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# ISO 14001

## ISO 14001

### Environmental Management



#### Motivation and benefits

There are approx. 300.000 organizations certified worldwide according to ISO 14001, with numbers increasing every year. In Austria the ISO 14001 certifications amount to over 1.000.

In general ISO 14001:2015 also follows the high level structure (HLS), just like ISO 9001. Since 2012, the ISO/IEC Directives have had specifications about the structure and key contents of management system standards. A new Annex has been adopted. This Annex instructs all technical committees in the field of management systems in the way management system standards need to be structured and in the core text they need to include. Important topics of these Revisions are already determined by the relevant requirements: The new priorities in connection with the topics of risk based thinking, leadership, having a look at the context of the organization, focussing on competence and the unified term of documented information are topics determined by this common structure and relevant key contents.

Besides ISO 9001, 14001 and 45001 (formerly OHSAS

18001), this Annex SL forms the basis for all management system standards to be revised in future. Thanks to this, common implementation of these Standards within integrated management systems is simplified for users.

#### Objectives

- Protection of the environment by eliminating or reducing harmful impacts
- Reduction of possible negative effects on the organisation
- Support of the organisation with the fulfillment of binding obligations
- Improvement of the environmental performance
- Controlling of or influence on the way products and services are developed, produced, distributed, consumed or disposed by the organisation
- Achievement of possible financial and operational advantages in order to strengthen the market position
- Communication of environmental information to relevant and interested parties to promote trust

#### The new structure of the Standard

- |                                |                           |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Scope                       | 6. Planning               |
| 2. Normative references        | 7. Support                |
| 3. Terms and definitions       | 8. Operation              |
| 4. Context of the organisation | 9. Performance evaluation |
| 5. Leadership                  | 10. Improvement           |

#### Overview of the most important changes

##### Clause 4 – Context

The requirement for an analysis of the context of the organization is aimed at better understanding one's own organization conceptually and more comprehensively, e.g. in terms of the internal and external interested parties, their needs and expectations as well as possible influencing factors. The context also means that the environmental condition needs to be taken into account. This condition affects the organization while the organization affects the environmental condition because of the organization's activities, products and services.

##### Clause 5 – Leadership

Top management is required to demonstrate leadership even more. This means that the environmental aspects need to be integrated in the business processes, strategic planning and decision-making. Top management is given a more significant role, not only because top management is supposed to act as a role model (active leadership role) but also because the classical Environmental Representative is no longer required.



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In practice, however, this person will continue to be there to meet the comprehensive and variegated technical, legal, normative and ecological requirements of daily practice.

### Clause 6 – Planning

Due to the high level structure, the risk based approach can be found in ISO 14001:2015. This approach includes the determination of risks and opportunities from the perspectives of analysis of the context, environmental aspects and impacts, legal requirements and emergency preparedness and response. Opportunities and risks might be derived from this. Adequate actions will have to be planned, implemented and reviewed for their effectiveness. The organization will have to determine the environmental aspects of the organization's activities, products and services that the organization can control and influence. Based on criteria to be established, the related environmental impacts will have to be identified. The term of "Legal requirements" becomes "compliance obligations". This implies compliance with legal requirements, additional burdens as well as voluntary self-commitment. Here basically the wording has changed.

### Clause 7 – Support

Awareness and competence are separate sub-clauses in Clause 7. This means that they are upgraded as compared to former times. Internal and external communication becomes more important. Internal communication is closely linked to the internal context. In analogy, external communication is closely linked to the external context. External communication is required to enhance confidence by means of a dialogue about environmental performance with the external target groups. In Clause 7, the requirements placed on documented information are also established.

### Clause 8 – Operation

Clause 8 is mainly dedicated to operational planning and control, above all control of the processes, including the outsourced processes. The requirement for a life cycle perspective of products and services draws a red-thread path as a new requirement throughout the Standard and is amply described in Clause 8.1. It is true that no detailed life cycle analysis in the sense of ISO 14044 is required. Nevertheless, all the phases of life will have to be considered, and the organizations are required to review to what extent they can control and influence them. In 8.2, "Emergency preparedness and response", Clause 8 also defines the requirements relating to emergency preparedness and response.

### Clause 9 – Performance evaluation

Environmental performance needs to be improved. Basically the term is not new. Environmental performance is the measurable result of the management of environmental aspects within an organization. In the Revision, indicators play a role now. Inputs in performance evaluation also include review of compliance with compliance obligations, the internal audit as well as management review. Thus the circle is closed for top management again.

### Quality Austria introduces itself

Quality Austria - Trainings, Zertifizierungs und Begutachtungs GmbH is your competence partner for the Integrated Management System in the fields of Quality, Environment, Safety and Industry Standards as well as Business Excellence. The services provided by Quality Austria range from trainings in the field of international management trends and techniques via certification of management systems according to international standards, regulations, national guidelines, directives and assessments according to the EFQM Excellence Model to awarding the Austria Quality Seal. The Austrian Excellence Award will be presented to Austrian organizations in cooperation with the Federal Ministry for Digital and Economic Affairs. Quality Austria is accredited by the Federal Ministry of Digital and Economic Affairs and has numerous international registrations and accreditations.

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