
Environmental labels and declarations — Development of product category rules

*Marquages et déclarations environnementaux — Développement des
règles de catégorie de produit*

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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.

The procedures used to develop this document and those intended for its further maintenance are described in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1. In particular the different approval criteria needed for the different types of ISO documents should be noted. This document was drafted in accordance with the editorial rules of the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2 (see www.iso.org/directives).

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For an explanation on the voluntary nature of standards, the meaning of ISO specific terms and expressions related to conformity assessment, as well as information about ISO's adherence to the World Trade Organization (WTO) principles in the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) see the following URL: www.iso.org/iso/foreword.html. (standards.iteh.ai)

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Introduction

International standards for product-related environmental communication, based on life cycle assessment (LCA), necessitate the use of product category rules (PCR). Since the publication of ISO 14025, ISO 14046, ISO/TS 14067 and ISO 21930 between 2006 and 2014, operators of Type III environmental product declaration and footprint communications as well as other organizations have gained varying levels of experience with the development and use of PCR.

The quality of PCR available on the market varies and PCR of low quality bear the risk of undermining the usefulness and credibility of PCR in general. A common international approach to the development of PCR can also facilitate the involvement of all interested parties, including those from developing countries, which can increase the quality and consistency of PCR generally.

This document is intended to ensure a certain level of quality of PCR by providing principles, requirements and guidelines for their development, including reviewing, registration and updating.

This document is intended to benefit organizations, governments, communities and other interested parties through:

- providing efficient and consistent procedures for developing PCR of good quality;
- enabling the harmonization of PCR, or the recognition of equivalence of measures, when relevant;
- providing a better understanding of PCR especially among interested parties and regions;
- encouraging the adoption and dissemination of PCR in the business community; enhancing the credibility, consistency (e.g. between different regions or sectors) and transparency of PCR.

This document is part of the suite of standards developed by ISO/TC 207/SC 3 dealing with environmental labels and environmental declarations of products.

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Environmental labels and declarations — Development of product category rules

1 Scope

This document provides principles, requirements and guidelines for developing, reviewing, registering and updating PCR within a Type III environmental declaration or footprint communication programme based on life cycle assessment (LCA) according to ISO 14040 and ISO 14044 as well as ISO 14025, ISO 14046 and ISO/TS 14067.

It also provides guidance on how to address and integrate additional environmental information, whether or not it is based on LCA in a coherent and scientifically sound manner according to ISO 14025.

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.

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

ISO 14021:2016, *Environmental labels and declarations — Self-declared environmental claims (Type II environmental labelling)*

ISO 14025:2006, *Environmental labels and declarations — Type III environmental declarations — Principles and procedures*

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

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

ISO 14046, *Environmental management — Water footprint — Principles, requirements and guidelines*

ISO/TS 14067, *Greenhouse gases — Carbon footprint of products — Requirements and guidelines for quantification and communication*

ISO/TS 14071:2014, *Environmental management — Life cycle assessment — Critical review processes and reviewer competencies: Additional requirements and guidelines to ISO 14044:2006*

3 Terms and definitions

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

ISO and IEC maintain terminological databases for use in standardization at the following addresses:

- ISO Online browsing platform: available at <http://www.iso.org/obp>
- IEC Electropedia: available at <http://www.electropedia.org/>

3.1
product category rules
PCR

set of specific rules, requirements and guidelines for developing *Type III environmental declarations* (3.5) and footprint communications for one or more *product categories* (3.3)

Note 1 to entry: For PCR for footprint communications, a qualifier is often used, e.g. CFP-PCR in the case of carbon footprint product category rules.

[SOURCE: ISO 14025:2006, 3.5, modified — The words “and footprint communications” have been added to the definition and Note 1 to entry has been added.]

3.2
core rules

set of rules which provide consistent requirements for the development of *product category rules* (3.1) across multiple *product categories* (3.3)

Note 1 to entry: These product categories may belong to the same industry sector.

Note 2 to entry: An example of core rules for construction products is ISO 21930.

3.3
product category
group of products that can fulfil equivalent functions

[SOURCE: ISO 14025:2006, 3.12]

3.4
environmental declaration
environmental label

claim which indicates the environmental aspects of a product

Note 1 to entry: 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.

Note 2 to entry: The term “product” includes goods and services.

[SOURCE: ISO 14025:2006, 3.1, modified — The words “or service” have been deleted from the definition and Note 2 to entry has been added.]

3.5
Type III environmental declaration

environmental declaration (3.4) providing quantified environmental data using predetermined parameters and, where relevant, additional environmental information

Note 1 to entry: The predetermined parameters are based on the ISO 14040- series of standards, which is made up of ISO 14040 and ISO 14044.

Note 2 to entry: The additional environmental information may be quantitative or qualitative.

[SOURCE: ISO 14025:2006, 3.2.]

3.6
programme operator
body or bodies that conduct a *Type III environmental declaration* (3.5) programme or footprint communication programme

Note 1 to entry: 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.

Note 2 to entry: See [Annex B](#) for further information on the tasks for a programme operator.

[SOURCE: ISO 14025:2006, 3.4, modified — The words “or footprint communication programme” have been added to the definition and Note 2 to entry has been added.]

3.7

PCR committee

group of *interested parties* (3.9) tasked by the *programme operator* (3.6) with drafting and finalizing the *product category rules* (3.1)

3.8

registration code

identifier of the *product category rules* (3.1)

3.9

interested party

person or organization that can affect, be affected by, or perceive itself to be affected by a decision or activity

EXAMPLE Customers, communities, suppliers, regulators, non-governmental organizations, investors and employees.

