

# Sustainability Report Review Panels

---

Since 2011, the Vancouver Fraser Port Authority (“the port authority”) has been inviting feedback on its sustainability reporting from internal and external stakeholders to improve the organization’s sustainability reporting and performance.

In 2018, two Sustainability Report Review Panels – one internal and one external – provided input to the port authority’s sustainability reporting program. The panels were facilitated by an independent consultant from Solstice Sustainability Works Inc. This report was prepared by Solstice to synthesize the observations and recommendations of the two panels. We are very grateful to all panel participants for contributing their knowledge and experience to this process.

The internal panel included port authority representatives from Project Management & Business Optimization, Trade Development, Business Analysis & Decision Support, Public Affairs, Safety & Emergency Management, Community and Aboriginal Affairs, Environmental Programs, Finance, Human Resources, Marine Operations, Planning and Development, and Real Estate.

The external panel included the following individuals:

- Wendy Avis, Vancouver Airport Authority
- David Barrett, Eldorado Gold
- Terry Duggan, British Columbia Maritime Employers Association
- Nicole Foth, District of North Vancouver
- Scott Galloway, Shipping Federation of Canada
- Derek Jennejohn, Metro Vancouver
- Daryl Lawes, Seaspan Marine
- Lloyd Lee, City of Vancouver
- Robert McCandless, Port Community Liaison Committee Delta
- Jamiann Questa, North Shore Waterfront Liaison Committee
- Dave Scott, Raincoast Conservation Foundation
- Alex Tunner, North Shore Waterfront Liaison Committee
- Brittany Visona, Coastal Ocean Research Institute, Ocean Wise

## 1. Panel objectives and process

The panels had similar objectives:

- provide input on sustainability topics for reporting and their relative priority; and
- identify preferences for future reporting considering the port authority’s shift to online reporting.

The involvement of stakeholders in the panels also partially satisfies the Global Reporting Initiative principles of Stakeholder Inclusiveness and Materiality (GRI Standard 101). The Materiality principle states that an organization’s sustainability report shall cover topics that:

- reflect the reporting organization’s significant economic, environmental, and social **impacts**; or
- substantively influence the assessments and decisions of **stakeholders**.

The internal panel focused on impacts while the external panel focused on the views of stakeholders.

The process for both internal and external panels involved an online survey and a half day workshop. Invitees to the workshops were given the opportunity to complete a survey in advance. The survey asked participants to rate 34 topics, across several categories on a scale of low to very high, considering the whole port rather than the port authority exclusively. They were then asked to select five topics with the greatest impact or importance respectively (referred to in table below as “top 5”). Sixteen people completed the surveys for each panel.

An example question from the **internal** panel survey was:

1. The impact of the port on water quality is or could be...
- Low                       Moderate                       High                       Very high

An example question from the **external** panel survey was:

1. The importance of water quality for a sustainable port is or could be...
- Low                       Moderate                       High                       Very high

The two panels met for half a day each, with the internal panel meeting on October 17 and the external panel on November 8. Port authority management participated in the internal panel meeting. For the external panel meeting, port authority management attended to provide a welcome and overview of reporting at the port authority, returning at the end to hear a summary. Staff and consultants acted as notetakers in both meetings. We received assurances from external stakeholders that the presence of staff would not inhibit the discussion. This report summarizes and combines panel feedback from both meetings.

Both meetings were structured into two parts. In one part participants discussed how they use, or could use, the report and the features of an online site that could enhance the ways they use it. The other part of the meeting was devoted to prioritization, using the survey results as a starting point. For both parts, participants worked in small groups to complete exercises, then shared their comments with the whole group.

## 2. Prioritization overview

In analyzing survey results we considered both average topic scores/ratings and “top 5” rankings, giving more weight to top 5 rankings. Based on the survey results alone, there appeared to be a marked difference in priorities between internal and external participants, even allowing for the difference in the way questions were posed. Internal participants gave the three highest average ratings to topics related to business competitiveness, strategic investment and asset management. In contrast, external stakeholders gave the top three average ratings to environmental topics and vessel safety. The same pattern appeared when comparing the topics that internal and external survey participants selected for their top five reporting priorities.

