



Dear << Test First Name >> ,

Welcome to the second issue of *GISR INSIGHT*, a resource for keeping you informed on the latest developments of the Global Initiative for Sustainability Ratings (GISR) and for sharing new ideas and resources on sustainability (ESG) ratings.

Launched in June 2011, **GISR** is part of the value chain of initiatives aimed at making capital and other markets an agent of, rather than impediment to, sustainability. Our mission is to expand and accelerate the contribution of businesses worldwide to sustainable development by bringing convergence, harmonization, and transparency to sustainability (ESG) ratings, rankings and indices.

## The GISR Standard

Through a multi-stakeholder platform, GISR will develop a new global standard for measuring corporate sustainability performance that that will be a public good, accessible to all users at no cost. Developed under the stewardship of the Steering Committee and Technical Review Committee (TRC), the GISR "stand alone" Standard will comprise three components:

**Principles.** Pillars that support excellence in sustainability ratings, including concepts such as determining issues of materiality, boundary-setting, integrity, dynamism, independence, auditability, and sustainability context.

**Process.** Attributes of the ratings process aimed at ensuring state-of-the-art technical excellence, quality assurance, and inclusiveness with regard to stakeholder input.

**Performance.** Social, environmental, (non-financial) economic, and governance indicators, focused on outcomes of the organization's activities. Performance assessment will also cover intangibles such as the quality of strategy and management, capacity to innovate, and sustainability culture.

In addition to the stand-alone Standard, GISR will also certify other ratings methodologies as "GISR-compliant" when such approaches substantially adhere to the

### OUR PARTNERS

We are grateful for the generous support from our partners and sponsors.

**Founding Partners (FP)** are organizations that are committed to GISR's mission, provide seed funding, and serve as ambassadors to their respective constituencies to elevate awareness of and broaden engagement with GISR. FP's include:



### Collaborating

**Organizations (CO)** are organizations whose missions complement GISR's and who seek to maximize synergies through joint and cooperative activities. Current CO's include:



### GOVERNANCE

GISR is governed by a multistakeholder Steering Committee. SC Members include:

**Mindy Lubber**, CERES  
**Allen White**, Tellus

principles, process, and performance aspects of the GISR Standard.

We welcome your feedback on and input into this standard-setting process. [Email us](#) to learn more and to participate in the standard development process.

## Technical Review Committee (TRC) Convened

The Technical Review Committee (TRC) is a multistakeholder group of experts that will oversee development of a beta version of the Standard in Q1 2013, and release Version 1.0 in Q4 2013. We welcome the following individuals to the TRC, whose expertise will make the GISR Standard truly world class:

- **Catherine Benoit**, *New Earth, Advisor to the UN, Canada*
- **Chandra Bhushan**, *Centre for Science and Environment, India*
- **Carlos Brandão**, *Independent entrepreneur, Brazilian Institute of Corporate Governance*
- **Greg Elders**, *Bloomberg, UK*
- **Hendrik Garz**, *WestLB, Germany*
- **Julie Gorte**, *Pax Management Corporation, USA*
- **Adrian Henriques**, *Independent Advisor, UK*
- **Eric Hespenheide**, *Deloitte, USA*
- **Tim Mohin**, *AMD, USA*
- **Jeremy Raccio**, *UBS, USA*
- **Michael Sadowski**, *SustainAbility, USA*
- **George Serafeim**, *Harvard Business School, USA*
- **Chris Smith**, *P&G, UK*
- **Martin Whittaker**, *Sonen Capital, UK*
- **Alan Willis**, *Advisor, Canadian Accountants' Community, Canada*
- **Allen White**, *Tellus, GISR, USA*

## GISR Featured at Ceres Conference Event

GISR Founder Allen White moderated a standing-room-only session at the Ceres Conference this year on GISR and sustainability ratings. This working session was attended by a mix of company, institutional investor, and NGO representatives. Representatives from several ratings organizations were also invited and participated in the discussions. Panelists included Chris Jochnick from Oxfam, Erica Matthews from PepsiCo, Bruno Bertocci from UBS, and Alan Willis, Advisor to the Canadian Institute of Chartered Accountants. The objective of this interactive, two-hour session was to update participants on the latest GISR developments and to provide a forum to engage directly in the development of the standard. This interactive session served as an important input for the creation and polishing of GISR's standard-setting objectives, and provided a rich discussion for identifying gaps in materiality and opportunities for improving ratings.

*Institute*

**Nelmara Arbex**, *GRI*  
**Bruno Bertocci**, *UBS*  
**Suzanne Fallender**, *Intel*  
**Hans Hirt**, *Hermes*  
**Joe Keefe**, *Pax World*  
**Chris Jochnick**, *Oxfam*  
**Erica Matthews**, *PepsiCo*  
**Amy O'Brien**, *TIAA-CREF*  
**Curtis Ravenel**, *Bloomberg*  
**Roberta Simonetti**, *FGV*  
**Alan Willis**, *Advisor, Canadian Accountants' Community*

### ABOUT GISR

GISR's mission is to design and implement a global sustainability ratings standard to expand and accelerate the contribution of business and other organizations worldwide to sustainable development. GISR will not rate companies. Instead, it will certify other organizations to apply its standard through a process of training and follow-up quality assurance.

Launched in June 2011 as a joint program of CERES and Tellus Institute, GISR is a global non-profit, mission driven program aimed at moving markets to the advantage of true sustainability leaders.