Note 1 to entry: To “perceive itself to be affected” means the perception has been made known to the organization.

[SOURCE: ISO 14001:2015, 3.1.6]

3.10

declared unit

quantity of a product for use as a reference unit in a *Type III environmental declaration* (3.5) or footprint communication, based on one or more *information modules* (3.12)

Note 1 to entry: The declared unit is used where the function and the reference scenario for the whole life cycle cannot be stated.

EXAMPLE 1 kg of primary steel; 1 m³ of crude oil.

[SOURCE: ISO 21930:—, modified — The definition has been broadened to cover all products, as well as footprint communications.]

3.11

comparative assertion

environmental claim regarding the superiority or equivalence of one product versus a competing product that performs the same function

[SOURCE: ISO 14040:2006, 3.6]

3.12

information module

compilation of data to be used as a basis for a *Type III environmental declaration* (3.5) or footprint communication, covering a unit process or a combination of unit processes that are part of the life cycle of a product

Note 1 to entry: See also [Annex A](#).

[SOURCE: ISO 14025:2006, 3.13, modified — The words “or footprint communication” have been added to the definition and Note 1 to entry has been added.]

4 Symbols and abbreviated terms

LCA	Life Cycle Assessment
LCI	Life Cycle Inventory
PCR	Product Category Rules

5 Principles

5.1 LCA based environmental information

PCR follow the provisions of ISO 14044, and where relevant ISO 14025, ISO 14046 and ISO/TS 14067. PCR are based on supporting LCA or footprint studies and on additional LCA-based information from other sources referenced in the PCR.

NOTE Type III environmental declarations also include additional information that is not based on LCA, as described in ISO 14025:2006, 7.2.3.

5.2 Involvement of interested parties

The process of developing PCR is transparent, includes participatory open consultation with a balanced representation of interested parties and involves reasonable efforts to achieve a consensus throughout the process. Organizing appropriate consultations ensures credibility and transparency.

5.3 Comparability

PCR are intended to increase, as far as possible, the comparability of Type III environmental declaration and footprint communications for products in the same product category using the same PCR

NOTE For limitations of comparability, see ISO 14025.

6 PCR development

6.1 General

PCR shall follow the rules of the Type III environmental declaration or footprint communication programme within which they are developed.

NOTE 1 For Type III environmental declarations, these rules are summarized in the general programme instructions in accordance with ISO 14025:2006, 6.4.

The PCR shall be based on environmental information obtained from at least one of the following:

- relevant LCA studies that fulfil the requirements of [6.5.1](#) and ISO 14044, and represent the full life cycle of the product category covered by the PCR;
- relevant LCA-based footprint studies.

EXAMPLE ISO 14046 for water footprints; ISO/TS 14067 for carbon footprint of products.

The PCR may also take into consideration:

- other LCA-based additional environmental information from documents referenced in the PCR;
- additional environmental information not based on LCA (see [6.6](#)).

LCA studies that have been critically reviewed in accordance with ISO 14044:2006, Clause 6, or ISO/TS 14071 should be given precedence if the representativeness, completeness, and accuracy of the information they contain is comparable.

In the case of PCR for products, the supporting LCA study or studies shall represent all life cycle stages of one or more products within the product category covered by the PCR.

In the case of PCR for information modules, the life cycle stages considered in the supporting LCA study or studies, alone or in combination, shall match the scope of the PCR.

NOTE 2 Further guidance on information modules is provided in [Annex A](#).

An existing PCR document, registered by a programme operator, based on LCA in accordance with ISO 14044 or other relevant LCA-based footprint studies and having undergone a PCR review according to this document, may also be used for developing new PCR. If an existing PCR can be used or amended, this course should be followed rather than creating a new PCR.

NOTE 3 The process of preparing PCR can be done in parallel with supporting LCA studies.

6.2 Consistent information

A goal of PCR is to enable different practitioners using the PCR to generate consistent results when assessing products of the same product category. PCR shall provide requirements to generate Type III environmental declarations and footprint communications that provide consistent information.

These requirements shall include data quality aspects based on ISO 14044:2006, 4.2.3.6.2.

6.3 Comparability (standards.iteh.ai)

PCR shall include requirements for comparability within the product category, including requirements related to data and modelling.

Comparability as described in this document is not sufficient to make a comparative claim (see ISO 14021), or a comparative assertion (see ISO 14044). Performance tracking (see ISO/TS 14067 and ISO 14026) does not require a PCR, but where a PCR is used for performance tracking, it shall follow all the requirements of this standard, including the requirements for comparability.

NOTE 1 For requirements on comparability see ISO 14025:2006, 6.7.2.

NOTE 2 Programme operators can prefer, recommend or require the use of certain background data sources to enhance the comparability of environmental declarations and footprint communications based on the same PCR.

6.4 PCR preparation

6.4.1 Formation of the PCR committee

A PCR committee shall be established for a selected product category. The task of the PCR committee is to define the product category and develop the respective PCR.

The programme operator, or their delegate, shall:

- a) notify representatives of the interested parties about the development of the PCR and the formation of the PCR committee, so that interested parties can determine whether they wish to participate in the PCR committee or contribute otherwise to the PCR development process;
- b) establish the PCR committee;
- c) ensure a balanced mix of interested party perspectives and competencies (see ISO 14025:2006, 5.5, 6.5 and 9.3). If an interested party is excluded, this shall be justified;

NOTE 1 Any interested party can choose to participate in, or abstain from the open consultation (see [6.4.3](#)).