
Environmental management systems — Requirements with guidance for use

*Systèmes de management environnemental — Exigences et lignes
directrices pour son utilisation*

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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 14001 was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 207, *Environmental management*, Subcommittee SC 1, *Environmental management systems*.

This second edition cancels and replaces the first edition (ISO 14001:1996), which has been technically revised.

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Introduction

Organizations of all kinds are increasingly concerned with achieving and demonstrating sound environmental performance by controlling the impacts of their activities, products and services on the environment, consistent with their environmental policy and objectives. They do so in the context of increasingly stringent legislation, the development of economic policies and other measures that foster environmental protection, and increased concern expressed by interested parties about environmental matters and sustainable development.

Many organizations have undertaken environmental “reviews” or “audits” to assess their environmental performance. On their own, however, these “reviews” and “audits” may not be sufficient to provide an organization with the assurance that its performance not only meets, but will continue to meet, its legal and policy requirements. To be effective, they need to be conducted within a structured management system that is integrated within the organization.

International Standards covering environmental management are intended to provide organizations with the elements of an effective environmental management system (EMS) that can be integrated with other management requirements and help organizations achieve environmental and economic goals. These standards, like other International Standards, are not intended to be used to create non-tariff trade barriers or to increase or change an organization's legal obligations.

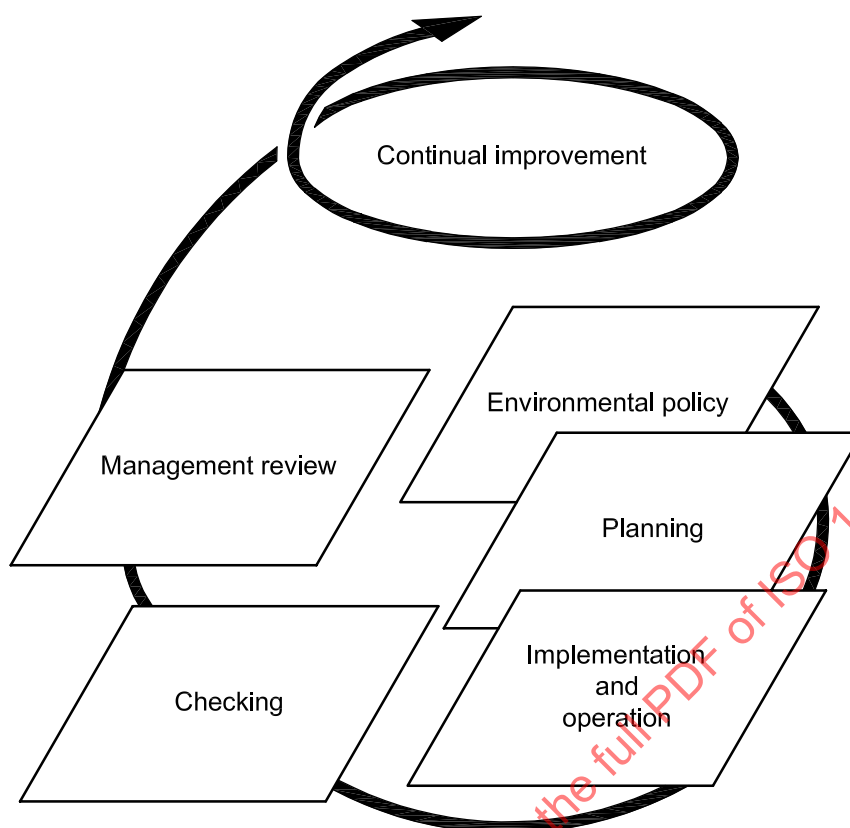
This International Standard specifies requirements for an environmental management system to enable an organization to develop and implement a policy and objectives which take into account legal requirements and information about significant environmental aspects. It is intended to apply to all types and sizes of organization and to accommodate diverse geographical, cultural and social conditions. The basis of the approach is shown in Figure 1. The success of the system depends on commitment from all levels and functions of the organization, and especially from top management. A system of this kind enables an organization to develop an environmental policy, establish objectives and processes to achieve the policy commitments, take action as needed to improve its performance and demonstrate the conformity of the system to the requirements of this International Standard. The overall aim of this International Standard is to support environmental protection and prevention of pollution in balance with socio-economic needs. It should be noted that many of the requirements can be addressed concurrently or revisited at any time.

The second edition of this International Standard is focused on clarification of the first edition, and has taken due consideration of the provisions of ISO 9001 to enhance the compatibility of the two standards for the benefit of the user community.

For ease of use, the subclause numbers in Clause 4 of the body of this International Standard and in Annex A have been related. For example, 4.3.3 and A.3.3 both deal with objectives, targets and programme(s), and 4.5.5 and A.5.5 both deal with internal audit. In addition, Annex B identifies broad technical correspondences between ISO 14001:2004 and ISO 9001:2000 and *vice versa*.

