
**Environmental labels and declarations —
Type I environmental labelling — Principles
and procedures**

*Marquage et déclarations environnementaux — Étiquetage
environnemental de type I — Principes et méthodes*

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ISO 14024:1999

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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.

International Standards are drafted in accordance with the rules given in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 3.

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.

International Standard ISO 14024 was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 207, *Environmental management*, Subcommittee SC 3, *Environmental labelling*.

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Introduction

There are a number of approaches to environmental labelling. This International Standard relates to Type I environmental labelling programmes which award their environmental label to products which meet a set of predetermined requirements. The label thus identifies products which are determined to be environmentally preferable within a particular product category.

Type I environmental labelling programmes are voluntary, can be operated by public or private agencies and can be national, regional or international in nature.

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Environmental labels and declarations — Type I environmental labelling — Principles and procedures

1 Scope

This International Standard establishes the principles and procedures for developing Type I environmental labelling programmes, including the selection of product categories, product environmental criteria and product function characteristics; and for assessing and demonstrating compliance. This International Standard also establishes the certification procedures for awarding the label.

2 Normative reference

The following normative document contains provisions which, through reference in this text, constitute provisions of this International Standard. For dated references, subsequent amendments to, or revisions of, any of these publications do not apply. However, parties to agreements based on this International Standard are encouraged to investigate the possibility of applying the most recent edition of the normative document indicated below. For undated references, the latest edition of the normative document referred to applies. Members of ISO and IEC maintain registers of currently valid International Standards.

ISO 14020:1998, *Environmental labels and declarations — General principles*.
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3 Terms and definitions

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

3.1

Type I environmental labelling programme

voluntary, multiple-criteria-based third party programme that awards a licence which authorizes the use of environmental labels on products indicating overall environmental preferability of a product within a particular product category based on life cycle considerations

3.2

product

any goods or service

3.3

product category

group of products which have equivalent function

3.4

product environmental criteria

environmental requirements that the product shall meet in order to be awarded an environmental label

3.5

product function characteristic

attribute or characteristic in the performance and use of a product

3.6 ecolabelling body

third party body, and its agents, which conducts a Type I environmental labelling programme

3.7 third party

person or body that is recognized as being independent of the parties involved, as concerns the issue in question

[ISO/IEC Guide 2:1996]

NOTE "Parties involved" are usually supplier ("first party") and purchaser ("second party") interests.

3.8 interested party

any party affected by a Type I environmental labelling programme

3.9 licensee

party authorized by an ecolabelling body to use a Type I environmental label

3.10 environmental aspect

element of an organization's activities, products or services which can interact with the environment

NOTE A significant environmental aspect is an environmental aspect which has, or can have, a significant environmental impact.

[ISO 14001:1996]

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3.11 environmental impact

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

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[ISO 14001:1996]

3.12 certification

procedure by which a third party gives written assurance that a product, process or service conforms to specified requirements

[ISO/IEC Guide 2:1996]

3.13 licence (for Type I environmental labelling)

document, issued under the rules of a certification system, by which an ecolabelling body grants to a person or body the right to use Type I environmental labels for its products or services in accordance with the rules of the environmental labelling programme

3.14 fitness for purpose

ability of a product, process or service to serve a defined purpose under specific conditions

[ISO/IEC Guide 2:1996]

4 Objective of Type I environmental labelling

The overall goal of environmental labels and declarations is, through communication of verifiable and accurate information, that is not misleading, on environmental aspects of products and services, to encourage the demand for and supply of those products and services that cause less stress on the environment, thereby stimulating the potential for market-driven continuous environmental improvement.

The objective of Type I environmental labelling programmes is to contribute to a reduction in the environmental impacts associated with products, through the identification of products that meet a specific Type I programme's criteria for overall environmental preferability.

The objective of this International Standard is to secure transparency and credibility in implementing Type I environmental labelling programmes and to harmonize the principles and procedures applicable to the programmes.

5 Principles

5.1 Voluntary nature of the programme

Type I environmental labelling programmes, including those developed or operated by government-sponsored agencies, shall be voluntary in nature.

5.2 Relationship with ISO 14020

In addition to the requirements of this International Standard, the principles set out in ISO 14020 shall apply. Where this International Standard provides for more specific requirements than ISO 14020, such specific requirements shall apply.

5.3 Relationship with legislation

A precondition for the granting and maintenance of a licence to use a Type I environmental label shall be the compliance by the applicant with environmental and other relevant legislation.

5.4 Life cycle consideration

The objective of reducing environmental impacts and not merely transferring impacts across media or stages of the product life cycle is best served by considering the whole product life cycle when setting product environmental criteria.

