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Summary 23 November 2016 meeting
Meeting summary – Draft_v1: pending GSSB approval

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Participants

Present:

Name	Constituency
Daniel Taillant	Civil Society Organization
David Russell	Business
Dwight Justice	Labor
Hidemi Tomita	Business
Judy Kuszewski	Mediating Institution
Jürgen Buxbaum	Labor
Kirsten Margrethe Hovi	Business
Michael Nugent (Vice-Chair)	(Mediating Institution)
Robin Edme	Mediating Institution
Stiaan Wandrag	Business
Vadakepatth Nandkumar	Mediating Institution
Simeon Cheng	Business
Sulema Pioli	Mediating Institution

Apologies:

Name	Designation
Daniel Ingram	Investment Institution

In attendance:

Name	Designation
Eric Hesperheide	Interim Chief Executive
Chelsea Reinhardt	Deputy Director, Standards Division
Laura Espinach	Manager, Standards Division
Pamela Carpio	Senior Coordinator, Governance Relations

List of abbreviations

Board	Board of Directors	ICE	Interim Chief Executive
CE	Chief Executive	OHS	Occupational health and safety
DPP	Due Process Protocol	PCP	Public comment period
GRI	Global Reporting Initiative	PRI	Principles for Responsible Investment
GSSB	Global Sustainability Standards Board	PWG	Project working group

SC	Stakeholder Council	ToR	Terms of Reference
SD	Standards Division	R&P	Rules and Procedures
SECO	State Secretariat for Economic Affairs	UN	United Nations
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals	UNGC	United Nations Global Compact
SME	Small and medium enterprises		

1 Meeting summary

2 Please see a list of decision and action items deriving from the meeting on pp.6-7.

3 Session 1: Welcome and approval of previous meeting 4 summary

5 Michael Nugent, the GSSB Vice-Chair (henceforth, “the Vice-Chair”) welcomed everyone to the
6 meeting and presented an overview of the meeting agenda. He further moved for the approval of
7 [Item 01 – Summary 27 October GSSB meeting](#).

8 The GSSB unanimously approved the meeting summary with no further changes.
9

10 Session 2: Update from Interim CE

11 The GSSB received a presentation from Eric Hespenheide, GRI Interim Chief Executive.

12 Hespenheide informed that the Standards launch events and (social) media coverage of the
13 Standards were still going well and that 20 launch events between January and May 2017 will fol-
14 low the series of events for 2016.

15 He provided an update about the renewed membership of the Board and SC as of January 2017
16 as well as of the SC R&P which now reflect the improved interaction between the SC, Board,
17 GSSB and the Secretariat. He also informed that the search for a new CE was in its final stage
18 and that GRI is likely to make an announcement regarding the permanent CE by the end of the
19 current year.

20 Finally, he mentioned projects led by the Secretariat, namely the UNGC, PRI and GRI partner-
21 ship focusing on SDGs as well as the SECO grant related activities focusing on SMEs, as they will
22 most likely lead to input for the GSSB work agenda by mid-2017.

23 INPUT FROM GSSB MEMBERS

24 One GSSB member enquired about the ICE’s involvement with GRI once a new CE was to be
25 appointed. Hespenheide responded to expect to pursue his engagement although in which capac-
26 ity needed to be determined by new CE and the timing.

27 One GSSB member asked about the issue of conciliating what is being reported by companies
28 and by governments to the UNGC in the context of the SDGs. Hespenheide clarified that GRI is

29 involved at national levels and engaged with the UN Statistical department about how to address
30 this issue.

31 The GSSB thanked Eric Hespenheide for his contribution to GRI and recent leadership.

32 Session 3: Project Proposal on Occupational Health 33 and Safety

34 Chelsea Reinhardt, Deputy Director SD, GRI, presented [Item 02 -Project Proposal: Review of](#)
35 [GRI 403: Occupational Health and Safety](#) which is an update of the proposal previously reviewed
36 and approved by the GSSB in November 2015. Brought back for comment and approval under
37 the current GSSB public proceedings, this proposal has been updated to align with the new struc-
38 ture and requirements of the GRI Standards. A timeline displaying important milestones for
39 Phase I review of the Standards was also presented while it was also clarified that this did not
40 exclude initiating the review of Phase 2 Standards as indicated in the [GSSB Work Program](#).

41 Reinhardt reminded GSSB members of the [DPP requirement on Project Commencement \(par.6\)](#)
42 and [Development of Proposed Standards and Formation of Project Working Groups \(par.7-8\)](#).
43 She further informed that PWG ToR were currently under development and would be circulated
44 to the GSSB sponsors for approval.

