

# Introduction

Organizations today are paying closer attention to their environmental and sustainability reports, and for good reasons. More and more stakeholders are using the reports for important decision-making. Organizations review them to decide on potential partners, consumers to choose whose products and services they want to buy, and college graduates to evaluate prospective employers.

Organizations now have a more comprehensive approach to reporting than just the traditional financial reporting to shareholders. There is a move towards covering the triple-bottom-line of sustainability, environmental, social and wider economic impact, together with the traditional financial information, often all included in a stand-alone report.

Stakeholders' demand for information has grown more demanding than ever before. Organizations are asked for information on their vision, values and principles, the management systems and action plans they have in place to support these, their objectives, and their past and current performance in comparison to their peers and their targets. They are asked to provide sufficient information on all those issues that stakeholders have identified as being important to them and having an impact on matters such as the environment.



The world today is a place where transparency has become a prerequisite for acceptance in the marketplace as well as the licence to operate. Indeed, reporting is a very effective approach towards making progress. External reporting to interested stakeholders enhances mutual trust and acceptance. Internal reporting of progress against targets and on action plans to management supports their decision-making and therewith can improve performance and the organization's overall success.

Many organizations make great efforts for more transparency and accountability and work together in initiatives, such as the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI). In doing so, they aim to increase acceptance of reporting as an effective tool for making progress and to create better understanding and enhance the use of commonly accepted reporting principles and formats.