There is an important distinction between this International Standard, which describes the requirements for an organization's environmental management system and can be used for certification/registration and/or self-declaration of an organization's environmental management system, and a non-certifiable guideline intended to provide generic assistance to an organization for establishing, implementing or improving an environmental management system. Environmental management encompasses a full range of issues, including those with strategic and competitive implications. Demonstration of successful implementation of this International Standard can be used by an organization to assure interested parties that an appropriate environmental management system is in place.

Guidance on supporting environmental management techniques is contained in other International Standards, particularly those on environmental management in the documents established by ISO/TC 207. Any reference to other International Standards is for information only.



NOTE This International Standard is based on the methodology known as Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA). PDCA can be briefly described as follows.

- Plan: establish the objectives and processes necessary to deliver results in accordance with the organization's environmental policy.
- Do: implement the processes.
- Check: monitor and measure processes against environmental policy, objectives, targets, legal and other requirements, and report the results.
- Act: take actions to continually improve performance of the environmental management system.

Many organizations manage their operations via the application of a system of processes and their interactions, which can be referred to as the "process approach". ISO 9001 promotes the use of the process approach. Since PDCA can be applied to all processes, the two methodologies are considered to be compatible.

Figure 1 – Environmental management system model for this International Standard

This International Standard contains only those requirements that can be objectively audited. Those organizations requiring more general guidance on a broad range of environmental management system issues are referred to ISO 14004.

This International Standard does not establish absolute requirements for environmental performance beyond the commitments, in the environmental policy, to comply with applicable legal requirements and with other requirements to which the organization subscribes, to prevention of pollution and to continual improvement. Thus, two organizations carrying out similar operations but having different environmental performance can both conform to its requirements.

The adoption and implementation of a range of environmental management techniques in a systematic manner can contribute to optimal outcomes for all interested parties. However, adoption of this International Standard will not in itself guarantee optimal environmental outcomes. In order to achieve environmental objectives, the environmental management system can encourage organizations to consider implementation of the best

available techniques, where appropriate and where economically viable, and fully take into account the cost-effectiveness of such techniques.

This International Standard does not include requirements specific to other management systems, such as those for quality, occupational health and safety, financial or risk management, though its elements can be aligned or integrated with those of other management systems. It is possible for an organization to adapt its existing management system(s) in order to establish an environmental management system that conforms to the requirements of this International Standard. It is pointed out, however, that the application of various elements of the management system might differ depending on the intended purpose and the interested parties involved.

The level of detail and complexity of the environmental management system, the extent of documentation and the resources devoted to it depend on a number of factors, such as the scope of the system, the size of an organization and the nature of its activities, products and services. This may be the case in particular for small and medium-sized enterprises.

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Environmental management systems — Requirements with guidance for use

1 Scope

This International Standard specifies requirements for an environmental management system to enable an organization to develop and implement a policy and objectives which take into account legal requirements and other requirements to which the organization subscribes, and information about significant environmental aspects. It applies to those environmental aspects that the organization identifies as those which it can control and those which it can influence. It does not itself state specific environmental performance criteria.

This International Standard is applicable to any organization that wishes to

- a) establish, implement, maintain and improve an environmental management system,
- b) assure itself of conformity with its stated environmental policy,
- c) demonstrate conformity with this International Standard by
 - 1) making a self-determination and self-declaration, or
 - 2) seeking confirmation of its conformance by parties having an interest in the organization, such as customers, or
 - 3) seeking confirmation of its self-declaration by a party external to the organization, or
 - 4) seeking certification/registration of its environmental management system by an external organization.

All the requirements in this International Standard are intended to be incorporated into any environmental management system. The extent of the application depends on factors such as the environmental policy of the organization, the nature of its activities, products and services and the location where and the conditions in which it functions. This International Standard also provides, in Annex A, informative guidance on its use.

2 Normative references

No normative references are cited. This clause is included in order to retain clause numbering identical with the previous edition (ISO 14001:1996).

3 Terms and definitions

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

3.1

auditor

person with the competence to conduct an audit

[ISO 9000:2000, 3.9.9]

3.2

continual improvement

recurring process of enhancing the **environmental management system** (3.8) in order to achieve improvements in overall **environmental performance** (3.10) consistent with the **organization's** (3.16) **environmental policy** (3.11)

NOTE The process need not take place in all areas of activity simultaneously.

3.3

corrective action

action to eliminate the cause of a detected **nonconformity** (3.15)

3.4

document

information and its supporting medium

NOTE 1 The medium can be paper, magnetic, electronic or optical computer disc, photograph or master sample, or a combination thereof.

NOTE 2 Adapted from ISO 9000:2000, 3.7.2.

3.5

environment

surroundings in which an **organization** (3.16) operates, including air, water, land, natural resources, flora, fauna, humans, and their interrelation

NOTE Surroundings in this context extend from within an **organization** (3.16) to the global system.

3.6

environmental aspect

element of an **organization's** (3.16) activities or products or services that can interact with the **environment** (3.5)

NOTE A significant environmental aspect has or can have a significant **environmental impact** (3.7).

