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Environmental management systems — Specification with guidance for use

Systèmes de management environnemental — Spécification et lignes directrices pour son utilisation

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Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) is a worldwide federation of national standards bodies (ISO member bodies). The work of preparing International Standards is normally carried out through ISO technical committees. Each member body interested in a subject for which a technical committee has been established has the right to be represented on that committee. International organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO, also take part in the work. ISO collaborates closely with the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) on all matters of electrotechnical standardization.

Draft International Standards adopted by the technical committees are circulated to the member bodies for voting. Publication as an International Standard requires approval by at least 75 % of the member bodies casting a vote.

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International Standard ISO 14001 was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 207, *Environmental management*, Subcommittee SC 1, *Environmental management systems*.

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Annexes A, B and C of this International Standard are for information only.

Introduction

Organizations of all kinds are increasingly concerned to achieve and demonstrate sound environmental performance by controlling the impact of their activities, products or services on the environment, taking into account their environmental policy and objectives. They do so in the context of increasingly stringent legislation, the development of economic policies and other measures to foster environmental protection, and a general growth of concern from interested parties about environmental matters including sustainable development.

Many organizations have undertaken environmental "reviews" or "audits" to assess their environmental performance. On their own, however, these "reviews" and "audits" may not be sufficient to provide an organization with the assurance that its performance not only meets, but will continue to meet, its legal and policy requirements. To be effective, they need to be conducted within a structured management system and integrated with overall management activity.

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International Standards covering environmental management are intended to provide organizations with the elements of an effective environmental management system which can be integrated with other management requirements, to assist organizations to achieve environmental and economic goals. These Standards, like other International Standards, are not intended to be used to create non-tariff trade barriers or to increase or change an organization's legal obligations.

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This International Standard specifies the requirements of such an environmental management system. It has been written to be applicable to all types and sizes of organizations and to accommodate diverse geographical, cultural and social conditions. The basis of the approach is shown in figure 1. The success of the system depends on commitment from all levels and functions, especially from top management. A system of this kind enables an organization to establish, and assess the effectiveness of, procedures to set an environmental policy and objectives, achieve conformance with them, and demonstrate such conformance to others. The overall aim of this International Standard is to support environmental protection and prevention of pollution in balance with socio-economic needs. It should be noted that many of the requirements may be addressed concurrently or revisited at any time.

There is an important distinction between this specification which describes the requirements for certification/registration and/or self-declaration of an organization's environmental management system and a non-certifiable guideline intended to provide generic assistance to an organization for implementing or improving an environmental management system. Environmental management encompasses a full range of issues including those with strategic and competitive implications. Demonstration of successful implementation of this International Standard can be used by an organ-

ization to assure interested parties that an appropriate environmental management system is in place.

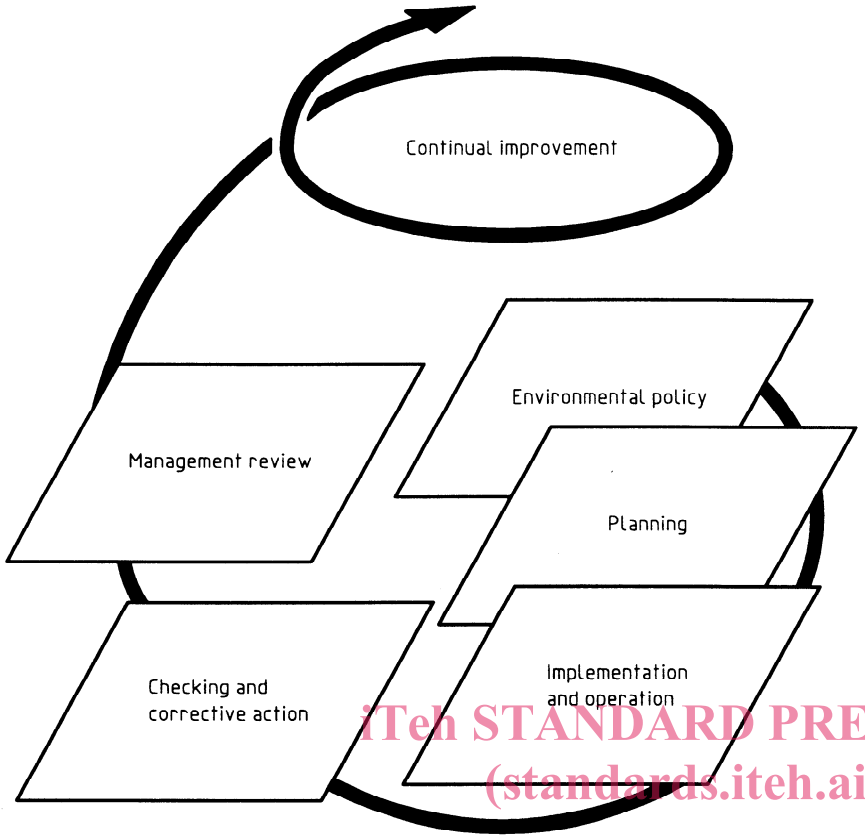

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Figure 1 — Environmental management system model for this International Standard

Guidance on supporting environmental management techniques will be contained in other International Standards.

