
**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.

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.

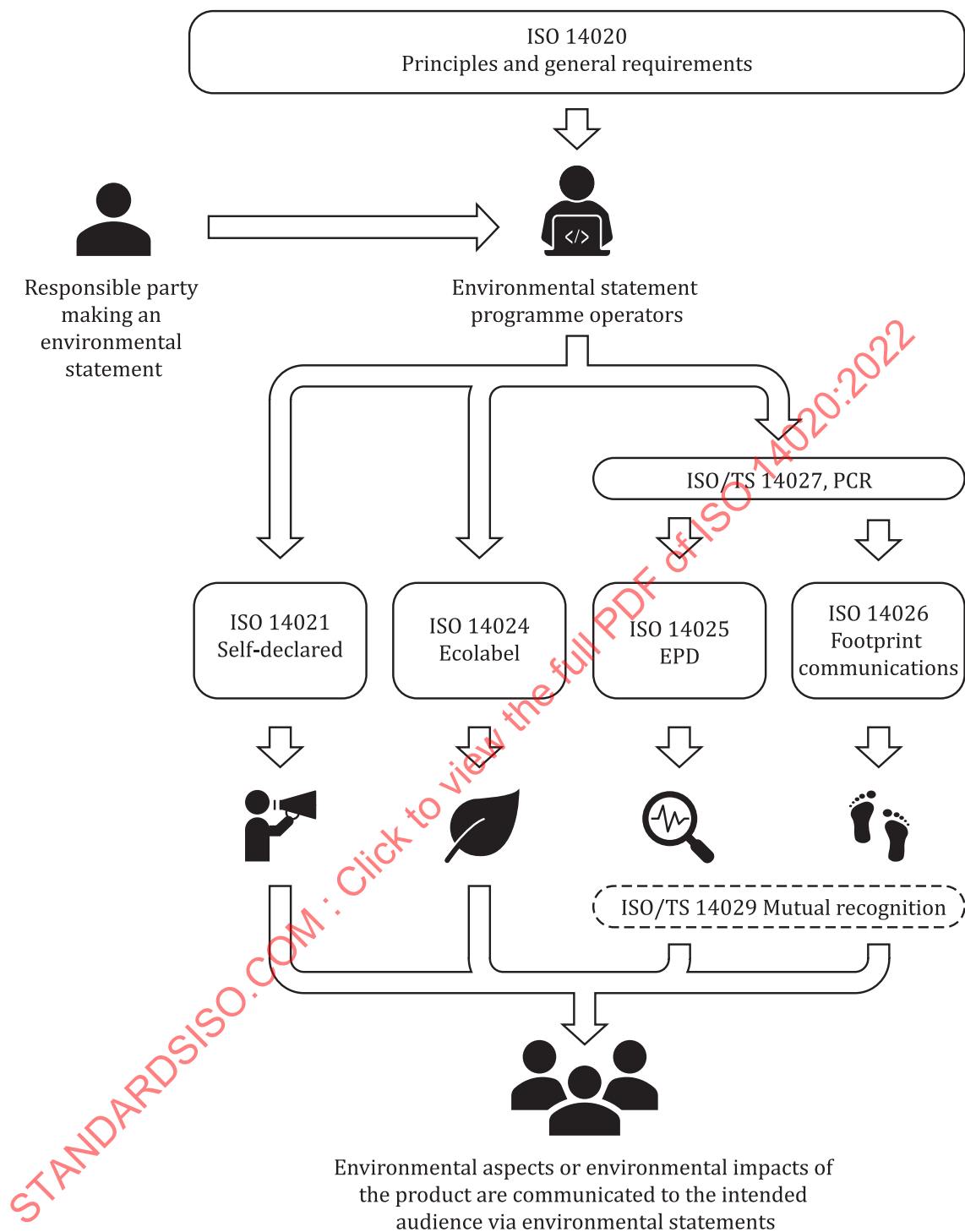


Figure 1 — Structure of the ISO 14020 family of standards

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).

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.]

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.

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.

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.]

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.]