3.7

environmental impact

any change to the **environment** (3.5), whether adverse or beneficial, wholly or partially resulting from an **organization's** (3.16) **environmental aspects** (3.6)

3.8

environmental management system

EMS

part of an **organization's** (3.16) management system used to develop and implement its **environmental policy** (3.11) and manage its **environmental aspects** (3.6)

NOTE 1 A management system is a set of interrelated elements used to establish policy and objectives and to achieve those objectives.

NOTE 2 A management system includes organizational structure, planning activities, responsibilities, practices, **procedures** (3.19), processes and resources.

3.9

environmental objective

overall environmental goal, consistent with the **environmental policy** (3.11), that an **organization** (3.16) sets itself to achieve

3.10

environmental performance

measurable results of an **organization's** (3.16) management of its **environmental aspects** (3.6)

NOTE In the context of **environmental management systems** (3.8), results can be measured against the **organization's** (3.16) **environmental policy** (3.11), **environmental objectives** (3.9), **environmental targets** (3.12) and other environmental performance requirements.

3.11**environmental policy**

overall intentions and direction of an **organization** (3.16) related to its **environmental performance** (3.10) as formally expressed by top management

NOTE The environmental policy provides a framework for action and for the setting of **environmental objectives** (3.9) and **environmental targets** (3.12).

3.12**environmental target**

detailed performance requirement, applicable to the **organization** (3.16) or parts thereof, that arises from the **environmental objectives** (3.9) and that needs to be set and met in order to achieve those objectives

3.13**interested party**

person or group concerned with or affected by the **environmental performance** (3.10) of an **organization** (3.16)

3.14**internal audit**

systematic, independent and documented process for obtaining audit evidence and evaluating it objectively to determine the extent to which the environmental management system audit criteria set by the **organization** (3.16) are fulfilled

NOTE In many cases, particularly in smaller organizations, independence can be demonstrated by the freedom from responsibility for the activity being audited.

3.15**nonconformity**

non-fulfilment of a requirement

[ISO 9000:2000, 3.6.2]

3.16**organization**

company, corporation, firm, enterprise, authority or institution, or part or combination thereof, whether incorporated or not, public or private, that has its own functions and administration

NOTE For organizations with more than one operating unit, a single operating unit may be defined as an organization.

3.17**preventive action**

action to eliminate the cause of a potential **nonconformity** (3.15)

3.18**prevention of pollution**

use of processes, practices, techniques, materials, products, services or energy to avoid, reduce or control (separately or in combination) the creation, emission or discharge of any type of pollutant or waste, in order to reduce adverse **environmental impacts** (3.7)

NOTE Prevention of pollution can include source reduction or elimination, process, product or service changes, efficient use of resources, material and energy substitution, reuse, recovery, recycling, reclamation and treatment.

3.19**procedure**

specified way to carry out an activity or a process

NOTE 1 Procedures can be documented or not.

NOTE 2 Adapted from ISO 9000:2000, 3.4.5.

3.20

record

document (3.4) stating results achieved or providing evidence of activities performed

NOTE Adapted from ISO 9000:2000, 3.7.6.

4 Environmental management system requirements

4.1 General requirements

The organization shall establish, document, implement, maintain and continually improve an environmental management system in accordance with the requirements of this International Standard and determine how it will fulfil these requirements.

The organization shall define and document the scope of its environmental management system.

4.2 Environmental policy

Top management shall define the organization's environmental policy and ensure that, within the defined scope of its environmental management system, it

- a) is appropriate to the nature, scale and environmental impacts of its activities, products and services,
- b) includes a commitment to continual improvement and prevention of pollution,
- c) includes a commitment to comply with applicable legal requirements and with other requirements to which the organization subscribes which relate to its environmental aspects,
- d) provides the framework for setting and reviewing environmental objectives and targets,
- e) is documented, implemented and maintained,
- f) is communicated to all persons working for or on behalf of the organization, and
- g) is available to the public.

4.3 Planning

4.3.1 Environmental aspects

The organization shall establish, implement and maintain a procedure(s)

- a) to identify the environmental aspects of its activities, products and services within the defined scope of the environmental management system that it can control and those that it can influence taking into account planned or new developments, or new or modified activities, products and services, and
- b) to determine those aspects that have or can have significant impact(s) on the environment (i.e. significant environmental aspects).

The organization shall document this information and keep it up to date.

The organization shall ensure that the significant environmental aspects are taken into account in establishing, implementing and maintaining its environmental management system.

4.3.2 Legal and other requirements

The organization shall establish, implement and maintain a procedure(s)

- a) to identify and have access to the applicable legal requirements and other requirements to which the organization subscribes related to its environmental aspects, and
- b) to determine how these requirements apply to its environmental aspects.

The organization shall ensure that these applicable legal requirements and other requirements to which the organization subscribes are taken into account in establishing, implementing and maintaining its environmental management system.

4.3.3 Objectives, targets and programme(s)

The organization shall establish, implement and maintain documented environmental objectives and targets, at relevant functions and levels within the organization.

The objectives and targets shall be measurable, where practicable, and consistent with the environmental policy, including the commitments to prevention of pollution, to compliance with applicable legal requirements and with other requirements to which the organization subscribes, and to continual improvement.

