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Item 01 – Draft summary of the GSSB meeting held on 18 November 2021

For GSSB approval

Date	19 November 2021
Meeting	9 December 2021
Description	This document presents the summary of the GSSB virtual meeting held on 18 November 2021.

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

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2 Participants

3 Present:

Name	Constituency
Judy Kuszewski	Chair
Robyn Leeson	Vice-Chair
Loredana Carta	Labor
Peter Colley	Labor
Giulia Genuardi	Business enterprise
Evan Harvey	Investment institution
Vincent Kong	Business enterprise
Jennifer Prancing	Business enterprise
Corli le Roux	Mediating institution
Kim Schumacher	Civil society organization
Gustavo Sinner	Mediating institution
Kenton Swift	Civil society organization
Michel Washer	Business enterprise

4 Apologies:

Name	Constituency
Joseph Martin	Business enterprise
Rama Krishnan Venkateswaran	Investment institution

5 In attendance from GRI:

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

6 List of abbreviations

GRI	Global Reporting Initiative
GSSB	Global Sustainability Standards Board
SD	Standards Division
TC	Technical committee
WG	Working group

7 **Decisions and action items**

8 **Decisions**

9 The GSSB resolved to approve the following:

10 **GSSB Decision 2021.27** [Item 01 – Draft summary of the GSSB meeting held on 21 October](#)

11 **GSSB Decision 2021.28** Inclusion of additional member to the Biodiversity Technical Committee

12 **Session 1: Welcome**

13 The Global Sustainability Standards Board (GSSB) Chair Judy Kuszewski (henceforth the Chair)
14 welcomed the GSSB and presented an overview of the meeting agenda. The GSSB was presented
15 with the following item for approval:

16 [Item 01 – Draft summary of the GSSB meeting held on 21 October](#)

17 **Session 2: GSSB Work Program 2020- 18 2022 update**

19 The Chief of Standards Bastian Buck presented the update on the GSSB Work Program 2020-2022.
20 The following points are for consideration:

- 21 • From the present GSSB meeting to the next meeting in December 2021 and up to the first
22 meeting in January 2022, the SD will work on an improved addendum to the current GSSB
23 Work Program 2020-2022.
- 24 • Budget discussions are underway with the Finance Committee of the GRI Supervisory Board
25 to confirm budget allocation.
- 26 • The budget allocations will be made available to the GSSB as part of due process.
- 27 • A more significant budget allocation will generate an anticipated increase in standard setting
28 activities towards the end of 2022.
- 29 • Extra staffing will improve resource capacity. However, additional projects can commence in
30 an orderly way only when these resources become available.

31 The Chief of Standards introduced Harold Pauwels, the new Director Standards. The Director
32 Standards raised the following points regarding upcoming revisions and new Topic Standards projects
33 for 2022:

- 34 • Topic Standards should be reviewed every four years in line with new Sector Standard work.

- 35 • The biodiversity topic is under review; for publication in the fourth quarter of 2022.
- 36 • The critical incident management topic will be developed based on the GSSB decision to
- 37 develop a separate GRI Topic Standard (incorporating spills and leaks disclosures from *GRI*
- 38 *303 Water and Effluents 2018* and *GRI 306: Effluents and Waste 2016*).
- 39 • It is envisioned that one TC will work in a programmatic approach on a set of 8 to 10
- 40 social/human rights-related standards aligned with EU EFRAG.
- 41 • Regarding climate change, one or more new Topic Standards and revisions of *GRI 302:*
- 42 *Energy 2016* and *GRI 305: Emissions 2016* are expected to start in the fourth quarter of 2022
- 43 with the main purpose to align with both EFRAG and IFRS.
- 44 • Data protection and privacy topic will commence research in the second half of 2022.
- Based on stakeholder feedback, the topic of public policy and anti-competitive behavior (incl.
- revisions of *GRI 206: Anti-competitive Behavior*, *GRI 415: Public Policy 2016*, and the related
- GRI 205: Anti-corruption 2016*) is prioritized as a research topic for 2022. Based on the
- results, further steps will be proposed in the second half of 2022.
- 45 • In answer to a question from the GSSB regarding the process of undertaking new projects
- 46 and revisions, the SD welcomes any input that can guide or prioritize future topic
- 47 development. The input can be included for the next GSSB meeting in December.

48 Mia d'Adhemar, Sr. Manager Sector Program, explained the Sector Program trajectory into 2022. The

49 following points explain how the projects are prioritized:

- 50 • The Sector Program will continue to follow the order outlined in the prioritization list previously
- 51 validated by the GSSB. Feedback from stakeholders has not, at this stage, been significant
- 52 enough to lead to any changes to the order of projects.
- 53 • The pilot projects are nearing completion, with the coal project set for GSSB approval in the
- 54 first quarter of 2022, while the agriculture, aquaculture, and fishing project is earmarked for
- 55 the second quarter of 2022.
- 56 • Mining is the next project to be undertaken with the recruitment for the WG nearing
- 57 completion. A recommendation for the WG composition will be presented at the next GSSB
- 58 meeting. Active work on the project with the Working Group will commence in February 2022.
- 59 • The final project proposals for the food sector and the textiles and apparel sectors are
- 60 currently taking a little more time to complete due to the need for further stakeholder
- 61 engagement regarding the sector scopes. The final project proposals will be circulated to the
- 62 GSSB for approval early next year.
- 63 • The sectors following these two will be three financial sector projects. These will be assessed
- 64 for synergies and efficiencies before being presented to the GSSB.

65 The Chief of Standards raised a final point regarding the increase in future projects and how to

66 organize the GSSB for this expectation. The ambition from the SD requires that more projects be

67 reviewed and overseen by the GSSB; this expectation may be unrealistic. Roles and responsibilities

68 between the SD and the GSSB are to be defined in a slightly different way. The SD will develop a
69 workable proposal that will require further discussion.

70 **Session 3: Update on biodiversity** 71 **membership**

72 Harold Pauwels, Director Standards, presented to the GSSB an update on the biodiversity TC
73 membership. The GSSB and SD raised the following points regarding the proposed membership:

- 74 • The proposed member represents a mining company embroiled in a recent scandal. This
75 raises concerns that GRI may be used to mitigate reputational damage. Memberships to
76 committees are often used as evidence of proper governance, but these committees are only
77 for participation.
- 78 • The Chair further noted that the concern is not about the proposed individual membership, but
79 involves membership to any TC or WG in general. External communication is prioritized
80 regarding the relationships between experts and GRI as a standard setting organization.
- 81 • The Chief of Standards explained that the proposed membership is based on individual
82 capacity. Constituency background and the institution represented are important selection
83 criteria. However, the leading aspect in recruitment is the expertise on the subject matter and
84 not the affiliated institution.
- 85 • Of consideration is that the terms of reference become available when the project proposal is
86 in the public domain. An overview with biographies of the TC members or WG members
87 becomes available, which allows for a transparent process.
- 88 • Africa and South America have no representation on the TC for the biodiversity project
89 despite their combined importance to biodiverse regions of the world.
- 90 • The SD aimed to achieve a balanced regional TC representation, but it was unsuccessful in
91 securing experts from those regions despite active engagement with potential members.
92 However, constituency representation is achieved.

93 The GSSB resolved to approve the addition of the proposed member to the TC.

94 **Session 4: Any other business and** 95 **close of the meeting**

96 No other business was raised, and the Chair closed the public meeting at 14.05 Central European
97 Time (CET).