

INTERNATIONAL STANDARD



Environmental considerations specific to insulated electrical power and control
cables

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IEC 62125:2019

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CONTENTS

FOREWORD.....	4
INTRODUCTION.....	6
1 Scope.....	7
2 Normative references	7
3 Terms, definitions and symbols.....	7
3.1 Terms and definitions.....	7
3.2 Symbols.....	9
4 General principles	11
5 Environmental checklist approach.....	11
5.1 What is the checklist approach?.....	11
5.2 Checklist.....	12
6 Life cycle assessment (LCA) of cables	12
6.1 General.....	12
6.2 Goal and scope.....	13
6.2.1 LCA study goal	13
6.2.2 Functional unit.....	13
6.2.3 Reference flow	14
6.2.4 System boundary.....	14
6.2.5 Cut-off criteria	15
6.2.6 Assumptions and limitations.....	15
6.3 Life cycle inventory (LCI)	15
6.3.1 General	15
6.3.2 Data collection.....	15
6.3.3 Data selection.....	16
6.3.4 Allocation procedure	16
6.4 Life cycle impact assessment (LCIA).....	16
6.5 Interpretation	17
6.6 Single environmental indicator approach.....	17
7 Environmental and energy cost-based conductor size optimization – ECSO	18
7.1 Overview.....	18
7.2 Basic rules.....	18
7.3 Factors	20
7.4 CO ₂ evaluation.....	20
7.4.1 General	20
7.4.2 CO ₂ emissions during manufacturing, transportation, installation and final disposal	20
7.4.3 CO ₂ emissions at the use phase	20
7.5 Calculation method	20
7.5.1 General	20
7.5.2 Calculation of initial cost.....	20
7.5.3 Calculation of running costs.....	21
7.5.4 Conductor resistance.....	21
7.5.5 Optimum current.....	21
7.5.6 Optimum conductor size	22
7.5.7 Energy reduction related to the use phase of the cable.....	22
7.6 Example.....	23

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IEC 62125:2019

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8	Environment-related communication	24
8.1	General.....	24
8.2	General principles.....	24
8.3	Composition and compliancy to legislation on substances.....	25
8.4	Life cycle assessment.....	25
8.5	End of life	25
Annex A	(informative) Checklist for the checklist approach	26
A.1	Preliminary considerations	26
A.2	Design considerations.....	26
A.3	Production considerations.....	26
A.4	Considerations for use and end of life phase.....	27
Annex B	(informative) Example for ECSO	28
B.1	General.....	28
B.2	Cable data	28
B.3	Calculation condition.....	28
B.4	Initial cost	29
B.4.1	Initial investment	29
B.4.2	Conversion of CO ₂ emissions during material/cable production, removal, transportation and disposal to cost	29
B.4.3	Initial cost (sum).....	29
B.4.4	Conductor resistance.....	30
B.5	Calculation of running costs.....	30
B.5.1	Costs for Joule losses during anticipated life time.....	30
B.5.2	Costs for CO ₂ emission during anticipated life time	30
B.6	Life cycle cost.....	31
B.7	Optimum current	31
B.8	Efficiency.....	32
B.8.1	Calculation of energy efficiency	32
B.9	Life cycle cost versus service life.....	33
Annex C	(informative) Example of environmental communication.....	34
Bibliography	35
Figure 1	– Life cycle phases	13
Figure 2	– Life cycle costs for conductor size for a certain current	19
Figure 3	– Optimum current range for minimizing life cycle cost.....	19
Table B.1	– Life cycle cost versus service life	33
Table B.2	– Life cycle cost versus service life, relative to 3C 70 mm ²	33

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**ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS SPECIFIC TO
INSULATED ELECTRICAL POWER AND CONTROL CABLES**

FOREWORD

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International Standard IEC 62125 has been prepared by IEC technical committee 20: Electric cables.

This first edition cancels and replaces IEC TR 62125, published in 2007. This edition constitutes a technical revision.

This edition includes the following significant technical changes with respect to IEC TR 62125:2007:

- a) development of the document from TR to international standard;
- b) inclusion of a methodology for LCA;
- c) inclusion of a methodology for conductor size optimization.

The text of this standard is based on the following documents:

FDIS	Report on voting
20/1876/FDIS	20/1881/RVD

Full information on the voting for the approval of this standard can be found in the report on voting indicated in the above table.

This publication has been drafted in accordance with the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2.

The committee has decided that the contents of this publication will remain unchanged until the stability date indicated on the IEC web site under "<http://webstore.iec.ch>" in the data related to the specific publication. At this date, the publication will be

- reconfirmed,
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INTRODUCTION

The cable sector has, for many years, considered the impact of electric cables on the environment with respect to their operating conditions. Transmission system operators, distribution system operators, manufacturers, installers/contractors, users and authorities have considerably increased their requirements to take into account the environmental impact of electric cables.

