

BUSINESS PLAN
ISO/TC 207
Environmental Management

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The management of environmental aspects and impacts has established itself as a cornerstone of effective organizational practice alongside the management of quality, security, and health and safety issues. Ongoing concern about environmental issues and sustainable development has significantly affected global practices in recent years as organizations strive to be responsive to government regulations, shareholder concerns and interested parties' expectations all at the same time. The work products of ISO/TC 207 – the basic standard for environmental management, ISO 14001, standards for environmental auditing and performance evaluation, product labelling and declarations, lifecycle assessment, greenhouse gas emission reporting, and others – provide effective management tools for organizations to better manage and communicate about their environmental aspects and to work towards improving their environmental performance and contributing to sustainable development. When used properly, these tools can provide significant advantages and benefits to users in both the private and public sectors.

ISO/TC 207 is a mature ISO Technical Committee with a well-established structure and organization and a well-accepted roster of products. The current focus of ISO/TC 207 is to

- Ensure that ISO TC 207 is aware of relevant international policy developments and trends within its scope
- Ensure that market needs are served
- Ensure global participation in the development, revision, acceptance and use of the ISO 14000 standards
- Ensure the continual relevance and quality of ISO/TC 207's standards
- Protect the brand and the integrity of the usage of the ISO 14000 series standards
- Ensure the compatibility of ISO 14001 with other management system standards (MSS).

1 INTRODUCTION.

1.1 ISO technical committees and business planning.

The extension of formal business planning to ISO Technical Committees (ISO/TCs) is an important measure which forms part of a major review of ISO governance. The aim is to align the ISO work programme with expressed user needs and trends and to allow ISO/TCs to prioritise among different projects, to identify the benefits expected from the availability of International Standards, and to ensure adequate resources for projects throughout their development.

1.2 International standardization and the role of ISO.

The foremost aim of international standardization is to facilitate the exchange of goods and services through the elimination of technical barriers to trade.

Three bodies are responsible for the planning, development and adoption of International Standards: ISO (International Organization for Standardization) is responsible for all sectors excluding Electrotechnical,

1 which is the responsibility of IEC (International Electrotechnical Committee), and most of the
2 Telecommunications Technologies, which are largely the responsibility of ITU (International
3 Telecommunication Union).

4
5 ISO is a legal association, the members of which are the National Standards Bodies (NSBs) of some 151
6 countries (organizations representing social and economic interests at the international level), supported
7 by a Central Secretariat based in Geneva, Switzerland.

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9 The principal deliverable of ISO is the International Standard.

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11 An International Standard embodies the essential principles of global openness and transparency,
12 consensus and technical coherence. These are safeguarded through its development in an ISO
13 Technical Committee (ISO/TC), representative of all interested parties, supported by a public comment
14 phase (the ISO Technical Enquiry). ISO and its Technical Committees are also able to offer the ISO
15 Technical Specification (ISO/TS), the ISO Public Available Specification (ISO/PAS) and the ISO Technical
16 Report (ISO/TR) as solutions to market needs. These ISO products represent lower levels of consensus
17 and have therefore not the same status as an International Standard.

18
19 ISO offers also the Industry Technical Agreement (ITA) as a deliverable, which aims to bridge the gap
20 between the activities of consortia and the formal process of standardization represented by ISO and its
21 national members. An important distinction is that the ITA is developed by ISO workshops and fora,
22 comprising only participants with direct interest, and so it is not accorded the status of an International
23 Standard.

24 25 **2 BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT OF ISO/TC 207.**

26 27 **2.1 Description of the Business Environment.**

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29 The following political, economic, technical, regulatory, legal, societal and/or international dynamics
30 describe the business environment of the industry sector, products, materials, disciplines or practices
31 related to the scope of ISO/TC207, and they may significantly influence how the relevant standards
32 development processes are conducted and the content of the resulting standards:

33 The management of environmental aspects and impacts has established itself as a cornerstone of
34 effective organizational practice alongside the management of quality, security, and health and safety
35 issues. Ongoing concern about environmental issues and sustainable development has significantly
36 affected global practices in recent years as organizations strive to be responsive to government
37 regulations, shareholder concerns and interested parties' expectations all at the same time.

