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Environmental statements and programmes for products — Principles and general requirements

Déclarations environnementales et programmes pour les produits — Principes et exigences générales

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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 of 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 www.iso.org/iso/foreword.html.

This document was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 207, *Environmental management*, Subcommittee SC 3, *Environmental labelling*, in collaboration with the European Committee for Standardization (CEN) Technical Committee CEN/SS S26, *Environmental management,* in accordance with the Agreement on technical cooperation between ISO and CEN (Vienna Agreement).

This third edition cancels and replaces the second edition (ISO 14020:2000), which has been technically revised.

The main changes are as follows:

— two new concepts and terms have been added: "environmental statement" and "environmental statement programme";

— terms and definitions have been added that are generic to all types of environmental statement programmes and environmental statements;

— the principles applicable for environmental statements that were previously given in the ISO 14020 family of standards have been consolidated and updated, and the requirements that were previously included within those principles have been placed into separate requirement clauses within this document;

— general requirements applicable to all types of environmental statement programmes and environmental statements have been added.

Any feedback or questions on this document should be directed to the user's national standards body. A complete listing of these bodies can be found at www.iso.org/members.html.

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Introduction

Communicating the environmental aspects and potential environmental impacts of products assists intended audiences (e.g. investors, purchasers, consumers) to make decisions on the selection and use of those products. The overall objective of providing information about the environmental aspects and environmental impacts of products (i.e. environmental statements) is to encourage the selection, purchase and use of those products that have the least adverse potential or actual environmental impact.

Suppliers that communicate the environmental aspects and environmental impacts of their products via environmental statements hope to influence the market in favour of their products. If the communication has this effect, the market share of those products can increase, and it is possible that other suppliers will respond by improving the environmental performance of their products. Ultimately this results in reduced environmental impact from that product category.

Suppliers that communicate the environmental aspects of their products via environmental statements also benefit at different levels within their organizations, both in the development of their products as well as in their environmental management and improvement of environmental performance.

The ISO 14020 family of standards provide principles and requirements for communicating environmental aspects and environmental impacts of products through environmental statements (e.g. self-declared environmental claims (see ISO 14021), ecolabels (see ISO 14024), environmental product declarations (EPDs) (see ISO 14025) and footprint communications (see ISO 14026)). This document is the core document in the ISO 14020 family of standards.

The intended structure of the ISO 14020 family of standards is illustrated in Figure 1 and summarized as follows:

— ISO 14020: common terms and definitions, principles and general requirements for all environmental statements (e.g. self-declared environmental claims, ecolabels, EPDs and footprint communications) and associated programmes that enable the communication of environmental aspects and environmental impacts of products.

— ISO 14021: requirements for environmental statements in the form of self-declared environmental claims.

— ISO 14024: requirements for environmental statements in the form of environmental labels known as ecolabels.

— ISO 14025: requirements for environmental statements in the form of EPDs.

— ISO 14026: requirements for environmental statements in the form of footprint communications.

— ISO/TS 14027: requirements for product category rules (PCR) that support the use of life cycle assessment (LCA) as a method to compile and evaluate information that is used as a basis for making environmental statements.

— ISO/TS 14029: requirements for the mutual recognition of EPDs, footprint communications and associated programmes.