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.]

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.

4.4 Transparency and availability

4.4.1 Principle

Communication of environmental aspects and environmental impacts of products using environmental statements and associated programmes is transparent for the intended audience and interested parties. Supporting information is available upon request.

4.4.2 Rationale

Intended audiences and interested parties need information about the communication so that they understand the underlying principles, assumptions and boundary conditions associated with the environmental statement and associated programme. This information needs to be sufficient and reasonably comprehensible to allow intended audiences and interested parties to:

- a) evaluate and potentially compare environmental statements in relation to their scientific validity and acceptance;
- b) determine whether the environment statement is self-declared or has been assessed by a third party;
- c) determine whether an environmental statement is consistent with the applicable standards within the ISO 14020 family of standards.

4.5 Confidentiality

4.5.1 Principle

Communication of the environmental aspects and environmental impacts of products using environmental statements and associated programmes respect the ownership and confidentiality of proprietary information and data.

4.5.2 Rationale

There can be limits to transparency and availability of specific information due to confidential business information, intellectual property rights or other legal restrictions.

4.6 Life cycle perspective

4.6.1 Principle

Communication of the environmental aspects and environmental impacts of products using environmental statements and associated programmes takes into consideration the function of the product, all relevant stages of the life cycle of the product, including raw material acquisition, production, distribution, use and end-of-life stage.

4.6.2 Rationale

Consideration of the life cycle of a product enables an environmental statement and the associated programme to identify:

- a) the most significant environmental impacts created by the product during its life cycle;
- b) the potential for one impact to be increased during the process of decreasing another;
- c) appropriate and relevant characteristics and criteria to be used as the basis for environmental statements and their significance.

NOTE 1 The extent to which the life cycle is considered varies depending on the type of the programme, the nature of the environmental statement, the product category and the defined boundaries.

NOTE 2 Taking a life cycle perspective does not mean that an LCA is necessary.

NOTE 3 See ISO 14040 and ISO 14044 for more information on LCA.

4.7 Environmental performance improvement and innovation

4.7.1 Principle

Environmental statement programmes do not inhibit innovation which maintains or has the potential to improve environmental performance.

4.7.2 Rationale

An approach based on environmental-performance-related requirements rather than on product design or descriptive characteristics of the product leaves maximum flexibility for technical or other innovations.

4.8 Accessibility and avoidance of unnecessary information and administrative demands

4.8.1 Principle

Communication of the environmental aspects and environmental impacts of products using environmental statements and associated programmes limit the amount of information requirements to only what is needed to support the communication. Administrative procedures to participate in the programme are simple, transparent and non-discriminatory. Information demands are limited to those necessary to establish conformance with the programme.

4.8.2 Rationale

Organizations, regardless of size, have equal opportunity to make environmental statements and participate in associated programmes. Involvement is not to be restricted by extraneous factors or requirements such as procedural complexity or unreasonable information or administrative demands.

4.9 Interested parties and consultation

4.9.1 Principle

The environmental statement programme determines the extent to which consultation is undertaken with interested parties. When consultation is undertaken, reasonable effort is made to achieve a consensus throughout the process.

NOTE “Consultation” does not necessarily imply a public consultation. The programme operator ensures that appropriate consultations take place to ensure credibility and transparency in the operation of the programme. Competitors of the organization(s) developing the programme or the PCR can be included in the open consultation.

4.9.2 Rationale

To encourage acceptance and support for environmental statements and associated programmes it is important to gain buy-in from interested parties. This can be achieved through identification and consultation with those parties on the selection of:

- programme design and operation;

- product categories;
- PCR;
- product environmental criteria;
- product function characteristics;
- the preferred format of the environmental statement and any supporting information.

4.10 Voluntary

4.10.1 Principle

Environmental statement programmes developed in accordance with the ISO 14020 family of standards for the communication of the environmental statements of products are voluntary.

4.10.2 Rationale

As International Standards are voluntary, participation in programmes that fulfil the requirements of the ISO 14020 family of standards are also voluntary. This does not preclude mandatory participation if necessary, to fulfil regulatory compliance or as specified in contractual provisions.