Through the workshop process participants were able to discuss the survey results and provide more nuance. Both panels acknowledged that report users would span a range of perspectives with varying interests and information needs. While some participants see the report as being primarily for port business partners (e.g. tenants), others see the key audience being people in neighbouring communities. The different assumptions about primary audience likely contribute to the difference in content priorities.

One of the key areas of divergence both between panels and within the external panel, was the topic of national economic activity, with the internal panel giving more weight to this. Some external groups wanted reporting to highlight economic benefits to sectors across the country. Others preferred to keep the focus on local economic activity where the port had more influence. Both panels advanced the view that the scope, whether local or broader, should apply consistently to positive and negative impacts of port activity.

Both panels agreed that it is difficult to consider leaving out any topics that have been covered in prior sustainability reports because priorities differ depending on the audience. When pressed to identify lower priority topics, the panels suggested some possible (and contradictory) decision rules for sustainability reporting:

- Leave out the lowest rated topic in each survey category
- Leave out topics that are covered in other public reports such as the Annual Report
- Focus on topics that the port authority can control or influence
- Focus on topics that can affect social license or relate to environmental risk
- Be consistent in applying content decisions – don't prioritize good news over bad news

There were also suggestions that the scope and depth of reporting should reflect audience interest, which could result in different treatments for different topics. For example, workplace related topics could be condensed into one. Economic topics could distinguish local, provincial and national implications. Topics specific to the port authority could be treated differently than topics applicable to the whole port.

The external panel suggested that shifting from a PDF report to a dedicated sustainability reporting website ("microsite") could alleviate the pressure to reduce the number of topics. They suggested reporting on all topics in relation to the level of support shown through this process and adjusting the coverage of topics over time based on the number of views from report users.

Comments that shed light on specific topic priorities appear in section 3, Priority topics. The panels also made several suggestions for improving reporting that did not relate to the priority of specific topics. These comments can be found in section 4, Reporting quality.

*Port authority response: We thank all panel members for their valuable feedback and help in prioritizing topics to discuss in our 2018 Sustainability Report. We have included information about the panels' contribution to our materiality process in the [Report details section](#) of our report, together with a link to the full panel report.*

*One of our reporting objectives is to focus report content on topics that are most material to the port and port stakeholders. Given the diverse range of port stakeholders and their respective interests, it is challenging for us to direct our reporting towards a narrower report audience or to reduce the report content. We continue to look for ways to enhance the materiality process to better reflect the broad range of stakeholders, their interests, and how these interests change over time.*

### 3. Priority topics

We used survey results together with workshop discussion to group topics according to the level of support participants expressed for prioritizing them in future sustainability reports. The top 5 topics identified by survey respondents provides an indication of *individual support*. The process of small group discussion can provide new information that leads to changes in individual views. We therefore structured the categories below to take account of both individual and group rankings and gave more weight to topics that had strong *group support*.

Topic descriptions in the table below are taken from the external survey, which differs slightly from the internal survey due to the focus on importance as opposed to impact.