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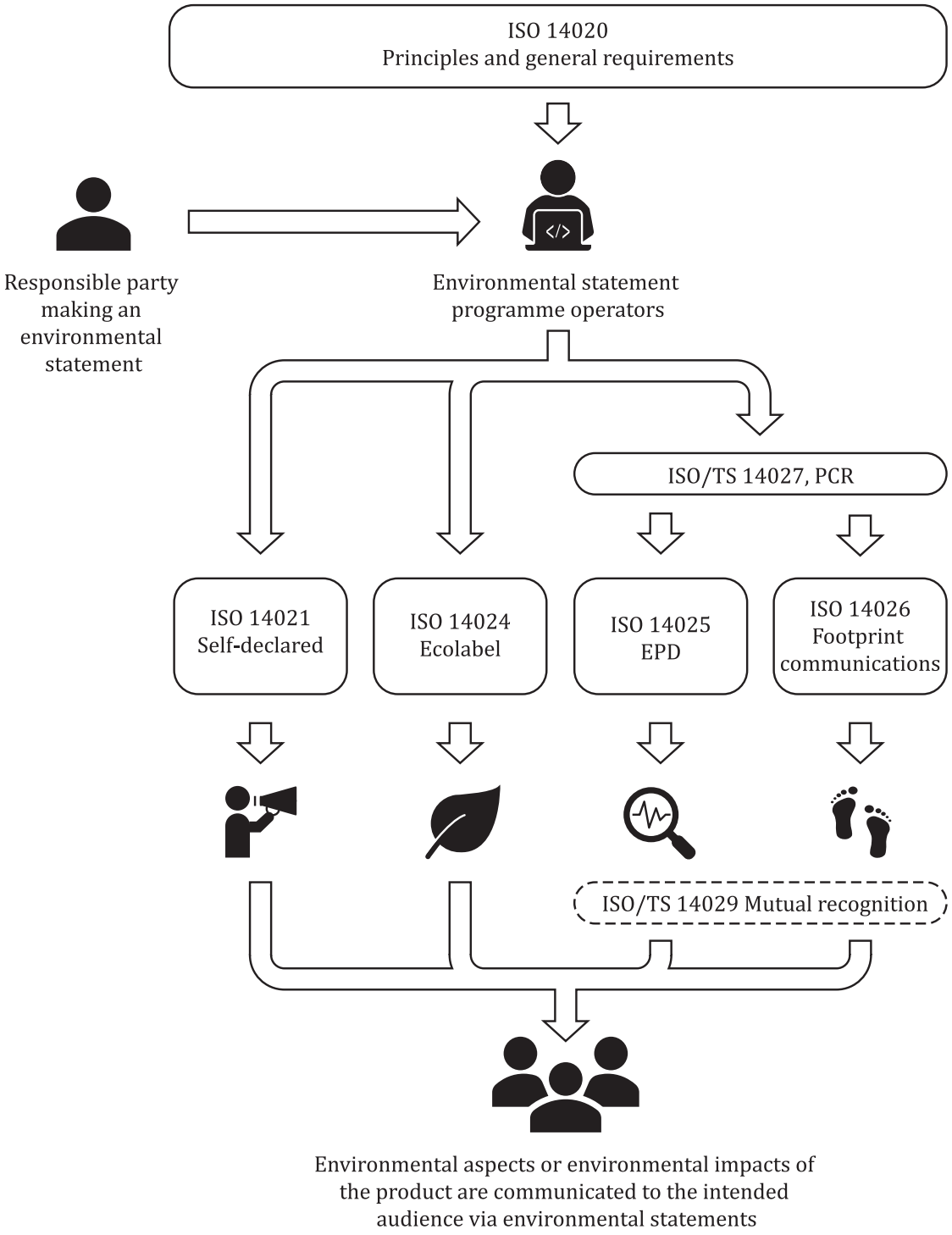


Figure 1 — Structure of the ISO 14020 family of standards

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Further explanation on the types of environmental statement is given in Clause 5.

Fundamental to the communication of the environmental aspects or environmental impacts of products through the use of the ISO 14020 family of standards are the following understandings:

a) that an environmental statement is prepared or made about environmental aspect(s) or environmental impact(s) of a product by an identifiable responsible party;

b) that, in future, all environmental statements (including self-declared environmental claims) will be made within the context of an environmental statement programme (see Annex A as an example of a simple type of environmental statement programme for a self-declared environmental claim);

c) that an environmental statement programme is established by an identifiable programme owner or operator who:

   1) specifies the type of the environmental statement(s) (e.g. self-declared environmental claim, ecolabel, EPD, footprint communication) included in the environmental statement programme;

   2) specifies the requirements, criteria and methodology associated with the environmental statement programme and the environmental statement;

   3) where relevant, identifies how and by whom the environmental statement is to be assessed (e.g. through methods such as auditing, evaluation, examination, inspection, testing, validation or verification; and whether these assessment techniques result in the environmental statement being self-declared by the first party, or whether a second- or third-party assessment activity is required);

   4) confirms the format, media and type of information that is to be communicated with the environmental statement to the intended audiences (e.g. investors, purchasers, consumers);

   5) establishes the validity period of environmental statement(s) and any ongoing assessment requirements.

