

Steel Standards Principles

Common emissions measurement methodologies to accelerate the transition to near zero

Steel Standards Principles: Progress Statement for COP 30

November 14th 2025

Overview

There is a need for clear standards and robust methodologies that support steel decarbonisation efforts, in order to help scale markets, verify product claims, and ensure transparency around the climate and environmental impact of steel production. The Steel Standards Principles (SSP)¹, formed by stakeholders of the global steel industry, aim to pursue an inclusive, open and transparent process to achieve harmonisation of measurement methodologies, and where not possible, yield the interoperability of existing Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions frameworks for steelmaking, thereby accelerating the transition to near zero.

Launched at COP28, the Steel Standards Principles are now endorsed by 65 organisations across multiple regions and stakeholder groups. Since COP29, new endorsers have included Hyundai Steel, Transition Asia, WWF and Bellona, strengthening both the industrial and civil society representation.

The SSP now stands as an example of how stakeholder cooperation on standards can drive transparency and alignment, inspiring other sectors to follow a similar path.

Progress since COP29

Throughout 2025, endorsers have advanced their own initiatives to support the SSP, while jointly working towards the common objectives agreed before COP29.

The World Steel Association (worldsteel) expanded its global mapping exercise, providing a comprehensive assessment of over 50 initiatives and standards against 35 criteria. This work highlights commonalities, differences, and areas where harmonisation is possible, offering a clearer picture of the global landscape. In parallel, worldsteel has updated its own LCA and CO₂ data collection methodologies to better align with the SSP and support greater comparability across frameworks.

In relation to the objectives we set for 2025, the following progress has been made:

1. Establishing a common reporting point

Progress in this area has enabled comparability of emissions intensity from mining to crude steel, creating a clear and common baseline.

Over the past year, CARES and worldsteel have incorporated an additional crude steel boundary into their reporting systems. The Chinese C2F standard, also launched in the past year with a crude steel boundary, has announced the intention to extend the boundary upstream to include mining. These add to existing standards that already include a mine-to-crude steel boundary, as can be seen in the worldsteel mapping of standards and methodologies.

2. Enhancing data quality and transparency

Progress in this area has improved data transparency, with the call for the establishment of common emission factors and increased use of primary data.

SSP endorsers are developing GHG reporting criteria that highlight critical methodological choices that could be reported qualitatively or quantitatively in addition to the Carbon Footprint (CFP). This will provide additional transparency and allow stakeholders to more easily assess reported GHG emissions, strengthening trust in the reported data.

¹https://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/envir_e/steel_standards_principles_e.pdf

Steel Standards Principles

Common emissions measurement methodologies to accelerate the transition to near zero

3. Developing common terminology

Progress in this area resulted in the creation of the first edition of an SSP Glossary (available on the SSP website), bringing together more than 60 terms, and driving towards their harmonisation. The use of shared language will reduce misinterpretation across standards and will build a stronger foundation for broader recognition and adoption.

4. Increasing stakeholder engagement and communication

Progress in this area saw endorsers promote the SSP at a range of events in 2025, from OECD, IEA and WTO technical meetings to industry conferences across Asia, Europe and the Americas. This broad engagement reflects the initiative's collaborative nature and helps to build momentum for wider adoption, especially in emerging markets. To aid in this outreach, the SSP website has been developed to provide a reference point, a repository of resources, and news on the progress of implementation of the Principles.

Guidance on interoperability

Beyond harmonisation, endorsers are developing practical guidance and a framework to guide credible **interoperability mechanisms**, emphasising the need for transparency and alignment without undermining existing frameworks. This entails aligning on minimum requirements of accounting rules and sources of data, independent verification or assurance and deploying recognition to avoid duplication. Bilateral discussions between standardisation bodies on how this can be done in practice are ongoing and as part of this, ResponsibleSteel have signed an agreement with the Brussels-based LESS standard and another with CISA's C2F standard, to develop interoperability mechanisms that enable conversion and equivalency between the standards. The learnings from this process can feed into the work of SSP.

2026 Roadmap

Building on the momentum of 2025, SSP endorsers intend to continue their work to:

1. **Ensure continuity of technical discussions**, increased uptake of the additional reporting requirements and to continue working for the increased use of primary data.
2. **Publish the GHG reporting criteria** and explore opportunities for piloting their use with companies and initiatives.
3. **Finalise the Interoperability Guidance** by incorporating practical case studies of cross-standard conversion and recognition, establishing a robust framework to safeguard the credibility of interoperability systems and related claims arising from them.
4. **Facilitate dialogue among stakeholders**, promoting wider understanding and support for harmonized approaches.

Progress will be reported at **COP31**.

Call to action

The Steel Standards Principles continues to prove that **collaboration between industry partners, regions and stakeholders is possible and necessary**. By aligning **boundaries, terminology and transparency**, we are laying the foundation for harmonised GHG accounting that supports, strengthens and accelerates the decarbonisation of the steel sector and its value chain.

We invite governments, companies, standard-setters and civil society to join us in supporting this initiative or to work towards similar goals, ensuring interoperable and transparent emissions data to guide the transition of the steel sector. For more information: www.steelstandardsprinciples.org.

¹https://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/envir_e/steel_standards_principles_e.pdf