

PROJECT

Resource Conservation + Circular Economy
Sustainability
Water

Management of Water within the Framework of Environmental Management Systems



[1]

The project supported the preparatory process for a new ISO guidance for environmental management in the water sector. Experts were asked in an international workshop whether such an ISO guideline could usefully supplement the existing ISO standards and should be introduced. As a result of the project, a unanimous, positive vote from the experts could be passed on to the ISO decision-makers. Subsequently, the decision-makers agreed to set up an appropriate working group to develop the guideline.

A working group of the ISO community prepared the draft of the new ISO guideline for the adaptation of ISO 14001 for the water sector prior to the project; during the course of the project, the draft was commented on and further developed. Concrete suggestions for the design were elaborated, documented and included in the newly created working group. These include the following aspects:

The guideline should...

- ...not become a certificate, but be voluntary.
- ...focus on water on land.
- ...consider the coordination and cooperation between organisations within a catchment area.
- ...consider all physical states of water.

Background

ISO 14001 is a general framework that specifies the requirements of an environmental management system (EMS). About 360.000 organizations worldwide currently use ISO 14001 to reduce their impacts on the environment and to adapt to changing environmental conditions.

The new proposal is intended to become part of the ISO 14002 series, which is supposed to provide support for organizations who want to direct and focus the actions within their EMS to specific environmental topic areas, such as water. The standard is organized as a series of parts, where part one (ISO 14002-1) provides generic guidance and following parts will emphasize different environmental topic areas.

Organizations will benefit from applying the guidance provided in ISO 14002 by:

- enhancing environmental performance within specific environmental topic areas;
- protecting the environment by preventing or mitigating adverse environmental impacts within specific environmental topic areas;
- mitigating the potential adverse effect of environmental conditions on the organization within specific environmental topic areas;
- aligning the environmental management system with the organization's strategic direction.

The proposed new standard ISO 14002-2 is intended to provide guidance for organizations seeking to manage water-related risks and opportunities and taking related actions in their EMS.

Related Articles

- [New ISO Guidance for Managing Water with ISO 14001](#)

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Links

[1] https://www.ecologic.eu/sites/files/project/2019/fotolia_c_richard_lister_xl_adopteb_iso_14002-2_3_0.png