This document aims to ensure that, in future, environmental statements will be made within the context of an environmental statement programme or scheme. Environmental statement programmes can vary in complexity depending on the type of environmental statement being made (in some cases a simple internal process or procedure, in other cases an extensive set of programme rules).

All programmes specify:

— the product or the family of products that are to be covered;

— the specified requirements and criteria that must be demonstrated to support the environmental statement;

— the determination methodology to undertake the demonstration, including any necessary information, competencies and use of conformity assessment (e.g. testing, inspection, verification or certification activities).

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Environmental statements and programmes for products — Principles and general requirements

1 Scope

This document establishes principles and specifies general requirements that are applicable to all types of product-related environmental statements and environmental statement programmes. Environmental statements result from environmental statement programmes and include self-declared environmental claims, ecolabels, environmental product declarations (EPDs) and footprint communications.

This document is intended to be used in conjunction with other standards in the ISO 14020 family.

NOTE Those other standards contain additional terms and definitions, principles and requirements that are relevant to their specific scopes.

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

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

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

ISO 14026, *Environmental labels and declarations — Principles, requirements and guidelines for communication of footprint information*

3 Terms and definitions

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

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

— ISO Online browsing platform: available at https://www.iso.org/obp

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

3.1 Terms related to the environment

3.1.1
area of concern
aspect of the natural environment, human health or resources of interest to society

EXAMPLE Water scarcity, climate change, biodiversity.

[SOURCE: ISO 14050:2020, 3.2.11, modified — EXAMPLE added.]

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3.1.2
environment
surroundings in which an organization operates, including air, water, land, natural resources, flora, fauna, humans and their interrelationships

Note 1 to entry: Surroundings can extend from within an organization to the local, regional and global system.

Note 2 to entry: Surroundings can be described in terms of biodiversity, ecosystems, climate or other characteristics of an organization's activities (including projects) or *products* (3.2.11) that interact or can interact with the environment.

[SOURCE: ISO 14050:2020, 3.2.2, modified — Notes to entry added.]

3.1.3
environmental aspect
element of an organization's activities or *products* (3.2.11) that interacts or can interact with the *environment* (3.1.2)

Note 1 to entry: Typically, environmental aspects can include emissions to air, discharges to water and waste arisings, which in turn can generate environmental and health impacts such as global warming, smog, water pollution or contaminated land.

[SOURCE: ISO 14050:2020, 3.2.20, modified — Note to entry added.]

3.1.4
environmental impact
change to the *environment* (3.1.2), whether adverse or beneficial, including possible consequences, wholly or partially resulting from an organization's *environmental aspects* (3.1.3)

[SOURCE: ISO 14050:2020, 3.2.22]

3.1.5
environmental performance
performance related to the management of *environmental aspects* (3.1.3)

[SOURCE: ISO 14050:2020, 3.2.27]

3.2 Terms related to environmental statements

3.2.1
environmental statement
DEPRECATED: environmental claim
information on one or more *environmental aspect(s)* (3.1.3) or *environmental impact(s)* (3.1.4) of a *product* (3.2.11), which intends to inform an *intended audience* (3.2.14) and intends to influence the market of this product

Note 1 to entry: The environmental statement can represent a point in time or can cover a period of time.

Note 2 to entry: Types of environmental statement include, but are not limited to:

a) *self-declared environmental claims* (3.2.6);

b) *ecolabels* (3.2.7);

c) *environmental product declarations* (3.2.8);

d) *footprint communications* (3.2.10).