This International Standard contains only those requirements that may be objectively audited for certification/registration purposes and/or self-declaration purposes. Those organizations requiring more general guidance on a broad range of environmental management system issues should refer to ISO 14004:1996, *Environmental management systems — General guidelines on principles, systems and supporting techniques*.

It should be noted that this International Standard does not establish absolute requirements for environmental performance beyond commitment, in the policy, to compliance with applicable legislation and regulations and to continual improvement. Thus, two organizations carrying out similar activities but having different environmental performance may both comply with its requirements.

The adoption and implementation of a range of environmental management techniques in a systematic manner can contribute to optimal outcomes for all interested parties. However, adoption of this International Standard will not in itself guarantee optimal environmental outcomes. In order to achieve environmental objectives, the environmental management system should encourage organizations to consider implementation of the best available technology, where appropriate and where economically viable. In addition,

the cost effectiveness of such technology should be fully taken into account.

This International Standard is not intended to address, and does not include requirements for, aspects of occupational health and safety management; however, it does not seek to discourage an organization from developing integration of such management system elements. Nevertheless, the certification/registration process will only be applicable to aspects of the environmental management system.

This International Standard shares common management system principles with the ISO 9000 series of quality system Standards. Organizations may elect to use an existing management system consistent with the ISO 9000 series as a basis for its environmental management system. It should be understood, however, that the application of various elements of the management system may differ due to different purposes and different interested parties. While quality management systems deal with customer needs, environmental management systems address the needs of a broad range of interested parties and the evolving needs of society for environmental protection.

The environmental management system requirements specified in this International Standard do not need to be established independently of existing management system elements. In some cases, it will be possible to comply with the requirements by adapting existing management system elements.

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Environmental management systems — Specification with guidance for use

1 Scope

This International Standard specifies requirements for an environmental management system, to enable an organization to formulate a policy and objectives taking into account legislative requirements and information about significant environmental impacts. It applies to those environmental aspects which the organization can control and over which it can be expected to have an influence. It does not itself state specific environmental performance criteria.

This International Standard is applicable to any organization that wishes to

a) implement, maintain and improve an environmental management system;

b) assure itself of its conformance with its stated environmental policy;

c) demonstrate such conformance to others;

d) seek certification/registration of its environmental management system by an external organization;

e) make a self-determination and self-declaration of conformance with this International Standard.

All the requirements in this International Standard are intended to be incorporated into any environmental management system. The extent of the application will depend on such factors as the environmental policy of the organization, the nature of its activities and the conditions in which it operates. This International Standard also provides, in annex A, informative guidance on the use of the specification.

The scope of any application of this International Standard must be clearly identified.

NOTE — For ease of use, the subclause of the specification and annex A have related numbers; thus, for example, 4.3.3. and A.3.3 both deal with environmental objectives and targets, and 4.5.4 and A.5.4 both deal with environmental management system audit.

2 Normative references

There are no normative references at present.

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3 Definitions

For the purposes of this International Standard, the following definitions apply.

3.1
continual improvement
process of enhancing the environmental management system to achieve improvements in overall environmental performance in line with the organization's environmental policy

NOTE — The process need not take place in all areas of activity simultaneously.

3.2
environment
surroundings in which an organization operates, including air, water, land, natural resources, flora, fauna, humans, and their interrelation

NOTE — Surroundings in this context extend from within an organization to the global system.

3.3
environmental aspect
element of an organization's activities, products or services that can interact with the environment

NOTE — A significant environmental aspect is an environmental aspect that has or can have a significant environmental impact.

