Summary 3-5 November 2015 in-person meeting
Meeting summary

Approved by the GSSB on 5 April 2016

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## Participants

### Present:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Constituency</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>David Russell</td>
<td>Business</td>
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<tr>
<td>Daniel Ingram (3 November)</td>
<td>Investment Institution</td>
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<tr>
<td>Daniel Taillant</td>
<td>Civil Society Organization</td>
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<td>Dwight Justice</td>
<td>Labor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Eric Hespenheide (Chairman)</td>
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<td>Hidemi Tomita</td>
<td>Business</td>
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<tr>
<td>Judy Kuszewski</td>
<td>Mediating Institution</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jürgen Buxbaum</td>
<td>Labor</td>
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<td>Kirsten Margrethe Hovi</td>
<td>Business</td>
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<tr>
<td>Michael Nugent (Vice-Chair)</td>
<td>Mediating Institution</td>
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<tr>
<td>Robin Edme (3-4 November)</td>
<td>Mediating Institution</td>
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<tr>
<td>Simeon Cheng</td>
<td>Business</td>
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<tr>
<td>Staia Wandrag</td>
<td>Business</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sulema Pioli</td>
<td>Mediating Institution</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vadakepatth Nandkumar</td>
<td>Mediating Institution</td>
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### Apologies:

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<tr>
<td>Daniel Ingram (4-5 November)</td>
<td>Investment Institution</td>
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<tr>
<td>Robin Edme (5 November)</td>
<td>Mediating Institution</td>
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### In attendance:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bastian Buck</td>
<td>Director, Standards Division</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jack Boulter</td>
<td>Technical Writer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Katja Krieger</td>
<td>Manager Reporting Standard</td>
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<tr>
<td>Laura Espinach</td>
<td>Manager Reporting Standard</td>
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<tr>
<td>Maaike Fleur</td>
<td>Senior Strategy Advisor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tamara Bergkamp</td>
<td>Manager Reporting Standard</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rashmi van de Loenhorst</td>
<td>Director, Marketing and Communications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rumyana Taneva</td>
<td>Governance Relations Intern (minutes)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tina Nybo Jensen</td>
<td>Governance Relations Coordinator (minutes)</td>
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List of abbreviations

GSSB  Global Sustainability Standards Board
PWG  Project Working Group
SDGs  Sustainable Development Goals
SRSs  Sustainability Reporting Standards

Session 1.6: Introduction to the GSSB

Eric Hespenheide, Chairman (henceforth “The Chair”) of the Global Sustainability Standards Board (GSSB), welcomed the members of the GSSB and public to this inaugural public meeting of the GSSB from the 3-5 November 2015.

The Chair provided an overview of GRI’s governance structure and the role of the GSSB.

Present GSSB members introduced themselves and the Chair presented the agenda for this meeting.

Session 1.7: Work Program GSSB July 2015 - June 2016

Bastian Buck, Director Standards, presented this session asked for the GSSB’s approval on Agenda item 14 – Work Program GSSB July 2015 - June 2016. This Agenda item was circulated prior to the meeting and taken as read.

DECISIONS


Session 1.8: Project Proposals

Laura Espinach, Manager Reporting Standards, and Katja Kriege, Manager Reporting Standards, presented an update on the Project Proposals. Agenda items 15, 16, and 17 were circulated prior to the meeting and taken as read.

Agenda item 15 – Project Proposal ‘Transition to Standards’

GSSB members provided specific comments to the language of the text.

Agenda item 16 – Project Proposal ‘Revision Occupational Health and Safety Contents’
25 The GSSB recommended the Standards Division to consider gender balance when appointing the PWG.

28 Agenda item 17 – Project Proposal ‘Revision Employee/Worker Terminology’

29 GSSB members provided specific comments to the language of the text.

ACTION ITEMS

Standards Division:

32 • Consider the gender balance when appointing PWG’s for Project Proposal ‘Revision Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Contents.

DECISIONS

GSSB Decision 2015.32 The GSSB resolved to approve Agenda item 15 – Transition to Standards project proposal.

GSSB Decision 2015.33 The GSSB resolved to provisionally approve Agenda item 16 – Project Proposal Revision Occupational health and Safety.

GSSB Decision 2015.34 The GSSB resolved to provisionally approve Agenda item 17 – Project Proposal Revision Employee/Worker Terminology.

Session 2.3: Transition to Standards – Progress Update

Laura Espinach, Manager Reporting Standards, presented a Transition to Standards Progress Update. Espinach presented the six groups of proposals under development and explained the next steps for the proposal. Agenda item 18 – was circulated prior to the meeting and taken as read.

47 The GSSB discussed two options for numbering the SRSs.

48 The GSSB agreed on a combination of acronyms and Arabic numerals and asked for a proposal to be developed following this approach.