Note 3 to entry: An environmental statement can appear on a product or packaging as a label, a symbol, a logo, an *electronic product label* (3.2.2) or a *machine-readable code* (3.2.3). It can also be communicated in other ways, e.g. in web-based product data or in an advertisement.

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Note 4 to entry: In some countries, the term "environmental claim" is used to indicate all types of product environmental statements. However, for the sake of clarity, within this document the word "claim" is only used in relation to a self-declared environmental claim.

3.2.2
electronic product label
electronically stored and displayed compliance markings, statements and other product information using a Web address, a *machine-readable code* (3.2.3) and/or e-Label

[SOURCE: ISO/IEC 22603-1:2021, 3.1]

3.2.3
machine-readable code
automatic identification and data capture (AIDC) data carrier placed on the *product* (3.2.11) that contains information used to establish a relationship between the physical object and the data sources

[SOURCE: ISO/IEC 22603-1:2021, 3.2]

3.2.4
comparative environmental statement
environmental statement (3.2.1) regarding the superiority or equivalence of one *product* (3.2.11) versus other products that perform the same function with regard to the *environmental aspect(s)* (3.1.3) addressed

Note 1 to entry: In the case of comparative *environmental product declarations* (3.2.8) and *footprint communications* (3.2.10), products fulfil the same functional unit.

Note 2 to entry: Comparative environmental statements can also be applied to the same product over time, e.g. performance tracking.

3.2.5
supporting information
explanatory information
information that is given to enable the understanding and describe the limits of an *environmental statement* (3.2.1)

3.2.6
self-declared environmental claim
DEPRECATED: Type II environmental label
environmental statement (3.2.1) which is self-declared by a *responsible party* (3.2.13)

Note 1 to entry: Requirements for self-declared environmental claims are given in ISO 14021.

3.2.7
ecolabel
DEPRECATED: Type I environmental label
environmental statement (3.2.1) which indicates a *product* (3.2.11) fulfils the criteria of an *ecolabelling programme* (3.3.2)

Note 1 to entry: Requirements for ecolabels are given in ISO 14024.

3.2.8
environmental product declaration
EPD
DEPRECATED: Type III environmental declaration
environmental statement (3.2.1) providing environmental data of a *product* (3.2.11) using predetermined parameters resulting from a *life cycle assessment (LCA)* (3.4.2) and additional environmental information

Note 1 to entry: The predetermined parameters address relevant *environmental impacts* (3.1.4) and the results of the predetermined parameters are derived from LCA using *product category rules (PCR)* (3.4.3).

Note 2 to entry: Requirements for life cycle assessment are given in ISO 14040 and ISO 14044.

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Note 3 to entry: EPD can include quantitative and qualitative data.

Note 4 to entry: Requirements for EPDs are given in ISO 14025.

Note 5 to entry: Requirements for PCR are given in ISO/TS 14027.

3.2.9
footprint
metric(s) used to report *life cycle assessment* (3.4.2) results addressing an *area of concern* (3.1.1)

EXAMPLE Carbon footprint of a product (CFP) within the area of concern of climate change.

Note 1 to entry: Requirements for *footprint communication* (3.2.10) are given in ISO 14026.

[SOURCE: ISO 14026:2017, 3.2.2, modified — EXAMPLE and note to entry added.]

3.2.10
footprint communication
result of preparation, provision and dissemination of the *footprint* (3.2.9) and *supporting information* (3.2.5)

[SOURCE: ISO 14026:2017, 3.1.1, modified — " and explanatory statement" has been deleted from the definition.]

3.2.11
product
any goods or service

Note 1 to entry: The definition of product can refer to the process of producing the good or service.

[SOURCE: ISO 14050:2020, 3.5.12, modified — Note to entry added.]

