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Review of *GRI 303: Water*

Terms of Reference for Project Working Group

16 January 2017

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Terms of Reference

These Terms of Reference outline the mandate of the *GRI 303: Water* Project Working Group, including its composition, selection criteria, commitments and project timeline.

Background

The Global Sustainability Standards Board (GSSB) is GRI's independent standard setting body, which works to develop and revise GRI Standards in line with its [Due Process Protocol](#). The GSSB has initiated a project to update its water reporting standard – [GRI 303: Water 2016](#) (hereafter 'GRI 303'). The aim is to update the content of this Standard to bring it in line with internationally-agreed best practice and with recent developments in water management and reporting practice. The scope of this review will also include the effluents-related content in *GRI 306: Effluents and Waste*, with the PWG making a recommendation about whether to integrate this content into *GRI 303: Water*, or to keep it as a separate Standard. Key references for revising the content will include, among others, the work of the CDP, UN Global Compact and the CEO Water Mandate, ISO, AWS, and the Sustainability Development Goals (SDGs).

In line with the GSSB's Due Process Protocol, a multi-stakeholder Project Working Group (hereafter 'PWG') will be formed to develop content for the revision of *GRI 303*.

See the [project proposal](#) for more information.

PWG mandate

The overall work of the PWG should be conducted in a way that supports sustainability reporting as promoted by the GRI Standards, that is – as an organization's practice of reporting publicly on its economic, environmental, and/or social impacts, and hence its contributions – positive or negative – towards the goal of sustainable development.

The GRI Standards create the common language for organizations and stakeholders, with which the economic, environmental, and social impacts of organizations can be communicated and understood. They are designed to enhance the global comparability and quality of information on these impacts, thereby enabling greater transparency and accountability of organizations, and informed decision-making by internal and external stakeholders.

The PWG will be responsible for revising the content of *GRI 303* and the effluents-related content from *GRI 306* and suggesting revised content to GSSB, for review and approval. In particular, the PWG is tasked with:

- revising, and where needed, expanding on the existing 'Background context' information from *GRI 303* (as well as the background context from *GRI 306* related to effluents)
- reviewing the existing [management approach disclosures](#) for water and effluents, including:
 - revising the existing content

- where applicable, developing new requirements, recommendations, and/or guidance
- ensuring the revised management approach disclosures are compatible for organizations to use together with [GRI 103: Management Approach](#)
- reviewing the existing [topic-specific disclosures](#)¹ for water and effluents (along with their related reporting requirements, recommendations and/or guidance) including:
 - revising the existing content
 - where applicable, developing new disclosures, requirements, recommendations, and/or guidance order to address areas not currently covered by the Standards
- revising and updating the existing References lists related to water and effluents
- revising existing definitions in the [GRI Standards Glossary](#) and, where applicable, developing new ones

The PWG will also be responsible for proposing to delete existing content, where applicable. This may be the case when content is considered to be outdated or not useful for reporting an organization's water impacts.

The GSSB will review draft content provided by the PWG and, if considered necessary, may ask the PWG to conduct further research and/or develop the draft further.

The review of *GRI 303* is to be carried out within the existing structure and template of the GRI topic-specific Standards, including preserving the hierarchy of requirements, recommendations, and guidance. The Standards Division will provide the PWG with a template structure to refer to in revising the content.

The PWG should ensure that the revised Standard is applicable to organizations of any size, type, sector or geographic location; and that it reflects and supports best practice of water reporting, while remaining accessible and practicable for a global user base.

The PWG should aim to develop disclosures (and related methodologies) that are clear, consistent, and focused on the measurement and reporting of water and effluent-related impacts.

The PWG should seek to revise content in line with international authoritative instruments, and other relevant standards and developments.

The Standards Division will assist with drafting, and will style and edit the content, applying house rules for text and presentation. The PWG will not be responsible for editing the stylistic and grammatical presentation of the deliverables. Such edits will be undertaken by the Standards Division to ensure consistency with existing GRI documents.

Changes to other GRI Standards, or to the 'in accordance' criteria, are not within the remit of the PWG.

¹Disclosure 306-1: Water discharge by quality and destination, Disclosure 306-3: Significant spills, and Disclosure 306-5: Water bodies affected by water discharges and/or runoff.

PWG composition

In line with due process, the PWG membership should reflect a balance of multi-stakeholder constituencies. As a minimum, the PWG shall have at least one person drawn from each of the constituencies on which the membership of the GSSB is based: Business Enterprise (or reporters more generally), Civil Society, Investment Institution, Labor, and Mediating Institutions.

Business Enterprise	a) an enterprise (other than a Mediating or Investment Institution) that has been established in order to generate a profit for the benefit of its investors or owners or, b) an organization representing the collective interests of those falling into category 'a'.
Investment Institution	an enterprise that is primarily concerned with the direct or indirect, long-term investment of funds in business - including, but not limited to, asset owners, asset managers, development banks, exchanges, ratings agencies and market information brokers.
Labor	an organization established independently of employers and governments to represent the interests of workers.
Civil Society Organization	an organization established in order to promote or secure a public good relating to sustainability (environmental, social and governance) and that does not fall into any of the categories defined above.
Mediating Institution	an individual or organization that provides goods and/or services associated with the reporting process and derives benefit from doing so.