When establishing and reviewing its objectives and targets, an organization shall take into account the legal requirements and other requirements to which the organization subscribes, and its significant environmental aspects. It shall also consider its technological options, its financial, operational and business requirements, and the views of interested parties.

The organization shall establish, implement and maintain a programme(s) for achieving its objectives and targets. Programme(s) shall include

- a) designation of responsibility for achieving objectives and targets at relevant functions and levels of the organization, and
- b) the means and time-frame by which they are to be achieved.

4.4 Implementation and operation

4.4.1 Resources, roles, responsibility and authority

Management shall ensure the availability of resources essential to establish, implement, maintain and improve the environmental management system. Resources include human resources and specialized skills, organizational infrastructure, technology and financial resources.

Roles, responsibilities and authorities shall be defined, documented and communicated in order to facilitate effective environmental management.

The organization's top management shall appoint a specific management representative(s) who, irrespective of other responsibilities, shall have defined roles, responsibilities and authority for

- a) ensuring that an environmental management system is established, implemented and maintained in accordance with the requirements of this International Standard,
- b) reporting to top management on the performance of the environmental management system for review, including recommendations for improvement.

4.4.2 Competence, training and awareness

The organization shall ensure that any person(s) performing tasks for it or on its behalf that have the potential to cause a significant environmental impact(s) identified by the organization is (are) competent on the basis of appropriate education, training or experience, and shall retain associated records.

The organization shall identify training needs associated with its environmental aspects and its environmental management system. It shall provide training or take other action to meet these needs, and shall retain associated records.

The organization shall establish, implement and maintain a procedure(s) to make persons working for it or on its behalf aware of

- a) the importance of conformity with the environmental policy and procedures and with the requirements of the environmental management system,
- b) the significant environmental aspects and related actual or potential impacts associated with their work, and the environmental benefits of improved personal performance,
- c) their roles and responsibilities in achieving conformity with the requirements of the environmental management system, and
- d) the potential consequences of departure from specified procedures.

4.4.3 Communication

With regard to its environmental aspects and environmental management system, the organization shall establish, implement and maintain a procedure(s) for

- a) internal communication among the various levels and functions of the organization,
- b) receiving, documenting and responding to relevant communication from external interested parties.

The organization shall decide whether to communicate externally about its significant environmental aspects, and shall document its decision. If the decision is to communicate, the organization shall establish and implement a method(s) for this external communication.

4.4.4 Documentation

The environmental management system documentation shall include

- a) the environmental policy, objectives and targets,
- b) description of the scope of the environmental management system,
- c) description of the main elements of the environmental management system and their interaction, and reference to related documents,
- d) documents, including records, required by this International Standard, and
- e) documents, including records, determined by the organization to be necessary to ensure the effective planning, operation and control of processes that relate to its significant environmental aspects.

4.4.5 Control of documents

Documents required by the environmental management system and by this International Standard shall be controlled. Records are a special type of document and shall be controlled in accordance with the requirements given in 4.5.4.

The organization shall establish, implement and maintain a procedure(s) to

- a) approve documents for adequacy prior to issue,
- b) review and update as necessary and re-approve documents,
- c) ensure that changes and the current revision status of documents are identified,
- d) ensure that relevant versions of applicable documents are available at points of use,
- e) ensure that documents remain legible and readily identifiable,

- f) ensure that documents of external origin determined by the organization to be necessary for the planning and operation of the environmental management system are identified and their distribution controlled, and
- g) prevent the unintended use of obsolete documents and apply suitable identification to them if they are retained for any purpose.

4.4.6 Operational control

The organization shall identify and plan those operations that are associated with the identified significant environmental aspects consistent with its environmental policy, objectives and targets, in order to ensure that they are carried out under specified conditions, by

- a) establishing, implementing and maintaining a documented procedure(s) to control situations where their absence could lead to deviation from the environmental policy, objectives and targets, and
- b) stipulating the operating criteria in the procedure(s), and
- c) establishing, implementing and maintaining procedures related to the identified significant environmental aspects of goods and services used by the organization and communicating applicable procedures and requirements to suppliers, including contractors.

4.4.7 Emergency preparedness and response

The organization shall establish, implement and maintain a procedure(s) to identify potential emergency situations and potential accidents that can have an impact(s) on the environment and how it will respond to them.

The organization shall respond to actual emergency situations and accidents and prevent or mitigate associated adverse environmental impacts.

The organization shall periodically review and, where necessary, revise its emergency preparedness and response procedures, in particular, after the occurrence of accidents or emergency situations.

The organization shall also periodically test such procedures where practicable.

4.5 Checking

4.5.1 Monitoring and measurement

The organization shall establish, implement and maintain a procedure(s) to monitor and measure, on a regular basis, the key characteristics of its operations that can have a significant environmental impact. The procedure(s) shall include the documenting of information to monitor performance, applicable operational controls and conformity with the organization's environmental objectives and targets.

The organization shall ensure that calibrated or verified monitoring and measurement equipment is used and maintained and shall retain associated records.

