

Guideline for Progress Reporting

Revised: September 2012 (after the working meeting)

1. Why Report? –

Requirements and Challenges

The 'Biodiversity in Good Company' Initiative is seeking to be a frontrunner with its “good companies”. Its Leadership Declaration represents the core of the Initiative’s work. With the Leadership Declaration the member companies make a self-commitment. Additionally, they agree to report on their individual progress every two years. This acts as a mechanism to assure the association’s integrity and the trustworthiness of the individual member companies. The reports are meant to be binding, credible and of high quality while at the same time practicable.

2. When to Report? –

Reporting Cycle and Submission Date

1. The reports are to be submitted based upon the company’s date of joining the association.
2. Special rules apply for companies that have worked with the Initiative since the CoP 10 in Nagoya or longer and who subsequently became formal members of the new Initiative in 2011. They are to submit a report by the end of 2012 followed by a new report every 2 years.
3. The coordination office shall remind each member of its report 2 months prior to its due date.

3. How to Report? –

Formal Guidelines for Report Structure and Quality Standards

1. Each company shall transparently report on each of the Leadership Declaration’s 7 points. Each point shall be addressed separately.
2. Companies located in Germany shall submit the report in both German and English. Foreign companies shall submit the report in English.
3. The principle of “comply/report or explain” shall be applied: If a point cannot be reported, the reason for this must be explained.
4. It is possible to report on goals that have been fully reached and for which therefore no progress has been made at the time of reporting. In this case the member company shall report as to when the goal was achieved.
5. The standard reporting principles from sustainability reporting (compare e.g. GRI), which have been established and are generally recognized, are to be used. Of particular importance are: materiality, completeness, balance, comparability, accuracy, timeliness, reliability, and clarity.
6. The report shall detail the developments of the previous 2 years.
7. The length of the text is variable. To guarantee readability, it is recommended that the text length for each of the Leadership Declaration’s 7 points not exceed more than 2,500 characters.
8. Links and references to reports and additional information can be used to complement the text (where appropriate please remember to include page numbers).

4. How to Ensure Credibility? – Quality Assurance, Grace Periods and Penalty Mechanisms

Note: These mechanisms may be adapted and the process modified on the basis of experience.

Quality Assurance

1. The Leadership Declaration allows for flexible progress for each of its members. The report shall meet the formal criteria (see point 3 above). It shall be clear from the progress report as a whole that the member company is committed and has made progress and/or achieved its goals.
2. An internal quality assurance shall be carried out by the coordination office, the board as well as all the member companies in the manner of peer review.
3. In the first step, the coordination office shall review and evaluate if a submitted report meets the formal criteria and if progress is identifiable.
4. The coordination office shall then respond to the reporting member company. In the case that changes are considered to be useful or necessary, these changes should take place within a short period of time (ca. 2 weeks).
5. Afterwards, the coordination office shall submit the report to the board together with a short comment/recommendation.
6. Should the board have no objections to the report, the report can be made public.
7. The regularly occurring member workshops and general meetings shall be used as a platform for peer review of submitted reports. International member companies not able to attend the meetings can have the coordination office present their report on their behalf.
8. In the event that problems arise with reports, general meetings shall be used to consult with the member companies.

Grace Periods

1. In the event a member company cannot submit a report within the time limit, the member company may request a grace period of 3 months. The submission date for the future reports shall remain based on the original date! Upon submission of the report, the usual quality assurance process shall be carried out (see above).
2. In the event the grace period expires before a report is submitted, the board may extend the grace period by another 3 months when an important reason is given by the member company. The submission date for the future reports shall remain based on the original date! By the end of the second grace period the report must have been submitted. Upon submission of the report, the usual quality assurance process shall be carried out (see above).

Penalty Mechanisms

1. In the event a report is not submitted by the end of the second grace period, the board shall convene as soon as possible to evaluate the situation.
2. The membership of the member company shall be temporarily suspended together with its voting rights.
3. The board shall contact the tardy member company to obtain a solution.
4. This solution must be implemented within a time period of not more than 3 months; otherwise the member company shall be expelled from the association by board decision in accordance with the statutes.

5. How to Publish? – Communication

1. The reports shall be published on the website of the 'Biodiversity in Good Company' Initiative.
2. Member companies shall be asked to integrate their reports into their normal communication channels (websites, reports, etc.)