3.4
environmental impact
any change to the environment, whether adverse or beneficial, wholly or partially resulting from an organization's activities, products or services

3.5
environmental management system
the part of the overall management system that includes organizational structure, planning activities, responsibilities, practices, procedures, processes and resources for developing, implementing, achieving, reviewing and maintaining the environmental policy

3.6
environmental management system audit
a systematic and documented verification process of objectively obtaining and evaluating evidence to determine whether an organization's environmental management system conforms to the environmental management system audit criteria set by the organization, and for communication of the results of this process to management

3.7
environmental objective
overall environmental goal, arising from the environmental policy, that an organization sets itself to achieve, and which is quantified where practicable

3.8
environmental performance
measurable results of the environmental management system, related to an organization's control of its environmental aspects, based on its environmental policy, objectives and targets

3.9
environmental policy
statement by the organization of its intentions and principles in relation to its overall environmental performance which provides a framework for action and for the setting of its environmental objectives and targets

3.10
environmental target
detailed performance requirement, quantified where practicable, applicable to the organization or parts thereof, that arises from the environmental objectives and that needs to be set and met in order to achieve those objectives

3.11
interested party
individual or group concerned with or affected by the environmental performance of an organization

3.12
organization
company, corporation, firm, enterprise, authority or institution, or part or combination thereof, whether incorporated or not, public or private, that has its own functions and administration

NOTE — For organizations with more than one operating unit, a single operating unit may be defined as an organization.

3.13
prevention of pollution
use of processes, practices, materials or products that avoid, reduce or control pollution, which may include recycling, treatment, process changes, control mechanisms, efficient use of resources and material substitution

NOTE — The potential benefits of prevention of pollution include the reduction of adverse environmental impacts, improved efficiency and reduced costs.

4 Environmental management system requirements

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4.1 General requirements

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The organization shall establish and maintain an environmental management system, the requirements of which are described in the whole of clause 4.

4.2 Environmental policy

Top management shall define the organization's environmental policy and ensure that it

a) is appropriate to the nature, scale and environmental impacts of its activities, products or services;

b) includes a commitment to continual improvement and prevention of pollution;

c) includes a commitment to comply with relevant environmental legislation and regulations, and with other requirements to which the organization subscribes;

d) provides the framework for setting and reviewing environmental objectives and targets;

e) is documented, implemented and maintained and communicated to all employees;

f) is available to the public.

4.3 Planning

4.3.1 Environmental aspects

The organization shall establish and maintain (a) procedure(s) to identify the environmental aspects of its activities, products or services that it can control and over which it can be expected to have an influence, in order to determine those which have or can have significant impacts on the environment. The organization shall ensure that the aspects related to these significant impacts are considered in setting its environmental objectives.

The organization shall keep this information up-to-date.

4.3.2 Legal and other requirements

The organization shall establish and maintain a procedure to identify and have access to legal and other requirements to which the organization subscribes, that are applicable to the environmental aspects of its activities, products or services.

4.3.3 Objectives and targets

The organization shall establish and maintain documented environmental objectives and targets, at each relevant function and level within the organization.

When establishing and reviewing its objectives, an organization shall consider the legal and other requirements, its significant environmental aspects, its technological options and its financial, operational and business requirements, and the views of interested parties.

The objectives and targets shall be consistent with the environmental policy, including the commitment to prevention of pollution.

4.3.4 Environmental management programme(s)

The organization shall establish and maintain (a) programme(s) for achieving its objectives and targets. It shall include

a) designation of responsibility for achieving objectives and targets at each relevant function and level of the organization;

b) the means and time-frame by which they are to be achieved.

If a project relates to new developments and new or modified activities, products or services, programme(s) shall be amended where relevant to ensure that environmental management applies to such projects.

4.4 Implementation and operation

4.4.1 Structure and responsibility

Roles, responsibility and authorities shall be defined, documented and communicated in order to facilitate effective environmental management.

Management shall provide resources essential to the implementation and control of the environmental management system. Resources include human resources and specialized skills, technology and financial resources.

The organization's top management shall appoint (a) specific management representative(s) who, irrespective of other responsibilities, shall have defined roles, responsibilities and authority for

a) ensuring that environmental management system requirements are established, implemented and maintained in accordance with this International Standard;

b) reporting on the performance of the environmental management system to top management for review and as a basis for improvement of the environmental management system.

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4.4.2 Training, awareness and competence

The organization shall identify training needs. It shall require that all personnel whose work may create a significant impact upon the environment, have received appropriate training.

It shall establish and maintain procedures to make its employees or members at each relevant function and level aware of

a) the importance of conformance with the environmental policy and procedures and with the requirements of the environmental management system;

b) the significant environmental impacts, actual or potential, of their work activities and the environmental benefits of improved personal performance;

c) their roles and responsibilities in achieving conformance with the environmental policy and procedures and with the requirements of the environmental management system, including emergency preparedness and response requirements;

d) the potential consequences of departure from specified operating procedures.

Personnel performing the tasks which can cause significant environmental impacts shall be competent on