4.5.2 Evaluation of compliance

4.5.2.1 Consistent with its commitment to compliance, the organization shall establish, implement and maintain a procedure(s) for periodically evaluating compliance with applicable legal requirements.

The organization shall keep records of the results of the periodic evaluations.

4.5.2.2 The organization shall evaluate compliance with other requirements to which it subscribes. The organization may wish to combine this evaluation with the evaluation of legal compliance referred to in 4.5.2.1 or to establish a separate procedure(s).

The organization shall keep records of the results of the periodic evaluations.

4.5.3 Nonconformity, corrective action and preventive action

The organization shall establish, implement and maintain a procedure(s) for dealing with actual and potential nonconformity(ies) and for taking corrective action and preventive action. The procedure(s) shall define requirements for

- a) identifying and correcting nonconformity(ies) and taking action(s) to mitigate their environmental impacts,
- b) investigating nonconformity(ies), determining their cause(s) and taking actions in order to avoid their recurrence,
- c) evaluating the need for action(s) to prevent nonconformity(ies) and implementing appropriate actions designed to avoid their occurrence,
- d) recording the results of corrective action(s) and preventive action(s) taken, and
- e) reviewing the effectiveness of corrective action(s) and preventive action(s) taken.

Actions taken shall be appropriate to the magnitude of the problems and the environmental impacts encountered.

The organization shall ensure that any necessary changes are made to environmental management system documentation.

4.5.4 Control of records

The organization shall establish and maintain records as necessary to demonstrate conformity to the requirements of its environmental management system and of this International Standard, and the results achieved.

The organization shall establish, implement and maintain a procedure(s) for the identification, storage, protection, retrieval, retention and disposal of records.

Records shall be and remain legible, identifiable and traceable.

4.5.5 Internal audit

The organization shall ensure that internal audits of the environmental management system are conducted at planned intervals to

- a) determine whether the environmental management system
 - 1) conforms to planned arrangements for environmental management including the requirements of this International Standard, and
 - 2) has been properly implemented and is maintained, and
- b) provide information on the results of audits to management.

Audit programme(s) shall be planned, established, implemented and maintained by the organization, taking into consideration the environmental importance of the operation(s) concerned and the results of previous audits.

Audit procedure(s) shall be established, implemented and maintained that address

- the responsibilities and requirements for planning and conducting audits, reporting results and retaining associated records,
- the determination of audit criteria, scope, frequency and methods.

Selection of auditors and conduct of audits shall ensure objectivity and the impartiality of the audit process.

4.6 Management review

Top management shall review the organization's environmental management system, at planned intervals, to ensure its continuing suitability, adequacy and effectiveness. Reviews shall include assessing opportunities for improvement and the need for changes to the environmental management system, including the environmental policy and environmental objectives and targets. Records of the management reviews shall be retained.

Input to management reviews shall include

- a) results of internal audits and evaluations of compliance with legal requirements and with other requirements to which the organization subscribes,
- b) communication(s) from external interested parties, including complaints,
- c) the environmental performance of the organization,
- d) the extent to which objectives and targets have been met,
- e) status of corrective and preventive actions,
- f) follow-up actions from previous management reviews,
- g) changing circumstances, including developments in legal and other requirements related to its environmental aspects, and
- h) recommendations for improvement.

The outputs from management reviews shall include any decisions and actions related to possible changes to environmental policy, objectives, targets and other elements of the environmental management system, consistent with the commitment to continual improvement.

Annex A (informative)

Guidance on the use of this International Standard

A.1 General requirements

The additional text given in this annex is strictly informative and is intended to prevent misinterpretation of the requirements contained in Clause 4 of this International Standard. While this information addresses and is consistent with the requirements of Clause 4, it is not intended to add to, subtract from, or in any way modify these requirements.

The implementation of an environmental management system specified by this International Standard is intended to result in improved environmental performance. Therefore this International Standard is based on the premise that the organization will periodically review and evaluate its environmental management system to identify opportunities for improvement and their implementation. The rate, extent and timescale of this continual improvement process are determined by the organization in the light of economic and other circumstances. Improvements in its environmental management system are intended to result in further improvements in environmental performance.

This International Standard requires an organization to

- a) establish an appropriate environmental policy,
- b) identify the environmental aspects arising from the organization's past, existing or planned activities, products and services, in order to determine the environmental impacts of significance,
- c) identify applicable legal requirements and other requirements to which the organization subscribes,
- d) identify priorities and set appropriate environmental objectives and targets,
- e) establish a structure and a programme(s) to implement the policy and achieve objectives and meet targets,
- f) facilitate planning, control, monitoring, preventive and corrective actions, auditing and review activities to ensure both that the policy is complied with and that the environmental management system remains appropriate, and
- g) be capable of adapting to changing circumstances.

An organization with no existing environmental management system should, initially, establish its current position with regard to the environment by means of a review. The aim of this review should be to consider all environmental aspects of the organization as a basis for establishing the environmental management system.