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Life cycle stages to be taken into account when developing the product environmental criteria should include: extraction of resources, manufacturing, distribution, use and disposal relating to relevant cross-media environmental indicators. Any departure from this comprehensive approach or selective use of restricted environmental issues shall be justified.

5.5 Selectivity

Product environmental criteria shall be established to differentiate environmentally preferable products from others in the product category, based on a measurable difference in environmental impact. Product environmental criteria should differentiate between products only when these differences are significant. Testing and verification methodologies used to evaluate products have different levels of precision and accuracy. This should be considered when determining the significance of this difference.

Once product environmental criteria are established according to the above paragraph, all products which meet the criteria shall be eligible to use the label.

5.6 Product environmental criteria

5.6.1 Life cycle considerations

The product environmental criteria shall be based on indicators arising from life cycle considerations (see 6.4).

5.6.2 Basis of criteria

The product environmental criteria should be set at attainable levels and give consideration to relative environmental impacts, measurement capability and accuracy.

5.7 Product function characteristics

In developing the criteria, the fitness for purpose of the product and levels of performance shall be taken into account. International, regional or national standards for the product should be considered for use in the programme, according to the hierarchy for use of standards set out in ISO 14020.

NOTE In the context of environmental labelling, fitness for purpose implies that a product satisfies health, safety and consumer performance needs.

5.8 Validity of programme requirements

5.8.1 Period of validity

The product environmental criteria and product function requirements for each product category shall be set for a predefined period.

5.8.2 Review period

The product environmental criteria and product function requirements shall be reviewed within a predefined period, taking account of factors such as new technologies, new products, new environmental information and market changes. Review of the product environmental criteria and product functional requirements need not necessarily lead to changes in them.

5.9 Consultation

A process of formal open participation among interested parties shall be established at the outset for the purpose of selecting and reviewing product categories, product environmental criteria and product function characteristics.

5.10 Compliance and verification (standards.iteh.ai)

All the elements in the product environmental criteria and product function characteristics of the environmental labelling programme shall be verifiable by the ecolabelling body. The methods for assessing compliance should make use of, in order of preference:

- ISO and IEC standards;
- other internationally recognized standards;
- regional and national standards;
- other repeatable and reproducible methods which follow accepted principles of good laboratory practice (see ISO/IEC 17025 for information on good laboratory practice);
- manufacturer's evidence.

5.11 Transparency

A Type I environmental labelling programme should be able to demonstrate transparency through all stages of its development and operation. Transparency implies that information shall be available to interested parties for inspection and comment where appropriate. Adequate time shall be allowed for comments to be submitted. This information should include:

- selection of product categories;
- selection and development of product environmental criteria;
- product function characteristics;
- testing and verification methods;
- certification and award procedures;

- review period;
- period of validity;
- nonconfidential evidence on which the awarding of the label is based;
- funding sources for the programme development (e.g. fees, government financial support etc.);
- compliance verification.

Transparency should not conflict with the requirements of 5.17.

5.12 International trade aspects

Procedures and requirements for environmental labelling programmes shall not be prepared, adopted or applied with a view to, or with the effect of creating unnecessary obstacles to international trade. The applicable provisions and interpretations of the World Trade Organization (WTO) should be taken into account.

5.13 Accessibility

Application to, and participation in, environmental labelling programmes shall be open to all potential applicants. All applicants who fulfil the product environmental criteria for a given product category and the other programme requirements shall be entitled to be granted a licence and authorized to use the label.

5.14 Scientific basis of product environmental criteria

The development and selection of criteria shall be based on sound scientific and engineering principles. The criteria should be derived from data that support the claim of environmental preferability.

5.15 Avoidance of conflict of interest

Type I Environmental labelling programmes shall ensure that they are free from undue influence. Programmes shall be able to demonstrate that sources of funding do not create a conflict of interest.

NOTE Attention is drawn to the provisions of ISO/IEC Guide 65.

Fees may include application, testing or administration fees. In principle, the costs and fees for the granting and maintaining of a label should be based on all programme costs and should be kept as low as possible to maximize accessibility.

Any fees should be applied equitably to all applicants and licensees.

5.17 Confidentiality

The confidentiality of all information which is identified as confidential shall be maintained.

5.18 Mutual recognition

Mutual recognition, based on confidence, should be encouraged. There may be mutual recognition of tests, inspections, conformity assessment, administrative procedures and, where appropriate, product environmental criteria.

To ensure full transparency, information on existing mutual recognition agreements with other eco-labelling bodies shall be made available.

NOTE For further guidance see Chapter 8 of reference [6].

5.16 Costs and fees