Topic and Support for Prioritizing	Comments
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Very strong support for prioritizing</b></p>	
<p><b>Test:</b> A top 5 topic for at least 3 individuals in <i>both</i> internal and external surveys and supported by <i>more than one group*</i> in workshops</p>	
<p>Greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions - GHG and black carbon emissions associated with fuel and electricity used by marine and rail sectors, on-road vehicles, non-road equipment, administrative operations, and infrastructure development; contribution to climate change.</p>	<p>Some support for combining the GHG topic with the topic Products Shipped – Environmental to account for the GHG lifecycle impacts of products shipped wherever they occur in the value chain.</p> <p>One group member suggested combining with the topic Air Quality to address all air emissions.</p>
<p>Water quality – Water pollution from spills, authorized discharges, or stormwater runoff, waste; pollution prevention.</p>	<p>Survey results placed water quality among the top 5 topics for several individuals in both groups. In group discussion the internal panel commented that port activities have relatively low impact compared to other sources of water pollution in the region. All external panel groups gave water quality a high priority and the panel also suggested that water use or withdrawal be added to this topic.</p> <p>One suggestion was to co-operate with Metro Vancouver to gather “one set of samples that everyone buys into.”</p>
<p>Air quality - Air pollutants, other than greenhouse gas emissions, from cargo-handling equipment, ships, trains, trucks and infrastructure development that affect local and regional air quality.</p>	<p>One group specified that measurements for GHG, NOx and SOx emissions should be reported</p>
<p>Aquatic species - Population changes in aquatic species (whales, fish, plankton, etc.) associated with habitat loss and degradation, disruption of feeding and breeding (through vessel activity, underwater noise and vibration), or invasive species introduction (from ballast water discharge, or hull and propeller cleaning).</p>	<p>The external panel would like to see baseline data established for aquatic populations.</p> <p>The habitat enhancement program could inform a better understanding of ecosystems, but the emphasis should be on performance indicators of ecosystem health. Include invasive species.</p> <p>Underwater noise was of particular interest to some external groups.</p>
<p>Products shipped (environmental) - Upstream (extraction, manufacture, transport to port) or downstream (transportation from port, use, and disposal) environmental impacts (e.g. GHG emissions from coal or oil) of products shipped through the port.</p>	<p>Both panels made the point that if positive economic impacts are reported using a national scope, the national scope of GHG impacts should be counted too.</p>

Strong support for prioritizing	
<b>Test:</b> A top 5 topic for at least 3 individuals in <i>either</i> internal or external survey and supported by <i>at least one</i> group in workshops	
Land use - Local and regional land use planning for industrial use and other local/regional goals.	There were different interpretations of this topic, but both panels prioritized land use. The internal panel and some external participants prioritized land use because an inability to acquire and develop industrial land could hamper the port's growth. Other external participants prioritized land use out of concern that industrialization could take prominence over other land uses, such as agricultural or residential.
Local economic activity - Stimulus to or shifts in local economic activity through direct and indirect spending, (wages, infrastructure investments, contributions to government revenues), business generation, and/or support services.	While the internal panel rated all scopes of economic activity similarly, most groups of the external panel emphasized local economic activity, especially local job creation. One group emphasized the need for robust stories of local economic benefit. Another suggested adding a resilience lens to economic discussions, for example reporting the anticipated impacts to the port of an average 2 degree temperature rise. While there was strong support for reporting on how port activity affects the local economy, there was less interest in internal business metrics, unless they have significance for customers. Some suggested that business metrics such as vessel on time arrival were better suited to other types of reporting. One internal participant suggested accounting for any loss of local jobs from offshoring that could be linked to an increase in trade.
Noise - Noise from terminal operations, infrastructure development, vessels, trucks, or rail crossings.	Not much discussion.
Worker health and safety - Safety and health of port workers.	This appeared in the top 5 topics for more external respondents than internal. Internal group discussion flagged that it should be rated more highly.
Infrastructure safety and security - Protection of port facilities and infrastructure (Canada place, terminals, port roads, etc.) from security incidents, natural disasters, climate-related events, or other emergencies.	Resiliency of infrastructure in the face of climate change stood as a key aspect of infrastructure safety and security.
Vessel safety - Safe movement of vessels through the port.	One external group noted that if something goes wrong in this respect, it could have serious outcomes.
Supply chain connectivity - Reliable movement of cargo through the port; linkages between modes of cargo transportation (truck, rail, ship).	Rated very highly in survey results but did not receive a high ranking in group discussions.

