International Standard

ISO 14075

Environmental management — Principles and framework for social life cycle assessment

Management environnemental — Principes et cadre pour l'analyse sociale du cycle de vie

First edition
2024-10

Reference number
ISO 14075:2024(en)

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ISO copyright office
CP 401 • Ch. de Blandonnet 8
CH-1214 Vernier, Geneva
Phone: +41 22 749 01 11
Email: copyright@iso.org
Website: www.iso.org

Published in Switzerland

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Foreword

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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 document 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 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 5, *Life cycle assessment*.

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

There is increasing demand for the assessment of social aspects in life cycle assessment or sustainability evaluations. This has created interest in the development of frameworks to better understand and address the social impacts over the life cycle of products.

A social life cycle assessment (S-LCA) of a product can assist in:

— assessing the magnitude and significance of the potential social impacts of a product system;

— analysing current potential social impacts associated with a system or forecasting future potential social impacts.

This document provides requirements and guidance for practitioners from industries, government, universities and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in the efficient and credible development and implementation of practices for assessing social impacts.

An S-LCA comprises the following four phases:

a) goal and scope definition;

b) social life cycle inventory analysis (S-LCI);

c) social life cycle impact assessment (S-LCIA);

d) interpretation.

Following the requirements and recommendations presented in this document, S-LCA can be implemented using different methods and assessment approaches. An S-LCA or S-LCI study can be used as part of a more comprehensive decision process that involves a variety of interested parties with different knowledge and background.

However, comparing the results of different S-LCA or S-LCI studies is only possible if the goal and scope, assumptions and context of each study are equivalent. This document is not intended to inform a ranking of the human rights performance of products. Therefore, this document contains several requirements and recommendations to support transparency on these issues.

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Environmental management — Principles and framework for social life cycle assessment

1 Scope

This document establishes principles and framework, specifies requirements and gives guidance for the social life cycle assessment (S-LCA) of a product. The framework supports addressing the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) and reaching the targets by identifying the enabling aspects from the inhibiting ones (with detrimental contributions).

The document provides goal and scope definition, inventory analysis, impact assessment, interpretation and reporting of the S-LCA of a product.

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

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

ISO 14050, *Environmental management — Vocabulary*

3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the terms and definitions given in ISO 14040, ISO 14044, ISO 14050 and the following 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
social aspect
element of an *organization's* (3.31) activities or products that interacts or can interact with human well-being of any *interested party* (3.4) which can cause a *social impact* (3.12)

3.2
social life cycle assessment
S-LCA
social LCA
compilation and assessment of the socially relevant inputs and outputs and the potential *social impacts* (3.12) of a *product system* (3.6) throughout its *life cycle* (3.3)

[SOURCE: ISO 14044:2006, 3.2, modified — "social" added to the term. "assessment" replaced "evaluation", "socially relevant" added and "social" replaced "environmental" in the definition.]

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