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Environmental labels and declarations — General principles

Étiquettes et déclarations environnementales — Principes généraux



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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 3.

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 International Standard may be the subject of patent rights. ISO shall not be held responsible for identifying any or all such patent rights.

International Standard ISO 14020 was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 207, *Environmental management*, Subcommittee SC 3, *Environmental labelling*.

This second edition cancels and replaces the first edition (ISO 14020:1998), which has been technically revised.

Introduction

Environmental labels and declarations are one of the tools of environmental management, which is the subject of the ISO 14000 series.

Environmental labels and declarations provide information about a product or service in terms of its overall environmental character, a specific environmental aspect, or any number of aspects. Purchasers and potential purchasers can use this information in choosing the products or services they desire based on environmental, as well as other, considerations. The provider of the product or service hopes the environmental label or declaration will be effective in influencing the purchasing decision in favour of its product or service. If the environmental label or declaration has this effect, the market share of the product or service can increase and other providers may respond by improving the environmental aspects of their products or services to enable them to use environmental labels or make environmental declarations, resulting in reduced environmental stress from that product or service category.

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Environmental labels and declarations — General principles

1 Scope

This International Standard establishes guiding principles for the development and use of environmental labels and declarations. It is intended that other applicable standards in the ISO 14020 series be used in conjunction with this International Standard.

This International Standard is not intended for use as a specification for certification and registration purposes.

NOTE Other International Standards in the series are intended to be consistent with the principles set forth in this International Standard. Other standards currently in the ISO 14020 series are ISO 14021, ISO 14024 and ISO/TR 14025 (see Bibliography).

2 Terms and definitions

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

2.1

environmental label

environmental declaration

claim which indicates the environmental aspects of a product or service

NOTE An environmental label or declaration may take the form of a statement, symbol or graphic on a product or package label, in product literature, in technical bulletins, in advertising or in publicity, amongst other things.

2.2

life cycle

consecutive and interlinked stages of a product system, from raw material acquisition or generation of natural resources to the final disposal

[ISO 14040:1997]

NOTE "Product" includes any goods or service.

2.3

environmental aspect

element of an organization's activities, products or services which can interact with the environment

3 Objective of environmental labels and declarations

The overall goal of environmental labels and declarations is, through communication of verifiable and accurate information, that is not misleading, on environmental aspects of products and services, to encourage the demand for and supply of those products and services that cause less stress on the environment, thereby stimulating the potential for market-driven continuous environmental improvement.