National economic activity - Stimulus to or shifts in national economic activity.	There were divergent views on this topic. It scored high on the internal survey. Some external participants would like to see national economic benefits discussed. A different view was that economic issues generally should be downplayed or reframed in terms of economic resilience, with the focus on the local economy.
<b>Concentrated support for prioritizing</b>	
<b>Test:</b> A top 5 topic for at least one individual in <i>either</i> survey and supported by <i>at least one</i> group in workshops	
Truck and rail traffic - Traffic congestion or safety incidents.	One group suggested the addition of a congestion index to reporting.
Terrestrial species - Population changes in terrestrial species (birds, bats, etc.) associated with habitat loss and degradation, disruption of feeding and breeding (from light or noise emissions), or invasive species introduction.	Treated similarly to aquatic species by one external panel group, with a similar call for environmental effects monitoring – baseline studies of populations and identification of indicator species. Birds were highlighted.
Opportunities for Aboriginal peoples - Aboriginal business, employment opportunities, or environmental initiatives that the port supports, creates, or facilitates.	While this topic rated fairly high in survey results there was very little discussion of it from either panel. There was a comment internally to raise its priority. (None of the invited members of Aboriginal groups were able to attend the workshop.)
Public safety - Safety of the public on port lands and port waters (e.g. security measures, emergency and climate change preparedness).	Prioritized by one external panel group. The internal panel discussion led to it being rated more highly than initial survey results.
<b>Group support for prioritizing</b>	
<b>Test:</b> Did not receive a top 5 ranking in <i>either</i> survey, but supported by <i>at least one</i> group in workshops	
Community investment/culture - Financial support for community groups and cultural events through port investments, donations, or sponsorships.	While not ranked highly through survey results, two groups of the external panel prioritized this. One individual viewed it as important to the port’s social licence and noted the work of other tenants in this area should also be reported. One group said that port businesses want to know how fees and harbour dues are used by the port authority in support of community groups/events
Employment opportunities - Creation or loss of jobs within the port and port-supporting businesses.	For the external panel, this was considered as part of local economic activity and was prioritized by all groups.

Individual support for prioritizing	
<b>Test:</b> A top 5 topic for <i>at least one</i> survey participant	
Soil quality - Soil and groundwater contamination from accidental spills, leaks, hazardous waste, historical contamination, or stormwater runoff; soil remediation.	Not much discussion.
Nighttime light - Nighttime light from port operations or infrastructure development.	Not much discussion.
Provincial economic activity - Stimulus to or shifts in provincial economic activity.	Not much discussion.
Business ethics - Business integrity, anti-corruption, and rule of law.	External panel noted that while business ethics is important it might not need to go in the sustainability report as long as it was cross referenced to other reports that address it.
Recreational use and access - Enjoyment of port-adjacent lands, water or local amenities (e.g. parks, trails).	This was raised as a factor in social license by one external panel group but flagged by another group as a topic that did not need to be in the sustainability report
Labour relations - Fair labour practices, quality of relationships between port employers, employees and unions.	Not much discussion.
Customer Satisfaction - Satisfaction with services by port customers/users (e.g. shippers, terminal operators, marine carriers); customer service.	Not much discussion. One individual suggested the report should focus only on only what's important to customers.
Products shipped (social impacts) - Upstream (extraction, manufacture, transport to the port) or downstream (transportation from port, use and disposal) social importance (e.g. modern slavery, worker health and safety, community impacts, food security) of products shipped through the port.	Not much discussion.
Training and skills development - Education, training and development, or career opportunities for port workers.	While this secured one top 5 placement on the internal survey, the external panel suggested that it could be dropped from sustainability reporting. They reasoned that the information currently reported is port authority-specific, not material in the broader port context or of interest to an external audience
Prioritization not supported	
<b>Test:</b> Did not receive a top 5 ranking in <i>either</i> survey <i>or</i> there was group support for dropping the topic from sustainability reporting (though it could be included in other port authority reporting)	
Waste - Generation, storage, and disposal of hazardous and solid waste from port activities	The internal panel suggested reporting on the impact of waste under the relevant aspect of the receiving



(including ship waste) and infrastructure development.	environment (water, air, soil) and dropping waste as a separate topic.
Cyber security/data security - Security and privacy of port data (e.g. customer information, tenant agreements, commodity forecasts); protection against cyber security incidents.	There was support from the external panel groups to drop this from the sustainability report. The internal panel reduced it in priority through discussion but did not suggest dropping it.
Working conditions - Conditions of work and the quality of jobs within the port (hiring practices, recruitment, retention, financial and non-financial benefits, equal opportunities).	Some external panel groups supported dropping this topic, noting that current reporting reflects port authority internal business metrics which may not be of interest to external stakeholders.
Traditional Aboriginal culture - Recognition of Aboriginal culture through port processes and collaboration (e.g. permitting processes, environmental collaborations).	Not much discussion.
Workforce diversity - Diversity (gender, ethnic, age, physical abilities, etc.) of the port's workforce.	Some external panel groups supported dropping this topic, saying current reporting reflects port authority internal business metrics and may not be material from a port-wide perspective or relevant to external stakeholders.
Human rights - Human rights of ship passengers and seafarers; human trafficking.	The external panel suggested that this could be treated similarly to the topic Business Ethics – reported elsewhere and just referenced in the sustainability report.