45 The GSSB discussed:

- 46 • That although the concept of wellness should be included in the scoping discussions re-
47 garding OHS disclosures, it is a debatable concept and does not entirely coincide with
48 OHS. This is to be reflected in the PWG briefing package currently under development.
- 49 • Opportunities to find greater efficiencies in the process for revising and updating Stand-
50 ards. The SD was encouraged to ensure that PWG membership for both OHS and Wa-
51 ter issues could be approved for the March in-person GSSB meeting and to investigate
52 the possibility to shorten the PCP.
- 53 • That the complexity of the issues for review could have implications on the capacity to
54 ensure the right representation and expertise on the PWGs and demand a more flexible
55 timeline. Importance was attributed to the need for enabling balanced viewpoints on
56 PWGs and high-quality output.
- 57 • That the list of organizations to engage with in relation to the OHS project should in-
58 clude trade unions as well as industry representatives holding this expertise.
- 59 • That the need to start the review of Human Rights related disclosures (Phase 2) was still
60 pressing and outreach to the UN Working Group on Business and Human rights was
61 suggested. Due to the preparation needed before undertaking this project it was how-
62 ever understood that SD would follow the course of the GSSB Work Program, and that
63 the GSSB in-person meeting in March 2017 would include in-depth discussion on the
64 scope of these reviews.

65 The GSSB further agreed to [Item 02 - Project Proposal: Review of GRI 403: Occupational Health](#)
66 [and Safety](#).

67 Session 4: Update on Standards-related queries

68 Reinhardt exposed and sought advice of the GSSB on two issues that had been raised by users of
69 the GRI Standards: 1) *Non-compliance with reporting requirements for a specific disclosure*, and 2) the
70 *definition of impacts as related to materiality* (see [Item 3: Summary of technical questions on the](#)
71 [GRI Standards](#)..

72 The GSSB discussed:

- 73 - That the SD and GSSB should continue to monitor questions related to reporting re-
74 quirements; but that issuing any specific guidance now would be premature, and;
- 75 - That the clarifications around the definition of impact are likely to affect some reporters
76 that had misinterpreted the materiality dimensions from G4. It is also likely this issue will
77 be raised more frequently in the future as reporters become more familiar with these
78 clarifications. Again in this case, the GSSB recommended monitoring the questions
79 raised and holding off on issuing any specific further guidance or interpretation.

80 The GSSB agreed to follow the proposed action by the SD on both technical questions discussed
81 during this session and as outlined in [Item 3: Summary of technical questions on the GRI Stand-](#)
82 [ards](#).

83 Session 5: Any Other Business

84 The Vice-Chair clarified that changes requested by the GSSB were included to [Item 04 - Final](#)
85 [GSSB Work Program 2017-2019](#) and that this item was newly submitted to the GSSB for final
86 approval.

87 The GSSB discussed:

- 88 - How to include the issue of assurance in the Work Program
- 89 - The suggestion of adding the following language at the end of line III in the [GSSB Work](#)
90 [Program](#) : “*aspects of credibility and trust such as governance arrangements, consistency with*
91 *external information, credibility of the framework and external services, such as assurance*”.
92 This addition received general support from the GSSB.
- 93 - The importance of prioritizing work on sector-specific content, in response to questions
94 and feedback from stakeholders
- 95 - The suggestion to amend line 95 of the [GSSB Work Program](#) to: “*sectors to be covered will*
96 *depend on the system (...)*” which received general support from the GSSB.

97 The GSSB further approved the Final GSSB Work Program 2017-2019 with the amendments
98 noted in this summary.

99 Self-evaluation

100 No further comments were received regarding the [GSSB Self-evaluation](#). The Vice-Chair re-
101 quested the Secretariat to circulate this final document for GSSB members to respond and sub-
102 mit to GRI’s governance team by 8 December.

103 No further business was raised.

104 Decisions and Action Items

105 DECISIONS

106 Session 1

107 **GSSB Decision 2016.44** The GSSB approved the summary of the meeting held 27 October
108 2016 with no further changes.

109 *The GSSB supported the decision by consensus.*

110 Session 3

111 **GSSB Decision 2016.45** The GSSB agreed to the [Project Proposal: Review of GRI 403: Occu-](#)
112 [pational Health and Safety](#).

113 *The GSSB supported the decision by consensus.*

114 Session 5

115 **GSSB Decision 2016.46** The GSSB approved the Final GSSB Work Program 2017-2019 with
116 the amendments noted in this summary.

117 *The GSSB supported the decision by consensus.*

118 ACTIONS

119 **Governance:**

120 Session 5

- 121 • Circulate the final [GSSB Self-evaluation](#) form in a dynamic PDF format in the following
122 day or two of the present meeting.
- 123 • Circulate the GSSB Rotation Schedule
- 124 • Circulate the list of GSSB meetings for 2017

125 **Standards Division**

126 Session 3

- 127 • Follow-up with GSSB members who expressed an interest in being a sponsor for a Pro-
128 ject Working Group'
- 129 • Follow-up with GSSB members Stiaan Wandrag and Dwight Justice to confirm if are able
130 to be GSSB sponsors for the OHS review.

131 Session 4

- 132 • Keep GSSB updated with a summary of the technical questions received on a regular ba-
133 sis.

134 Session 5

- 135 • Perform the language edits received regarding the Work Program as noted in this sum-
136 mary.

137 **GSSB members**

138 Session 3

- 139 • GSSB members Dwight Justice and Jürgen Buxbaum offered to identify trade union or-
140 ganizations
141 • Send suggestions on organizations to contact in relation to any of Standards review pro-
142 ject.

143 Session 5

- 144 • Respond to the GSSB Self-evaluation and submit to GRI's governance team by 8 Decem-
145 ber 2016.

DRAFT