

ESG **Book**

Shaping the Future of ESG Data

Over \$100 trillion of assets under management are today committed to the Principles for Responsible Investment (PRI), while many of the world's largest public companies have pledged to meet net-zero targets, as sustainability shapes global markets in the 21st century. However, a lack of disclosure, limited accessibility, and inconsistency of ESG data is limiting the acceleration of capital allocation towards low-carbon and sustainable business activities, just when it is most urgently needed.

The commitments made around COP26 amplify a critical market need for accessible, comparable, and transparent ESG data in order to build trust and alignment amongst companies, investors, and standard-setters, and to measure progress on sustainable development. That is why we, a global alliance of leading financial institutions, investors, and businesses, are launching a new central source for accessible and digital corporate sustainability information with the aim of shaping the future of ESG data.

Supporting the Ten Principles of the UN Global Compact, 'ESG Book' makes sustainability data more widely available and comparable for all stakeholders, enables companies to be custodians of their own data through a digital platform, provides framework-neutral ESG information in real-time, and promotes transparency.

Available for all companies, investors, standard-setters, and other stakeholders, ESG Book follows five principles based on a mission to create ESG data as a public good:

1. Companies are custodians of their own data

Corporates should have control of their sustainability data by having autonomy over the disclosure and maintenance of data in real-time, unrestricted by the annual reporting cycle. This improves both transparency and market-driven oversight from investors, banks, and business partners, and reduces errors common within the global ESG data ecosystem.

2. Transparency on data usage and interactions brings more meaningful reporting

Once directly connected to their stakeholders, companies should be empowered to report on the most material and valuable issues requested by investors, thereby reducing the noise in reporting, and enabling data gaps to be more clearly identified.

3. Accessibility and impartiality

Reported ESG data should be made available to all stakeholders for free, and displayed in an impartial manner, independent of judgement in the form of opaque ratings. Any ESG data platform should be open-access to all in order to promote greater transparency and provide better and more up-to-date information to guide global capital flows.

4. Framework-neutral

ESG data should be framework-neutral and provide a level-playing field for all market participants, allowing stakeholders to collect and report data based on sustainability questions from multiple frameworks at the same time. It should be adaptable and flexible to respond to a fast-moving market and regulatory environment.

5. Easing the reporting burden

Reported ESG data can be mapped across a range of frameworks simultaneously over time. For example, if a company discloses CO₂ emissions according to GRI, other reporting questionnaires can be populated with the same data. This frees up company resources for greater action-driven insights once the reporting company decides to disclose.

We today call for a new coordinated approach to ESG data, where corporate sustainability information is widely available, comparable, and transparent. In turn, it can lead to a drastic change in how ESG data is integrated and measured on a global scale. We invite you to join us.

The Founding Partners of ESG Book



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