

AccountAbility Management Response to Assurance Providers & Sustainability Practitioners

The AccountAbility Management Team is pleased to respond to your note.

First, let us reassure you that the AA Management Team has no intention of becoming the governance board for the Standards. We are absolutely committed to the independent governance of AA1000.

The issue we believe is more fundamental. It is our view that working with stakeholders to develop a sound strategic plan must come first. The situation that we face today is not a consequence of the resignation of the Standards Board. And a new governance structure, as important as that may be, is not the solution to all the issues that need to be addressed.

The first step in our approach is to establish a nominating committee made up of four AccountAbility Directors and four independent members to engage with a more inclusive group of stakeholders to serve on five working groups, one of them being charged with Governance. Once we have an agreed-on strategic plan we intend to appoint an independent outside legal counsel to advise on governance options.

In the meantime, we are actively at work forming a new independent, multi-stakeholder governance structure for AccountAbility as a whole which will have strategic oversight of the Standards function. The new Advisory Council will include prominent representatives from the corporate world, civil society, regulators and academia. We expect to make a formal announcement within the next few weeks.

The open, collaborative partnership we envision will bring greater transparency to AA1000 from both a governance standpoint and a broader range of input. New ideas and new perspectives from stakeholders who have not previously been part of the process will encourage fresh thinking and re-energize AA1000.

We truly appreciate your commitment to the Standards and your contributions over the years. We realize that you would prefer that governance be sorted out first. We hope that we can quickly find a reasonable solution to move the Standards agenda forward.

If we can work together in a timely fashion and move ahead in a thoughtful, comprehensive way with our many stakeholders, we will be able to develop a sound plan for increasing acceptance and uptake of AA1000, and establish a sustainable standards model for the future.

Sincerely,

The AccountAbility Management Team