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GSSB summary of the meeting held on 26 March 2020

| *Approved by the GSSB on 23 April 2020*

This document does not represent an official position of the GSSB

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3 Participants

4 Present:

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

5 Apologies:

Name	Constituency
Bruce Klafter	Business enterprise
Rama Krishnan Venkateswaran	Investment institution

6 In attendance:

Name	Position
Anna Krotova	Manager, Standards Division
Bastian Buck	Chief of Standards, Standards Division
Gillian Balaban	Team Assistant, Standards Division
Mia D'Adhemar	Senior Manager Sector Program, Standards Division
Noora Puro	Manager Sector Program, Standards Division

7 List of abbreviations

GSSB	Global Sustainability Standards Board
PWG	Project Working Group
TC	Technical Committee
SD	Standards Division

8 Decisions and action items

9 *Decisions*

10 **GSSB Decision 2020.02** The GSSB resolved to approve [Item 01 – Draft summary of the GSSB](#)
11 [meeting held on 6 February 2020](#).

12 **GSSB Decision 2020.03** The GSSB resolved to approve [Item 02 – Draft summary of the GSSB](#)
13 [meeting held on 11 February 2020](#).

14 **GSSB Decision 2020.04** The GSSB resolved to approve [Item 03 – Final version of GRI 306:](#)
15 [Waste 2020](#) with the effective date of 1 January 2022.

16 **GSSB Decision 2020.05** The GSSB resolved to approve that there have been no substantial
17 changes since the exposure draft such that re-exposure of [Item 03 – Final version of GRI 306:](#)
18 [Waste 2020](#) is necessary.

19 **GSSB Decision 2020.06** The GSSB resolved to approve the withdrawal of [GRI 306: Effluents and](#)
20 [Waste 2016](#) as of 31 December 2021.

21 *Action items*

GSSB	
Session 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• GSSB to send any feedback on Item 04 – Draft GSSB basis for conclusions for GRI 306: Waste 2020 to the SD by email.• GSSB to reach out to the SD with any recommendations for the promotion and roll out of the Waste Standard.
Standards Division	
Session 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• SD to submit the Due Process Adherence Report to the Due Process Oversight committee, finalize the basis for conclusions for <i>GRI 306: Waste 2020</i>, and prepare for the launch of the Standard.
Session 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• SD to schedule time for discussion on the scope of the Sector Standard for oil, gas, and coal at the GSSB meeting on 23 April 2020 and to prepare further briefing materials to support the GSSB discussion.

22 Session 1: Welcome

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

25 The GSSB was presented with [Item 01 – Draft summary of the GSSB meeting held on 6 February](#)
26 [2020](#) and [Item 02 – Draft summary of the GSSB meeting held on 11 February 2020](#), for discussion
27 and approval

28 **GSSB Decision 2020.02** The GSSB resolved to approve [Item 01 – Draft summary of the GSSB](#)
29 [meeting held on 6 February 2020](#).

30 **GSSB Decision 2020.03** The GSSB resolved to approve [Item 02 – Draft summary of the GSSB](#)
31 [meeting held on 11 February 2020](#).

32 Session 2: Standards Division update

33 The updates on the review of the Waste Standard and the development of the Sector Standard for
34 oil, gas, and coal were presented during sessions 3 and 4 respectively. No further updates were
35 presented.

36 Session 3: Approval of GRI 306: Waste 37 2020

38 The GSSB was presented with [Item 03 – Final version of GRI 306: Waste 2020](#) for approval, and
39 [Item 04 – Draft GSSB basis for conclusions for GRI 306: Waste 2020](#) for discussion.

40 The SD presented an overview of the review process for the Waste Standard, and summarized the
41 purpose of each of the disclosures and the changes implemented by the project working group for
42 the review of GRI waste disclosures (Waste PWG) following the public comment period.

43 The revised Waste Standard was sent to the GSSB for their review in advance of the meeting. The
44 SD presented the following comments received from GSSB members:

45 • Disclosure 306-2-c on goals and targets in the revised Waste Standard is repetitive of the
46 requirements in *GRI 103: Management Approach 2016*.

