



ISO 14001

Environmental Management



MOTIVATION AND BENEFITS

There are more than 440.000 organizations certified worldwide according to ISO 14001, with numbers increasing. In Austria the ISO 14001 certifications amount to over 2.200.

In general ISO 14001 also follows the harmonized structure, just like ISO 9001.

Risk based thinking, leadership, considering 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.

The harmonized structure supports the integration of specific requirements into an Integrated Management System.

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

STRUCTURE

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 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 |

MOST IMPORTANT REQUIREMENTS

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 no longer is required.





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 harmonized structure, the risk based approach can be found in ISO 14001. 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 conditions 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.

ACCREDITATION

Quality Austria Certification GmbH is accredited for ISO 14001 by Akkreditierung Austria on the basis of ISO/IEC 17021-1.

OTHER RELEVANT STANDARDS

EMAS, ISO 50001, ISO 9001, ISO 45001, SCC, Sustainability Reports



Axel Dick, MSc
Executive Vice President
Head of Business Development
Environment and Energy, ESG
axel.dick@qualityaustria.com



Andreas Ackerl, BSc
Head of Environment and Energy
andreas.ackerl@qualityaustria.com

