalties, along with widely
I 318 applicable taxes and payments to governments, for using natural resources. Royalties are obligations
I 319 to governments that are not based on corporate profits, but rather on amounts of the commodity
I 320 extracted. They are designed to guarantee governments an income from the non-renewable resource
I 321 that is protected from transfer pricing and other mechanisms used by organizations to minimize taxes.
I 322 At the same time, the sector receives substantial subsidies from governments in many countries,
I 323 even despite government commitments to phase out financial support by 2018.²¹ Transparency about
I 324 the subsidies received can be of great value interest to some stakeholders, such as investors or civil
I 325 society.

I 326 When disclosing information on payments to governments, organizations in the coal sector may report
I 327 aggregate payments at a global level. However, aggregated figures provide limited insight into
I 328 payments made in each country or per project. Reporting country-level or project-level payments
I 329 enables governments to compare the actual payments made to those stipulated in fiscal, legal, and
I 330 contractual terms and to assess the financial contribution of coal projects to communities. It can also
I 331 enable tax authorities to address tax avoidance and evasion by revealing information on transfer
I 332 pricing arrangements and transactions. This can remove information asymmetry and provide a level
I 333 playing field for governments when negotiating contracts.

I 334 **State-owned enterprises**

I 335 In some countries – China and India being notable examples – the largest producers of coal are state-
I 336 owned enterprises (SOEs). As direct customers, SOEs are also highly relevant for the sector. Of all
I 337 power plants burning coal, 40% belong to SOEs; the figure rises to 56% if joint ventures are included.

I 338 SOEs often have special status, which can involve financial advantages and preferential treatment.
I 339 By disclosing their transactions with SOEs, organizations in this sector can increase transparency
I 340 about payments to governments and help reduce risks of corruption.

²¹ In the European Union, subsidies to coal producers added up to €9.7 billion in 2012 (M. Blom et al., '[Subsidies and Costs of EU Energy](#)', 2014), and remained at similar levels in the following years (see S. Whitley et al.; Overseas Development Institute (ODI), '[Cutting Europe's Lifelines to Coal: Tracking Subsidies in 10 Countries](#)', 2017).

I 341 **What to report**

I 342 If an organization in the coal sector has identified payments to governments as a material topic, this
 I 343 section helps it determine what to report on this topic.

Standard	Disclosure	Additional sector recommendations
Management of the topic		
GRI 103: Material Topics	Disclosure MT-3 Management of material topics	
Topic Standards disclosures		
GRI 201: Economic Performance 2016	Disclosure 201-1 Direct economic value generated and distributed <i>Note: This information is also listed in 2.8 Economic impacts. If the organization has identified economic impacts as a material topic and has already reported this disclosure, the organization can provide a reference to this information.</i>	
	Disclosure 201-4 Financial assistance received from government	For state-owned organizations, report the financial relationship between the government and the SOE. <i>Note: This disclosure is based on EITI Standard 2019 Requirement 2.6 State participation.</i>
GRI 207: Tax 2019	Disclosure 207-1 Approach to tax	
	Disclosure 207-2 Tax governance, control, and risk management	
	Disclosure 207-3 Stakeholder engagement and management of concerns related to tax	
	Disclosure 207-4 Country-by-country reporting	

Additional sector disclosures

Report a breakdown of taxes and other payments to governments by revenue stream and project.

Note: This disclosure is based on EITI Standard 2019 Requirement 4.1 Comprehensive disclosure of taxes and revenues and requirement 4.7. Level of disaggregation.

For coal purchased from the state, or from third parties appointed by the state to sell on their behalf, report:

- the volumes and types of coal purchased;
- the full names of the buying entity and of the recipient of the payment;
- the value of payments made for the purchase.

Note: This disclosure is based on EITI Standard 2019 Requirement 4.2 Sale of the state's share of production or other revenues collected in kind and EITI Reporting Guidelines for companies buying oil, gas and minerals from governments.

I 344 Resources and references

I 345 [GRI 201: Economic Performance 2016](#) and [GRI 207: Tax 2019](#) list authoritative intergovernmental
I 346 instruments and other sources relevant to reporting on this topic.

I 347 The additional intergovernmental instruments and references used to develop this topic description as
I 348 well as further resources that may be helpful for understanding and reporting on the topic by the coal
I 349 sector are listed on in the Bibliography on page 69.

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2.22 Public policy and lobbying

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An organization can participate in public policy development, directly or through an intermediary organization, by means of lobbying and making financial or in-kind contributions to political parties, politicians, or causes. This topic covers an organization’s approach to public policy participation, and the impacts that can result from the influence an organization exerts in such participation.

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Lobbying by the coal sector can result in long-lasting impacts on the economy, environment, and people, including local communities. In regions where coal generates significant revenue for governments, organizations in the sector can have undue influence over public policy discussions. Documented cases show how the sector has habitually donated to political parties whose policies favor corporate agendas, or to gain special access to politicians.

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The coal sector has actively lobbied against ambitious climate policies. These lobbying activities may aim to safeguard existing jobs and the livelihoods of coal-mining areas, but also to prevent meaningful carbon pricing, carbon budgets, or other actions to reduce GHG emissions that could leave coal assets or resources stranded. These activities sometimes contradict publicly stated corporate strategies or positions that support policies addressing climate change (see also Climate adaptation and resilience).

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Other lobbying activities by the sector include hindering environmental policies; blocking or amending legislation on environmental and social assessments of projects or fair participation of all stakeholders; overturning restrictions on resource development; and supporting the lowering of corporate taxes and resource royalties.

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Lobbying can also be used to gain or retain government subsidies, which can result in commodity prices that do not reflect the full environmental or social costs of products. Subsidies for the coal sector can impede the transition to a low-carbon economy. This can consequently hinder sustainable development in numerous ways, including by reducing or inefficiently allocating available national resources, increasing dependence on fossil fuels, and discouraging investment in renewable energy and energy efficiency, which impedes the transition to a low-carbon economy.

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What to report

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If an organization in the coal sector has identified public policy and lobbying as a material topic, this section helps it determine what to report on this topic.

Standard	Disclosure	Additional sector recommendations
Management of the topic		
GRI 103: Material Topics	Disclosure MT-3 Management of material topics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Report any significant issues that the organization focuses on when participating in public policy development and lobbying. - Report the organization’s stance on these issues as well as any differences between lobbying positions and the stated policies, goals, or other public positions.

Topic Standards disclosures		
GRI 415: Public Policy 2016	Disclosure 415-1 Political contributions	

I 380 **Resources and references**

I 381 *GRI 415: Public Policy 2016* lists authoritative intergovernmental instruments and other sources
I 382 relevant to reporting on this topic. The additional intergovernmental instruments and references used
I 383 to develop this topic description as well as further resources that may be helpful for understanding
I 384 and reporting on the topic by the coal sector are listed on in the Bibliography on page 69.

This document does not represent an official position of the GSSB

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Glossary

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Note to the GSSB: A number of defined terms are being revised as part of the review of the GRI Universal Standards. To facilitate consistency, this glossary section will be completed prior to public exposure based on the drafts of Universal Standards submitted to the GSSB for approval. No new defined terms are proposed to be added as a result of the development of this Standard.

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Some definitions included in this glossary contain terms that are further defined in the complete [GRI Standards Glossary](#). All defined terms are underlined. If a term is not defined in this glossary or the complete GRI Standards Glossary, definitions that are commonly used and understood apply.

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This document does not represent an official position of the GSSB

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