47 SD response and proposal: The SD acknowledged the repetition of this content and explained
48 that the Waste PWG had reviewed the requirements in *GRI 103* and considered them not
49 explicit enough to elicit information on how goals and targets were set and if and why they were
50 not achieved. The SD proposed to remove Disclosure 306-2-c and requested that the GSSB
51 consider including this content in the ongoing revision of the universal Standards.

52 • The word ‘diverted’ used in the revised Waste Standard is unclear.

53 SD response and proposal: The phrase ‘waste diverted from disposal’ is used to emphasize the
54 proactive approach that an organization can take to recover its waste instead of sending it to
55 disposal. Alternative wording suggestions were considered, but none were as effective in
56 communicating this message. The SD proposed to add clarification on this wording in the
57 guidance to Disclosure 306-4 as follows: ‘The waste management hierarchy prioritizes waste
58 prevention, followed by recovery operations that divert waste from being sent to disposal, such
59 as preparation for reuse, recycling, and other recovery.’

- 60 • The criteria to identify significant waste-related impacts should be called out to address
61 recurring concerns raised by reporters about the difficulty in identifying thresholds for significant
62 impacts.

63 SD response and proposal: The SD proposed not to call out these criteria in the revised Waste
64 Standard. As part of the revision of the universal Standards, a standalone guidance section will be
65 developed to help reporting organizations identify significant impacts. Additionally, this
66 information can be covered in trainings and other external communications following the launch
67 of the revised Waste Standard.

- 68 • The scope of the value chain when identifying significant waste-related impacts in the process
69 flow diagram was commended.

70 SD response: The SD reconfirmed that the process flows are primarily intended to be an
71 internal exercise for an organization to understand their waste-related impacts in their own
72 activities and upstream and downstream in their value chain.

- 73 • Provide the possibility to include other resources (e.g., energy and water) in process flow
74 diagrams.

75 SD response and proposal: The SD proposed not to expand the process flow diagrams as these
76 are introduced in the revised Waste Standard in the specific context of waste reporting. The SD
77 confirmed that this does not preclude reporting organizations from adopting and customizing
78 the process flow diagrams to represent their interaction with other resources and to reflect
79 other material issues next to waste.

80 The GSSB agreed with the SD proposals. The GSSB asked for clarification on how the requirement
81 on goals and targets will be taken up in the revision of the universal Standards. The SD will
82 incorporate the input from the Waste PWG when reviewing the disclosures on goals and targets in
83 the universal Standards and follow up with the GSSB.

84 A GSSB member requested information on the breakdown of the public comment submissions from
85 the business enterprise constituency by sector. The SD explained that the business enterprises
86 targeted in the public comment were those for whom waste is a material issue, such as chemicals
87 companies, food producers, heavy goods manufacturers, and organizations in the hospitality sector.
88 The SD will send further information on the sector-wise breakdown of public comment submissions
89 to the GSSB member.

90 **Effective date and implications for other topic-specific Standards**

91 The SD proposed the effective date of 1 January 2022 for the revised Waste Standard. Earlier
92 adoption of the Standard will be encouraged.

- 93 The SD presented the implications for other topic-specific Standards:
- 94 • The content on significant spills in [GRI 306: Effluents and Waste 2016](#) will no longer be covered
- 95 in the GRI Standards after the revised Waste Standard, [GRI 306: Waste 2020](#), comes into effect.
- 96 • Inconsistencies and areas for improvement have been identified in [GRI 301: Materials 2016](#).
- 97 Stakeholder feedback indicates that waste and materials are topics that are frequently reported
- 98 together. However, the issues relating to materials are distinct from those relating to waste and
- 99 would require a dedicated project.

100 The SD recommends prioritizing work on the development of a Standard on spills and leaks and

101 revising [GRI 301: Materials 2016](#) so that updated content on these topics is available by 1 January

102 2022.

103 **Adherence to due process**

104 The Chief of Standards confirmed that all the steps in the development of [GRI 306: Waste 2020](#)

105 were followed as per the GSSB Due Process Protocol, and advised the GSSB that there are no

106 significant changes between the exposure draft and the final Standard presented for GSSB approval

107 that require re-exposure.