### FEEDBACK

We welcome your feedback and input in our programs and invite you to share this update with your organization and networks. Contact [Mark Tulay](#), *GISR Program Manager*.

GISR is committed to spreading the word about our mission and our plans for 2012 and beyond. [Email us](#) to suggest speaking opportunities for GISR representatives.

## GISR Highlighted at WBCSD Conference

GISR's Program Manager, **Mark Tulay**, briefed members of the World Business Council for Sustainability Development (WBCSD) on GISR activities in Montreux, Switzerland on April 24. WBCSD is a CEO-led organization comprised of 200 forward-thinking companies that share best practices on sustainable development issues and develop innovative tools aimed at changing the status quo. This was the first member meeting convened by WBCSD's new President, Peter Bakker, who presented an ambitious game-changing agenda for WBCSD.

The GISR session on sustainability ratings was moderated by **Ann Condon** from General Electric who compared financial ratings with the emerging 'green' ratings landscape. Ann contrasted financial ratings methodology as a 'quantitative evaluation on specific criteria' against the green ratings emphasis on 'best practices benchmarking.' The panel also included a discussion led by SCA's **Kersti Strandqvist** on how SCA views ratings and prioritizes requests for ESG information. The session provided some valuable feedback that will help shape the development of the GISR Standard and which led to several discussions on ways for WBCSD and its members to engage in GISR activities. Stay tuned for more information on collaborative opportunities under consideration between GISR and WBCSD and its members.

WBCSD members are invited to [email us](#) to discuss ways to participate in the GISR program.

## Founding Partner Program (FPP) Extended

Organizations are invited to support GISR as Founding Partners. Our goal in 2012 is to build a global network of Founding Partners to support the development of a world-class sustainability ratings standard that is recognized for its excellence, integrity, and dynamism. Founding Partners will be prominently recognized as a distinguished group that support GISR's mission. Benefits include:

- Company will be featured prominently in GISR publicity materials and website
- Yearly special briefing – exclusive to Founding Partners – on the state of play in sustainability ratings, including an interactive multistakeholder discussion on global trends in ratings, assessments on best practices in KPI development
- Early access to GISR reports, newsletters and publications
- Complementary invitation to the launch of the GISR Standard in Q1 2013

The FPP is open through Q3 2012, with an announcement event planned for Q4 2012. [Email us](#) to learn more about benefits for participating in the FPP and visit [www.ratesustainability.org](http://www.ratesustainability.org)

## GISR Launches Supporting Stakeholder Program (SPP)

GISR relies on the generosity and commitment of a diversity of sources to achieve its mission, including foundations, companies, governments, and NGOs. Organizations are cordially welcomed to support GISR through the "Supporting Stakeholder" program. Supporting Stakeholders will be listed prominently on GISR's website, publications, and events, and will receive free and early access to GISR reports and resources. Supporting Stakeholders will also be invited to attend invitation-only webinars, briefings, and events tailored to Supporting Stakeholders.

[Click here](#) to be one of the first organizations to participate in the SSP.

## Ratings Spotlight

**Newsweek to released 4th Annual Green Ratings on October 12, 2012.** Newsweek is partnering with Sustainalytics and Trucost this year for the second time. According to a Sustainalytics press release, "This year's rankings will be calculated using the same methodology as last year, making meaningful comparisons possible." This should be welcome news to companies and investors who voiced concerns last year about the significant change of research partners and methodology from the previous year. Joel Makower wrote about the change last year in a piece for Greenbiz titled the 'Agony and Ecstasy of Newsweek's Green Rankings,' stating:

*"The tweaked methodology will confound some companies. While the top and bottom of the list look roughly the same — 5 of this year's top-10 companies are the same as last year, as are 6 of the 10 lowest-ranked companies — several companies' scores changed dramatically, not always for obvious reasons."*

The largest 500 publicly traded companies in the US and globally by market capitalization will be included in the rankings. A complete list of companies being rated can be found [here](#). Companies should act quickly to be able to join the June informational webinar and to ask questions prior to the July 30th deadline. Companies with questions can email [GR\\_research@newsweekdailybeast.com](mailto:GR_research@newsweekdailybeast.com) for more information.

Companies that are not included in the Newsweek ratings

can – for the first time this year - pay a fee to be rated. According to a statement by Sustainalytics, “For a research fee, we will evaluate any such company and score it using the Green Rankings methodology.” The scores will be published by *Newsweek* in a separate list. GISR will be engaging with *Newsweek* to learn more about the rating process and methodology as well as the new pay-to-be-rated program. Important questions arise such as: What is the fee level? Will this information be used for other purposes other than the *Newsweek* ratings? Are consulting services included in this fee? And are the services and research process identical for companies paying to be rated versus companies that are rated for free? Answer to such issues will inform GISR’s position on how to ensure its ratings standard achieves the highest level of independence and credibility as a global, public good.

## GISR Featured In Latin America

**Antonio Vives**, former head of CSR for the Inter-American Development Bank, has posted [an article](#) (in Spanish) about GISR and the broader field of sustainability ratings. GISR is expanding its network throughout Latin America where companies, investors and NGOs are demonstrating both leadership and innovation in infusing sustainability into business practices, stock exchanges and investor decision making.

All content ©2012 Global Initiative for Sustainability Reporting. All rights reserved.

---

This email was sent to << Test Email Address >>

[why did I get this?](#) [unsubscribe from this list](#) [update subscription preferences](#)

Global Initiative for Sustainability Ratings (GISR) · 9810 Sunrise Road · Vienna, VA 22181 · USA