38 Membership in the ISO TC 207 is the highest of any ISO Technical Committee, and is among the
39 broadest and most diverse in representation, two key indicators of the breadth of worldwide interest in the
40 work of ISO/TC 207.

41
42 Throughout the 1990s and continuing into the new millennium, the worldwide business community has
43 seen:

- 44
45 • Increasing government and community expectations relating to the environmental performance of
46 organizations;
- 47 • Increasing use of environmental management standards to better manage environmental
48 aspects. This is occurring especially in the private sector but is being increasingly adopted by
49 governmental bodies;
- 50 • Increasing emphasis on compliance with environmental regulatory requirements;
- 51 • Increasing sophistication and maturity of environmental management tools;
- 52 • Increasing concerns relating to the integrity of the third party certification/registration process in
53 relation to environmental management systems, and
- 54 • Emerging concerns and possible confusion in the business community as a result of the
55 multiplicity of management systems standards, programs and schemes.

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2 **2.2 Quantitative Indicators of the Business Environment.**
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4 The following indicators describe the business environment in support of the actions of ISO/TC 207:

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6 Everyone has an inherent interest in the quality of the environment around them, although the reasons for
7 this interest may vary according to the perspective of the interested parties. The need of organizations to
8 manage their interactions with the environment provided the impetus for the development of International
9 Standards on Environmental Management Systems. While the variety of organizations and users of
10 environmental management system standards is broad, ISO/TC 207 has produced some two-dozen
11 documents in the ISO 14000 series by successfully reconciling the array of views and needs to achieve
12 consensus in an efficient and timely manner.

13
14 As of mid-2005, there are in excess of 87,000 certifications (world-wide) to ISO 14001. While this is a
15 good indicator of the extent of international acceptance of the products of ISO/TC 207, it does not
16 account for the other users of the standard who choose not to formally register their conformity. Nor does
17 it account for the users of the other documents such as those relating to life cycle analysis, product
18 labelling, greenhouse gas emission reporting and others issued as part of the ISO 14000 family. ISO
19 14001 has been adopted by more than half of all the National Standards Body members of ISO and its
20 use is encouraged by governments around the world.

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22
23 **3 BENEFITS EXPECTED FROM THE WORK OF ISO/TC 207.**
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25 The adoption of ISO 14001 in 1995 as an international consensus standard served to end the proliferation
26 of national, regional and private versions of environmental management systems. The entire ISO 14000
27 family of international standards provides management tools for organizations to better manage and
28 communicate about their environmental aspects and to work towards improving their environmental
29 performance and contributing to sustainable development. When used properly, these tools can provide
30 significant advantages and benefits to users in both the private and public sectors, including:

- 31
32 ✓ Improved risk/environmental impacts identification
33 ✓ Enhanced clarity in understanding requirements and setting objectives and targets
34 ✓ Greater assurance in meeting regulatory and other requirements
35 ✓ More specificity in identifying responsibilities and accountabilities
36 ✓ Increased potential to streamline operations, reduce energy and raw material use and minimize
37 waste generation
38 ✓ Establishing an environmental strategy that improves environmental performance
39 ✓ Measuring and communicating improvement in environmental performance
40 ✓ Promoting an organizational culture that promotes employee involvement
41 ✓ More consistent and scientifically defensible approach to analyzing product attributes
42 ✓ Providing consumers with greater assurance of the validity of environmental communications

43 These advantages and benefits contribute directly and indirectly to the organization's commitments to
44 environmental performance and sustainable development.