3.2.12
product category
group of *products* (3.2.11) that can fulfil equivalent functions

3.2.13
responsible party
claimant
person or organization responsible for the provision of the *environmental statement* (3.2.1)

Note 1 to entry: The supplier of the *product* (3.2.11) can be the responsible party. Other examples are a social media influencer, distributor or marketer of a product.

[SOURCE: ISO 14050:2020, 3.9.39, modified — "claimant" added as admitted term. "person or organization" replaced "person or persons" and "environmental statement" replaced "greenhouse gas statement and the supporting greenhouse gas information" in the definition. Note 1 to entry added.]

3.2.14
intended audience
person or organization identified by the *responsible party* (3.2.13) as being the one that relies on the *environmental statement* (3.2.1) to make decisions

Note 1 to entry: The intended audience can be a client, purchaser or potential purchaser, investor, consumer, responsible party, *programme operator* (3.3.3), regulators, financial community, general public or other *interested parties* (3.2.15), such as local communities, governmental or non-governmental organizations.

[SOURCE: ISO 14050:2020, 3.9.37, modified — "audience" replaced "user" in the term. "person" replaced "individual", "the responsible party" replaced "those reporting greenhouse gas-related information" and "the environmental statement" replaced "that information" in the definition. Note to entry added.]

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3.2.15
interested party
person or organization that can affect, be affected by, or perceive itself to be affected by an *environmental statement* (3.2.1)

Note 1 to entry: To "perceive itself to be affected" means the interested party has made its perception known to the *programme operator* (3.3.3).

Note 2 to entry: The interested parties for *environmental statement programmes* (3.3.1) can include, but are not limited to, material suppliers, manufacturers, trade associations, purchasers, users, consumers, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), public agencies and, when relevant, certification bodies.

[SOURCE: ISO 14050:2020, 3.1.2, modified — "stakeholder" deleted as the admitted term. "an environmental statement" replaced "a decision or activity" in the definition. Notes to entry added.]

3.3 Terms related to programmes

3.3.1
environmental statement programme
rules and procedures for providing an *environmental statement* (3.2.1)

Note 1 to entry: Environmental statement programmes can be carried out at international, regional, national or sub-national levels.

Note 2 to entry: A programme can also be called a scheme.

Note 3 to entry: An environmental statement programme can include requirements for *conformity assessment* (3.5.1).

Note 4 to entry: In the case of *self-declared environmental claims* (3.2.6), the environmental statement programme is typically established by the *responsible party* (3.2.13). For other types of environmental statement, the environmental statement programme is typically a party that is external to the responsible party.

Note 5 to entry: In the case of self-declared environmental claims, the environmental statement programme consists of the information and records used to support the claim, in accordance with ISO 14021.

[SOURCE: ISO 14065:2020, 3.1.6, modified — "statement" replaced "information" in the term. "statement" replaced "information statement" in the definition. Notes to entry replaced.]

3.3.2
ecolabelling programme
DEPRECATED: Type I environmental labelling programme
environmental statement programme (3.3.1) that is multiple-attribute-based and provided by a third-party that assesses overall environmental preferability of a *product* (3.2.11) within a particular *product category* (3.2.12) based on life cycle considerations, and awards a licence which authorizes the use of specific *ecolabels* (3.2.7) on products related to *environmental performance* (3.1.5)

Note 1 to entry: Requirements for ecolabelling programmes are given in ISO 14024.

3.3.3
programme operator
person or organization responsible for developing and maintaining an *environmental statement programme* (3.3.1)

Note 1 to entry: In the case of *self-declared environmental claims* (3.2.6), the programme operator is typically the *responsible party* (3.2.13). For other types of *environmental statement* (3.2.1), the programme operator is typically a party that is external to the responsible party.

[SOURCE: ISO 14065:2020, 3.3.3, modified — "operator" replaced "owner" in the term. "statement programme" replaced "information programme" and "a validation programme or a verification programme" deleted from the definition. Notes to entry replaced.]