IEC TC 20 regularly reviews its approach to the incorporation of environmental aspects into standards for electric cables and their components. Environmental considerations should be included in both design and redesign work with respect to the raw materials used, energy consumption, emissions and generation of waste during production, end of life recycling or disposal, and in-service performance.

This document supersedes IEC TR 62125 published 2007, which intended to give assistance to writers of standards within IEC Technical Committee 20, to take into account the relevant environmental aspects that are specific to electric cables in normal use.

This document is addressed to writers of standards, manufacturers and users of power cables to provide guidance when evaluating:

- the qualitative environmental impact (checklist approach), or
- the quantitative environmental impact (LCA approach), and
- the environmental and energy cost-based conductor size optimization (ECISO).

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ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS SPECIFIC TO INSULATED ELECTRICAL POWER AND CONTROL CABLES

1 Scope

This document provides methodologies addressing environmental evaluation and communication related to cables in normal use.

It includes an environmental checklist for power cables, the method for life cycle assessment (LCA) and a methodology for conductor size optimization.

The results obtained by applying such methodologies can be used for external communication. Environmental communication can also include other topics, such as material declaration.

2 Normative references

The following documents are referred to in the text in such a way that some or all of their content constitutes requirements of this document. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

IEC 60287-3-2:2012, *Electric cables – Calculation of the current rating – Part 3-2: Sections on operating conditions – Economic optimization of power cable size*

ISO 14040:2006, *Environmental management – Life cycle assessment – Principles and framework*

ISO 14044:2006, *Environmental management – Life cycle assessment – Requirements and guidelines*

3 Terms, definitions and symbols

3.1 Terms and definitions

3.1.1

life cycle assessment

LCA

compilation and evaluation of the inputs, outputs and the potential environmental impacts of a product system throughout its life cycle

[SOURCE: ISO 14040:2006, 3.2]

3.1.2

life cycle inventory

LCI

phase of life cycle assessment involving the compilation and quantification of inputs and outputs for a product throughout its life cycle

[SOURCE: ISO 14040:2006, 3.3]

3.1.3
life cycle impact assessment
LCIA

phase of life cycle assessment aimed at understanding and evaluating the magnitude and significance of the potential environmental impacts for a product system throughout the life cycle of the product

[SOURCE: ISO 14040:2006, 3.4]

3.1.4
life cycle thinking
LCT

consideration of all relevant environmental aspects during the entire lifecycle of products

[SOURCE: IEC 62430:2009, 3.11]

3.1.5
reference flow

measure of the outputs from processes in a given product system required to fulfil the function expressed by the functional unit

[SOURCE: ISO 14040:2006, 3.29]

3.1.6
functional unit

quantified performance of a product system for use as a reference unit

[SOURCE: ISO 14040:2006, 3.20]

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3.1.7
environment

surroundings in which a product or system exists, including air, water, land, natural resources, flora, fauna, humans and their interrelation

Note 1 to entry: "Environment" in this document means ecological environment. It does not refer to surrounding factors influencing the cable (such as humidity or temperature), nor to the business environment.

[SOURCE: IEC Guide 109:2012, 3.3, modified – Note 1 to entry has been added.]

3.1.8
life cycle

consecutive and interlinked stages of a product system, from raw material acquisition or generation from natural resources to final disposal

[SOURCE: ISO 14040:2006, 3.1]

3.1.9
environmental impact of a product

change to the environment, whether adverse or beneficial, wholly or partially resulting from the life cycle of a product

3.1.10
unit process

smallest element considered in the life cycle inventory analysis for which input and output data are quantified

[SOURCE: ISO 14040:2006, 3.34]

3.2 Symbols

α_{20}	temperature coefficient of conductor resistance at 20 °C (for copper: 0,003 93, for aluminium: 0,004 03)	1/K
θ	maximum rated conductor operating temperature	°C
θ_a	ambient average temperature	°C
θ_m	mean operating conductor temperature	°C
$\Delta\theta$	temperature rise of conductor $\Delta\theta = (\theta_m - 20 \text{ °C})$	°C
μ	loss load factor, see IEC 60853-1	–
C_{af}	cost for ancillary materials and installation materials (like conduits)	cu/km
C_C	cable cost including transportation	cu/km
C_I	initial cost of the cable being considered	cu/km
$C_{I(\text{CO}_2)}$	cost for CO ₂ emission during mining, manufacturing, transportation, installation and final disposal for a certain conductor size	cu/km
C_{I1}	initial cost of the next smaller standard size of conductor	cu/km
$C_{I1(\text{CO}_2)}$	cost for CO ₂ emission during mining, manufacturing, transportation, installation and final disposal for the next smaller size of conductor	cu/km
C_{I2}	initial cost of the next larger standard size of conductor	cu/km
$C_{I2(\text{CO}_2)}$	cost for CO ₂ emission during mining, manufacturing, transportation, installation and final disposal for the next larger size of conductor	cu/km
C_J	present value of the cost of joule losses during N years	cu/km
$C_{J(\text{CO}_2)}$	present value of the costs for CO ₂ emission during anticipated life time due to Joule losses	cu/km
C_L	cable installation (including laying, removal and disposal) cost	cu/km
C_T	life cycle cost	cu/km
C_{T1}	life cycle cost for the next smaller size of conductor	cu/km
C_{T2}	life cycle costs for the next larger size of conductor	cu/km
cu	arbitrary currency unit	
E_{CONV}	CO ₂ emission of the cable of conventional size per year during use phase	CO ₂ -kg/year