4.11 Regionality

4.11.1 Principle

Communication of the environmental aspects and environmental impacts of products using environmental statements and associated programmes take into consideration the local or regional environmental context relevant to the area where the corresponding potential environmental impacts occur, including impacts during the production, use and end-of-life stages.

4.11.2 Rationale

The extent of environmental impacts can be different depending on where they take place and the environmental conditions that exist in those locations. Environmental conditions can vary due to latitude, longitude, altitude, diurnal length, temperature, humidity, weather patterns (e.g. rain, snow, wind) and proximity to oceans or arid areas, etc. It is appropriate for environmental statement programmes to consider the appropriateness of their environmental statements in the regions that they are likely to be used.

5 Types of environmental statements

5.1 General

The different types of environmental statements are described in [5.2](#) to [5.6](#).

NOTE The standards listed for each type of product environmental statement are the core standards that set out generic requirements. There can also be associated sector-specific standards, such as ISO 21930 for EPDs used in the building and construction sector.

5.2 Self-declared environmental claim

5.2.1 A self-declared environmental claim on a product is provided by persons or an organization which is involved in the supply or the marketing of this product and wants to demonstrate specific positive environmental aspects of this product in order to influence the market.

5.2.2 In addition to this document, requirements, guidance and further information for self-declared environmental claims are given in ISO 14021.

5.3 Ecolabel

5.3.1 An ecolabel on a product indicates overall environmental preferability of that product within a particular product category, based on meeting multiple criteria that are based on life cycle considerations. A licence to use an ecolabel is awarded through an independent, voluntary programme operated by a party that is not associated with the supply of the product.

5.3.2 In addition to this document, requirements, guidance and further information for ecolabels are given in ISO 14024.

5.4 Environmental product declaration

5.4.1 An EPD provides environmental data of a product using predetermined parameters resulting from an LCA plus additional environmental information. The predetermined parameters address relevant impacts and are derived from LCA using PCR.

NOTE 1 The following parameter results derived from LCA can be considered as predetermined parameters:

- a set of impact category indicator results;
- a set of inventory results that are elementary flows (e.g. iron ore);
- a set of data that do not represent elementary flows (e.g. waste).

NOTE 2 An environmental product declaration does not declare the environmental preferability of a product.

5.4.2 In addition to this document, requirements, guidance and further information for EPDs are given in ISO 14025.

5.5 Footprint communication

5.5.1 A footprint communication provides one or more metric(s) related to a specific area of concern, e.g. climate change (carbon footprint communication) or water scarcity (water footprint communication).

5.5.2 In addition to this document, requirements, guidance and further information for footprint communication are given in ISO 14026.

5.6 Other types of environmental statement

This document relates to the communication of environmental information about products, and can be applied to any type of environmental statement about a product, even if there is no specific standard for that type of environmental statement within the ISO 14020 family of standards. Examples of potential applications of this document are shown in [Table 1](#).

6 General requirements for environmental statement programmes

6.1 Environmental statement programme

6.1.1 Environmental statements shall be made based on an environmental statement programme that conforms to [Table 1](#).

Table 1 — Elements in an environmental statement programme applicable to different types of environmental statement

Selected elements in environmental statement programmes included in ISO 14020	Environmental statement types				
	Self-declared environmental claims	Ecolabels	EPDs	Footprint communications	Other environmental statements ^a
Related standards	ISO 14021	ISO 14024	ISO 14025	ISO 14026	
Environmental statement programme ^b (6.1.2)	required	required	required	required	required
Involvement of interested parties (6.3)	optional	required	required	optional	optional
Supporting information (6.8.2)	required	required	required	required	required
LCA or footprint study based on PCR	optional ^c	optional ^c	required	required	optional
Conformity assessment (6.7)	optional	required	required	required	required
Documentation ^d (6.8)	required	required	required	required	required
^a Other environmental statement types can have additional requirements in documents outside the ISO 14020 family of standards, e.g. in ISO 14044 for comparative assertions. ^b Any environmental statement programme needs some documentation of the rules. General programme instructions can provide or refer to this detail. ^c In relation to LCA or a footprint study based on PCR, “optional” is understood to mean LCA using PCR is optional, and can be recommended but is not necessary for a self-declared environmental claim (i.e. 14021) or an ecolabel (i.e. 14024). ^d Any environmental statement type needs documentation according to its rules.					

