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Environmental labels and declarations — Type III environmental declarations — Principles and procedures

Marquages et déclarations environnementaux — Déclarations environnementales de Type III — Principes et modes opératoires

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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 2.

The main task of technical committees is to prepare International Standards. 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.

Attention is drawn to the possibility that some of the elements of this document may be the subject of patent rights. ISO shall not be held responsible for identifying any or all such patent rights.

ISO 14025 was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 207, *Environmental management*, Subcommittee SC 3, *Environmental labelling*.

This first edition of ISO 14025 cancels and replaces ISO/TR 14025:2000, which has been technically revised.

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Introduction

Type III environmental declarations present quantified environmental information on the life cycle of a product to enable comparisons between products fulfilling the same function. Such declarations

— are provided by one or more organizations,

— are based on independently verified life cycle assessment (LCA) data, life cycle inventory analysis (LCI) data or information modules in accordance with the ISO 14040 series of standards and, where relevant, additional environmental information,

— are developed using predetermined parameters, and

— are subject to the administration of a programme operator, such as a company or a group of companies, industrial sector or trade association, public authorities or agencies, or an independent scientific body or other organization.

Type III environmental declarations as described in this International Standard are primarily intended for use in business-to-business communication, but their use in business-to-consumer communication is not precluded. It is recognized that a developer of a Type III environmental declaration cannot precisely determine the audience. However, it is important to consider the information needs of different purchaser or user groups, for instance large businesses, small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs), public procurement agencies and consumers. Those responsible for developing Type III environmental declarations and programmes based on this International Standard will need to pay due attention to the level of awareness of the target audience.

In programmes based on this International Standard, the organization making the declaration will be required to ensure that data are independently verified either internally or externally. This could, but does not necessarily, mean third-party verification except in the case of business-to-consumer declarations. ISO provides a general definition for "certification" (procedure by which a third party gives written assurance that a product or process conforms to specified requirements). Nevertheless, "certification" is understood and conducted differently in different regions. To avoid confusion, this International Standard uses the term "third-party verification" instead of "certification".

Harmonization of general programme instructions and particularly product category rules (PCR) are encouraged between programmes to meet the principle of comparability. This includes mutual recognition of rules with respect to PCR development, PCR review and verification procedures, administrative procedures and declaration format. To ensure comparability, programme operators are encouraged to work cooperatively to achieve harmonization of the programmes and to develop mutual recognition agreements.

NOTE   In the practice of developing Type III environmental declarations, programmes or their declarations are referred to by various names such as Eco-Leaf, eco-profile, environmental declaration of product, environmental product declaration (EPD) and environmental profile.

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Environmental labels and declarations — Type III environmental declarations — Principles and procedures

1 Scope

This International Standard establishes the principles and specifies the procedures for developing Type III environmental declaration programmes and Type III environmental declarations. It specifically establishes the use of the ISO 14040 series of standards in the development of Type III environmental declaration programmes and Type III environmental declarations.

This International Standard establishes principles for the use of environmental information, in addition to those given in ISO 14020.

Type III environmental declarations as described in this International Standard are primarily intended for use in business-to-business communication, but their use in business-to-consumer communication under certain conditions is not precluded.

This International Standard does not override, or in any way change, legally required environmental information, claims or labelling, or any other applicable legal requirements.

This International Standard does not include sector-specific provisions, which may be dealt with in other ISO documents. It is intended that sector-specific provisions in other ISO documents related to Type III environmental declarations be based on and use the principles and procedures of this International Standard.

2 Normative references

The following referenced documents are indispensable for the application 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.

ISO 14020:2000, *Environmental labels and declarations — General principles*

ISO 14021:1999, *Environmental labels and declarations — Self-declared environmental claims (Type II environmental labelling)*

ISO 14024:1999, *Environmental labels and declarations — Type I environmental labelling — Principles and procedures*

ISO 14040:2006[1]), *Environmental management — Life cycle assessment — Principles and framework*

ISO 14044:2006[1]), *Environmental management — Life cyle assessment — Requirements and guidelines*

ISO 14050, *Environmental management — Vocabulary*

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1) ISO 14040:2006 and ISO 14044:2006 cancel and replace ISO 14040:1997, ISO 14041:1998, ISO 14042:2000 and ISO 14043:2000.