108 **Vote on approval of [GRI 306: Waste 2020](#)**

109 The Chair called for a vote on the approval of [Item 03 – Final version of GRI 306: Waste 2020](#) with

110 the effective date of 1 January 2022.

111 Table 1. GSSB approval vote for [GRI 306: Waste 2020](#)

GSSB member	Vote
Bruce Klafter	—*
Corli le Roux	In favor
Evan Harvey	In favor
Gustavo Sinner	In favor
Jennifer Princing	In favor
Judy Kuszewski	In favor
Kent Swift	In favor
Kirsten Margrethe Hovi	In favor
Loredana Carta	In favor
Michel Washer	In favor
Peter Colley	In favor

Rama Krishnan Venkateswaran	—*
Robyn Leeson	In favor
Tung-Li (Tony) Mo	In favor
Vincent Kong	In favor
* GSSB member absent for vote.	

112 **GSSB Decision 2020.04** The GSSB resolved to approve [Item 03 – Final version of GRI 306:](#)
113 [Waste 2020](#) with the effective date of 1 January 2022.

114 **Vote on the need for re-exposure of GRI 306: Waste 2020**

115 The Chair called for a vote to approve that there have been no substantial changes since the
116 exposure draft such that re-exposure of [Item 03 – Final version of GRI 306: Waste 2020](#) is
117 necessary.

118 Table 2. GSSB approval vote for *GRI 306: Waste 2020* to be issued without re-exposure

GSSB member	Vote
Bruce Klafter	—*
Corli le Roux	In favor
Evan Harvey	In favor
Gustavo Sinner	In favor
Jennifer Princing	In favor
Judy Kuszewski	In favor
Kent Swift	In favor
Kirsten Margrethe Hovi	In favor
Loredana Carta	In favor
Michel Washer	In favor
Peter Colley	In favor
Rama Krishnan Venkateswaran	—*
Robyn Leeson	In favor
Tung-Li (Tony) Mo	In favor

Vincent Kong	In favor
* GSSB member absent for vote.	

119 **GSSB Decision 2020.05** The GSSB resolved to approve that there have been no substantial
120 changes since the exposure draft such that re-exposure of [Item 03 – Final version of GRI 306:](#)
121 [Waste 2020](#) is necessary.

122 **Vote on withdrawal of GRI 306: Effluents and Waste 2016**

123 The Chair called for a vote on the withdrawal of [GRI 306: Effluents and Waste 2016](#) as of 31
124 December 2021.

125 Table 3. GSSB approval vote for withdrawal of [GRI 306: Effluents and Waste 2016](#)

GSSB member	Vote
Bruce Klafter	—*
Corli le Roux	In favor
Evan Harvey	In favor
Gustavo Sinner	In favor
Jennifer Prancing	In favor
Judy Kuszewski	In favor
Kent Swift	In favor
Kirsten Margrethe Hovi	In favor
Loredana Carta	In favor
Michel Washer	In favor
Peter Colley	In favor
Rama Krishnan Venkateswaran	—*
Robyn Leeson	In favor
Tung-Li (Tony) Mo	In favor
Vincent Kong	In favor
* GSSB member absent for vote.	

126 **GSSB Decision 2020.06** The GSSB resolved to approve the withdrawal of [GRI 306: Effluents and](#)
127 [Waste 2016](#) as of 31 December 2021.

128 **Next steps and launch**

129 The SD outlined the steps for the close of the process and the launch of the Standard, tentatively
130 scheduled for May. The SD and the GSSB thanked the Waste PWG and the SD for their work on
131 the project.

Actions:

- 132 • GSSB to send any feedback on [Item 04 – Draft GSSB basis for conclusions for GRI 306:](#)
133 [Waste 2020](#) to the SD by email.
- 134 • GSSB to reach out to the SD with any recommendations for the promotion and roll out of
135 the Waste Standard.
- 136 • SD to submit the Due Process Adherence Report to the Due Process Oversight committee,
137 finalize the basis for conclusions for *GRI 306: Waste 2020*, and prepare for the launch of the
138 Standard.