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46 An illustration of the expected benefits from the work of ISO/TC 207 is outlined in the brochure released
47 recently by ISO Geneva, namely "[The ISO 14000 Family of International Standards](#)".
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51 **4. REPRESENTATION AND PARTICIPATION IN ISO/TC 207.**
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53 **4.1 Countries/ISO member bodies that are P and O members of ISO/TC 207.** ([Countries/ISO](#)
54 [members bodies that are P and O members of the ISO committee](#))
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56 **4.2 Analysis of the participation**

1 There is meaningful representation from developed countries, developing countries and countries with
2 economies in transition in all major geographical regions. Liaison organizations include major international
3 business-sector organizations, NGOs, Regional, Consumers, and Certification organizations. Many
4 member body delegations have broadly diverse representations.
5

6 ISO/TC 207 supports the broadest possible participation of ISO and liaison members, and recognises that
7 special attention must be given to the needs of several groups. The following groups are active within
8 ISO/TC 207 to help address these needs:
9

- 10 1. Developing Country Contact Group (DCCG)
 - 11 2. Chairman's Advisory Group TF (NGO CAG TF)
 - 12 3. Spanish Translation Task Force (STTF)
 - 13 4. Joint Arabic Translation Task Force (JATTF)
 - 14 5. Subcommittee 1 - Strategic Small and Medium Sized Enterprises Group
- 15

16 Likewise, ISO/TC 207 encourages its members to ensure that their delegations and positions reflect
17 openness and represent broad constituencies, especially the concerns of environmental and consumer
18 public interest groups and small and medium sized enterprises.
19

20 At the leadership level, ISO/TC 207 is encouraging capacity development with a twinning program in
21 which the TC and each of its sub-committees and working groups appoints a "twin" from a developing
22 country or an economy in transition.
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24 **5 OBJECTIVES OF ISO/TC 207 AND STRATEGIES FOR THEIR ACHIEVEMENT.**

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26 **5.1 Defined objectives of ISO/TC 207.**

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28 ISO/TC 207's objectives are to:
29

- 30 • Ensure that ISO TC 207 is aware of relevant international policy developments and trends within its
31 scope
 - 32 • Ensure that market needs are served
 - 33 • Ensure global participation in the development, revision, acceptance and use of the ISO 14000
34 standards
 - 35 • Ensure the continual relevance and quality of ISO/TC 207's standards
 - 36 • Protect the brand and the integrity of the usage of the ISO 14000 series standards
 - 37 • Ensure the compatibility of ISO 14001 with other management system standards (MSS).
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40 **5.2 Identified strategies to achieve ISO/TC 207's defined objectives.**

41 *Ensure that ISO/TC 207 is aware of all relevant international policy developments and trends*

- 42 • Identify and register organizations and initiatives which influence or which are affected by the work of
43 ISO/TC 207 and track their activities
- 44 • Of these organizations and initiatives, actively and consistently engage with the leaders and
45 innovators
- 46 • Encourage TC 207 members to participate in relevant activities held in their countries and regions
47 and to report to the TC 207 membership
- 48 • Regularly communicate relevant trends to TC 207 members through workshops, reports, etc.
49

50 *Ensure that market needs are served*

- 51 • Apply Guide 72 when justifying NWIP and conducting standards projects
 - 52 • Monitor the acceptance and use of TC 207's products
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54 *Ensure global participation in the development, revision, acceptance and use of the ISO 14000 standards*

- 1 • Promote the involvement of relevant bodies in the activities of TC 207
- 2 • Update and enhance the TC 207 communication and outreach plan to communicate the important
- 3 role of ISO/TC207 in environmental management and sustainable development worldwide
- 4 • Encourage the establishment of national mirror committees for TC 207
- 5 • Build awareness and understanding to help stakeholders participate effectively in standardization,
- 6 e.g. by encouraging regional workshops
- 7 • Facilitate and encourage effective participation by NGOs, SMEs and developing countries (including
- 8 monitoring actual participation, providing relevant training, and, where appropriate, assisting in fund
- 9 raising)
- 10 • Monitor the potential need for changes in TC 207 procedures
- 11 • Encourage translation of ISO/TC 207 standards into appropriate non-official ISO languages
- 12 • Establish and maintain proactive involvement with relevant ISO bodies dealing with issues of
- 13 sustainable development

