
ISSB Meeting

Date	March 2025
Project	Biodiversity, Ecosystems and Ecosystem Services
Topic	Cover note
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This paper has been prepared for discussion at a public meeting of the International Sustainability Standards Board (ISSB). This paper does not represent the views of the ISSB or any individual ISSB member. Any comments in the paper do not purport to set out what would be an acceptable or unacceptable application of IFRS[®] Sustainability Disclosure Standards. The ISSB's technical decisions are made in public and are reported in the ISSB *Update*.

Purpose

1. Agenda papers 3A, 3B, 3C and 3D prepared for this meeting summarise the findings of research on disclosures about risks and opportunities associated with biodiversity, ecosystems and ecosystem services (BEES). The meeting is an opportunity for the International Sustainability Standards Board (ISSB) to discuss these findings and provide input on areas of focus for continued research to adequately prepare and support the ISSB in its decision making around standard-setting. The staff will not ask the ISSB to make any decisions in the sessions.
2. This cover note provides:
 - (a) an update on the status of the BEES research project;
 - (b) an overview of the relevant agenda papers that will be discussed at the March 2025 meeting of the ISSB; and
 - (c) a brief description of the next steps.

Status of the project

3. At its April 2024 meeting, the ISSB decided to add the BEES research project to its work plan, based on the deliberation of feedback to its Request for Information

Consultation on Agenda Priorities published in May 2023 with a comment period of 120 days.

4. In July 2024, the staff provided the ISSB with an overview of the design and approach for the BEES research project.¹ The project is intended to collect evidence on two broad areas of consideration: first, the nature and extent of the market need for more useful disclosure of information about BEES-related risks and opportunities that could reasonably be expected to affect an entity's prospects, and second, on potential ways to address that need. The staff developed its design and approach with a particular focus on four anchoring principles to help ensure the research:
 - (a) is oriented toward providing information that is useful to investors in their decisions that relate to providing resources to an entity;
 - (b) gives due consideration to the literature and practice already established in the market;
 - (c) builds on the foundation established by IFRS S1 *General Requirements for Disclosure of Sustainability-related Financial Information*; and
 - (d) leverages the ISSB's core activities and its commitment to proportionality.

5. The staff also set out a plan to execute its research using a phased approach that would enable it to first build a foundation of knowledge and understanding before moving on to synthesise findings and analyse implications regarding the necessity and feasibility of potential standard-setting. The staff's research thus far has been focused on the initial, foundation-building phase with work taking place in four, clearly defined research areas guided by specific research questions, which are:
 - (a) *evidence of investor interest*—‘What are the information needs of investors and how is current disclosure practice meeting or failing to meet these needs?’;
 - (b) *evidence of effects on an entity's prospects*—‘Whether, how and to what extent do BEES-related risks and opportunities affect an entity's cash flows,

¹ [Agenda Paper 2B Biodiversity, ecosystems and ecosystem services and human capital research projects — Research design and approach](#) (July 2024).

- its access to finance or its cost of capital over the short, medium or long term?';
- (c) *landscape of other standards and frameworks*—‘What is the current landscape of standards and frameworks for BEES-related reporting and how does it compare to the requirements in IFRS S1 and the SASB Standards?’; and
 - (d) *current state of disclosure*—‘What is the current state of company disclosure about BEES-related risks and opportunities?’
6. At this meeting, the staff will present its findings in two of those research areas—evidence of BEES-related effects on an entity’s prospects and current state of BEES-related disclosure. The findings build on sessions held during previous ISSB meetings, which are summarised in Appendix A.

Overview of the papers for this meeting

7. The staff has prepared four papers for this meeting related to the BEES research project. The first paper, Agenda paper 3A, focuses on evidence of BEES-related effects on an entity’s prospects. Agenda papers 3B–3D focus on the current state of BEES-related disclosure and are meant to be read as a package. The papers prepared for this meeting are:
- (a) Agenda paper 3A *Evidence of effects on an entity’s prospects*, which summarises evidence the staff has analysed on the effects of BEES-related risks and opportunities on an entity’s prospects.
 - (b) Agenda paper 3B *Current state of disclosure—background and methodology*, which provides background information on the two databases of disclosures that the staff evaluated to inform the ISSB’s research project on risks and opportunities related to BEES. It describes the key characteristics of each database, the methodology adopted to develop the disclosure database and potential limitations of the analysis and related findings.
 - (c) Agenda paper 3C *Current state of disclosure of BEES-related information*, which aims to set a baseline shared knowledge on the current practice of

company disclosure of BEES-related information and presents a preliminary assessment of the degree to which current BEES-related disclosures align with the requirements of IFRS S1 and which BEES-related topics appear to be sector-based or universally applicable.

- (d) Agenda paper 3D *Current state of disclosure of BEES-related information: Sector Findings*, which aims to present and compare sector findings on current state of BEES-related disclosure from a sample of publicly-traded global companies in developed and emerging markets (‘available reporters’) and a sample of companies reporting in accordance with SASB Standards (‘SASB reporters’).

Next steps

8. Based on the ISSB’s discussion, we will aim to transition to the next phase of research work—summarising collective findings from the foundation-building phase of research and moving on to synthesise findings and analyse implications regarding the necessity and feasibility of potential standard-setting. We will conduct the next phase of research over the coming months.

Appendix A

Summary of previous ISSB meetings regarding BEES-related research	
April 2024	ISSB added BEES research project to its work plan. AP2: Projects to add to the work plan
July 2024	Staff provided the ISSB with an overview of the design and approach for the BEES research project. AP2B: Biodiversity, Ecosystems and Ecosystem Services and Human Capital research projects—Research design and approach
September 2024	The vice-chair of the ISSB Investor Advisory Group presented an investor view on the ISSB’s work plan, including the BEES project. ISSB meeting video Staff presented an overview of the content in the SASB Standards that is applicable to risks and opportunities associated with BEES. AP3A and AP4A: BEES and Human Capital-related risks and opportunities in the SASB Standards
October 2024	The ISSB discussed feedback from a survey on jurisdictional requirements related to BEES and how that feedback might inform the research, including assessments of existing standards and the current state of disclosure. AP3 and AP4: Overview—Jurisdictional survey on Biodiversity, Ecosystems and Ecosystem Services and Human Capital
November 2024	The staff presented some of its preliminary findings in three of the research areas—evidence of investor interest, evidence of effects on an entity’s prospects and existing standards and frameworks—and sought ISSB feedback on the remaining research. AP3: Cover note AP3A: Preliminary assessment of existing disclosure standards and frameworks AP3B: Preliminary assessment of evidence of investor interest AP3C: Literature review on the evidence of investor interest AP3D: Preliminary assessment of evidence of effects on an entity's prospects
January 2025	The staff presented its complete findings regarding evidence of investor interest in BEES-related disclosure, along with an overview of how information about BEES-related matters might be presented or disclosed in financial statements when applying IFRS Accounting Standards. AP3: Evidence of investor interest in BEES-related risks and opportunities AP3A and AP4: IFRS Accounting Standards—Presentation or disclosure on BEES- and Human Capital-related matters
February 2025	The staff presented its complete findings on existing standards and frameworks. In addition, the Taskforce on Nature-related Financial Disclosures presented on their recommendations.

	<p><u><i>AP3: Cover note</i></u></p> <p><u><i>AP3A: Background on other BEES-related standards and frameworks</i></u></p> <p><u><i>AP3B: Comparison of other BEES-related standards and frameworks to IFRS S1 and SASB Standards</i></u></p> <p><u><i>AP3C: Nature-related risks and opportunities—The TNFD recommendations</i></u></p>
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