The review should cover four key areas:

- identification of environmental aspects, including those associated with normal operating conditions, abnormal conditions including start-up and shut-down, and emergency situations and accidents;
- identification of applicable legal requirements and other requirements to which the organization subscribes;
- examination of existing environmental management practices and procedures, including those associated with procurement and contracting activities;
- evaluation of previous emergency situations and accidents.

Tools and methods for undertaking a review might include checklists, conducting interviews, direct inspection and measurement, results of previous audits or other reviews, depending on the nature of the activities.

An organization has the freedom and flexibility to define its boundaries and may choose to implement this International Standard with respect to the entire organization or to specific operating units of the organization. The organization should define and document the scope of its environmental management system. Defining the

scope is intended to clarify the boundaries of the organization to which the environmental management system will apply, especially if the organization is a part of a larger organization at a given location. Once the scope is defined, all activities, products and services of the organization within that scope need to be included in the environmental management system. When setting the scope, it should be noted that the credibility of the environmental management system will depend upon the choice of organizational boundaries. If a part of an organization is excluded from the scope of its environmental management system, the organization should be able to explain the exclusion. If this International Standard is implemented for a specific operating unit, policies and procedures developed by other parts of the organization can be used to meet the requirements of this International Standard, provided that they are applicable to that specific operating unit.

A.2 Environmental policy

The environmental policy is the driver for implementing and improving an organization's environmental management system so that it can maintain and potentially improve its environmental performance. This policy should therefore reflect the commitment of top management to comply with applicable legal requirements and other requirements, to prevent pollution and to continually improve. The environmental policy forms the basis upon which the organization sets its objectives and targets. The environmental policy should be sufficiently clear to be able to be understood by internal and external interested parties, and should be periodically reviewed and revised to reflect changing conditions and information. Its area of application (i.e. scope) should be clearly identifiable and should reflect the unique nature, scale and environmental impacts of the activities, products and services within the defined scope of the environmental management system.

The environmental policy should be communicated to all persons who work for, or on behalf of, the organization, including contractors working at an organization's facility. Communication to contractors can be in alternative forms to the policy statement itself, such as rules, directives and procedures, and may therefore only include pertinent sections of the policy. The organization's environmental policy should be defined and documented by its top management within the context of the environmental policy of any broader corporate body of which it is a part, and with the endorsement of that body.

NOTE Top management usually consists of a person or group of people who direct and control an organization at the highest level.

A.3 Planning

A.3.1 Environmental aspects

Subclause 4.3.1 is intended to provide a process for an organization to identify environmental aspects, and to determine those that are significant which should be addressed as a priority by the organization's environmental management system.

An organization should identify the environmental aspects within the scope of its environmental management system, taking into account the inputs and outputs (both intended and unintended) associated with its current and relevant-past activities, products and services, planned or new developments, or new or modified activities, products and services. This process should consider normal and abnormal operating conditions, shut-down and start-up conditions, as well as reasonably foreseeable emergency situations.

Organizations do not have to consider each product, component or raw material input individually. They may select categories of activities, products and services to identify their environmental aspects.

Although there is no single approach for identifying environmental aspects, the approach selected could for example consider

- a) emissions to air,
- b) releases to water,
- c) releases to land,
- d) use of raw materials and natural resources,

- e) use of energy,
- f) energy emitted, e.g. heat, radiation, vibration,
- g) waste and by-products, and
- h) physical attributes, e.g. size, shape, colour, appearance.

In addition to those environmental aspects an organization can control directly, an organization should also consider aspects that it can influence, e.g. those related to goods and services used by the organization and those related to products and services that it provides. Some guidance to evaluate control and influence is provided below. However, in all circumstances it is the organization that determines the degree of control and also the aspects it can influence.

Consideration should be given to aspects related to the organization's activities, products and services, such as

- design and development,
- manufacturing processes,
- packaging and transportation,
- environmental performance and practices of contractors and suppliers,
- waste management,
- extraction and distribution of raw materials and natural resources,
- distribution, use and end-of-life of products, and
- wildlife and biodiversity.

The control and influence over the environmental aspects of a product supplied to an organization can vary significantly, depending on the organization's market situation and its suppliers. An organization that is responsible for its own product design can influence such aspects significantly by changing, for example, a single input material, while an organization that needs to supply in accordance with externally determined product specifications may have little choice.

With respect to products provided, it is recognized that organizations may have limited control over the use and disposal of their products, e.g. by users, but they can consider, where practicable, communication of proper handling and disposal mechanisms to these users in order to exert influence.

Changes to the environment, either adverse or beneficial, that result wholly or partially from environmental aspects are called environmental impacts. The relationship between environmental aspects and impacts is one of cause and effect.

In some locations cultural heritage can be an important element of the surroundings in which an organization operates, and therefore should be taken into account in the understanding of its environmental impacts.

Since an organization might have many environmental aspects and associated impacts, it should establish criteria and a method to determine those that it considers significant. There is no single method for determining significant environmental aspects. However, the method used should provide consistent results and include the establishment and application of evaluation criteria, such as those related to environmental matters, legal issues and the concerns of internal and external interested parties.

