

First International Meeting of the Sustainability Context Group Half Day Workshop Event September 5th, 2012 – 1.30pm – 4.30pm



(Held immediately after the 24th CSEAR International Congress
on Social and Environmental Accounting Research)

The Boardroom, The Gateway, University of St Andrews, Scotland

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Immediately following the CSEAR conference at the University of St. Andrews on September 5th, the **Sustainability Context Group (SCG)**, an international association of sustainability academics, and practitioners, will hold its first meeting. The meeting will last three hours, and will focus on finalising language to be used in a submission to the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) urging it to take concrete steps to strengthen the guidance on how to operationalize the Sustainability Context principle in the fourth generation of *Sustainability Reporting Guidelines*, scheduled for completion in May 2013.

This SCG meeting will take place during the Public Comment Period of G4. Although the current version of GRI's *Guidelines* include mention of Sustainability Context as a core principle in sustainability measurement and reporting, a protocol of any kind for how to operationalize it is missing. As a result, there is scant evidence that GRI-compliant sustainability reports actually report sustainability performance per se, since Sustainability Context must be included in order to do so.

This meeting is organized as another element of CSEAR's engagement and practitioner initiative and CSEAR is grateful to Mark McElroy, Martin Thomas and Bill Baue for this opportunity.

AGENDA

- Lunch 12.30 – 1.30 (served on the lower floor of the Gateway)
- Plenary Session: Sustainability Context, the History Behind It At GRI, and the Draft Statement to Be Submitted to GRI (1:30-2:30)
- Breakout Sessions to Review and Discuss the Draft Statement (2:30-3:30).
Tea and Coffee will be available at 3pm.
- Plenary Session to Review Comments on the Draft and Make Changes As Needed (3:30-4:30)



Program Leaders include:



Mark W. McElroy, Ph.D. – Founder and Executive Director of the [Center for Sustainable Organizations](http://www.sustainableorganizations.org), lead author of [Corporate Sustainability Management](http://www.sustainableorganizations.org) (Earthscan, 2012), and the world's leading practitioner of context-based sustainability.

<http://www.sustainableorganizations.org/context-based-sustainability.html>



Bill Baue – Corporate sustainability architect and designer of systemic transformation and company-level solutions who has worked with organizations across the sustainability spectrum, from AccountAbility and Audubon to GE and GRI to the United Nations, Walmart, and Worldwatch Institute. He teaches communications in the [Marlboro Sustainability MBA](http://www.marlboro.com) in Vermont, and serves on the Advisory Council of the [Sustainability Accounting Standards Board](http://www.sustainabilityaccountingstandards.org) and the [Center for Sustainable Organizations](http://www.sustainableorganizations.org);
<http://www.sustainablebrands.com/users/bill-baue>

TO REGISTER:

The delegate rate for attending this event is **£100**. This event has also been generously sponsored by **CSEAR, ACCA** and **the University of St Andrews**. CSEAR members and conference delegates can attend for £25 and bursaries are available for **PhD** students to apply, covering the full cost of the workshop (but not travel). Please email us.

The event fee includes buffet lunch from 12.30 in the Gateway Building, University of St Andrews and refreshments during the workshop.

Conference and accommodation information and related sites:
<http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/~csearweb/conferencesnews/comingschool.html>
Registration and further enquiries
Email: csear@st-andrews.ac.uk

READING MATERIALS PRE-EVENT

- [A Public Plea to GRI: Enforce or Explain](#) (McElroy) coupled with [GRI Responds to 'Enforce or Explain'](#) (McElroy)
- [Context-Based Sustainability](#) (McElroy)
- [Embracing science to bridge the sustainability gap](#) (Baue)
- [Excerpts from Corporate Sustainability Management](#) (McElroy and Van Engelen)
- [GRI and Sustainability Context: Explain it Like We're Four](#) (McElroy & Baue)
- [How Leadership at Cabot Creamery Makes All the Difference](#) (McElroy)
- [Stepping Toward Corporate Sustainability Footprinting](#) (Baue)

