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

Labels et déclarations environnementaux — Délivrance du label environnemental de type I — Principes et procédures

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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).

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. Details of any patent rights identified during the development of the document will be in the Introduction and/or on the ISO list of patent declarations received (see www.iso.org/patents).

Any trade name used in this document is information given for the convenience of users and does not constitute an endorsement.

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.

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

This second edition cancels and replaces the first edition (ISO 14024:1999), which has been technically revised.

The main changes compared to the previous edition are as follows:

— addition of definitions for "verifier" (3.15) and "verification" (3.16);

— addition of subclauses on data quality (5.11) and the competence of verifiers (5.16);

— addition of paragraph on the competence of verifiers in 6.1;

— addition of subclause 7.4.5 on verification;

— updating of reference documents.

Introduction

There are several approaches to environmental labelling. This document relates to Type I environmental labelling programmes, which award their environmental label to products that meet a set of predetermined requirements. The label identifies products that 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 document 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 document also establishes the certification procedures for awarding the label.

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*

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 https://www.iso.org/obp

— IEC Electropedia: available at http://www.electropedia.org/

3.1
Type I environmental labelling programme
voluntary, multiple-criteria-based *third party* (3.7) programme that awards a *licence* (3.13) which authorizes the use of environmental labels on *products* (3.2) indicating overall environmental preferability of a product within a particular *product category* (3.3) based on life cycle considerations

[SOURCE: ISO 14050:2009, 8.3]

3.2
product
any goods or service

[SOURCE: ISO 14050:2009, 6.2, modified — Notes to entry have been deleted.]

3.3
product category
group of *products* (3.2) which have equivalent function

[SOURCE: ISO 14050:2009, 8.3.3]

3.4
product environmental criteria
environmental requirements that the *product* (3.2) shall meet in order to be awarded an environmental label

[SOURCE: ISO 14050:2009, 8.3.3.3]

3.5
product function characteristic
attribute or characteristic in the performance and use of a *product* (3.2)

[SOURCE: ISO 14050:2009, 8.3.3.2]

3.6
ecolabelling body
third party (3.7) body, and its agents, which conducts a *Type I environmental labelling programme* (3.1)

[SOURCE: ISO 14050:2009, 8.3.4]

3.7
third party
person or body that is recognized as being independent of the parties involved, as concerns the issue in question

Note 1 to entry: "Parties involved" are usually supplier ("first party") and purchaser ("second party") interests.

[SOURCE: ISO 14050:2009, 3.7]

3.8
interested party
party affected by a *Type I environmental labelling programme* (3.1)

3.9
licensee
party authorized by an *ecolabelling body* (3.6) to use a Type I environmental label

[SOURCE: ISO 14050:2009, 8.3.2]

3.10
environmental aspect
element of an organization's activities or *products* (3.2) that interacts or can interact with the environment

Note 1 to entry: An environmental aspect can cause (an) *environmental impact(s)* (3.11). A significant environmental aspect is one that has or can have one or more significant environmental impact(s).

Note 2 to entry: Significant environmental aspects are determined by the organization applying one or more criteria.

[SOURCE: ISO 14001:2015, 3.2.2, modified — The words "or services" have been deleted.]

3.11
environmental impact
change to the environment, whether adverse or beneficial, wholly or partially resulting from an organization's *environmental aspects* (3.10)

[SOURCE: ISO 14001:2015, 3.2.4]

3.12
certification
procedure by which a *third party* (3.7) gives written assurance that a *product* (3.2) or process conforms to specified requirements

[SOURCE: ISO 14050:2009, 3.10, modified — The words "a product, process or service" have been replaced by "a product or process".]

3.13
licence (for Type I environmental labelling)
licence
document, issued under the rules of a *certification* (3.12) system, by which an *ecolabelling body* (3.6) grants to a person or body the right to use Type I environmental labels for its *products* (3.2) in accordance with the rules of the environmental labelling programme

[SOURCE: ISO 14050:2009, 8.3.1, modified — Second term "licence" has been added, and the words "or services" have been deleted in the definition.]

3.14
fitness for purpose
ability of a *product* (3.2) or process to serve a defined purpose under specific conditions

[SOURCE: ISO 14050:2009, 8.3.3.1, modified — The words "a product, process or service" have been replaced by "a product or process".]

3.15
verifier
person or body that carries out *verification* (3.16)

[SOURCE: ISO 14050:2009, 5.3]

3.16
verification
confirmation, through the provision of objective evidence, that specified requirements have been fulfilled

[SOURCE: ISO 14050:2009, 5.1]

4 Objective of Type I environmental labelling

The overall goal of environmental labels and declarations is to encourage, through communication of verifiable and accurate information that is not misleading on environmental aspects of products, the demand for and supply of those products 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 the criteria of a specific Type I programme for overall environmental preferability.

The objective of this document 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 document, the principles set out in ISO 14020 shall apply. Where this document provides for more specific requirements than ISO 14020, those specific requirements shall apply.

5.3 Use of ecolabels

Use of an ecolabel in accordance with this document is considered to indicate meeting all environmental and other relevant legal requirements.

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.

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, all products that 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 should 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 the 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

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 the following, 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 Data quality

The ecolabelling body shall require data that reduce bias and uncertainty as far as practical by requiring the best quality data available. Data quality shall be characterized by both quantitative and qualitative aspects and the source of data shall be specified in the criteria requirements whenever possible.

5.12 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;

— the review period;

— the period of validity;

— non-confidential evidence on which the awarding of the label is based;

— funding sources for the programme development (e.g. fees, government financial support);