In addition, geographical, gender and cultural diversity will be considered. The PWG will have between 10 and 15 members. There can only be one representative per organization in the PWG.

The GSSB will determine the final composition of the PWG. The work of the PWG will not be invalidated if, for some appropriate reason, the GSSB is unable to achieve the desired multi-stakeholder composition.

PWG Chair – The Standards Division and the designated GSSB sponsor will appoint a PWG Chair. The PWG Chair will be responsible for chairing the PWG meetings, with the support of the Standards Division, and for facilitating discussions, with the aim of reaching decisions by consensus. See the [Annex](#) for the specific selection criteria and responsibilities of the PWG Chair.

GSSB sponsor(s) – The GSSB will appoint one or more 'sponsors' from among its members. The GSSB sponsors will (at a high-level) follow the progress of the PWG and represent the work of the PWG back to the GSSB.

PWG selection criteria

The principle criterion for identifying candidates and selecting the PWG members will be based on their knowledge of and expertise in water related issues, experience in water management, and availability to perform the role.

In addition, the following criteria will be considered:

- Relevant knowledge of sustainability reporting
- Familiarity with the needs of users of sustainability reports
- Related experience with multi-stakeholder initiatives
- Understanding of and willingness to work in a consensus-based multi-stakeholder PWG
- Ability to participate in PWG meetings held in English and provide written English feedback when requested

PWG commitments

PWG members are expected to:

- act in an individual capacity, exclusively in the public interest, and in accordance with the due process as defined in the Due Process Protocol
- review the materials provided by the Standards Division in advance of the online and in-person meetings, to be able to actively participate
- provide timely feedback on the documents distributed by the Standards Division
- work in the manner that aims at achieving consensus on the discussed topics

PWG members commit to attending a minimum of one in-person PWG meeting in Amsterdam of 2 days (excluding travel time) and approximately 5-6 teleconferences (each of 2 hours in length). Teleconferences are normally held between 1-3pm Central European Time (CET), so that PWG members in most time zones can join.

An additional in-person meeting may be convened following the public comment period, depending on the extent of the public feedback.

PWG members also commit to plan sufficient time to prepare for meetings and review materials in order to meet the project deadlines (see 'Project timeline' for estimated time commitments).

PWG members volunteer their time. There is no fee or compensation associated with participation in the PWG.

PWG timeline and time commitment

The table below outlines the high-level project timeline and expected time commitment from each PWG member. See the [Annex](#) for a more detailed project timeline.

Availability to travel to Amsterdam for the in-person meeting (between 22 May and 2 June 2017) is mandatory. Specific dates for virtual and in-person meetings will be defined based on the availability of PWG members within the time frames indicated below. This timeline is subject to change due to, for example, PWG members' availability, changes to the project scope or public comment feedback.

Milestone	Time Commitment	Completion Date
Review agenda and materials prior to #1 PWG Meeting	4 hours	Week of 3 April '17
#1 PWG Meeting (virtual)	2 hours	Week of 10 April '17
Interim review of documents	4 hours	Week of 24 April '17
#2 PWG Meeting (virtual)	2 hours	Week of 1 May '17
Interim review of documents	4 hours	Week of 15 May '17
#3 PWG Meeting (in-person)	20 hours	Between 22 May and 9 June '17
Interim review of documents	4 hours	Week of 12 June '17
#4 PWG Meeting (virtual)	2 hours	Week of 19 June '17
Interim review of documents	2 hours	Week of 26 June '17
<i>Submission of Exposure Draft for GSSB approval</i>	-	Week 17 July '17
<i>Public Exposure (90 days)</i>	-	Mid-August to Mid-November '17
Review of public comments	4 hours	November '17
#5 PWG Meeting (virtual or in-person)	2 or 16 hours	December '17
Interim review of documents	4 hours	December '17 – January '18
<i>Submission of final draft Standard for GSSB approval and Consideration of need for re-exposure</i>	-	February '18
<i>Release of final Standard</i>	-	March '18

The total time commitment is estimated at between 54-68 hours from April 2017 to January 2018, excluding travel time for in-person meetings.

PWG meetings

PWG meetings are convened by the Standards Division. The PWG Chair chairs and facilitates the meetings, with the support of the Standards Division.

PWG meetings are not open to the public. The GSSB sponsor(s) may join the PWG meetings.

Meeting agenda and materials will be typically circulated to the PWG at least 5 working days in advance of each meeting. Meeting summaries will be circulated within 5 working days following the meetings.

PWG meeting materials are confidential and shall not be distributed to anyone outside the PWG without prior permission from the Standards Division.

The PWG seeks to reach decisions by consensus. Where unanimity cannot be achieved, minority opinions are documented for consideration by the GSSB. A PWG should report to the GSSB and seek guidance whenever it requires further advice in order to advance the project or where its members cannot reach consensus.

