Voluntary sustainability reporting standards for use by smaller companies

Published by AGRINFO on 20 May 2026; Revised 25 Sep 2026

Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2026/1560 establishing sustainability reporting standards for voluntary use by undertakings protected by the value chain cap

What is changing and why?

The Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD) only requires the largest companies operating in the European Union (EU) – including some non-EU companies – to publish reports on the sustainability of their business. These large buying companies will need to collect information from their suppliers to meet these reporting obligations. Most operators in low- and middle-income countries will not be affected directly by the CSRD, because they will not meet the threshold (turnover exceeding €450 million, or €200 million within the EU). However, if they are supplying the large reporting companies, they are likely to be affected indirectly as their buyers will ask them to provide information about their activities.

In September 2026, the EU adopted voluntary sustainability reporting standards (Regulation 2026/1560) for companies that do not fall under the CSRD reporting threshold. The aim is to provide a simple reporting framework that smaller companies can use if they choose to share information about the sustainability of their business. By voluntarily sharing this information, companies are expected to be able to better monitor their sustainability performance, and to improve their management practices and reputation.

These standards also support a “value chain cap” under the CSRD, which means that smaller companies with an average of fewer than 1,000 employees do not have to provide their buyers with information that goes beyond the voluntary sustainability reporting standards. This is to reduce the reporting burden on small companies that supply large companies covered by this EU Directive. However, small suppliers may still be required to provide more detailed information to their buyers to meet their demands for private standards and certification (which are not affected by the “value chain cap”).

Actions

The EU's Have your say consultation on this proposal closed on 3 June 2026.

Copyright © **COLEAD 2026,** *AGRINFO is funded by the European Union and implemented by COLEAD.*

Timeline

The voluntary sustainability reporting standards enter into force on **24 September 2026** and will apply from the financial year beginning on or after 1 January 2027.

For more information see the full record on the AGRINFO website – where you can also view the latest AGRINFO Update newsletters and search the database.

Disclaimer: *Under no circumstances shall COLEAD be liable for any loss, damage, liability or expense incurred or suffered that is claimed to have resulted from the use of information available on this website or any link to external sites. The use of the website is at the user's sole risk and responsibility. This information platform was created and maintained with the financial support of the European Union. Its contents do not, however, reflect the views of the European Union.*

Copyright © **COLEAD 2026,** *AGRINFO is funded by the European Union and implemented by COLEAD.*