



Barbara Strozziiaan 336
1083 HN Amsterdam
The Netherlands
info@gssb.globalreporting.org

Item 05 – Terms of Reference:

GRI Project Working Group for the Agriculture and Fishing Sector Standard

For GSSB discussion

Date	28 November 2019
Meeting	10 December 2019
Project	Project Working Group – Agriculture and Fishing, GRI Sector Program
Description	This document sets out the Terms of Reference of the GRI Project Working Group for the development of an Agriculture and Fishing Sector Standard.

This document has been prepared by the GRI Standards Division. It is provided as a convenience to observers at meetings of the Global Sustainability Standards Board (GSSB), to assist them in following the Board's discussion. 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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Contact

Agriculture and Fishing Sector Project inbox – agriculture@globalreporting.org

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

3 Terms of Reference

4 These Terms of Reference outline the mandate of the GRI Project Working Group for the
5 agriculture and fishing sector including its selection and appointment, commitments and project
6 timeline.

7 *Background*

8 The Global Sustainability Standards Board (GSSB), GRI's independent standard-setting body, has
9 identified the agriculture and fishing sector as a priority sector for developing a Sector Standard.
10 The Project Working Group is to contribute their expertise to identify issues and develop issue
11 descriptions for sector impacts and stakeholder concerns from a sustainable development
12 perspective.

13 The project will be carried out following the [GSSB's Due Process Protocol](#). In line with this
14 protocol, a multi-stakeholder Project Working Group will be formed to develop draft
15 recommendations.

16 See the [project proposal](#) [hyperlink to come] for more information.

17 *Project Working Group mandate*

18 The overall work of the Project Working Group (PWG) should support sustainability reporting
19 as promoted by the GRI Standards. More specifically, the work of the PWG should support an
20 organization's practice of reporting publicly on its economic, environmental, and/or social
21 impacts, and hence its contributions – positive or negative – towards the goal of sustainable
22 development. Within the context of this program, sustainable development is defined as
23 “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future
24 generations to meet their own needs” (United Nations General Assembly, 1987, p. 43).

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

30 **Scope of work**

31 The PWG will be responsible for developing a Sector Standard for the agriculture and fishing
32 sector, for the consideration of the GSSB. Within the context of the GRI Sector Program, the
33 agriculture and fishing sector is defined as business activities related to crop production,
34 livestock production, fishing and aquaculture. These business activities are cross-referenced
35 against external classifications systems GICS, ICB, and ISIC in Table I below.

36 Note that though the primary focus is on the upstream activities, it will also be considered
37 relevant to companies further down the value chain. This includes those involved in food trading,
38 food processing, food distribution, and food retail. As well as those companies in non-food
39 sectors, including those in manufacturing, retail and wholesale of tobacco products, textiles and
40 wearing apparel, leather and related products, and financial activities related to agricultural
41 commodity trading, investment in agriculture and fishing companies, and other activities.

42 Table I: Sector key for the agriculture and fishing sector project

Classification Standard	Classification No.	Classification Name
GICS	30202010	Agricultural Products
ICB	3573	Farming, Fishing & Plantations
ISIC	A1	Crop and animal production (excluding hunting)
	A3	Fishing and aquaculture

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44 As part of the Sector Standard development, the PWG is tasked with providing
45 recommendations on:

- 46 • the **identification and description of issues** that represent significant impacts or
47 stakeholder concerns for agriculture and fishing sector (e.g. biodiversity);
- 48 • authoritative **evidence of the sector’s impacts** or stakeholder concerns;
- 49 • relevant **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and/or SDG targets** for the
50 sector;
- 51 • **significant issue and/or disclosure gaps** not sufficiently covered within the existing
52 GRI Standards, and the feasibility/utility of developing disclosures for these.

53 The Standards Division will draft the text according to the recommendations of the PWG. The
54 GSSB will review the drafted contents and may ask the PWG to conduct further research and/or
55 develop the draft recommendations further. PWG members should be committed to support
56 the revision of draft contents in addition to the development of these contents.

57 If during content development the PWG determines that the sector key needs revision (e.g. it
58 becomes clear that some subgroup of the sector is not covered within content development as
59 expected), the Project Working Group can recommend changes to this sector key for the GSSB’s
60 consideration.

61 **Additional considerations**

62 The work of the PWG is part of the second pilot project, which means that discoveries will be
63 made during the project on the details of content and structure to be developed. The Standards
64 Division will provide the PWG with templates as needed to refer to in developing
65 recommendations and will actively solicit feedback from the PWG on the usefulness of these
66 templates and suggested features of the Sector Standard, which may be amended during the
67 course of the project.

68 The PWG should ensure that the sector name and key accurately describe the organizations
69 that are meant to use the Sector Standard; that the produced content is applicable to the sector
70 as described; and that produced content is accessible and practicable for a global user base.