Upon request, PWG members will be eligible for travel and accommodation reimbursement in accordance with GRI policies.

Project management

The Standards Division is responsible for overall project management and implementation, according to due process. This includes:

- undertaking background research on water reporting practices, as input for the first PWG meeting
- preparing meeting agenda, meeting materials, and meeting summaries, for all PWG meetings
- providing logistical support for in-person PWG meetings and teleconferences
- producing working versions of draft Standards, based on PWG input
- conducting ad-hoc research and consultation, as needed
- maintaining an online collaboration platform for the PWG work
- collecting and summarizing public inputs on the exposure draft
- managing all internal (with GSSB) and external communications about the project and its outcomes

The Standards Division will supervise the formatting and production (as well as the stylistic and grammatical presentation) of the final deliverables. GRI will hold the copyright of the deliverables.

How to apply

All interested experts are invited to nominate themselves to be part of the PWG, by submitting their CV and this [application form](#) to water@globalreporting.org before 19 February 2017 (with 'Application to GRI 303 PWG' in the subject line).

In submitting your application, please ensure that you have the necessary internal approval(s) for participating in the PWG.

Next steps

Open call for nominations – 16 January to 19 February 2017

Interviews with candidates – 13 February to 2 March 2017

GSSB approval of PWG membership – March 2017

Communication of decision to candidates – March 2017

Contact

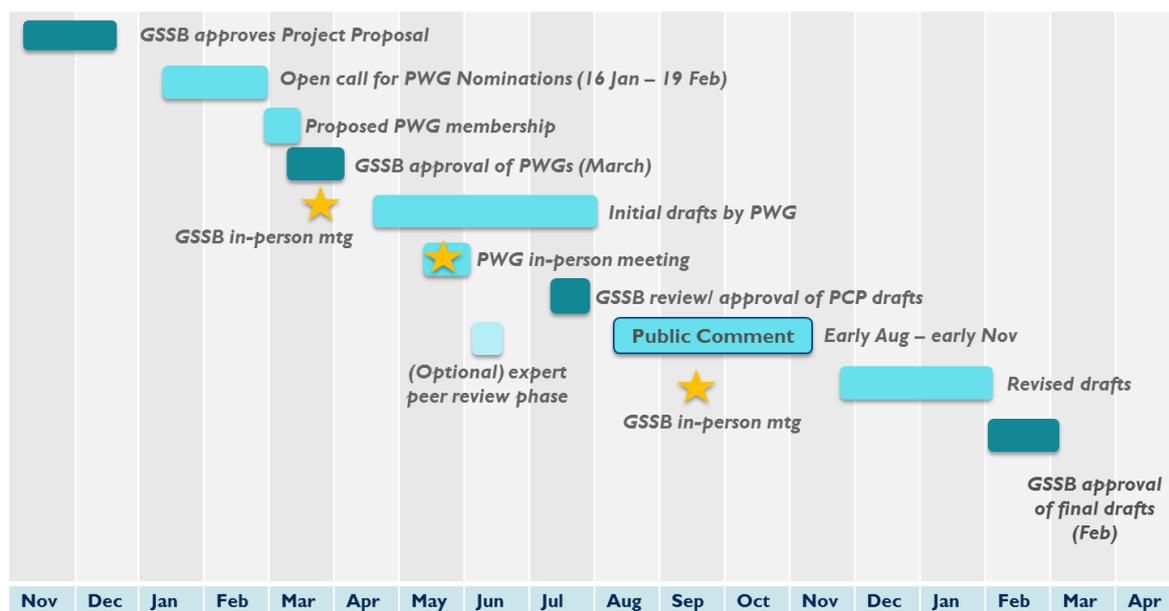
Chelsea Reinhardt – Deputy Director, Standards (Reinhardt@globalreporting.org)

Anna Krotova – Manager, Standards (Krotova@globalreporting.org)

For more information, visit the [project webpage](#) and [sign up here](#) to receive regular updates.

Annex

Project timeline 2016-2018



PWG Chair – selection criteria and responsibilities

In addition to the PWG selection criteria outlined in these Terms of Reference, the PWG Chair should have previous relevant professional experience with chairpersonship, and be able to commit sufficient time to fulfil the role.

The time commitment for the PWG Chair is estimated at an additional 40-50 hours (see ‘Project timeline’) – to join individual briefings with the Standards Division prior to, and following, each meeting.

The specific responsibilities of the Chair include:

- chairing the in-person and virtual meetings of the PWG
- facilitating discussions, with the aim of reaching decisions by consensus
- ensuring that all members are able to express their viewpoints, and that all positions and views are given equal attention and treatment
- taking the lead in helping to reach consensus where opinions are divided
- ensuring that all points of view expressed and decisions are adequately summed up so that they are understood by all present
- acting proactively and communicating diplomatically

In case of unforeseen unavailability of the Chair at a meeting, a session Chair may be elected by the PWG members.