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Item 01 – Draft summary of the GSSB meeting held on 18 June 2020

For GSSB approval

Date	1 September 2020
Meeting	15 September 2020
Description	This document presents the summary of the GSSB virtual meeting held on 18 June 2020.

This document has been prepared by the GRI Standards Division. It is made available to observers of the 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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This document does not represent an official position of the GSSB

2 Participants

3 Present:

Name	Constituency
Judy Kuszewski	Chair
Robyn Leeson	Vice-Chair
Peter Colley	Labor
Evan Harvey	Investment institution
Kirsten Margrethe Hovi	Business enterprise
Vincent Kong	Business enterprise
Tung-Li (Tony) Mo	Civil society organization
Jennifer Princing	Business enterprise
Corli le Roux	Mediating institution
Gustavo Sinner	Mediating institution
Kenton Swift	Civil society organization
Rama Krishnan Venkateswaran	Investment institution
Michel Washer	Business enterprise

4 Apologies:

Name	Constituency
Loredana Carta	Labor
Bruce Klafter	Business enterprise

5 In attendance:

Name	Position
Bastian Buck	Chief of Standards, Standards Division
Mia d'Adhemar	Senior Manager Sector Program, Standards Division
Pamela Carpio	Manager Sector Program, Standards Division
Gillian Balaban	Team Assistant, Standards Division

6 List of abbreviations

GSSB
SD

Global Sustainability Standards Board
Standards Division

7 Decisions and action items

8 *Decisions*

9 **GSSB Decision 2020.12** The GSSB resolved to approve [Item – 01 Draft summary of the GSSB](#)
10 [meeting held on 20 May 2020](#).

11 **GSSB Decision 2020.13** The GSSB resolved to approve [Item 03 – Exposure draft GRI Sector](#)
12 [Standard: Oil and Gas](#) for public comment.

13 *Action items*

GSSB	
Session 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• GSSB to provide comments or approval on the circulated documents, as requested, by the dates specified on the documents (see Session 2 summary for document details).
Session 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• GSSB to send their comments on the public comment questions for the exposure draft of GRI Sector Standard: Oil and Gas to the SD by 24 June 2020.• GSSB to provide the SD with suggestions or contact details for stakeholders that can be approached for the public comment.
Session 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• GSSB to send their approval of the proposed working group member by 30 June 2020.
Standards Division	
Session 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• SD to circulate documents for GSSB comments and approval via email.• SD to contact GSSB members to confirm dates and times for additional calls.

14 Session I: Welcome

15 GSSB Chair Judy Kuszewski (henceforth the Chair) welcomed the GSSB and presented an overview
16 of the meeting agenda.

17 The GSSB was presented with [Item – 01 Draft summary of the GSSB meeting held on 20 May 2020](#)
18 for approval.

19 **GSSB Decision 2020.12** The GSSB resolved to approve [Item – 01 Draft summary of the GSSB](#)
20 [meeting held on 20 May 2020](#).

21 The Chair made announcements:

- 22 • On behalf of the GSSB, the Chair accepted a request by the Due Process Oversight
23 Committee for a discussion with the GSSB on the due process requirements.
24 • On 17 June 2020, GRI hosted a virtual event to launch the Global Standards Fund that will
25 support the independent development of the GRI Standards.

26 Session 2: Standards Division update

27 The Standards Division (SD) presented an update of its activities under the ongoing projects,
28 including the public comment period for the Universal Standards and human rights-related updates,
29 downloads and translations of the Waste Standard, and ongoing work on the Agriculture and Fishing
30 Sector Standard.

31 The SD also highlighted the following points for GSSB information:

- 32 • The public comment period on the GSSB Work Program 2020-2022 ends on 23 June. The
33 SD will analyze the comments and present proposed amendments for GSSB discussion.
34 • The SD has drafted an FAQ in response to technical inquiries on whether the GSSB will
35 delay the effective date of 1 January 2021 for new or revised Standards released last year.
36 • The SD has prepared the GSSB Activity Report for the period from January 2017 to
37 December 2019.
38 • The GSSB in-person meeting scheduled for 6-7 October has been cancelled due to travel
39 restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic. The SD expects to hold additional calls
40 with the GSSB.

41 Documents to be circulated to the GSSB

42 The GSSB will receive the following documents from the SD after the meeting:

43 For comments by close of business on Wednesday, 24 June 2020:

- 44 • GRI Sector Standards Project for Oil, Gas, and Coal – Public comment questions for
45 exposure draft of Sector Standard: Oil and Gas
46 • Proposed FAQ on 1 January 2021 effective date

47 For electronic approval by close of business on Tuesday, 30 June 2020:

- 48 • GRI Sector Standards Project for Agriculture and Fishing – Proposed member for working
49 group
50 • GRI Sector Standards Project for Oil, Gas, and Coal – Proposed member for working group
51 • GSSB Activity Report, January 2017 – December 2019

Actions:

- 52 • SD to circulate documents for GSSB comments and approval via email.
53 • SD to contact GSSB members to confirm dates and times for additional calls.
54 • GSSB to provide comments or approval on the circulated documents, as requested, by the
55 dates specified on the documents.

56 Session 3: Approval of exposure draft of 57 GRI Sector Standard for oil and gas

58 The GSSB was presented with [Item 02 – Cover note to the exposure draft of Sector Standard: Oil](#)
59 [and Gas](#) for information, and [Item 03 – Exposure draft GRI Sector Standard: Oil and Gas](#) for
60 approval.

61 Sector Standard setup and structure

62 The SD outlined the interconnections between the Universal Standards and Sector Standards, which
63 provide the foundation for the Sector Standards.

