

The guidance tool on sustainable development reporting

To know before reading the three Guidance Tool documents

The purpose of the Guidance Tool is not to discuss the following issues:

- Introduction to sustainable development reporting
- Background on the development of sustainable development reporting
- Why companies need to develop sustainable development reports

Those questions are discussed in the final report of the project. The guidance tool is only a description on the sustainable development reporting process and is based on the information we have received from WG members during the development of the project.

A decision was taken at the WG meeting in KL that the guidance tool should mirror the “actual” reporting process and not the GRI structure.

The Guidance Tool will in the future when presented on the WBCSD Web contain linkages to the Inventory of reporting practices, that is however not the case in its current format.

The guidance tool is presented in the following three documents:

1. Introduction (guidance tool_introduction_020218.pdf)
2. The sustainable development reporting process (framework) (guidance tool_layer01_020218.pdf)
3. Detailed description of the different steps included in the sustainable development reporting process (sub-headings to the document above) (guidance tool_layer02_020218.pdf)

Introduction

The guidance tool is a process description aimed to support companies in developing sustainable development reports. The guidance tool describes the primary steps involved in developing a sustainable development report. It also shows the key interactions between the reporting process and the management process. The guidance tool illustrates how the value and usefulness of the sustainable development report increases when the reporting process reflects the supporting management process.

The structure of the guidance tool is based on a well defined work-process hinging on knowledge gleaned from the practical experience of WBCSD members who have well-developed sustainable development reports¹ and key existing external initiatives covering the areas of sustainable development reporting and/or management². The specific focus of the

¹ The working group included representatives from the following companies: (include list of signed-up working group members). In-depth interviews on the reporting process have been performed with: Grupo Medicion, KPMG, Nokia, Novo Nordisk, Rabobank, Rio Tinto, Shell, Unilever, WMC. Questionnaires on the reporting process, electronic reporting and verification process have been answered by: BASF, ING, Norske Skog, Petro-Canada, Powergen, DOW, Novo Nordisk, WMC.

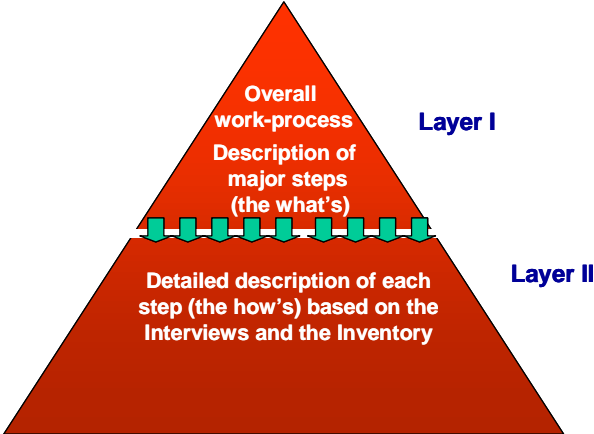
² Examples of these external initiatives are: “AA 1000 Overview”, “BT, Adding Values - The Economics of Sustainable Business”, “Deloitte & Touche: Checklist for the development and evaluation of voluntary reports”, “Deloitte & Touche: Sustainability Reporting Scorecard”, “European Environmental Reporting Awards, Report of the panel of judges '97-'98-'99”, “EU: Green Paper: Promoting a common Framework for Corporate Social Responsibility”, “FEE, Towards a generally accepted framework for environmental reporting”, “FEE Discussion Paper: Providing Assurance of Sustainability Reports”, “GRI, Sustainability Reporting Guidelines”, “KMPG International Survey of Environmental Reporting '99 (verification)”, “OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises”, “OECD Principles of Corporate Governance”, “SustainAbility:

guidance tool is to describe and explore the reporting process and to encourage companies to use all or part of the process internally when developing their own sustainable development reports. The guidance tool describes the interaction between the reporting process and the management process, although the tool does not include an in-depth exploration on the management process. The focus of the guidance tool is on describing the synergies and value created when the two processes are integrated.

The audience of the guidance tool is the **initiated and uninitiated** WBCSD members and its main purpose is to support the improvement of members reporting process so that their sustainable development reports communicate the business value generated by a systematic approach towards management of sustainable development issues important for the specific company.

The structure of the guidance tool is illustrated in the figure below and the content of the tool is available for WBCSD members on the Web.

Structure of the guidance tool



The first layer of the guidance tool describes and illustrates the overall sustainable development reporting process and its connection to the overall management process. The second layer is a generic but still detailed description of the content in the major steps included in the reporting process. In addition, how the different steps within the process interact with each other is also depicted. In some cases references are done to a specific step included in the management cycle. The description also contain linkages to how other companies have chosen to report on certain sustainable development issues, effectively integrating the knowledge from the inventory of reporting practices into the guidance tool.

Buried Treasury”, “The EFQM Excellence Model,” “The Global Compact”, “The Global Reporters: The 2000 Benchmark Survey”, “WBCSD: Measuring Eco-efficiency”, “WBCSD Social (??)”, ...

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[ÅB1] Is it important to use the terms initiated and uninitiated here? I guess that is to be said in the report and since the guidance tool does not discuss these terms it feels unnecessary to use them here – what is your opinion?

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[ÅB2] Is this figure still needed?