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**Environmental statements and  
programmes for products —  
Principles and general requirements**

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



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## Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) is a worldwide federation of national standards bodies (ISO member bodies). The work of preparing International Standards is normally carried out through ISO technical committees. Each member body interested in a subject for which a technical committee has been established has the right to be represented on that committee. International organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO, also take part in the work. ISO collaborates closely with the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) on all matters of electrotechnical standardization.

The procedures used to develop this document and those intended for its further maintenance are described in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1. In particular, the different approval criteria needed for the different types of ISO documents should be noted. This document was drafted in accordance with the editorial rules of the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2 (see [www.iso.org/directives](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://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.

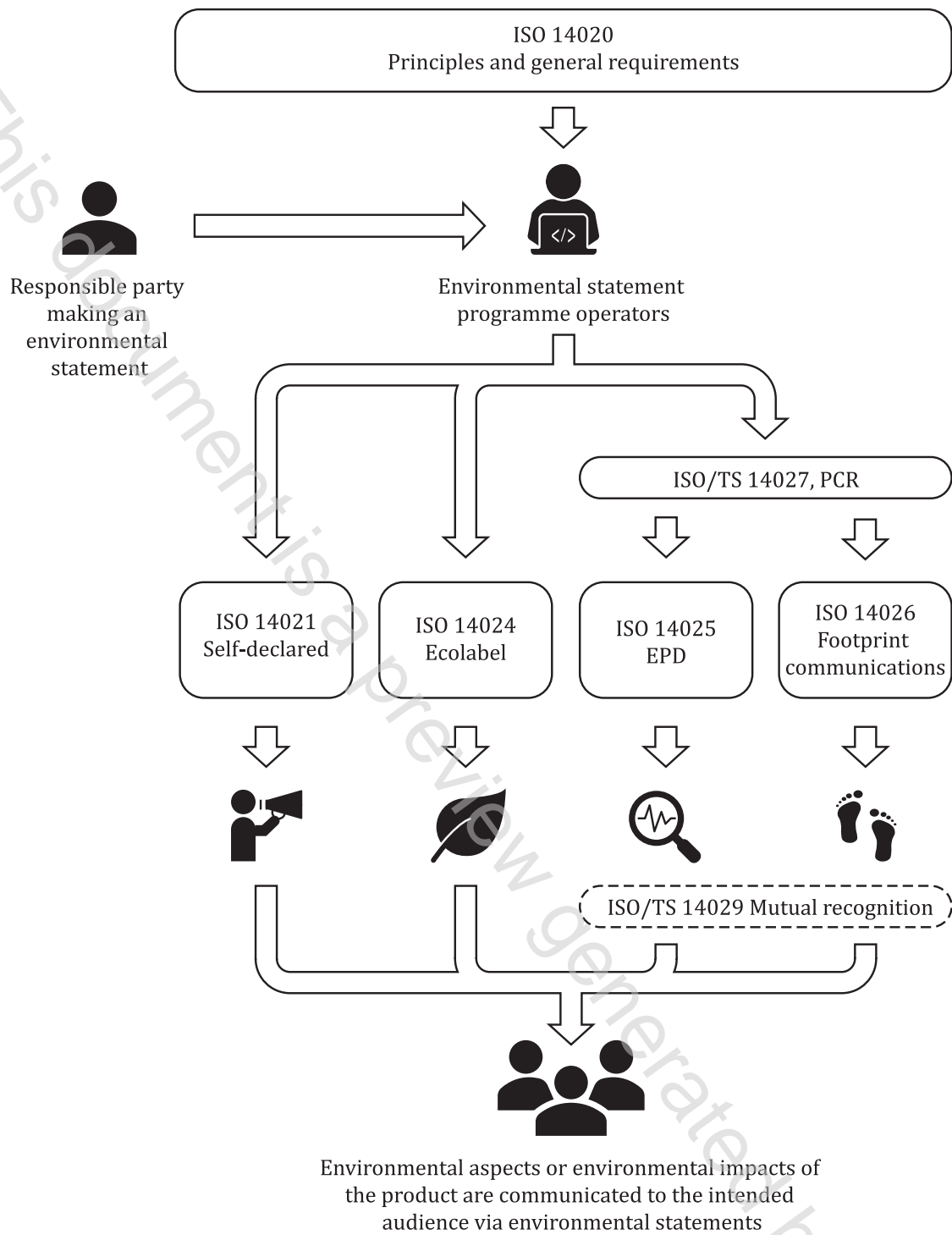
Suppliers that communicate the environmental aspects and environmental impacts of their products via environmental statements hope to influence the market in favour of their products. If the communication has this effect, the market share of those products can increase, and it is possible that other 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.]