64 Likely materiality of topics

65 The concept of likely materiality is currently applied uniformly across all topics included in the Oil
66 and Gas exposure draft. Working group members have raised concerns and expressed that some
67 topics (e.g., the climate change-related topics such as GHG emissions and climate resilience and
68 transition) should be considered material and mandatory for reporting by all organizations in the
69 sector. The SD proposed to maintain the current setup in the exposure draft and seek feedback
70 through public comment on the value and challenges of making reporting on certain topics
71 mandatory. The SD will circulate the public comment questions for GSSB comments.

72 GSSB feedback on ‘What to report’ sections

73 The SD received a comment from the GSSB on the use of the word ‘should’ in the ‘What to report’
74 sections in the draft Sector Standard.

75 The SD explained the rationale for this choice of wording.

76 The word ‘should’, in all instances that it is used in these sections, follows the Universal Standards
77 and represents recommended reporting. The use of the word ‘can’, which also signals recommended
78 reporting, was considered and dismissed by the SD in light of the working group recommendations
79 to send a clear message to organizations on the need for reporting these disclosures.

80 The SD will work on improving clarity of these sections through visual cues during template
81 development. In the exposure draft, the SD will provide a visual depiction of the structure of the
82 ‘What to report’ sections in the Introduction, which clarifies the meaning and reporting expectations
83 for each element of these sections. The SD also proposed the following wording to improve clarity:
84 ‘The following additional disclosures have also been identified as appropriate **and should be**
85 **reported** on this topic’.

86 GSSB members expressed support for these proposed changes and agreed that visual cues would be
87 essential to improving clarity of these sections, given that the Standards serve a global audience.

88 One GSSB member asked whether the use of the word ‘should’ is derived based on the status of the
89 additional disclosure or the source from which it is drawn (e.g., based on whether the source is
90 another standard or recommended guidelines). The SD did not make a distinction between
91 disclosures based on the status of the source for simplicity and because of the Sector Project
92 ambition that these additional disclosures are eventually incorporated into GRI Topic Standards. The
93 SD highlighted that the oil and gas sector and the coal sector face high demands for transparency,

94 which has led to the working group identifying several additional disclosures. This situation might not
95 be as pronounced for other sectors.

96 Another GSSB member suggested clarifying which information listed in the Sector Standards is new
97 to report, mentioning that organizations will find this information useful.

98 Oil and Gas Sector Standard exposure draft

99 The SD presented the revisions implemented following the previous GSSB discussion of the draft
100 Sector Standard.

101 The SD informed the GSSB of four Sector topics for which there are no corresponding GRI Topic
102 Standards:

- 103 • Asset integrity and process safety
- 104 • Climate resilience and transition
- 105 • Closure and decommissioning
- 106 • Land use and resettlement

107 The SD also reiterated the working group input that the issue of climate change is central for this
108 sector and that there is currently no clear corresponding GRI Topic Standard that encompasses
109 international norms and the working group's expectations for reporting on the climate change-
110 related topic of climate resilience and transition. This topic merits further consideration; the SD
111 proposed to seek input on this during the public comment period.

112 GSSB members raised no further comments or questions.

113 Approval of the exposure draft of GRI Sector Standard: Oil and Gas

114 The Chair called for comments regarding the exposure draft. No comments or concerns were
115 raised.

116 **GSSB Decision 2020.13** The GSSB resolved to approve [Item 03 – Exposure draft GRI Sector](#)
117 [Standard: Oil and Gas](#) for public comment.

118 Thirteen GSSB members were present for the decision: Peter Colley, Evan Harvey, Kirsten
119 Margrethe Hovi, Vincent Kong, Judy Kuszewski, Robyn Leeson, Tung-Li (Tony) Mo, Jennifer
120 Pringing, Corli le Roux, Gustavo Sinner, Kenton Swift, Rama Krishnan Venkateswaran, and Michel
121 Washer.

122 GSSB members Loredana Carta and Bruce Klafter were absent for the decision.

123 The SD presented the plans for the public comment period, which will last for 90 days between July
124 and October 2020.

Actions:

- 125 • GSSB to send their comments on the public comment questions for the exposure draft of
126 GRI Sector Standard: Oil and Gas to the SD by 24 June 2020.
- 127 • GSSB to provide the SD with suggestions or contact details for stakeholders that can be
128 approached for the public comment.

129 Session 4: Proposed plan for the GRI 130 Sector Standard for coal

131 The SD proposed developing a separate Sector Standard for coal under the existing Oil, Gas, and
132 Coal Project, using the same working group. The SD has analyzed and tested this proposal with the
133 existing working group to ensure they adequately represent expertise on coal.

134 Two working group members with exclusive oil and gas expertise may abstain from the
135 development of the coal content. The SD proposed the replacement of a previously disengaged
136 working group member. The SD will circulate the proposal for the replacement member to the
137 GSSB for electronic approval.

138 A GSSB member raised the question whether the abstinence of the two members would have
139 implications for business constituency representation in the working group. The SD confirmed that
140 one of these members is from the business constituency but explained that this concern could be
141 balanced by the proposed replacement member who represents the business constituency. The SD
142 will check for business constituency representation in the working group to ensure it is adequately
143 represented.

144 The SD expects to present the Coal exposure draft to the GSSB for approval in November. While
145 developing the coal content, the SD will give consideration to packaging the oil and gas and coal
146 Sector Standards as extractives-related Standards as previously flagged by a GSSB member.

Actions:

- 147 • GSSB to send their approval of the proposed working group member by 30 June 2020.

148 Session 5: Any other business and close of 149 public meeting

150 No other business was raised and the Chair closed the public sessions of the meeting at 3.05 p.m.
151 CEST (Central European Summer Time).

152 Session 6: Private session

153 This was a private session.