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3.4 Terms related to life cycle

3.4.1
life cycle
consecutive and interlinked stages, from raw material acquisition or generation from natural resources to final disposal

[SOURCE: ISO 14044:2006/Amd 2:2020, 3.1]

3.4.2
life cycle assessment
LCA
compilation and evaluation of the inputs, outputs and the potential *environmental impacts* (3.1.4) of a product system throughout its *life cycle* (3.4.1)

[SOURCE: ISO 14050:2020, 3.6.2, modified — "evaluation" replaced "assessment" in the definition.]

3.4.3
product category rules
PCR
set of specific rules, requirements and guidelines for developing statements based on *life cycle assessment* (3.4.2) for one or more *product categories* (3.2.12)

[SOURCE: ISO 14050:2020, 3.7.12, modified — "statements based on life cycle assessment" replaced "Type III environmental declarations and footprint communications" in the definition.]

3.5 Terms related to conformity assessment of environmental statements

3.5.1
conformity assessment
demonstration that specified requirements are fulfilled

Note 1 to entry: Conformity assessment includes activities such as but not limited to testing, inspection, *validation* (3.5.3), *verification* (3.5.4), *certification* (3.5.2), and accreditation of conformity assessment bodies.

[SOURCE: ISO/IEC 17000:2020, 4.1, modified — Notes 1, 3 and 4 to entry deleted. Note 2 to entry revised and renumbered as Note 1 to entry.]

3.5.2
certification
third-party attestation related to an *environmental statement* (3.2.1)

[SOURCE: ISO/IEC 17000:2020, 7.6, modified — "environmental statement" replaced "object of conformity assessment with the exception of accreditation" in the definition.]

3.5.3
environmental statement validation
validation
process for evaluating the reasonableness of the assumptions, limitations and methods that support an *environmental statement* (3.2.1) about the outcome of future activities

Note 1 to entry: The term "environmental statement validation" is shortened to "validation" in this document to reduce sentence complexity and aid understanding.

Note 2 to entry: Validation in this document can also be the appropriate evaluation process for the reasonableness of assumptions or limitations dealing with models of systems for the assessment of *environmental aspects* (3.1.3) and *environmental impacts* (3.1.4) including historic and future processes.

[SOURCE: ISO 14065:2020, 3.3.16, modified — "statement" replaced "information statement" in the definition. Note 2 to entry added.]

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3.5.4
environmental statement verification
verification
process for evaluating an *environmental statement* (3.2.1) based on historical data and information to determine whether the environmental statement is materially correct and conforms to criteria

Note 1 to entry: The term "environmental statement verification" is shortened to "verification" in this document to reduce sentence complexity and aid understanding.

[SOURCE: ISO 14065:2020, 3.3.15, modified — "statement" replaced "information statement" in the definition. Note 1 to entry deleted. Note 2 to entry renumbered as Note 1 to entry.]

4 Principles

4.1 General

4.1.1 These principles are applicable to all environmental statements and associated programmes.

4.1.2 These principles provide the basis for subsequent general and specific requirements in the ISO 14020 family of standards.

4.1.3 The overall aim of environmental statements is to encourage the demand and supply of those products that cause less stress on the environment, thereby stimulating the potential for market-driven continuous environmental improvement and support for environmental agreements.

4.2 Credibility

4.2.1 Principle

Communication of the environmental aspects and environmental impacts of products using environmental statements and associated programmes is truthful, accurate, impartial and not misleading.

4.2.2 Rationale

The usefulness and effectiveness of environmental statements depend upon the extent to which they convey credible, reliable and meaningful information about the environmental aspects and environmental impacts of a product in a way that is clearly defined and is understandable.

4.3 Evidence-based methodology

4.3.1 Principle

Communication of the environmental aspects and environmental impacts of products using environmental statements and associated programmes is based on rational and defensible methodology.

4.3.2 Rationale

The methodology used to provide information for the environmental statement is widely recognized and accepted or is otherwise defensible to give confidence to the subsequent environmental statement. The methodology is appropriate to produce accurate and reproducible results.

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