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GRI 11: Oil and Gas 2021

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

GRI 11: Oil and Gas 2021 is the first GRI Sector Standard released. Sector Standards have been introduced to the GRI Standards as part of the revised Universal Standards, known as Universal Standards 2021.

FAQs on the the Universal Standards 2021, the updated system of GRI Standards, and how to use Sector Standards are available [here](#).

What was the process to develop GRI 11?

The development process of *GRI 11: Oil and Gas Sector 2021* was overseen by the [Global Sustainability Standards Board \(GSSB\)](#), GRI's independent standard setting body, following the [Due Process Protocol](#).

The Standard was developed in the public interest through a transparent and inclusive process. A multi-stakeholder working group developed the content with expertise in the oil and gas sector, with regard to authoritative intergovernmental instruments and widely held expectations of organizations relating to social, environmental, and economic responsibilities.

Between July and October 2020, an exposure draft of the Standard was made available for public comment. Almost 60 submissions were received from organizations across business, investment institutions, civil society, labor, and mediating institutions. For more information about the development process of *GRI 11*, please visit the [project page](#).

If I am still using the Universal Standards 2016, am I required to use GRI 11?

The GRI Sector Standards are an addition to the updated system of GRI Standards. This means that the requirement to use the Sector Standards is only included in the Universal Standards 2021 (released in 2021). These will be effective for information published on or after 1 January 2023.

GRI 11: Oil and Gas Sector 2021 has the same effective date, which means its usage is required by oil and gas companies from that date onwards. Effective dates for future Sector Standards are yet to be determined.

When will GRI 11 come into effect?

GRI 11: Oil and Gas Sector 2021 will be effective for information published on or after 1 January 2023. This means that its use will be required from that date onwards, though earlier adoption is encouraged.

To what organizations does GRI 11 apply?

GRI 11: Oil and Gas Sector 2021 applies to organizations undertaking oil and gas exploration, production, storage, transportation, and refining. It includes organizations that supply equipment and services to oil fields and offshore platforms, such as drilling.

Different Standards will cover related sectors, such as petrochemical manufacturing and energy utilities.

The full description of the 'Sector this Standard applies to' can be found on page 5 of *GRI 11*.

As an oil and gas organization, do I need to use any GRI Standards other than GRI 11?

The GRI Standards are structured as a system of interrelated standards organized into three series: GRI Universal Standards, GRI Sector Standards, and GRI Topic Standards.

An oil and gas organization reporting in accordance with the GRI Standards will use all three series in their reporting.

The Universal Standards 2021 apply to all organizations and comprise three Standards: *GRI 1: Foundation 2021*, *GRI 2: General Disclosures 2021*, and *GRI 3: Material Topics 2021*. The Universal Standards guide reporters on how to report with the GRI Standards, and they contain requirements and reporting principles that all organizations must comply with to report in accordance with the GRI Standards.

GRI 11: Oil and Gas Sector 2021 outlines the topics that are likely to be material for oil and gas organizations and lists disclosures relevant to the topic. These disclosures come from the GRI Topic Standards, or in some cases, based on other sources.

When a disclosure from a Topic Standard is listed, the organization needs to go to the relevant Topic Standard for the content of the disclosure, including requirements, recommendations, and guidance.

Why has oil and gas been separated from coal?

A multi-stakeholder working group was originally established to develop an Oil, Gas, and Coal Sector Standard. These sectors share key characteristics as producers of energy, which is an essential societal need, and through their impacts on areas such as climate change, communities, financial transparency, and the environment.

The Global Sustainability Standards Board (GSSB) received three stakeholder submissions from the oil and gas sector, raising concerns about addressing oil, gas, and coal in one GRI Sector Standard. The majority of working group members were also of the opinion that addressing oil, gas, and coal in a single Sector Standard would impede its uptake. Feedback collected during external engagement largely reflected the input of the working group.

Therefore, the GSSB decided to separate the oil and gas content from the coal content in light of these concerns. A separate Sector Standard for coal is being developed and expected to be published in the first quarter of 2022.

Does GRI 11 align with other relevant instruments and guidance for the Oil and Gas sector?

GRI 11: Oil and Gas Sector 2021 describes topics identified as likely material for organizations in the oil and gas sector, based on the sector's significant impacts on the economy, environment, and people. These impacts have been identified based on available evidence, authoritative international instruments, and expert and stakeholder input.

This means that authoritative instruments that shape the expectations of the responsible business conduct of the oil and gas sector also shape the content of *GRI 11*. For example, expectations related to climate change established by the *Paris Agreement*; the right to free, prior, and informed consent recognized in the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*; expectations on the use and management of security personnel established by the *Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights*; and, even the international conventions that outline requirements on decommissioning and removing offshore structures at the end of field life, all influence the content of *GRI 11*.

Similarly, this principle extends to transparency related initiatives that are of key relevance to the sector, such as the *Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures* and the *Extractives Industry Transparency Initiative*. Where appropriate, disclosures that do not come from the GRI Topic Standards are based on these established external instruments and frameworks. In some cases, you may even see direct references back to them for additional guidance.

Why does GRI 11 include reporting on Scope 3 emissions even though the use of oil and gas is often by other sectors?

GRI 3: Material Topics 2021 clarifies that an organization should consider actual and potential negative impacts that it causes or contributes to through its activities, as well as those directly linked to its operations, products, or services by its business relationships.

While customers of oil and gas organizations use much of the oil and gas extracted to produce energy, heat, and materials, there is also a firmly established stakeholder expectation that organizations extracting and producing oil and gas take action to reduce emissions from the use of their products and to disclose the related GHG emissions (Scope 3 GHG emissions).

Combined, GHGs released by extracting, refining, and burning oil and gas represent 55% of all energy-related GHG emissions and constitute the largest contribution to anthropogenic climate change.

What's the difference between GRI 11 and SASB's oil and gas standards?

The GRI Standards and SASB Standards are complementary because of the approaches they take to materiality. The likely material topics listed in *GRI 11* are based on the significant impacts the oil and gas sector has on the economy, the environment, and people, including their human rights. SASB's industry-specific standards identify the sustainability-related risks and opportunities most likely to affect a company's financial condition, operating performance, or risk profile.

Because of these different perspectives, *GRI 11* identifies different disclosures than SASB's corresponding standards. For example, while SASB identifies reporting on direct (Scope 1) GHG emissions as relevant for oil and gas organizations in exploration, production, midstream, refining

and marketing, *GRI 11* also lists indirect (Scope 2) and other indirect (Scope 3) GHG emissions as relevant for the reporting by the oil and gas sector.

SASB's oil and gas standards were a valuable input into the development of *GRI 11*, and a SASB representative participated as a member of the working group. Oil and gas organizations can use both standards simultaneously to report their sustainability impacts.

GRI and SASB published joint guidance, [A Practical Guide to Sustainability Reporting Using GRI and SASB Standards](#), which further explores experiences of companies that use the two sets of standards together to fulfil their reporting needs.

Is GRI 11 available in other languages?

The authoritative text of the GRI Standards is English, but we will start releasing authorized translations of *GRI 11: Oil and Gas Sector 2021* in key languages at the end of 2021. Please consult the [GRI Translations page](#) or contact translations@globalreporting.org for more information on the upcoming translation schedule.