When developing information relating to its significant environmental aspects, the organization should consider the need to retain the information for historical purposes as well as how to use it in designing and implementing its environmental management system.

The process of identification and evaluation of environmental aspects should take into account the location of activities, cost and time to undertake the analysis, and the availability of reliable data. The identification of environmental aspects does not require a detailed life-cycle assessment. Information already developed for regulatory or other purposes may be used in this process.

This process of identifying and evaluating environmental aspects is not intended to change or increase an organization's legal obligations.

A.3.2 Legal and other requirements

The organization needs to identify the legal requirements that are applicable to its environmental aspects. These may include

- a) national and international legal requirements,
- b) state/provincial/departmental legal requirements,
- c) local governmental legal requirements.

Examples of other requirements to which the organization may subscribe include, if applicable,

- agreements with public authorities,
- agreements with customers,
- non-regulatory guidelines,
- voluntary principles or codes of practice,
- voluntary environmental labelling or product stewardship commitments,
- requirements of trade associations,
- agreements with community groups or non-governmental organizations,
- public commitments of the organization or its parent organization,
- corporate/company requirements.

The determination of how legal and other requirements apply to an organization's environmental aspects is usually accomplished in the process of identifying these requirements. It may not be necessary, therefore, to have a separate or additional procedure in order to make this determination.

A.3.3 Objectives, targets and programme(s)

The objectives and targets should be specific and measurable wherever practicable. They should cover short- and long-term issues.

When considering its technological options, an organization should consider the use of best-available techniques where economically viable, cost-effective and judged appropriate.

The reference to the financial requirements of the organization is not intended to imply that organizations are obliged to use environmental cost-accounting methodologies.

The creation and use of one or more programmes is important to the successful implementation of an environmental management system. Each programme should describe how the organization's objectives and targets will be achieved, including timescales, necessary resources and personnel responsible for implementing the programme(s). This (these) programme(s) may be subdivided to address specific elements of the organization's operations.

The programme should include, where appropriate and practical, consideration of planning, design, production, marketing and disposal stages. This may be undertaken for both current and new activities, products or services. For products, this can address design, materials, production processes, use and ultimate disposal. For installations or significant modifications of processes, this can address planning, design, construction, commissioning, operation and, at the appropriate time determined by the organization, decommissioning.

A.4 Implementation and operation

A.4.1 Resources, roles, responsibility and authority

The successful implementation of an environmental management system calls for a commitment from all persons working for the organization or on its behalf. Environmental roles and responsibilities therefore should not be seen as confined to the environmental management function, but can also cover other areas of an organization, such as operational management or staff functions other than environmental.

This commitment should begin at the highest levels of management. Accordingly, top management should establish the organization's environmental policy and ensure that the environmental management system is implemented. As part of this commitment, top management should designate a specific management representative(s) with defined responsibility and authority for implementing the environmental management system. In large or complex organizations, there may be more than one designated representative. In small or medium-sized enterprises, these responsibilities may be undertaken by one individual. Management should also ensure that appropriate resources, such as organizational infrastructure, are provided to ensure that the environmental management system is established, implemented and maintained. Examples of organizational infrastructure include buildings, communication lines, underground tanks, drainage, etc.

It is also important that the key environmental management system roles and responsibilities are well defined and communicated to all persons working for or on behalf of the organization.

A.4.2 Competence, training and awareness

The organization should identify the awareness, knowledge, understanding and skills needed by any person with the responsibility and authority to perform tasks on its behalf.

This International Standard requires that

- a) those persons whose work could cause significant environmental impact(s) identified by the organization are competent to perform the tasks to which they are assigned,
- b) training needs are identified and actions are taken to ensure the provision of training,
- c) all persons are aware of the organization's environmental policy and environmental management system and the environmental aspects of the organization's activities, products and services that could be affected by their work.

Awareness, knowledge, understanding and competence may be obtained or improved through training, education or work experience.

The organization should require that contractors working on its behalf are able to demonstrate that their employees have the requisite competence and/or appropriate training.

Management should determine the level of experience, competence and training necessary to ensure the capability of personnel, especially those carrying out specialized environmental management functions.

A.4.3 Communication

Internal communication is important to ensure the effective implementation of the environmental management systems. Methods of internal communication may include regular work group meetings, newsletters, bulletin boards and intranet sites.

Organizations should implement a procedure for receiving, documenting and responding to relevant communications from interested parties. This procedure may include a dialogue with interested parties and consideration of their relevant concerns. In some circumstances, responses to interested parties' concerns may include relevant information about the environmental aspects and impacts associated with the organization's operations. These procedures should also address necessary communication with public authorities regarding emergency planning and other relevant issues.

The organization may wish to plan its communication taking into account the decisions made on relevant target groups, the appropriate messages and subjects, and the choice of means.

When considering external communication about environmental aspects, organizations should take into consideration the views and information needs of all interested parties. If the organization decides to communicate externally on its environmental aspects, the organization may establish a procedure to do so. This procedure could change depending on several factors including the type of information to be communicated, the target group and the individual circumstances of the organization. Methods for external communication can include annual reports, newsletters, websites and community meetings.