3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the terms and definitions given in ISO 14050 and the following apply.

NOTE   Terms are not defined where they retain their normal dictionary definition. Where bold type is used within a definition, this indicates a cross-reference to another term defined in this clause, and the number reference for the term is given in parentheses.

3.1
environmental label
environmental declaration
claim which indicates the environmental aspects of a **product** (3.11) or service

NOTE   An environmental label or declaration may take the form of a statement, symbol or graphic on a product or package label, in product literature, in technical bulletins, in advertising or in publicity, amongst other things.

[ISO 14020:2000]

3.2
Type III environmental declaration
environmental declaration (3.1) providing quantified environmental data using predetermined parameters and, where relevant, additional environmental information

NOTE 1   The predetermined parameters are based on the ISO 14040 series of standards, which is made up of ISO 14040 and ISO 14044.

NOTE 2   The additional environmental information may be quantitative or qualitative.

3.3
Type III environmental declaration programme
voluntary programme for the development and use of **Type III environmental declarations** (3.2), based on a set of operating rules

3.4
programme operator
body or bodies that conduct a **Type III environmental declaration programme** (3.3)

NOTE   A programme operator can be a company or a group of companies, industrial sector or trade association, public authorities or agencies, or an independent scientific body or other organization.

3.5
product category rules
PCR
set of specific rules, requirements and guidelines for developing **Type III environmental declarations** (3.2) for one or more **product categories** (3.12)

3.6
PCR review
process whereby a **third party** (3.10) panel verifies the **product category rules** (3.5)

3.7
competence
demonstrated personal attributes and demonstrated ability to apply knowledge and skills

[ISO 19011:2002]

3.8
verifier
person or body that carries out **verification** (3.9)

3.9
verification
confirmation, through the provision of objective evidence, that specified requirements have been fulfilled

[ISO 9000:2005]

3.10
third party
person or body that is recognized as being independent of the parties involved, as concerns the issues in question

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

[ISO 14024:1999]

3.11
product
any goods or service

[ISO 14024:1999]

3.12
product category
group of **products** (3.11) that can fulfil equivalent functions

3.13
information module
compilation of data to be used as a basis for a **Type III environmental declaration** (3.2), covering a unit process or a combination of unit processes that are part of the **life cycle** (3.20) of a **product** (3.11)

3.14
functional unit
quantified performance of a product system for use as a reference unit

[ISO 14040:2006]

3.15
interested party
person or body interested in or affected by the development and use of a **Type III environmental declaration** (3.2)

3.16
consumer
individual member of the general public purchasing or using goods, property or services for private purposes

(Reference [5], subclause 4.3)

3.17
environmental aspect
element of an organization's activities, products or services that can interact with the environment

[ISO 14040:2006]

3.18
environmental impact
any change to the environment, whether adverse or beneficial, wholly or partially resulting from an organization's **environmental aspects** (3.17)

[ISO 14001:2004]

3.19
comparative assertion
environmental claim regarding the superiority or equivalence of one product versus a competing **product**
(3.11) that performs the same function

[ISO 14040:2006]

3.20
life cycle
consecutive and interlinked stages of a product system, from raw material acquisition or generation from
natural resources to final disposal

[ISO 14040:2006]

4   Objectives

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

The objectives of Type III environmental declarations are as follows:

a)   to provide LCA-based information and additional information on the environmental aspects of products;

b)   to assist purchasers and users to make informed comparisons between products; these declarations are
not comparative assertions;

c)   to encourage improvement of environmental performance;

d)   to provide information for assessing the environmental impacts of products over their life cycle.

5   Principles

5.1   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.

5.2   Voluntary nature

The development and operation of Type III environmental declaration programmes and the development and
use of Type III environmental declarations are voluntary. This International Standard provides requirements
for an organization choosing to develop and operate such a programme or to develop and use such
declarations.

5.3   Life cycle basis

In the development of Type III environmental declarations, all relevant environmental aspects of the product
throughout its life cycle shall be taken into consideration and become part of the declaration. If the aspects
considered to be relevant do not cover all stages of the life cycle then this shall be stated and justified. The
data shall be generated using the principles, framework, methodologies and practices established by the
ISO 14040 series of standards (i.e. ISO 14040 and ISO 14044).

