

greenly × ifac⁷

Case Study

CSRD

Accounting

Ifac's Road to Sustainability:

CSRD Step by Step

 INTERVIEW

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Introduction

As sustainability reporting requirements evolve, *ifac*, the Irish Farm Accounts Co-operative, is committed to leading by example in the agricultural sector. To ensure compliance with the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD), *ifac* has embarked on a structured journey that will be documented through a series of four interviews. Each interview, held one month apart, will explore different aspects of the CSRD process, from initial onboarding to the complexities of the Double Materiality Assessment (DMA) and European Sustainability Reporting Standards (ESRS).

Through this initiative, we aim to provide transparency on *ifac*'s sustainability efforts while offering valuable insights for other businesses navigating the CSRD landscape. By sharing challenges, lessons learned, and best practices, we hope to contribute to a broader conversation about sustainability and regulatory compliance in the agri-business sector.

The series will follow this outline :

Onboarding & Expectations



Why *ifac* embarked on the CSRD journey.



Initial challenges, goals, and alignment with stakeholders.



Setting up tools, timelines, and first impressions of the platform

Can you tell us a bit about *ifac* and its sustainability journey before starting the CSRD compliance process?

Rosie

Ifac, the Irish Farm Accounts Co-operative, has been a trusted partner to Ireland's farming and agri-business sectors for 50 years. With 30 offices nationwide and over 500 staff, we are deeply embedded in the agricultural community, providing not just accounting services but also critical support to farmers, businesses, and local communities.

Sustainability has become an increasing focus for us in recent years. Our latest [Food and Agri-business Report](#) revealed that 75% of businesses are actively working to reduce energy consumption and waste. Additionally, 44% of food and agri-businesses have received sustainability-related information requests from their customers, while 36% have already set clear sustainability targets, with another 39% in the process of doing so.

At *ifac*, we lead by example, which is why we've embarked on our own sustainability journey, attaining B Corp certification as well as voluntarily pursuing CSRD compliance. This commitment reflects our broader dedication to sustainability and social responsibility. Sustainability has long been at the heart of *ifac*'s values, and we've been steadily growing our focus in this area. What began as a 'Green Group' - a passionate team of employees promoting energy-saving and waste reduction initiatives - has since evolved into a dedicated sustainability department.

Today, this team helps Irish businesses of all sizes find win-win opportunities to reduce waste, improve efficiencies, and plan for a more sustainable future. At *ifac*, sustainability goes beyond protecting the planet; it's also about caring for our people and making a positive impact in everything we do.

What motivated *ifac* to prioritize CSRD compliance? Was there a specific internal or external driver?

Rosie

Our decision to prioritize CSRD compliance is rooted in our core ethos: "practicing what we preach." We want to uphold the same sustainability standards we encourage our clients to adopt. By undergoing the CSRD process ourselves, we not only gain first-hand experience but also create a blueprint to help other businesses—particularly smaller companies within Scope 3 supply chains—better understand their role in sustainability reporting.

Additionally, given our strong statutory audit expertise, we are exploring ways to develop a CSRD assurance offering. Completing this process internally allows us to provide more informed guidance to clients navigating their own compliance journeys.



Expectations and Initial Goals

What were your initial expectations when starting the CSRD compliance journey?

Rosie

Having dealt with the CSRD directive in a previous role, I knew how overwhelming its complexity could feel. In my previous experience, I had worked through the ESRS disclosures in a series of 'in-person' workshops, which made the process time-consuming and challenging. When approaching the CSRD again, I was eager for a more streamlined and efficient way to navigate the requirements, to avoid the same level of complexity I had encountered before.






With my background in calculating GHG emissions and reporting to voluntary organisations such as CDP and Ecovadis, I approached this process with a clear understanding of the requirements. For example, I had already gained experience in assessing a company's climate-related risks, opportunities, impacts, and dependencies. Additionally, my previous role as a research scientist specialising in greenhouse gas emissions gave me a strong grasp of calculation methodologies. This experience proved crucial, as it allowed me to fully appreciate the time-saving and efficiency-enhancing capabilities of the Greenly platform, having firsthand knowledge of the complexities involved in these processes.

Beyond that, this initiative provided a great opportunity to integrate into my new role at *ifac*. The CSRD process has fostered stronger engagement with colleagues across the company, helping me build relationships and gain a deeper understanding of our operations.

Did you have specific goals or desired outcomes in mind when partnering with Greenly?

