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# SBTi Corporate Net-Zero Standard Expert Working Group (EWG) Meeting Minutes

Data Quality, Data Assurance & Claims – Session 1

17 April 2025 - 16:00-18:00 CEST

Virtual

PUBLIC

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## Meeting participants

### Expert Working Group Members

*As per clause 6 in the EWG Terms of Reference, members serve on the EWG in their individual capacity as technical experts.*

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1. Akshita Gupta, Greengage Environmental Ltd.    | 8. Martha Stevenson, WWF  |
| 2. Brad Schallert, Winrock International          | 9. Max Eichelbaum, RSB - Roundtable on Sustainable Biomaterials |
| 3. Claire Wigg, Exponential Roadmap Initiative    | 10. Paola Delgado Luna, Accountability Accelerator              |
| 4. Dan Magrath, Gold Standard                     | 11. Patrick Mallet, ISEAL                                       |
| 5. Florian Pothin, Toovalu / University of Rennes | 12. Sangwon Suh, Watershed                                      |
| 6. Laura Mora, Ecoverify                          | 13. Stephanie Glazer, RMHC. Inc.                                |
| 7. Laurence Opie, Green Guarantee Company         | 14. Tatiana Boldyreva, CDP                                      |
|   | 15. Vita Jarolimkova, SRT Group                                 |

### SBTi

1. Erin Lasher (MRV Technical Manager, SBTi)
2. Emma Watson (Head of Corporate Standards, SBTi)
3. Guy Davis (Legal Counsel, SBTi) - Observer
4. Paulina Tarrant (Stakeholder Engagement Senior Manager, SBTi) - Observer

# Meeting agenda

Housekeeping	10 min
Introductions	15 min
Context setting	10 min
Q&A	15 min
Exercise - group vision	30 min
Exercise - ambition claims	30 min

*Note: Please refer to the meeting slide deck for accompanying material*

## 1. Welcome & Introductions

Each attendee introduced themselves. The group includes 21 experts from around the world representing NGOs, corporates, standards setters, and consultancies.

## 2. Meeting Objectives

The session aimed to:

- Introduce the aims and scope of the working group.
- Provide context on the evolution of claims and data quality expectations in the SBTi Net-Zero Standard.
- Clarify the group's role in shaping ambition claims and their substantiation requirements.
- Launch a collaborative process to identify risks, opportunities, and priorities related to claims.

## 3. Housekeeping

- All materials and discussions are confidential and should not be shared outside the group without permission.
- Participants were reminded of antitrust rules and instructed not to disclose sensitive or company-specific data.
- Members were asked to declare any new or undeclared conflicts of interest.
- Miro and Mentimeter were introduced for use later in the session.

## 4. Context setting

### Data Quality and Assurance:

- Version 2 draft introduces limited assurance requirements and traceability targets.
- Scope 1, 2, and relevant scope 3 emissions must receive limited assurance using accepted verification standards.
- Public disclosure of assurance results and traceability progress is required.

### Claims Framework Overview:

- Four types of claims introduced:
  - **Application** – signaling intent to participate in the SBTi.
  - **Ambition** – confirmation of validated targets.
  - **Conformance** – confirmation of target progress post-assessment.
  - **Renewal** – confirmation of updated, continued commitments.
- All claims must be:
  - Accurate
  - Transparent
  - Verifiable
- The draft Standard has ambiguity around claims, leaving space for the public consultation and this EWG to shape future clarity.

## 5. Q&A

### Traceability Definition:

- Clarification requested; standard includes this term, but some found it unfamiliar in the carbon accounting context.

### Progress and Nonconformity:

- Queries arose around performance tracking, interim assessments, and consequences for nonconformity.

### Interaction with other EWGs:

- Concern around overlapping responsibilities and the need for clear dependencies and sequencing across EWGs.

### GHGP Coordination:

- Discussions ongoing about aligning with the Greenhouse Gas Protocol's developments (especially around uncertainty).

## 6. Exercise - group vision

Mentimeter was used to map challenges. Key themes were:

- Lack of credibility, traceability, and integrity in current claims.
- Risk of greenwashing and consumer misunderstanding.
- Absence of differentiation and incentives for leading performers.
- Difficulty in communicating the uncertainty in data (especially Scope 3).
- Complexity of multi-audience communication (consumers, investors, regulators).
- Concerns over companies misusing “SBTi-aligned” language without validation.

Mentimeter was used to map a group vision:

- A claims system that is:
  - Accurate, verifiable, and credible.
  - Aligned with planetary goals, yet reflective of sectoral and regional realities.
  - Simple yet meaningful across diverse audiences.
  - Supportive of action, enabling ambition without penalizing transparency.

Emphasis was placed on making claims understandable and differentiated while maintaining technical rigor.

## 7. Exercise - ambition claims

Three subtypes reviewed:

- Temperature alignment
  - Scientifically difficult to substantiate due to Earth system uncertainties.
  - Suggested approach: companies conform to SBTi-defined alignment criteria.
  - General agreement on decoupling global temperature from single company actions.
- Paris alignment
  - Seen as a middle-ground claim.
  - Raised need for clarity around alignment definition and use cases.
- Recognition for going beyond minimum ambition
  - Highly supported for creating incentives and differentiation.
  - Concerns over fairness across sectors and potential disincentives if requirements are unrealistic.
  - Balance needed between ambition and authenticity.

Possible additional claim types:

- Full responsibility for all emissions
- Sector pathway alignment
- Methane and high-impact gases claims
- Stacked claims

## 8. Actions & Next Steps

- Next meeting: cross-group informational session (TBD).
- Third session to focus on the legal/regulatory landscape of claims.
- SBTi is revisiting the scheduling and pacing of these sessions.
- Pre-reading for future sessions will be shared at least five days in advance.