\* Drawn from four groups from the external panel and one combined group for the internal panel.

*Port authority response: Our 2018 Sustainability Report is structured around our Sustainable Port Definition, which encompasses three pillars and 10 focus areas representing our material topics and the most significant sustainability challenges and opportunities facing the port community. The panels' feedback significantly influenced the topics included within each of these focus areas. The report covers all of the topics prioritized at the group level during the two panel sessions. A table containing the material topics is included in the [About this report section](#), which establishes the context for our report by situating the material topics within our Sustainable Port Definition. Each topic is hyperlinked to the relevant report section, which provides additional information on our management approach and performance. For additional context, we have also reported what we are hearing about these topics from port stakeholders.*

## 4. Reporting quality

Using the 2016 Sustainability Report as a basis for discussion, the panels made several observations and suggestions that could enhance the quality of reporting, regardless of the format used.

**4.1 Confirm scope and boundary of report.** The port authority has made some effort to report on topics that are material to the port as a whole but outside the port authority's control – port-wide emissions and national economic benefits, for example. Reporting on topics with a port-wide scope may help raise understanding of topics with broader significance. The panels saw value in port-wide reporting and acknowledged the challenge. The scope of the reported information should match the defined scope of the entity reporting. If the report is



seen to be a product of and for the port authority only, then it makes sense to report on port-specific data. If the aim is to create a report for the port as a whole, then an effort is needed to extend the scope of reporting port-wide. This could include more information about the contributions and sustainability of other port organizations, such as terminals.

*Port authority response: We have clarified the scope and boundary of our 2018 Sustainability Report. We are reporting on topics representing the greatest impacts of Port of Vancouver-related activities and the Vancouver Fraser Port Authority initiatives designed to address or manage these impacts. We report port-wide performance where this information is available from port tenants and customers. This includes supply chain, energy, and air emissions data.*

*In further clarifying report scope, we now report the majority of port authority-specific data in the [Port authority data](#) section of the report. In response to stakeholder feedback, we have also re-focused the Effective workforce section to discuss the broader port workforce and removed information relating specifically to port authority employees.*

**4.2 Provide port context.** An ongoing challenge for the port authority is to clarify its mandate and areas of responsibility in relation to port tenants, various levels of government and other port stakeholders. In every report the port authority has described its mandate and governance structure, but stakeholders continue to identify a need for clarification of responsibilities, including control and influence. A new approach may be needed.

The external workshop discussion suggested that stakeholders are more interested in specific responsibilities than the high-level mandate. They want to be able to identify the source of good/bad performance, clearly distinguishing between the port authority and the wider port. With respect to good performance, the panel noted that the port authority sometimes reports on joint initiatives without giving due credit to the terminal or other port partner involved. For performance indicators, the panel suggested using colour coding or some other means to distinguish port authority activities/performance from the wider port. Both the internal and external panel suggested reporting on the work/performance of terminals and partners.

*Port authority response: As noted previously, our 2018 Sustainability Report more clearly defines the report's scope. Although we report on significant port-wide impacts, the majority of report text and data discusses Vancouver Fraser Port Authority's initiatives designed to manage these impacts. The port authority works with government agencies, industry and other supply chain stakeholders in a collaborative manner, using influence, incentives and recognition programs to advance progress on key issues. When possible, we have included additional information about tenant and terminal efforts in these areas. However, as a landlord port, we do not have direct control over the performance of the wider port and, with a few exceptions, do not currently collect data from port tenants. We are, however, developing a suite of indicators to measure sustainability performance at the Port of Vancouver. Through this initiative, we hope future reports will contain port-wide progress on key sustainability issues.*

**4.3 Provide sustainability context.** The port authority took a big step in this direction by formulating its Sustainable Port Definition in 2015. Also in 2015, the United Nations established the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), a set of 17 goals and 169 targets necessary for global sustainability. The SDGs are part of the UN's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which was adopted by 193 UN General Assembly countries, including Canada. The external panel suggested that the port authority use the SDG framework in its reporting. There were also suggestions to provide additional context in showing progress on the vision of becoming the world's most sustainable port, by benchmarking its performance against other ports.