139 **Session 4: Update on the project**
140 **Development of Sector Standard: oil, gas,**
141 **and coal**

142 The GSSB was presented with [Item 05 – Draft GRI Sector Standard: oil, gas, and coal](#) for discussion.

143 The SD presented an overview of the progress to date on the pilot project for the development of a
144 Sector Standard for oil, gas, and coal, including the content proposed by the project working group
145 (Oil, Gas, and Coal PWG).

146 The first complete draft of the Sector Standard was shared with the Oil, Gas, and Coal PWG in
147 December 2019 for their review. Between February-March 2020, the SD has been conducting peer
148 review engagements to gather feedback on the content, usability, and scope of the draft Standard.
149 The GSSB subcommittee for the Sector Program provided feedback on the draft Standard early
150 March.

151 In addition to refining the format, structure, and language of the draft Standard, the SD continues to
152 revise the content based on the feedback received. The SD expects to submit the exposure draft for
153 approval to the GSSB in May 2020.

154 **Key elements of the draft Sector Standard**

155 The SD presented the proposed structure and outline of contents for a Sector Standard, consisting
156 of the following components:

157 **Introduction:** This explains the purpose of the Sector Standard and how to use it. The introduction
158 contains non-sector specific content, which will likely be the same in each Sector Standard. The
159 introduction to the draft Sector Standard has been reviewed to ensure there is no conflict with the
160 proposed revisions to the universal Standards and will be aligned with the exposure draft of the
161 universal Standards.

162 **Sector description:** This outlines the sector key, lists the activities that organizations in these
163 sectors typically undertake, and describes key business relationships associated with oil, gas, and

164 coal. A specific section on sustainability context identifies the key factors that contextualize the
165 sectors' impacts and highlights relevant Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

166 **Sector topics:** This includes the 22 likely material topics for oil, gas, and coal, validated by the Oil,
167 Gas, and Coal PWG. The topic descriptions document the sector's impacts, list appropriate
168 disclosures per topic, and provide additional resources for reporting organizations where helpful.
169 The SD highlighted that even though an oil, gas, or coal organization is expected to use this Sector
170 Standard to identify its material topics, this is not a substitute for meeting the requirements for
171 identifying material topics outlined in the universal Standards.

172 **Glossary and references:** These are still under development.

173 **Key feedback on the draft content**

174 The SD presented key findings from the peer review engagements, which confirmed the list of topics
175 and the importance of underscoring impacts related to climate change for the sectors. The contents
176 were considered useful for reporting organizations as well as for stakeholders to engage with
177 reporting organizations. The reporting expectations were considered reasonable, and the reporting
178 process and the interaction with the GRI Standards was considered clear.

179 The GSSB expressed concerns that including the SDGs as part of the main content will shorten the
180 shelf-life of the Standard. It was also mentioned that though the SDGs help organizations understand
181 their impacts in the global context, they are not directly helpful as a reporting tool. GSSB members
182 were in agreement that the SDGs should only be mentioned at a high level in the draft Sector
183 Standard with a mapping or linkage to the SDGs included in an annex or separate document that can
184 be easily updated or removed as the need arises.

185 A member of the GSSB subcommittee had raised a concern about the lack of clarity on the
186 materiality concept in the draft Sector Standard. The SD clarified that the Sector Standard provides
187 arguments and evidence why a certain topic might be material for an organization. The organization
188 will only be expected to report on its material topics that it has identified after carrying out its own
189 materiality assessment, and not all the likely material topics described in the Sector Standard.

190 The GSSB member expressed support for the changes implemented in the draft Sector Standard to
191 make the materiality concept clearer, but mentioned that more explanation needs to be offered on
192 how the topics described relate to the organization's own materiality analysis. The GSSB member
193 expressed concerns about the length of the draft Sector Standard and the possible replication of
194 content between different Sector Standards, and recommended that the SD consider how to
195 address this issue.