Relevant environmental aspects that have not been covered by LCA shall be addressed using other
appropriate methods.

5.4   Modularity

LCA-based data for materials, parts and other inputs that are used in the manufacture or assembly of other products may be used to contribute to Type III environmental declarations for those other products. In such circumstances, the LCA-based data for the materials, parts and other inputs shall be referred to as information modules and may represent the whole or a portion of the life cycle for those materials or parts. Information modules may be used to develop a Type III environmental declaration or may be combined to develop a Type III environmental declaration for a product, provided that the information modules are adjusted in accordance with the PCR for the product category. If the information modules combined to develop a Type III environmental declaration for a product do not cover all stages of the life cycle of the product, then any omissions shall be stated and justified in the PCR document.

An information module may be, but does not have to be, a Type III environmental declaration.

5.5   Involvement of interested parties

The process of developing environmental labels and declarations should include an open, participatory consultation with interested parties. Reasonable efforts should be made to achieve a consensus throughout the process.

NOTE   Taken from ISO 14020:2000, 4.9.1, Principle 8.

The interested parties for Type III environmental declaration programmes may include, but are not limited to, material suppliers, manufacturers, trade associations, purchasers, users, consumers, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), public agencies and, when relevant, independent parties and certification bodies.

"Open consultation" should take place and is strongly recommended, but this does not necessarily imply a public consultation. The programme operator shall be responsible for ensuring that appropriate consultations take place to ensure credibility and transparency in the operation of the programme. Competitors of the organization(s) developing the programme or the PCR may be included in the open consultation.

5.6   Comparability

Type III environmental declarations are intended to allow a purchaser or user to compare the environmental performance of products on a life cycle basis. Therefore comparability of Type III environmental declarations is critical. The information provided for this comparison shall be transparent in order to allow the purchaser or user to understand the limitations of comparability inherent in the Type III environmental declarations (see 6.7.2).

NOTE   Type III environmental declarations not based on an LCA covering all life cycle stages, or based on different PCR, are examples of declarations that have limited comparability.

5.7   Verification

To ensure that a Type III environmental declaration contains relevant and verifiable LCA information based on the ISO 14040 series of standards, the programme operator shall establish transparent procedures for

⎯ PCR review, including review of the LCA, LCI, information modules and additional environmental information on which the PCR are based (see 8.1.2),

⎯ independent verification of the LCA, LCI, information modules and additional environmental information on which the declaration is based (see 8.1.3), and

⎯ independent verification of the Type III environmental declaration (see 8.1.4).

5.8   Flexibility

For Type III environmental declarations to be successful in improving environmental understanding of products, it is important that these declarations maintain their technical credibility while providing flexibility, practicality and cost-effectiveness of application.

This International Standard allows

— a range of different types of bodies to operate a Type III environmental declaration programme (see 3.4 and Clause 6),

— use of relevant stages of the life cycle, provided necessary information is supplied (see 7.2.5), and

— provision of additional environmental information (see Figure 2 and 7.2.3).

5.9   Transparency

To ensure that a Type III environmental declaration can be understood and correctly interpreted by any person interested in the information, the programme operator shall ensure the availability of

— general programme instructions (see 6.4),

— a list of all published PCR documents within the programme,

— PCR documents, and

— explanatory material, as specified in this International Standard (see 7.2.1 and 9.2.3).

6   Programme requirements

6.1   General

Type III environmental declaration programmes are voluntary and have a set of rules guiding their overall administration and operation. These rules, managed by a programme operator, are referred to as general programme instructions.

An overview of Type III environmental declaration programme development and operation with references to relevant clauses of this International Standard can be found in Annex A.

6.2   Scope of the programme

The scope of the programme shall be clear and shall define whether the programme is limited, for example, to a certain geographical area or to certain industrial sectors, products or groups of products.

A programme should be accessible to all organizations interested in developing a PCR or Type III environmental declarations within the defined scope.

6.3   Responsibilities of the programme operator

The programme operator shall be responsible for the administration of a Type III environmental declaration programme.

This administration includes, but is not limited to, the following tasks:

a) preparing, maintaining and communicating general programme instructions;

b) publishing the names of the organizations actually involved as interested parties in the programme development (not individual names);