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15 *Ensure the continual relevance and quality of ISO/TC 207's standards*

- 16 • Identify trends and emerging issues affecting sustainable development and respond as necessary
- 17 • Evaluate information about the applicability and effectiveness of ISO/TC 207's standards

18
19 *Protect the brand and the integrity of the usage of the ISO 14000 series*

- 20 • Establish procedures for assessing the applicability and effectiveness of existing standards
- 21 • Establish/maintain effective co-operation with ISO/CASCO, the International Accreditation Forum,
- 22 and other relevant organizations
- 23 • Where appropriate, establish and maintain interpretation procedures
- 24 • Monitor information/data about certification and labelling schemes and any declaration of conformity
- 25 with the standards
- 26 • Consider ways to facilitate establishment of national registries for clarifications of intent
- 27 • Monitor organizational practices on publicizing ISO 14001 certification and advise ISO Central
- 28 Secretariat and others as necessary on the need for action.

29
30 *Ensure the compatibility of ISO 14001 with other management system standards (MSS).*

- 31 • Establish and maintain proactive involvement with relevant ISO bodies dealing with or
- 32 considering MSS and/or developing and implementing the ISO MSS policy
- 33 • Encourage the ISO MSS policy to take into account the ISO 14001 model of an EMS
- 34 • Encourage member bodies to share results of studies of trends in different countries regarding
- 35 organizations' experiences in integrating their management systems

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37 **6 FACTORS AFFECTING COMPLETION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF ISO/TC 207 WORK**

38 **PROGRAMME.**

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41 **6.1 Participation factors**

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- 43 • The high and increasing number of participating member countries, observer countries,
- 44 international liaisons and – consequently – of members in the various committees tends to extend
- 45 the timescale required for the work of ISO/TC 207 and its committees as:
 - 46 ○ a common understanding of the content of the standard has to be developed by new
 - 47 participants
 - 48 ○ new participants can have difficulty sustaining technical expertise and consistent funding
 - 49 ○ new work items strain member bodies' ability to provide appropriate resources
- 50 • The parallel scheduling of committee work at the annual meetings of ISO/TC 207 makes it
- 51 difficult for member bodies with small delegations to participate in all the meetings they consider
- 52 important

- 1 • The cost of hosting the annual meetings of ISO/TC 207 is becoming prohibitive; for many
2 member bodies, delegates and liaisons, the cost of attending meetings can limit the ability to
3 participate
4

5 Nevertheless ISO/TC 207 intends to meet the market need to develop standards in an acceptable time
6 frame (3 years in accordance with the ISO Directives).
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9 **6.2 Implementation factors**

- 10 • World-wide recognition and acknowledgement of the value of environmental management
11 systems conforming to ISO 14001 and ISO 14004 by influential public and private institutions,
12 e.g. supply chains and government agencies, would increase the acceptance of these standards.
13 • Effective education//training programs that ensure appropriate consulting expertise and
14 conformity assessment infrastructures are critical and are especially needed in developing
15 countries and economies in transition
16 • Compatibility among the ISO 14000 series documents and relevant documents of ISO/TC 176
17 and other ISO committees, such as the WG on Social Responsibility, will facilitate their
18 acceptance and implementation.
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1 **7 STRUCTURE, SCOPES AND WORK PROGRAMME OF ISO/TC 207.**

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3 This section gives an overview of ISO/TC 207's structure, the scope of ISO/TC 207 and its
4 subcommittees and information on existing and planned standardization projects, including resources
5 needed for their completion

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7 **7.1 Structure of the ISO committee**

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9 **7.2 Current projects of the ISO technical committee and its subcommittees**

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11 **7.3 Publications of the ISO technical committee and its subcommittees**

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1 **ANNEX A- GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS USED IN ISO/TC**
2 **BUSINESS PLANS.**

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4 [*Glossary of terms and abbreviations used in ISO/TC Business Plans*](#)

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6 [*ISO/TC 207 TermBank*](#)

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8 [*General information on the principles of ISO's technical work*](#)