196 **What to report sections**

197 The SD presented an overview of 'what to report' sections in the draft Sector Standard. These
198 sections outline:

- 199 • the 'appropriate disclosures' for reporting on a topic that is material to the organization;
- 200 • further disclosures organizations should report for this topic;
- 201 • resources that the organization can consult for additional reporting support on the topic.

202 The Oil, Gas, and Coal PWG have identified topics where existing GRI Standards or disclosures do
203 not meet commonly held expectations for reporting by the sector on a topic. In these cases, the
204 PWG has suggested additional disclosures; however, these have been kept to a minimum.

205 The PWG strongly recommends that disclosures related to likely material topics be included in the
206 Sector Standards and considers that the value of the Sector Standards will be greatly diminished
207 without the inclusion of disclosures. Some PWG members have expressed that the Sector Standard
208 should be weighted toward reporting guidance rather than topic descriptions.

209 The SD presented five potential options for implementing the reporting instructions included in the
210 Sector Standards:

- 211 • Option 1: Require reporting on all ‘appropriate disclosures’ (GRI disclosures and additional
212 disclosures) listed for a topic, if the organization identifies the topic as material.
- 213 • Option 2: List all disclosures (GRI disclosures and additional disclosures) for a topic, but
214 allow the organization to determine which of these are ‘appropriate’ to report on based on
215 its most significant impacts.
- 216 • Option 3: Require reporting on all ‘appropriate disclosures’ from the GRI Standards and
217 recommend reporting on the additional disclosures listed for a topic.
- 218 • Option 4: Recommend reporting on the ‘appropriate disclosures’ (GRI disclosures and
219 additional disclosures) listed for a topic.
- 220 • Option 5: Exclude disclosures from the Sector Standards.

221 The SD suggested that options 2, 3, and 4 are the most coherent with the existing GRI Standards
222 and the proposed approach of the revised universal Standards, while still reflecting the
223 recommendations of the Oil, Gas, and Coal PWG. The choice between these options depends on
224 the envisioned function of the Sector Standards in the overall system of GRI Standards, and it has
225 implications in turn for aspects such as reasons for omission and the GRI content index.

226 The GSSB expressed support for option 3 as well as option 2. A GSSB member asked for
227 clarification on the implications for governance when recommending disclosures from other
228 standards.

229 **Scope of the Sector Standard for oil, gas, and coal**

230 The SD presented an overview of the issue of the co-location of coal with oil and gas in one Sector
231 Standard. Following concerns raised through stakeholder submissions (previously presented to the
232 GSSB), the SD has sought the views of the Oil, Gas, and Coal PWG on grouping these sectors
233 together.

234 The topics that have been listed in the draft Sector Standard have been identified as likely material
235 for both sectors. The key differences between these sectors are the organizations that operate in
236 these sectors (i.e., with a few exceptions, organizations either operate in oil and gas or in the coal
237 sector, but not both), and the source of an impact, even where the impact is the same in both
238 sectors, based on the specific nature of activities undertaken. The inclusion of oil, gas, and coal in
239 one Sector Standard does not affect the relevance of a topic or associated reporting for the sectors.

240 The Oil, Gas, and Coal PWG does not have a unanimous view on this issue, but the majority of the
241 members consider that including coal together with oil and gas in a single Sector Standard would
242 negatively affect its uptake. The PWG recommended separating the two sectors. The SD has
243 developed impact descriptions such that this is technically possible; however, this decision will have
244 broader implications for the development of Sector Standards and the ability to maintain Sector
245 Standards with narrower scopes.

246 There was inadequate time for the GSSB to discuss this item. The item will be included in the agenda
247 for the next GSSB meeting on 23 April 2020.

Actions:

- 248 • SD to schedule time for discussion on the scope of the Sector Standard for oil, gas, and coal
249 at the GSSB meeting on 23 April 2020 and to prepare further briefing materials to support
250 the GSSB discussion.

251 **Session 5: Any other business and close of**
252 **public meeting**

253 No other business was raised and the Chair closed the public sessions of the meeting at 2.00 p.m.
254 CET (Central European Time).

255 **Session 6: Private session**

256 This was a private session.