ACTION ITEMS

Standards Division:

52 • Develop a proposal for numbering the SRSs that uses a combination of acronyms and Arabic numerals.
53 • Submit a near final version of the format for the SRSs for review during the 17 December GSSB Virtual Meeting.
Session 2.4: Transition to Standards - Mock-up of SRS
1 Conceptual Framework

Jack Boulter, Technical Writer, provided an update on the Transition to Standards – Mock-up of SRS 1. Agenda item 19 – Transition to GRI Standards - Mock-up of Sustainability Reporting Standard 1 Conceptual Framework was circulated prior to the meeting and considered as read. Boulter asked for the GSSB’s input on the appropriateness and completeness of the proposed content.

GSSB members discussed several items including:

- The use of the verb ‘shall’ in addition to the other verbs proposed.
- The naming of this SRS and the potential consolidation of SRS1, 2 and 3 into one standard.
- Consolidating definitions
- And other wording suggestions.

Agreement on the above-mentioned discussions are reflected in the Action items for this session.

ACTION ITEMS

Standards Division:

- Use the verb ‘shall’ to denote a requirement in the SRSs.
- Propose a new title for SRS 1. A suggestion from the GSSB was ‘Foundational Standard’.
- Review the presentation of SRS 1, SRS 2 and SRS 3 to strongly signify that these are ‘foundational’ and should be used prior to using any other SRS.
- Consider consolidating definitions that apply globally to the SRSs in the Conceptual Framework.
- Consider the GSSB’s comments on specific wording.

Session 2.5: Transition to Standards – Mock-up of SRS
2 Content Principles & Mock-up of SRS 3 Quality Principles

Laura Espinach, Manager Reporting Standards, presented this session. Agenda items 20 – Transition to GRI Standards - Mock-up of Sustainability Reporting Standard 2 Content Principles and 21 – Transition to GRI Standards – Mock-up of Sustainability Reporting Standard 3 Quality Principles were circulated prior to the meeting and taken as read. Espinach presented an update on the work and asked GSSB for their feedback on the content and decisions.

Agenda item 20

GSSB members discussed the content and whether or not to include it in SRS 2. In general this should be considered as optional and if included in the SRS shortened remarkably and the verbs in lines 74-77, including shall, should be applied carefully. The GSSB also discussed whether the term Aspect can be replaced with the term topic.
The GSSB asked the Standards Division to prepare a proposal in which the relevant content from the General Reporting Notes is included in the text of SRS 3.

**ACTION ITEMS**

**Standards Division:**

- Provide a proposal of SRS 2 that includes relevant content from the process guidance for defining report content. The verbs should be applied carefully and in general this should not be considered as mandatory.
- Provide a proposal of SRS 3 in which the General Reporting Notes have been included in the text of the SRS when relevant.

**DECISIONS**

**GSSB Decision 2015.35** The GSSB agreed to provisionally approve a move from the term Aspect to the term topic. This decision was not carried unanimously.

**Session 2.7: Transition to Standards – Mock-up of SRS 4 Reporting Organization**

Laura Espinach, Manager Reporting Standards, presented this session. Agenda item 22 – Transition to Standards Mock-up of SRS 4 Reporting Organization was circulated prior to the meeting and taken as read. Espinach presented an overview of the work on this Standard. The GSSB was then asked to provide feedback and decisions on key questions.

**ACTION ITEMS**

**Standards Division:**

- Replace ‘may include’ in lines 383 and 408-409 with ‘should where applicable’.
- Remove examples given within disclosure requirements (bold font).
- Review the numbering of the disclosure requirements (a, b, c). If there is only one requirement, consider removing the (a) numbering.
- Provide a proposal in which the content in lines 378-401 and 402-429 are merged while it is specified that it covers two different subjects.
Session 2.8: Mock-up of SRS 9-1 Management Approach Narrative & Mock-up of SRS 9-2 Management Approach Indicators

Laura Espinach, Manager Reporting Standards, presented this session. Agenda items 23 – Transition to Standards Mock-up of SRS 9-1 Management Approach Narrative and 24 – SRS 9-2 Management Approach Indicators were circulated prior to the meeting and considered as read.

Espinach provided an overview of the format and minor changes implemented as per the content revision principles. Espinach asked the GSSB whether the proposals for SRS 9-1 and SRS 9-2 are viable in terms of the conceptual fit of the content and the amount of content and requirements for the users.

GSSB members discussed:

- Whether the division of the items might add a reporting burden.
- Whether the indicators in Item 24 are appropriate proxies for measuring the extent of the management approach outlined in Item 23.
- Whether to make the G4 Aspect-specific DMA content identified as being widely applicable mandatory or optional for the material Aspects.

The GSSB asked the Standards Division to investigate how to simplify this and provided some suggestion during the meeting for consideration.

ACTION ITEMS

Standards Division:

- Develop a proposal that presents a simpler solution to the Management Approach Narrative and Indicators and that takes into account the considerations made by the GSSB.