NOTE 1 [Annex A](#) provides an example of a simple type of environmental statement programme for a self-declared environmental claim. In the case of ecolabels, EPDs and footprint communication, the programme details are often documented in a set of programme or scheme rules, or in general programme instructions, etc. that also cover the overall administration and operation of the programme.

NOTE 2 [Table 1](#) illustrates the typical elements within environmental statement programmes for different types of environmental statements that are specified by an identified programme owner (see [6.2](#)).

6.1.2 Environmental statement programmes shall specify the following:

- programme owner and programme operator (if the programme owner is not the operator) (see [6.2](#));
- type of environmental statement (see [Clause 5](#));
- extent to which interested parties are involved in the development and operation of the programme (see [6.3](#));

- d) scope of the programme, including the subject matter of the environmental statement and any related International Standard, responsible parties and intended audiences (see [6.4](#));
- e) specified requirements and criteria that the subject matter fulfils in order for the environmental statement to be credible (see [6.5](#));
- f) definition of data to be used and quantification methodologies, including data quality criteria and reporting (see [6.6](#));
- g) impartiality, competency and the extent of independence of the person and/or body undertaking any conformity assessment activities, including determination processes, and any subsequent review and decision-making (see [6.7](#));
- h) format of the environmental statement, ensuring that the requirements in [Clause 7](#) are fulfilled, and any reporting and publication requirements (see [6.8](#));
- i) process for implementing changes to programme, specified requirements and criteria, or the environmental statement (see [6.9](#)).

NOTE 1 The above list items are applicable in all cases that an environmental statement is being made in accordance with the ISO 14020 family of standards. It applies in the case of self-declared environmental claims, ecolabels, EPDs and footprint communications.

NOTE 2 The details in the above list items are described further for the different environmental statements programmes in ISO 14021, ISO 14024, ISO 14025 and ISO 14026.

6.2 Environmental statement programme owner and operator

6.2.1 Environmental statement programmes shall be owned by a legal entity, or a defined part of a legal entity, such that the legal entity can be held legally responsible for its environmental statement programme. An environmental statement programme owner may appoint an operator to administer and operate their programme and to fulfil the requirements of this document.

NOTE A governmental entity is deemed to be a legal entity on the basis of its governmental status.

6.2.2 If the owner of the environmental statement programme appoints an operator to administer and operate their programme, it shall have an agreement with the operator that clearly identifies roles, duties and legal responsibilities between the owner and the operator.

6.2.3 The owner of an environmental statement programme shall:

- a) ensure the programme, and any associated environmental statements made in accordance with the programme, fulfil the requirements of this document;
- b) be responsible for the design, development, periodic review and managed introduction of changes to the programme;
- c) be responsible for the funding and business model associated with the programme, including fee setting and associated arrangements (when used);
- d) be responsible for managing information that is associated with the programme, including confidentiality and any public information about the programme;

NOTE 1 Product-specific data are often confidential because of competitive business requirements, proprietary information covered by intellectual property rights or similar legal restrictions.

Such confidential data are not typically made public, but in accordance with the confidentiality requirements with a programme are reviewed during conformity assessment (e.g. verification, certification) activities, and can be provided in an aggregated form.

- e) communicate the scope, subject matter, requirements and criteria, determination methods and conformity assessment activities used in the programme to interested parties, when requested;

NOTE 2 This information can be included in programme or scheme rules, general programme instructions, etc.

- f) confirm the status of environmental statements that are made in accordance with the programme, when requested;
- g) be responsible for the credibility of their programme, including taking any necessary steps to respond to complaints, instances of fraudulent use or other misleading behaviour, in relation to their programme and any associated environmental statements.