Rosie

Yes, I had several key expectations when choosing Greenly. I was looking for:

-  A well-structured, intuitive platform
-  A responsive support team
-  Clear visual guidance and simplified explanations for Double Materiality questions
-  The ability to export data in iXBRL format for compliance
-  Dedicated support from an account manager

Greenly has successfully met all of these expectations, making the process much smoother and more efficient.

Challenges and Preparation

What were some of the main challenges you anticipated before starting the journey?

Rosie

One major challenge was data collection. While Greenly's suggested Excel templates are helpful, I see API-driven automation as the future of sustainability data management. For now, though, manual data collection remains a reality.

Another anticipated challenge was engaging external stakeholders, particularly suppliers. Many are unfamiliar with sustainability-related requests, and given their already demanding schedules, this can add an extra layer of complexity. Since we haven't reached this stage yet, it remains an expected hurdle.

How did you align stakeholders within ifac to get everyone on board for the CSRD initiative?

Rosie

I took a proactive approach by organizing early discussions with key stakeholders. These conversations focused on explaining what CSRD entails, why it matters, and its potential impact. Importantly, I initiated these discussions before we formally committed to the reporting process or partnered with Greenly. This ensured that stakeholders felt informed and engaged rather than pressured.

The response was overwhelmingly positive—colleagues recognized the logical benefits of the initiative and were supportive. There is a strong understanding within *ifac* that sustainability reporting is the future of business operations, and integrating it smoothly into existing processes is the best approach.

Did you conduct any internal preparations before onboarding with Greenly?

Rosie

Yes. I worked closely with a colleague who managed our B-Corp submission to gather relevant data. Additionally, I reached out to internal teams to collect utility data and establish a sensible baseline year for reporting. These early preparations provided us with a strong starting point, streamlining our onboarding experience.

Onboarding Process with Greenly

What was your first impression of Greenly's platform and tools?

Rosie

I was immediately impressed by the platform's clarity, ease of use, and intuitive design. The Double Materiality assessment stood out as a particularly strong feature—it transformed over 1,200 complex questions into manageable, digestible tasks, making the process significantly less overwhelming.

How did the onboarding process help align your team with the CSRD requirements?

Rosie

We're still in the early stages of onboarding, but so far, Greenly's team has been highly responsive and supportive. Their guidance has been instrumental in ensuring we remain aligned with CSRD requirements as we progress.

Were there any surprises or unexpected insights during the onboarding process?

Rosie

Not yet, but as we delve deeper into the reporting requirements, I expect to uncover valuable insights along the way.

Setting Up Tools and Timelines

What role did Greenly's tools play in defining your CSRD timelines and milestones?

Rosie

Greenly provided a solid framework for defining our compliance roadmap. Their onboarding Excel file was particularly useful, helping us identify key stakeholders, map out business activities, and track milestones with a prefilled Gantt chart.

Did you face any challenges or bottlenecks in the setup phase?

Rosie

So far, the main challenge has been the lack of API compatibility within our systems and supplier data. Otherwise, the setup process has been relatively smooth.

Reflections on the Early Steps

Looking back, do you think the initial steps prepared you well for more complex phases like the DMA and ESRS reporting?

Rosie

Absolutely. Starting with a well-structured process and bite-sized tasks laid a strong foundation for tackling more complex elements like the Double Materiality Assessment (DMA) and European Sustainability Reporting Standards (ESRS). My previous familiarity with the directive and ESRS requirements also helped me appreciate how much Greenly simplifies the process. Without that context, the value of the platform might not have been as immediately clear.



What advice would you give to other companies starting their CSRD compliance journey?

Rosie



Engage your team early

Clear communication and buy-in from stakeholders make a huge difference.



Trust the process

Greenly provides realistic, practical guidance—particularly in DMA training, where they emphasize using common sense and internal decision-making rather than chasing a single "right" answer.



Take your time

Don't rush—ensure you gather accurate data and set achievable timelines.



Choose the right platform

A well-structured, user-friendly solution that meets your needs can make a significant impact on your CSRD journey.

By following these principles, businesses can navigate CSRD compliance more efficiently and effectively.



Simplify CSRD Compliance with Greenly

Greenly streamlines every step of your CSRD reporting with an intuitive, automated platform:

- EFRAG-Compliant Materiality Assessment – Sector-specific analysis for full compliance.
- Automated ESRS Data Collection – AI-powered tools for seamless data integration.
- xHTML Reports with XBRL Tagging – Effortless, fully compliant report generation.
- Expert Guidance – Training and dedicated support to ensure a smooth process.

 Cut reporting time from 1,000+ hours to under 100 and turn CSRD into a strategic advantage.

Drive efficient and impactful climate action today

[Book a demo](#)