*Port authority response: The port authority is a member of the International Association of Ports & Harbours (IAPH). In 2018, IAPH established the World Ports Sustainability Program, which aims to demonstrate the global leadership of ports in contributing to the 17 Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations. The port authority plans to explore alignment with and reporting on the Sustainable Development Goals in the coming years.*

*As part of our work to establish performance indicators and targets, we intend to benchmark the Port of Vancouver's performance against other ports, industries or regions. This is a component of our work to establish robust targets intended to stretch the port's sustainability performance. We are currently exploring how best to report performance in comparison to others.*

**4.4 Distinguish leadership from compliance.** The port authority and its partners operate in a complex regulatory environment. Both panels called for increased clarity about performance in relation to global, national and local regulations and industry standards. The panels both expressed the view that the port authority should not take credit for following regulations. However, it is also important to signal to readers that the regulatory environment keeps changing (future standards for fuel, ballast water and derelict vessels, for example) and to show that the port authority and its partners are keeping up. This point has been raised by previous panels.

*Port authority response: The port operates in a complex regulatory landscape. The broad range of businesses, government agencies, and stakeholders involved in international trade and port operations make it difficult to provide a comprehensive, yet accessible, overview of applicable regulations and how our activities fit within those regulations. Within the report, we have worked to clarify our role and the regulatory context for certain topics including trucking, Aboriginal relationships, and safety and security. We recognize the importance of this information and will continue to consider ways in which relevant regulatory aspects can be incorporated into future reporting to improve context and report balance.*

**4.5 Focus on current year performance.** The panels observed that past reports are lengthy and contain a lot of background information, some of which is replicated elsewhere. In lieu of performance data there are lengthy descriptions of management's approach which don't change much from year to year. The panel called for concise reporting that focused on initiatives and outcomes or current performance metrics and new actions in the reporting year. Background information could be referenced to other sources using links.

*Port authority response: We have developed a new framework for our 2018 report. For each material topic, we provide our management approach, followed by a list of 2018 activities relating to that topic. We also include performance data when available. The intent is for a reader to easily understand our approach and current year's performance. We have leveraged on-line reporting, providing external links for readers wanting additional context or information.*

**4.6 Include performance targets and metrics.** External stakeholders noted a lack of performance targets and metrics to help them assess the port authority's performance, especially with respect to environmental impacts and the outcome of mitigation measures. Specific suggestions were to include both leading and lagging indicators and to introduce relative indicators such as GHG intensity factors for value of goods shipped, which might include full lifecycle GHG emissions for value of goods shipped. Related to point 4.4, the external panel recommended that the port authority distinguish mandatory targets established by regulation from its own internally developed targets.

*Port authority response: We are currently developing a suite of indicators to better measure the Port of Vancouver's sustainability performance. Our intention is to set performance targets against these indicators, following the establishment of performance baselines and comparative benchmarking.*

**4.7 Start creating a future focus.** The external panel observed that past reports have emphasized historic reporting. They suggested that the port authority begin to include forecasts for indicators that tie in to growth projections and discuss the implications. It could be framed as “this is what we’re planning to do and how it might affect our region.” Performance metrics, such as a congestion index, could include forecasts (projected environmental/social impacts of increased trade). This would help stakeholders to monitor the impact of port growth on neighbouring communities and Gulf Island communities.

A future focus would also be consistent with panel suggestions to report on progress towards achieving the port’s vision of becoming the world’s most sustainable port. This could include specific indicators aligned to the port’s Sustainable Port Definition.

