
**Soil quality — Guidance on the
determination of background values**

*Qualité du sol — Guide pour la détermination des valeurs de bruit
de fond*



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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.

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Soil quality — Guidance on the determination of background values

1 Scope

This International Standard provides guidance on the principles and main methods for the determination of pedo-geochemical background values and background values for inorganic and organic substances in soils.

This International Standard gives guidance on strategies for sampling and data processing and identifies methods for sampling and analysis.

This International Standard does not give guidance on the determination of background values for groundwater and sediments.

2 Normative references

The following referenced documents are indispensable for the application 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 10381-1, *Soil quality — Sampling — Part 1: Guidance on the design of sampling programmes*

ISO 10381-5, *Soil quality — Sampling — Part 5: Guidance on the procedure for the investigation of urban and industrial sites with regard to soil contamination*

ISO 11074:2005, *Soil quality — Vocabulary*

3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the terms and definitions given in ISO 11074 and the following apply.

3.1

background content

content of a substance in a soil resulting from both natural geological and pedological processes and including diffuse source inputs

3.2

background value

statistical characteristic (3.8) of the background content

3.3

contaminant

substance or agent present in the soil as a result of human activity

NOTE There is no assumption in this definition that harm results from the presence of the contaminant.