A.4.4 Documentation

The level of detail of the documentation should be sufficient to describe the environmental management system and how its parts work together, and to provide direction on where to obtain more detailed information on the operation of specific parts of the environmental management system. This documentation may be integrated with documentation of other systems implemented by the organization. It does not have to be in the form of a manual.

The extent of the environmental management system documentation may differ from one organization to another, depending on

- a) the size and type of organization and its activities, products or services,
- b) the complexity of processes and their interactions, and
- c) the competence of personnel.

Examples of documents include

- statements of policy, objectives and targets,
- information on significant environmental aspects,
- procedures,
- process information,
- organizational charts,
- internal and external standards,
- site emergency plans, and
- records.

Any decision to document procedure(s) should be based on issues such as

- the consequences, including those to the environment, of not doing so,
- the need to demonstrate compliance with legal and with other requirements to which the organization subscribes,
- the need to ensure that the activity is undertaken consistently,
- the advantages of doing so, which can include easier implementation through communication and training, easier maintenance and revision, less risk of ambiguity and deviations, and demonstrability and visibility,
- the requirements of this International Standard.

Documents originally created for purposes other than the environmental management system may be used as part of this system and, if so used, need to be referenced in the system.

A.4.5 Control of documents

The intent of 4.4.5 is to ensure that organizations create and maintain documents in a manner sufficient to implement the environmental management system. However, the primary focus of organizations should be on effective implementation of the environmental management system and on environmental performance, not on a complex document control system.

A.4.6 Operational control

An organization should evaluate those of its operations that are associated with its identified significant environmental aspects and ensure that they are conducted in a way that will control or reduce the adverse impacts associated with them, in order to fulfil the requirements of its environmental policy and meet its objectives and targets. This should include all parts of its operations, including maintenance activities.

As this part of the environmental management system provides direction on how to take the system requirements into day-to-day operations, 4.4.6 a) requires the use of documented procedure(s) to control situations where the absence of documented procedures could lead to deviations from the environmental policy and the objectives and targets.

A.4.7 Emergency preparedness and response

It is the responsibility of each organization to develop emergency preparedness and response procedure(s) that suits its own particular needs. In developing its procedure(s), the organization should include consideration of

- a) the nature of on-site hazards, e.g. flammable liquids, storage tanks and compressed gases, and measures to be taken in the event of spillages or accidental releases,
- b) the most likely type and scale of an emergency situation or accident,
- c) the most appropriate method(s) for responding to an accident or emergency situation,
- d) internal and external communication plans,
- e) the action(s) required to minimize environmental damage,
- f) mitigation and response action(s) to be taken for different types of accident or emergency situation,
- g) the need for a process(es) for post-accident evaluation to establish and implement corrective and preventive actions,
- h) periodic testing of emergency response procedure(s),
- i) training of emergency response personnel,
- j) a list of key personnel and aid agencies, including contact details (e.g. fire department, spillage clean-up services),
- k) evacuation routes and assembly points,
- l) the potential for an emergency situation(s) or accident(s) at a nearby facility (e.g. plant, road, railway line), and
- m) the possibility of mutual assistance from neighbouring organizations.

A.5 Checking

A.5.1 Monitoring and measurement

The operations of an organization can have a variety of characteristics. For example, characteristics related to monitoring and measurement of wastewater discharge may include biological and chemical oxygen demand, temperature and acidity.

Data collected from monitoring and measurement can be analysed to identify patterns and obtain information. Knowledge gained from this information can be used to implement corrective and preventive action.

Key characteristics are those that the organization needs to consider to determine how it is managing its significant environmental aspects, achieving objectives and targets, and improving environmental performance.

When necessary to ensure valid results, measuring equipment should be calibrated or verified at specified intervals, or prior to use, against measurement standards traceable to international or national measurement standards. If no such standards exist, the basis used for calibration should be recorded.

A.5.2 Evaluation of compliance

The organization should be able to demonstrate that it has evaluated compliance with the legal requirements identified, including applicable permits or licences.

The organization should be able to demonstrate that it has evaluated compliance with the other identified requirements to which it has subscribed.

A.5.3 Nonconformity, corrective action and preventive action

Depending on the nature of the nonconformity, by establishing procedures to deal with these requirements, organizations may be able to accomplish them with a minimum of formal planning, or it may be a more complex and long-term activity. Any documentation should be appropriate to the level of action.

A.5.4 Control of records

Environmental records can include, among others,

- a) complaint records,
- b) training records,
- c) process monitoring records,
- d) inspection, maintenance and calibration records,
- e) pertinent contractor and supplier records,
- f) incident reports,
- g) records of tests for emergency preparedness,
- h) audit results,
- i) management review results,
- j) external communications decision,
- k) records of applicable legal requirements,
- l) records of significant environmental aspects,
- m) records of environmental meetings,
- n) environmental performance information,
- o) legal compliance records, and
- p) communications with interested parties.

Proper account should be taken of confidential information.

NOTE Records are not the sole source of evidence to demonstrate conformity to this International Standard.