71 The PWG should aim to develop issue descriptions that are clear, consistent, and focused on
72 impacts from a sustainable development perspective. The PWG should seek to produce content
73 in line with key authoritative inter-governmental instruments (such as instruments of the UN,
74 the ILO, and the OECD) and consider the content of other business and human rights reporting
75 frameworks, such as the UN Guiding Principles Reporting Framework.

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

80 *Project Working Group composition*

81 The PWG will aim to have at least one person drawn from each of the constituencies on which
82 the membership of the GSSB is based: Business Enterprise (or reporters more generally),
83 Investment Institution, Labor, Civil Society Organization, and Mediating Institution (including
84 Standard Setters). In addition, geographical, gender and cultural diversity will be considered.

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.

85 It is anticipated that the PWG will have up to 15 members. There can only be one
86 representative per organization in the PWG.

87 **GSSB subcommittee** – A GSSB subcommittee will (at a high level) follow the progress of the
88 PWG and represent the work of the PWG back to the GSSB.

89 *Project Working Group selection criteria*

90 In line with the [GSSB's Due Process Protocol](#), Project Working Group (PWG) members are
91 appointed by the GSSB. The principal criterion for selecting PWG members shall be relevant
92 knowledge and experience of a broad range of sustainable development issues for the agriculture
93 and fishing sector.

94 In addition, the following criteria will be considered:

- 95 • relevant knowledge of sustainability reporting for the sector;
- 96 • familiarity with the needs of users of sustainability reports;
- 97 • related experience with multi-stakeholder initiatives;
- 98 • understanding of and willingness to work in a consensus-based, multi-stakeholder PWG;
- 99 • ability to participate in PWG meetings held in English and provide written English
100 feedback when requested.

101 These criteria will be considered by the GSSB in making a final decision on membership of the
102 PWG.

103 *Project Working Group commitments*

104 PWG members are expected to:

- 105 • act in an individual capacity, exclusively in the public interest, and according to due
106 process as defined in the [GSSB's Due Process Protocol](#);
- 107 • review the materials provided by the Standards Division in advance of the online and in-
108 person meetings, to be able to actively participate;
- 109 • provide timely feedback on the documents distributed by the Standards Division;
- 110 • work in the manner that aims at achieving consensus on the discussed topics.

111 PWG members commit to attending one in-person meeting in Amsterdam of 2 days (excluding
112 travel time) and 3-4 teleconferences (of 1.5 hours each) during the drafting of contents.
113 Additional meetings may be required for revising drafted contents after the public exposure.

114 Teleconferences are normally held between 1:00-2:30 pm Central European Time (CET), so that
115 members in most time zones can join (although this can be adjusted due to the final geographical
116 representation).

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

120 PWG members volunteer their time. There is no fee or compensation associated with
121 participation in the PWG. Upon request, PWG members will be eligible for travel and
122 accommodation reimbursement for in-person meetings, in accordance with GRI policies.

123 *Project timeline and time commitment*

124 Most of the Project Working Group (PWG)’s work is expected to be carried out between May
125 and October 2020 through a series of one in-person meeting (in Amsterdam) and 3-4 virtual
126 meetings. PWG members will be expected to spend 10 hours reviewing content materials
127 before the in-person meeting, and 3-4 hours to prepare for virtual meetings reviewing and
128 commenting on draft documents.

129 Additional work may be required in February - April 2021 to revise draft contents, including 2-3
130 virtual meetings.

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

133 Availability to travel to Amsterdam for the in-person meeting July 2020 is expected. Specific
134 dates for virtual and in-person meetings will be defined based on the availability of PWG
135 members within the time frames indicated below. This timeline is subject to change due to, for
136 example, PWG members’ availability or changes to the project scope.

Milestone	Time Commitment	Completion Date
#1 PWG Meeting (virtual)	2 hours meeting + 2 hours review of preparatory materials	May 2020
#2 PWG Meeting (in-person)	14 hours meeting + 10 hours review of documents prior to the meeting	July 2020
#3 PWG Meeting (virtual)	1.5 hours meeting + 2 hours review of documents	September 2020
#4 PWG Meeting (virtual)	1.5 hours meeting + 2 hours review of documents	October 2020
Public comment period starts	n/a	December 2020
Follow-up PWG Meeting 1 (after public comment period)	1.5 hours meeting + 2 hours review of documents	TBD
Follow-up PWG Meeting 2 (after public comment period)	1.5 hours meeting + 2 hours review of documents	TBD
Follow-up PWG Meeting 3 (after public comment period)	1.5 hours meeting + 2 hours review of documents	TBD

137 The time commitment for draft development is estimated at 45 hours, with roughly half related
138 to preparation for and attendance at the in-person meeting. This time commitment excludes
139 travel time for the in-person meeting.

140 *Project Working Group meetings*

141 Project Working Group (PWG) meetings are convened and chaired by the Standards Division.

142 PWG meetings are not open to the public. The GSSB subcommittee may join the PWG
143 meetings.

144 Meeting agenda and materials will be typically circulated to the PWG at least 10 working days in
145 advance of each meeting. Meeting summaries will be normally circulated within 5 working days
146 following the meetings.

