



AICPA[®]

Sustainability:

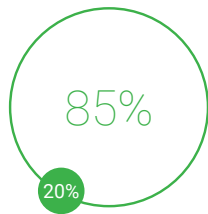
The world wants it. Can you deliver?

Tap into increasing demand for this valuable emerging service.

Sustainability assurance: The demand is there and so are the opportunities.

Consumers and investors increasingly care about corporate social responsibility (CSR). They're looking for transparency in companies' hiring practices, they're interested in where their food is grown and they want to know how organizations track their greenhouse gas emissions.

Over 80% of the S&P 500 Index companies already publish sustainability reports and nearly 70% of portfolio managers and research analysts advocate for independent assurance of sustainability information.



85% of the S&P 500 published a sustainability report in 2017, compared to 20% in 2011.

While CPAs have been providing sustainability assurance services under the clarified attestation standards, no sustainability-specific assurance guidance has existed for these types of engagements — until now. To offer robust, consistent guidelines for this area, the American Institute of CPAs (AICPA) developed the guide *Attestation Engagements on Sustainability Information (Including Greenhouse Gas Emissions Information)*.

Sustainability information is often referred to as the “triple bottom-line” because of its consideration of economic viability, social responsibility and environmental responsibility.

Putting the guidance to work

The sustainability attestation guide helps CPAs apply the clarified attestation standards (SSAE 18) to examination or review engagements on sustainability information. The guide features:

- An introduction to sustainability attestation engagements and insight into key sustainability-related concepts
- Explanations of how to use the existing standards in planning the engagement, performing examination or review procedures, and reporting on the engagement
- Details on issues that arise when greenhouse gas emissions are involved
- Side-by-side illustrations of examination and review procedures, as well as illustrative representation letters and practitioner’s reports

¹ Understanding and Contributing to the Enigma of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Assurance in the United States,” *Auditing: A Journal of Practice & Theory*, Vol. 34, No. 1, pages 97–130 (February 2015)

Help your clients fulfill stakeholder needs

Research shows that organizations are likely to reap greater benefits when the sustainability assurance is provided by a public accounting firm.¹

CPAs’ core qualities of objectivity, credibility and integrity — along with their reputation for independence, professional skepticism and commitment to quality — set them apart from other assurance providers. CPAs offer expertise in evaluating and improving internal processes and controls for collecting, analyzing and reporting information and experience incorporating the necessary specialists into assurance engagements.

Is your firm ready?

Demand for sustainability assurance is increasing. Is your firm prepared to take the lead in providing this valuable service? The information and tools in the sustainability attestation guide can bring your firm up to speed on how to perform these engagements and help distinguish your sustainability assurance services.