*Port authority response: As noted above, we are currently developing a suite of indicators to better measure the Port of Vancouver's sustainability performance. These will be included in future reporting.*

*Our 2018 Sustainability Report is in accordance with the Global Reporting Initiative Standards, which tends to focus reporting on lagging indicators and historic performance. Although we do include some forward-looking information, we have not directly connected that information to the broader implications of growth projections. We will consider broadening our discussion in future reports. The 2018 report does include, however, a case study on the [Gateway Transportation Collaboration Forum](#) and projects focused on alleviating the impacts of growing trade by enhancing safety, improving travel time, and reducing congestion and impacts to air quality.*

**4.8 Continue report assurance.** Both panels commented that assurance is an important factor in credibility.

*Port authority response: We recognize the value of assurance and engaged KPMG LLP to provide independent, external assurance on select performance indicators and assertions contained within the 2018 report. KPMG LLP's assurance statement can be found [here](#).*

**4.9 Improve balance and transparency.** Transparency and balance are recognized as essential features of quality reporting. Both panels noted that past reports emphasized good news and down played challenges and negative impacts. The internal panel suggested that reporting should acknowledge negative issues already in the public domain. The external panel suggested the need for clear and concrete discussion about how the port is addressing identified impacts.

*Port authority response: We endeavoured to provide a balanced tone in our reporting and transparency on the key impacts of port activities. For example, we have included tables setting out the key environmental and social impacts of port activities and our approach to managing these impacts. We recognize that the report may not have addressed all negative issues in the public domain to a depth at which certain stakeholders would like. Throughout the report, we have provided web links to further information on these topics when possible. We will continue to emphasize both balance and transparency in future reports.*

## 5 Making the most of the shift to microsite

Internal and external panels had similar ideas about how the port authority could take advantage of the new reporting platform. Broad directions with some specific suggestions include:

**5.1 Facilitate access and navigation.** Make it easy for all users to find the information/ data they want.

- Access from and links to the main the port authority website ✓
- Executive summaries for each topic or category
- Tiered information with ability to drill down into layers of increasing detail ✓
- Filtering to create custom views for specific audiences
- Searchable to locate topics/data of interest ✓
- Archived versions of past reports in PDF format and method for archiving information in new Web-based reports ✓

**5.2 Enable a range of uses and users.** Allow users to extract information/data in a way that works for them.

- Shareable on social media ✓
- Links to GRI ✓
- Printable sections
- GIS datasets
- Open, unlocked data
- Downloadable datasets
- Translation ✓
- Universal accessibility
- Dashboards for at-a-glance performance monitoring

**5.3 Enhance understanding.** Enable deeper research, analysis and comparisons.

- Trend data ✓
- Tracking of progress towards vision
- Links to webcams and noise monitoring ✓
- Graphs showing indicators in relation to both regulatory targets and internal targets
- Comparison to performance of other ports
- Links to research studies

**5.4 Add interest.** Engage users with storytelling and relatable information.

- Videos ✓
- Case studies ✓
- Maps ✓
- Links to underwater monitoring
- Infographics with sustainability context

**5.5 Be stingy with text.** Replace long paragraphs with graphs, figures and tables.

- Delete superfluous text. ✓
- Focus on initiatives and outcomes. ✓
- Pair executive summaries with tight synopsis of current year actions, outcomes, changes.

**5.6 Update as needed.** Frequency can vary by topic or indicator. Refresh data as available and indicate frequency for each indicator on the site.

**5.7 Remain accountable.** Archive a version of the report each year so readers can see a snapshot in time. ✓

**5.8 Internal priorities.** Leveraging the microsite for internal purposes.

- Allow access to digital content for use in presentations or communications ✓
- Use web analytics. Leverage analytics to determine report readership topic or datasets. Use information to inform development of future reporting content. ✓
- Create a feature to allow users to provide feedback on report ✓

*Port authority response: We appreciate the panels' input on the features they would like to see in an online report. Checkmarks on the list above show the suggested features that we have incorporated.*

*In designing the online report, we carefully considered layout, graphics and design features to assist readers in locating information of interest. For example, the [Sustainable Port Definition](#) in the report introduction, as well as the [Report topics section](#) and the [Global Reporting Initiative index](#) offer links to the relevant report content. To make the report more accessible and engaging, we have layered content, added videos and included some interactive data options. We have also reduced the report text and added web links to additional information.*

*We recognize that our 2018 Sustainability Report is our first digital report and that online reporting will be an evolution. In the coming years, we will work to continuously improve both our report content and the presentation of this information.*