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

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

153 *Project management*

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

- 156 • preparing meeting agendas, meeting materials, and meeting summaries, for all Project
157 Working Group (PWG) meetings;
- 158 • providing logistical support for in-person PWG meetings and teleconferences;
- 159 • producing working versions of draft recommendations, based on PWG input;
- 160 • conducting ad-hoc research, as needed;
- 161 • conducting an initial 'field test' or expert roundtable before public comment, as needed;
- 162 • maintaining an online collaboration platform for the PWG work;
- 163 • collecting and summarizing public inputs on the exposure draft(s);
- 164 • managing all internal (with GSSB) and external communications about the project and its
165 outcomes.

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

169 *Public communications protocol*

170 Public communication on issues related to the activities of the Project Working Group (PWG)
171 and the development of the GRI Standards is the responsibility of the GSSB. PWG members may
172 publicly express their personal opinions and views, but may not speak on behalf of the PWG,
173 GSSB or GRI.

174 The names and bios of the PWG members will be published on the GRI website. PWG
175 members are welcome to publicize their participation in the PWG, and the activities of the
176 PWG, in channels such as press releases or on social media. PWG members are asked to work
177 with the GRI project lead to coordinate any such activity ahead of time together with the GRI
178 communications team.

179 PWG members are advised to use the following formulation when referring to their
180 participation in this process:

181 “[name of member] has been appointed by the Global Sustainability Standards Board (GSSB),
182 GRI’s independent standard setting body, to serve on a Project Working Group to produce a
183 Standard for the agriculture and fishing sector.”

184 *How to apply*

185 Once the open call is launched, all interested experts will be able to nominate themselves to be
186 part of the PWG, by submitting their CV and the application form to
187 agriculture@globalreporting.org.

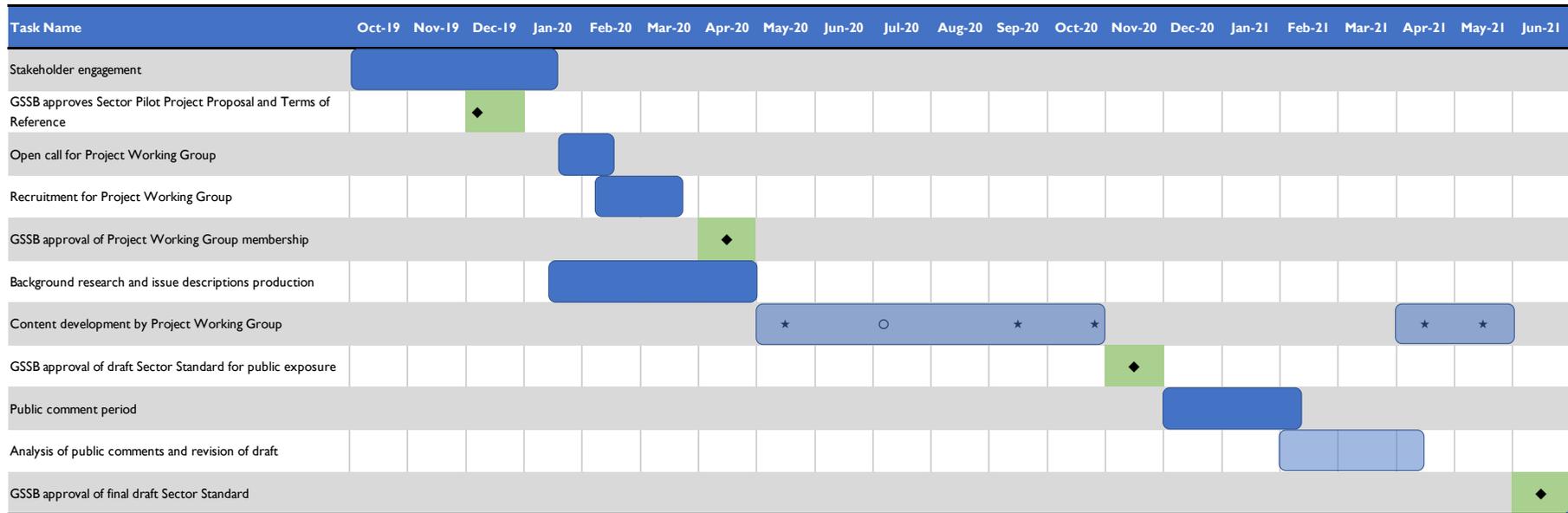
188 **Annex. Project timeline 2019-2021**

189 Note: This timeline is subject to change due to, for example, PWG members' availability or changes to the project scope.

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Key:

- GSSB Approvals ◆
- Project Working Group Meetings (Virtual) ★
- Project Working Group Meetings (In-person) ○



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