E_{OPTI}	CO ₂ emission of the cable of optimum size per year during use phase	CO ₂ -kg/year
F	auxiliary quantity defined by Formula (8)	cu/W
f_1	load factor	
f_2	power factor (= $\cos \varphi$, φ being the phase angle between voltage and current)	
I_{max}	maximum load current	A
I_{upper}	upper limit of I_{max}	A
I_{lower}	lower limit of I_{max}	A
I_Z	CO ₂ emissions during mining, manufacturing, transportation, installation and final disposal	CO ₂ -kg/km
K	CO ₂ emission for generation of unit power to be adjusted to the national situation	CO ₂ -kg/kWh
k_w	Coefficient based on wiring system, e.g. 3 phase-3 wire $k_w = \sqrt{3}$, for DC cables $k_w = 1$	
L	cable length	km
M	coefficient for converting CO ₂ emissions to cost to be adjusted to the national situation	CO ₂ -cu/kg
N	service life, a synonym (anticipated life time)	year
N_p	number of loaded phase conductors	–
P	cost of one kilowatt-hour at relevant voltage level	cu/kWh
R	conductor resistance of conductor per length (considered to be a constant value at an average operating temperature)	Ω/km
R_1	conductor resistance per length of the next smaller standard conductor size	Ω/km
R_2	conductor resistance per length of the next larger standard conductor size	Ω/km
R_{20}	conductor resistance at 20 °C per length, (ohm/km)	Ω/km
R_{conv}	AC resistance per length of the cable with conventional size for AC system and DC resistance per length of the cable with conventional size for DC system	Ω/km
R_{opti}	AC resistance per length of the cable with optimum size for AC system and DC resistance per length of the cable with optimum size for DC system	Ω/km
S	cross-sectional area of a cable conductor	mm ²

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S_1	cross-sectional area of the next smaller standard conductor size	mm ²
S_2	cross-sectional area of the next larger standard conductor size	mm ²
U	system voltage	V
W	amount of power consumption per year	kWh/year
W_{conv}	distribution losses with the cable of conventional size	kWh/year
W_{opti}	distribution losses of the cable with optimum size	kWh/year
Y	annual operating days	days

4 General principles

The environmental impact of an electric cable shall be considered throughout all life cycle phases: from design till end of life. This is called the concept of life cycle thinking.

There are various tools for the environmental evaluation of the products, for example:

- a checklist approach, which is a qualitative consideration of the environmental aspects related to the life cycle steps of the product, i.e. use of the checklist in accordance with Clause 5 and Annex A, that is based on IEC Guide 109 and specifically focused on power cables;
- life cycle assessment (LCA), which is a scientific tool providing a quantitative evaluation of the environmental impact occurring during the whole life cycle of the product, i.e. use of the life cycle assessment in accordance with Clause 6 for assessment of the environmental impacts of a product.

The use of LCA methodology is recommended, as it provides quantified and detailed information on product environmental impact. Nevertheless, considering the knowledge and resources required to perform LCA studies, the checklist might be acceptable, for instance if certain aspects are considered without determining the complete environmental impact. This choice has to be made depending on objectives and knowledge and resources available.

Apart from life cycle thinking, other approaches can be used, such as:

- ECSO, a tool (described in Clause 7) to evaluate and optimize the conductor size by combining environmental and energy costs. ECSO is the optimization of the conductor size so that the sum of the total costs and the conversion costs of CO₂ emissions throughout the life phases (defined in 6.2.4) of the cable is minimized.

Environmental improvement shall be balanced against other factors, such as product function, performance, health and safety, cost, marketability and quality, legal and regulatory requirements and other standards.

5 Environmental checklist approach

5.1 What is the checklist approach?

The checklist approach is a simple method without quantification of the complete environmental impact. It is a working aid to evaluate the cable design and the cable choice for a certain application so as to find environmentally related aspects that may require consideration. The lists in 5.2 and Annex A address key factors that have an impact on the environment.