NOTE 3 Other documents in the ISO 14020 family of standards contain additional requirements for programme owners such as the provision of public information on environmental performance and statements, and directories of confirmed environmental statements and their associated responsible parties and products.

6.3 Involvement of interested parties

During the development of the environmental statement programme, the environmental statement programme owner shall undertake consultation with interested parties, if applicable (see [Table 1](#)). Reasonable effort should be made to achieve a consensus throughout the process.

6.4 Scope of programme, responsible parties and intended audiences

Environmental statement programme owners shall clearly specify the scope of their programme including the:

- a) environmental aspect(s), environmental impact(s) and environmental performance that is included in the programme;
- b) objective of the programme and interested parties;
- c) subject matter covered by the programme;

NOTE The subject matter covered by the programme includes the identification of the products or product categories, and that the programme covers, and can be limited, for example, to a certain geographical area or a certain life cycle stage, or to certain economic or industrial sector.

- d) type(s) of environmental statement(s);

EXAMPLE Self-declared environmental claim (see ISO 14021), ecolabel (see ISO 14024), EPD (see ISO 14025), footprint communication (see ISO 14026).

- e) parties involved in the operation of the programme and their responsibilities, including the responsible party that is providing the environmental statement;
- f) intended audience(s).

6.5 Specified requirements and criteria

6.5.1 The environmental statement programme owner shall define the specified requirements and criteria related to the environmental aspects or environmental impacts of the product.

6.5.2 Specified requirements and criteria should be expressed in performance-based terms, rather than in prescriptive design or descriptive-based terms, and should be quantifiable.

6.6 Quantification methodologies, data quality and reporting

6.6.1 The environmental statement programme owner shall specify requirements (rules) for:

- a) quantification of environmental performance (when applicable);
- b) any reporting activities associated with data or other forms of information.

6.6.2 Data quality and reporting requirements shall specify any:

- a) data formats;
- b) reporting formats and obligations, including the parties to be involved and timing;
- c) necessary data quality assessment or verification activities;
- d) retention period for data and associated information for subsequent referral if required.

NOTE Requirements for the retention of documented information about determination methods can be specified through reference to regulations and supply chain contracts, but generally can be for as long as the product is available in the market, and through to its use and end of life.

6.6.3 The environmental statement programme owner shall specify any relevant competency and impartiality requirements that apply to persons or organizations that undertake quantification, data quality assessment and reporting activities.

6.7 Conformity assessment

6.7.1 The environmental statement programme owner shall prescribe any relevant conformity assessment requirements taking into account the requirements of the respective documents in the ISO 14020 family of standards.

NOTE 1 An approach to conformity assessment is outlined in ISO/IEC 17000:2020, Annex A, and includes the following steps:

- a) Selection: identification of the specific environmental statement, or parts of the environmental statement, that are to be subject to conformity assessment, identification of the specified requirements and criteria to be demonstrated, and identification of the conformity assessment determination methods to be used.
- b) Determination: specifying the party (first, second or third party) that is to carry out the determination methods, any associated impartiality and competency requirements, and requirements for reporting the determination results.
- c) Review and attestation: the process of reviewing the determination results and to make a decision and provide an attestation that the environment statement fulfils the specified requirements and criteria.
- d) Surveillance: if ongoing confirmation of fulfilment of specified requirements and criteria is necessary, the process for undertaking surveillance based on a repeat of the above steps, including the frequency and responsibility for undertaking the surveillance activity.

NOTE 2 Determination methods can include auditing, calibration, design appraisal, evaluation, examination, inspection, testing, validation and verification, or any combination thereof. Conformity assessment attestations can be provided by a first party (self-declaration), second party or a third party (e.g. certification).

NOTE 3 Conformity assessment requirements are specified in other standards for the different types of environmental statements (e.g. ISO 14021, ISO 14024, ISO 14025, ISO 14026 and ISO/TS 14027).

NOTE 4 Environmental statement programme owners for self-declared environmental claims (in accordance with ISO 14021) can choose not to specify any conformity assessment requirements in their programme.

