



Barbara Strozziiaan 336

1083 HN Amsterdam  
The Netherlands

[gssbsecretariat@globalreporting.org](mailto:gssbsecretariat@globalreporting.org)

1 **Item 02 – GRI Topic Standard Project**  
2 **for Biodiversity – Final project**  
3 **proposal**  
4 **For GSSB discussion and approval**

---

<b>Date</b>	09 September 2021
<b>Meeting</b>	23 September 2021
<b>Project</b>	GRI Topic Standard Project for Biodiversity
<b>Description</b>	<p>This document sets out the final project proposal to review the <i>GRI 304: Biodiversity 2016</i> for GSSB discussion and approval.</p> <p>The GRI Board and Stakeholder Council were consulted on the draft project proposal, and no feedback has been received.</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](http://www.globalreporting.org).

## 5 Contents

Project background .....	3
Project objectives .....	3
Division of responsibilities .....	4
Timeline.....	4

This document does not represent an official position of the GSSB

## 6 Project background

7 As part of the [GSSB Work Program 2020-2022](#), the Global Sustainability Standards Board (GSSB)  
8 has identified the review of *GRI 304: Biodiversity 2016* as a priority project for commencement in  
9 2021. Since the GRI disclosures on biodiversity were last revised in 2006, the issue of biodiversity  
10 has received significant attention in the global sustainable development agenda.

11 Biodiversity features as a key theme in the UN's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Both  
12 governments and private sector organizations are being called upon to realize SDG 14 and SDG 15.  
13 SDG14 is devoted to “conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources”<sup>1</sup>. While  
14 SDG 15 is devoted to “protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems,  
15 sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt  
16 biodiversity loss”<sup>2</sup>.

17 The Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES)  
18 issued the global assessment report on biodiversity and ecosystem services in 2019<sup>3</sup>, highlighting  
19 that biodiversity is declining in every region and issues an urgent call to halt and reverse the  
20 unsustainable use of nature.

21 Over the past years, the United Nations have been working on the Convention on Biological Diversity,  
22 a new global framework to reverse nature loss in the next decade. At the time of issuance of this  
23 project proposal, parties to the convention are in ongoing negotiations of the post-2020 global  
24 biodiversity framework with the aim to agree on the new convention at the upcoming meeting in  
25 Kunming, China, in April-May 2022<sup>4</sup>. The Global Biodiversity Outlook 5<sup>5</sup> and the first draft of the post-  
26 2020 global biodiversity framework<sup>6</sup> issued by the Convention on Biological Diversity form the basis  
27 of the ongoing deliberations.

## 28 Project objectives

29 The project aims to review the *GRI 304: Biodiversity 2016* to represent internationally agreed best  
30 practice and align with recent developments and the relevant authoritative intergovernmental  
31 instruments in the field of biodiversity.

32 The revised Topic Standard enables an organization to publicly disclose its most significant impacts  
33 on biodiversity and how it manages them. This disclosure enhances transparency on the  
34 organization's impacts and increases organizational accountability. The revised Topic Standards will  
35 contain disclosures that allow an organization to report information about its impacts consistently and  
36 credibly. In doing so, the global comparability and quality of reported information on these impacts  
37 supports information users in making informed assessments and decisions about the organization's  
38 impacts and contribution to sustainable development.

39 The review includes but is not limited to the review of the current disclosures. The revised Topic  
40 Standard can but does not necessarily have to build on the existing contents of the *GRI 304:  
41 Biodiversity 2016*.

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/oceans/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/biodiversity/>

<sup>3</sup> IPBES, *Global assessment report on biodiversity and ecosystem services of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services*, 2019.  
<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.3831673>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.cbd.int/article/new-dates-cop15-october-2021>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.cbd.int/gbo5>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.cbd.int/article/draft-1-global-biodiversity-framework>

## 42 **Division of responsibilities**

43 A Technical Committee will be formed to provide technical advice for the development of the revised  
44 Topic Standard.

45 The Standards Division will draft the Topic Standard, and the GSSB will have oversight and final  
46 approval over the Topic Standard before its release.

47 The project will be conducted in accordance with the [GSSB Due Process Protocol](#).

## 48 **Timeline**

49 This project is envisioned to commence in September 2021. Table 1, on the following page, outlines  
50 the anticipated project duration.

This document does not represent an official position of the GSSB