Session 2.9: Transition to Standards – Mock-up of SRS 11 Local Economic Development

Laura Espinach, Manager Reporting Standards, presented an overview of Agenda item 25 – Transition to Standards Mock-up of SRS 11 Local Economic Development. Espinach asked the GSSB to decide whether the Aspect-specific DMA guidance should be mandatory or optional for this SRS.

The GSSB discussed the importance that items in lines 155-212 within Agenda item 25 are not considered as an exhaustive list.

DECISIONS

GSSB Decision 2015.36 The GSSB agreed to make Aspect-specific DMA guidance mandatory for SRS 11 Local Economic Development.
Session 2.10: Transition to Standards – Mock-up of SRS 19 Emissions

Laura Espinach, Manager Reporting Standards, presented an overview of the work completed on Agenda item 26 – Transition to Standards Mock-up of SRS 19 Emissions. Espinach asked the GSSB to decide whether the Aspect-specific DMA guidance should be mandatory or optional for this SRS.

**DECISIONS**

**GSSB Decision 2015.37** The GSSB agreed to make Aspect-specific DMA guidance mandatory for SRS 19 Emissions.

Session 3.3: Update on Credibility and Trust Events

Maaike Fleur, Senior Strategy Advisor, presented an update on the Credibility and Trust Events held in Taipei, Beijing, Mumbai, Amsterdam and New York and that the key conclusions from these events would be used in a position paper.

**ACTION ITEMS**

**Standards Division:**

- Provide the GSSB an early and complete draft of the position paper ensuring that the GSSB has sufficient time for review.

Session 3.4: Update on Sustainable Development Goals

Bastian Buck, Director Standards Division, presented an update on the SDG’s and GRI’s activities to date.

Decisions & Action Items

**DECISIONS**


**GSSB Decision 2015.32** The GSSB resolved to approve Agenda item 15 – Transition to Standards project proposal.
GSSB Decision 2015.33 The GSSB resolved to provisionally approve Agenda item 16 – Project Proposal Revision Occupational health and Safety.

GSSB Decision 2015.34 The GSSB resolved to provisionally approve Agenda item 17 – Project Proposal Revision Employee/Worker Terminology.

GSSB Decision 2015.35 The GSSB agreed to provisionally approve a move from the term Aspect to the term topic.

GSSB Decision 2015.36 The GSSB agreed to make Aspect-specific DMA guidance mandatory for SRS 11 Local Economic Development.

GSSB Decision 2015.37 The GSSB agreed to make Aspect-specific DMA guidance mandatory for SRS 19 Emissions.

ACTION ITEMS

Standards Division:

Session 1.8 Project Proposals
- Consider the gender balance when appointing PWG’s for Project Proposal ‘Revision Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Contents’

Session 2.3: Transition to Standards – Progress Update
- Provide a proposal outlining the different options for combination of acronyms and Arabic numerals for numbering the Standards.
- Submit a near final version of the SRSs for review during the 17 December GSSB Virtual Meeting.

Session 2.4 Transition to Standards - Mock-up of SRS 1 Conceptual Framework
- Include the verb “shall” in the SRSs.
- Propose a new name for SRSs a suggestion from the GSSB was ‘Foundational Standard’.
- Replace sustainability topic in the footnote on page 9 with: Economic, Social and Environmental.
- Refer to sustainability development instead of sustainability throughout the document (footnote page 5).
- Review line 109-110 to assess whether GRI Standard is the singular of SRSs.

Session 2.5 Transition to Standards – Mock-up of SRS 2 Content Principles & Mock-up of SRS 3 Quality Principles
- Provide a proposal of SRS 2 including a shorten version of the process guidance for defining report content. The verb-methodology should be applied carefully and in general this should not be considered as mandatory.
- Provide a proposal of SRS 3 in which the General Reporting Notes have been included in the text of the SRS when relevant.

Session 2.7 Transition to Standards – Mock-up of SRS 4 Reporting Organization
- Replace ‘may include’ in lines 383 and 408-409 with ‘should where applicable’.
- Remove the examples from lines 379-381 and 403-406
- Remove the ‘a’ from lines 379 and 403 as there are no ‘b’.
- Provide a proposal in which the content in lines 378-401 and 402-429 are merged while it is specified that it covers two different subjects.
Session 2.8 Mock-up of SRS 9-1 Management Approach Narrative & Mock-up of SRS 9-2 Management Approach Indicators

- Develop a proposal that presents a simpler solution to the Management Approach Narrative and Indicators and that takes into account the considerations made by the GSSB.

Session 3.3 Credibility and Trust Events

- Provide the GSSB an early and complete draft of the position paper ensuring that the GSSB has sufficient time for review.

List of private sessions

The following private meeting sessions were held during the meeting. Private sessions are held for background briefing and administrative matters. No formal decisions are made during these sessions.

Session 1.1-1.5, 1.9, 2.1, 2.2, 2.6, 3.1, 3.2, 3.5, 3.6 covering topics:

- Technical setup sessions
- Governance update
- Standards Division update
- Any other business