6.8 Format of environmental statements, reporting and publication

6.8.1 The environmental statement programme owner shall specify:

- a) the format of the environmental statement (including digital formats) and ensure the format fulfils the requirements in [Clause 7](#);
- b) the extent to which responsible parties, products and associated environmental statements are listed in a directory;
- c) the type and regularity of reporting necessary from the responsible party;
- d) the extent to which information on products, product function characteristics, product environmental criteria, other specified requirements, and determination methods and results are to be published or made available upon request.

6.8.2 The environmental statement programme owner shall specify the need and format of any supporting information (see [7.5](#)) that shall be made available to the intended audience of the environmental statement, and how and where that supporting information shall be provided.

NOTE Supporting information can be made available through the use of electronic product labels. Another method for supporting information to be made available is to provide explanatory materials with the products at the point of sale.

6.9 Changes or revisions to environmental statement programmes, specified requirements and criteria and environmental statements

6.9.1 The environmental statement programme owner shall have a process to manage the review and implementation of changes to the programme, specified requirements or criteria, including communication with responsible parties and intended audiences.

6.9.2 In implementing any changes, the environmental statement programme owner shall take into account:

- a) legislative requirements;
- b) avoidance of unintentional commercial advantage given to a responsible party or to a particular design or product;
- c) action that needs to be taken with respect to existing environmental statements that are based on the old criteria and are still being relied upon in the market;
- d) time for appropriate consultation with interest parties.

6.9.3 In implementing any changes, the environmental statement programme owner should take into account:

- a) the urgency of complying with the revised specified requirements or criteria;

NOTE The programme owner can specify transition times for conformity with any revised requirements.

- b) the extent of the change, the length of time and the level of complexity involved changing the responsible party's processes to comply with the revised criteria;
- c) the complexity of administering the changes for the environmental statement programme owner;
- d) the need to involve the responsible party's material suppliers;

- e) avoidance of unintentional adverse impacts on interested parties, including any economic or social consequences;

6.9.4 The environmental statement programme owner shall have a process to:

- a) ensure any changes that can affect the ongoing veracity of an environmental statement is communicated by the responsible party to the environmental statement programme owner;
- b) to manage any corrective actions or changes to environmental statements.

7 General requirements for environmental statements

7.1 General

7.1.1 The requirements set out in this clause shall apply to all environmental statements.

7.1.2 Environmental statements and any supporting information shall:

- a) be accurate, not misleading and unlikely to result in misinterpretation;
- b) be substantiated and verifiable;
- c) be relevant to that particular product;
- d) be presented in a manner that clearly indicates whether the statement applies to the complete product, or only to a product component or packaging, or to an element of a service;
- e) be specific as to the environmental aspect or environmental improvement which is stated;
- f) be transparent about how the statement is developed (e.g. specified requirements and criteria, declared parameters, PCR documents, calculation and testing methods);
- g) not be restated using different terminology to imply multiple benefits for a single environmental change;
- h) take into consideration all relevant stages of the life cycle of the product;

NOTE 1 This does not necessarily mean that an LCA is undertaken.

NOTE 2 Self-declared claims often address only one stage of the product life cycle.

- i) be presented in a manner which does not imply that the product is endorsed or certified by a third-party organization when it is not;
- j) not, either directly or by implication, suggest an environmental improvement which does not exist, nor shall it overstate the environmental aspect of the product to which the statement relates;
- k) not be made if, despite the statement being literally true, it is likely to be misinterpreted by intended audiences or is misleading through the omission of relevant facts;
- l) only relate to an environmental aspect of the product that either exists or is likely to be realized;
- m) be presented in a manner that clearly indicates if the environmental statement has accompanying supporting information and where this is readily available;
- n) if a comparative statement of environmental superiority or improvement is made, be specific and make clear the basis for the comparison;
- o) if based on a pre-existing but previously undisclosed aspect, be presented in a manner that does not lead the intended audience to believe that the statement is based on a recent product modification;

- p) not be made where they are based on the absence of ingredients or features which have never been associated with the product category;
- q) be reassessed and updated as necessary to reflect changes in technology, competitive products or other circumstances that could alter the accuracy of the statement.

