

Investors ask all mining companies to confirm support for the implementation of the Global Standard in their operations.

Today the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) and the Principles for Responsible Investment (PRI), Co-Convenors of the Global Tailings Review, the Church of England Pensions Board and the Council on Ethics of the Swedish National Pension Funds, announced a partnership to create an independent international institute to support the implementation of the Global Industry Standard on Tailings Management. The industry Standard was launched in August 2020 and follows the January 2019 Brumadinho tailings dam disaster that resulted in the deaths of 270 people.

The partnership will seek to develop and establish an “Independent Institute” for the Standard, a self-sustaining institute, as recommended by Dr Bruno Oberle, who acted as Independent Chair of the Global Tailings Review, in *Towards Zero Harm: A compendium of papers prepared for the Global Tailings Review*.

As part of the partnership a senior consultant is being recruited to lead the process of establishing the Institute. Further information can be found [here](#).

Additionally, the Church of England Pensions Board and the Council on Ethics of the Swedish National Pension Funds have written to over 350 mining companies on behalf of investors with \$21 trillion in assets under management (AUM), asking them to confirm on their company websites their support for the Standard and to set out a timeline for their intended compliance with it. Take-up at the company level of the Standard beyond the largest mining companies will be key to its success.

Commenting on the partnership:

Ligia Noronha, Director of the Economy Division, UNEP

“The launch of the Global Industry Standard on Tailings Management has been an important milestone towards UNEP’s ambition of zero harm to people and the environment from tailings facilities. We are now taking the next step and welcome our partnership with the Church of England Pensions Board and the Council on Ethics of the Swedish National Pension Funds to develop and establish the independent international institution that will oversee the global implementation of the Standard. We look forward to a broad implementation of the Standard, echoing the feedback we have heard from participants in the consultations on UNEA4/19 resolution on mineral resource governance.”

Adam Matthews, Director of Ethics and Engagement for the Church of England Pensions Board

“Through this partnership we will create an independent international institute to drive best practice, share expertise and consolidate disclosure in support of the Standard. The Institute will also have a key role in evolving the Standard over time and in ensuring the independent verification that the Standard is being applied as intended. We look forward to working in partnership with UNEP, industry and other key stakeholders to ensure this institute is established with rigor and purpose. To underpin the Standard we have also asked all companies with tailings facilities for their endorsement and to confirm their implementation timeline. This will be essential in retaining confidence of their investors.”

John Howchin, Secretary General, Council on Ethics of the Swedish Public Pension Funds

“As one of the two PRI Co-Convenors of the Global Tailings Review representing investors in the mining sector, we are determined that the Standard is widely adopted and drives a change in practice within mining. A key recommendation of the Independent Chair of the Review was for the creation of an independent international institute to govern the evolution of the Standard and to ensure its implementation. We believe this is an essential next step to addressing the legacy of the Brumadinho disaster and are delighted to be working in partnership with UNEP to establish the institute in the coming year.”

Bruno Oberle, Director General of the International Union for Conservation of Nature, IUCN, and former Independent Chair of the Global

Tailings Review said: “As Chair of the Global Tailings Review process, my priority was to deliver a credible and trusted Standard. I am very encouraged by the announcement that an independent institute will be created to oversee the implementation and ongoing development of the Standard. The Standard is the product of an extensive multi-stakeholder and independent process and it will be critical to retain this model to ensure safe management of tailings facilities globally. I am particularly pleased to see the continued momentum and attention on this important topic.”

Further information:

- The Global Tailings Standard has been formally endorsed by the co-convenors of the Global Tailings Review: the International Council on Mining and Metals (ICMM), the UN Environment Programme (UNEP), and the Principles on Responsible Investment (PRI).
- Further information on the Global Tailings Review, the Global Industry Standard on Tailings Management, and accompanying papers are available here: <https://globaltailingsreview.org/>
- Following a resolution at the UN Environmental Assembly (UNEA4 resolution 4/19), the UN Environment Programme has been consulting widely on mineral resource governance. Participants in the consultative process considered the Global Industry Standard on Tailings Management to be an important development and have called for its successful implementation.
- This announcement also follows a letter sent by the Church of England Pensions Board and the Swedish Council on Ethics, supported by investors with over \$21 trillion in AUM, to over 350 publicly listed mining companies asking them to adopt the Standard, publicly disclose their support and their timeline for adoption across all relevant sites.
- The Church of England Pensions Board and the Swedish Council on Ethics have led the Investor Mining and Tailings Safety Initiative, which was recognised as the “Stewardship Project of the Year: 2020” by the Principles for Responsible Investment’s independent judging panel.

<https://www.unpri.org/showcasing-leadership/winners-of-the-pri-awards-2020/6518.article>