7.2 Vague or non-specific statements

Wording used within an environmental statement shall not be vague or non-specific or broadly imply that a product is environmentally beneficial or environmentally benign. Environmental statements such as “environmentally safe”, “environmentally friendly”, “earth friendly”, “non-polluting”, “green”, “nature’s friend” and “ozone friendly” shall not be used.

NOTE This list is illustrative and not exhaustive.

7.3 Statements of sustainability

Environmental statements shall only be made in association with statements of sustainability where the sustainability programme fulfils the requirements of [Clause 6](#), or are contained within a publicly available document established on a consensus basis with involvement of interested parties.

EXAMPLE The ISO 34101 series on sustainable and traceable cocoa.

NOTE Self-declared environmental claims regarding sustainability are addressed in ISO 14021.

7.4 Comparative environmental statements

7.4.1 Within comparative environmental statements, the baseline used for the comparison shall be clearly identified as one or more of the following:

- a) an organization’s own prior product;
- b) another organization’s product;
- c) an industry average for a product.

7.4.2 Comparative environmental statements shall only be made on the basis of:

- a) comparable products serving similar functions, supplied by the same or another producer, currently or recently in the same marketplace;
- b) quantification, calculation and determination using the same units of measurement and the same determination method (e.g. a published standard, test method, PCR);
- c) qualifications over an appropriate time interval, typically 12 months;
- d) when using LCA:
 - 1) the same functional unit;
 - 2) the same relevant stages of the life cycle;
 - 3) if any stage of the life cycle is left out of the comparison, the impact associated with that stage can be demonstrated to be insignificant for that product category.

NOTE See ISO 14044 for details on LCA.

7.4.3 Comparative environmental statements shall be communicated in a manner that makes it clear that they are expressions of absolute difference or of relative difference.

NOTE For further explanations, see ISO 14021 or ISO 14026.

7.4.4 Comparative environmental statements shall include supporting information (see 7.5) where necessary to ensure the clarity of the statement.

7.5 Use of supporting information

7.5.1 Environmental statements shall be accompanied by supporting information if the statement alone is likely to be misunderstood.

7.5.2 Supporting information shall:

- a) be freely available in print or electronic media (e.g. via a web address, machine-readable code or similar communication channel);
- b) be accessible at the time that the intended audience makes their decision to obtain or use the product that the environmental statement relates to (e.g. at the point of sale);
- c) identify the environmental statement programme operator;
- d) identify whether the environmental statement is principally intended for business-to-business or business-to-consumer communication;
- e) include identification of any life cycle stages that are not covered by the environmental statement;
- f) for a quantitative environmental statement, include declared parameters;
- g) include information about any conformity assessment activities (e.g. verification) that has been undertaken to support the veracity of the environmental statement.

7.6 Use of symbols and graphics in environmental statements

7.6.1 The use of a symbol or graphic is optional in environmental statement programmes and shall be determined by the environmental statement programme operator.

7.6.2 Symbols or graphics used to make an environmental statement should be simple, easily reproducible, and capable of being positioned and sized to suit the product to which the symbol is likely to be applied.

7.6.3 Symbols or graphics used for one type of environmental statement should be easily distinguishable from other symbols, including symbols for other environmental statements.

7.6.4 A symbol or graphic used to express implementation of an environmental management system shall not be used in such a way that it can be misunderstood as an environmental symbol indicating the environmental aspects of a product.

7.6.5 When words and numbers are used in addition to symbols or graphics, the words and numbers shall:

- a) communicate the underlying information and represent meaningful values;
- b) be presented in a manner that clearly indicates that the information is intended to be read together;
- c) be legible and located close to the symbol or graphic.

7.6.6 When symbols or graphics are used in an environmental statement, the symbol or graphic shall not be modified to relate the symbol or graphic to a specific brand, company or corporate position.