



Handled by, phone  
Sara Ellström, +46 8 55552066  
E-mail  
sara.ellstrom@sis.se

MINUTES  
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**ISO/TC 207/SC 3/WG 4**  
Type III environmental declarations

## **MINUTES of the third meeting of WG 4, held on 10, 11 and 13 June 2002 in Johannesburg, South Africa**

### **1. Opening of the meeting and roll call of participants**

The convenor, Stig Hirsbak opened the meeting and welcomed the experts to the third meeting of ISO/TC 207/ SC 3/WG 4. All experts introduced themselves around the table. An attendance list in Annex 1, also including observers, was circulated.

### **2. Approval of the draft agenda (N12 Rev 1)**

The draft agenda in document N12 Rev 1 was adopted. A work process for the three days meeting in Annex 2 was suggested by the convenor and adopted by the group. The subheadings of agenda item 5 – Discussion of report to SC 3 - will only be used as a guide for the discussion.

### **3. Report from the previous meeting (N3)**

The secretariat summarised the previous meeting of ISO/TC 207/SC 3/WG 4 as well as the activities of the past year. The summary is included as Annex 3.

The written report in document N9 was approved.

### **4. Ongoing activities within ISO/TC 59 – Building construction (ISO/TC 59/SC 3 N468, ISO/TC 59/SC 3/WG 12 N7)**

Sven-Olof Ryding informed of the activities within ISO/TC 59, related to Type III environmental declarations:

ISO/TC 59/SC 3/WG 12 are preparing five standards, all applications of standards within the ISO 14000 family. Mr Ryding has been involved in the WG 12 to make sure that the ISO 14000 standards influence the developed standards.

One of the work items are “Sustainability in building construction – Environmental declaration of building products”, of which a third WD was circulated in April 2002, see ISO/TC 59/SC 3 N468. Mr Ryding guided the group through selected parts of this document, to show examples of how this document relates to and apply Type III environmental declarations.

The plan is to circulate the document as CD after a meeting in Oslo in September 2002 and to submit a DIS in the end of year 2003.

## **5. Discussion of Report to SC 3 (N14, N15)**

### **5.1. Summary of the situation for Type III environmental declarations**

Eva Schmincke presented, as in Annex 4, the results of a study on Environmental Product Declarations by order of the European Commission, DG environment. An interim report is published and the final report will be completed by the end of August 2002. The final report will be circulated to WG 4 by the secretariat.

Comments to Eva's presentation as well as reports of the present situation in each country followed. A summary of this can be found in Annex 5.

### **5.2. Main gap issues to be dealt with**

The convenor recaptured the mandate given by SC 3 in Resolution 7/2001 and reminded the group of the fact that the main purpose of the Report to SC 3 is to "identify the gaps and additional needs, ... to be addressed before a generic standard could be developed". Several experts highlighted the importance of leaving this meeting with consensus on the principles of the Report to SC 3, which will be the basis for the coming SC 3 vote on the future of ISO/TR 14025.

It was also decided that the N15 document would not be sent out with the vote of the future of ISO/TR 14025. It was agreed to be used as base for future work, but not to be the response to the mandate given by SC 3. The document shows a structure and some principles for writing a Type III environmental declarations standard.

Based on the comments received prior to the meeting, the group agreed upon the following main gaps to be discussed.

- Business to Business (B2B) and Business to Consumer (B2C)
- The process around "consultation with interested parties"
- Independent verification

### **5.3. Discussion of identified gaps**

#### **5.3.1. Business to Business (B2B) and Business to Consumer (B2C)**

Argentina and Austria had provided comments indicating a preference for Type III environmental declarations as B2B practice only. It was agreed that B2B probably are of most value for the moment. The group discussed whether the possibility to use Type III environmental declarations for B2C purposes should be excluded or not. Some experts were of the opinion that it should be up to the market to decide on the use of the declarations. Others stressed that additional requirements would be necessary if using the declarations for B2C communication. It was also noted that ISO 14020 says that the requirements depend on the end-user of the information. Another point made was that it could be hard to separate B2B and B2C communication for some products.

**Conclusion:** The group agreed not to exclude B2C communication, but to note that Type III environmental declarations are most suitable for B2B transactions. The final wording of the consensus agreement was included in N14 Rev 3, clause 3.1.

#### **5.3.2. The process around "consultation with interested parties"**

Several comments provided prior to the meeting, as well as earlier discussions within the group, have concerned the required level of consultation with interested parties. Several experts stressed that setting of LCA rules and boundaries as well as discussion of relevance of information must be done together with interested parties. Otherwise the declaration will have

no value. Others expressed a fear for bureaucracy associated to the consultation process and also problems to see the market advantage if inviting competitors to take part of the process. The group discussed possibilities for single company initiatives and concluded that nothing prevents a single company to develop a Type III environmental declaration as long as they do it in an open process. Finally the group agreed that there should be an open consultation process and that no further requirements than the one of ISO 14020 has to be set for the moment.

**Conclusion:** The principle of ISO 14020 about consultation with interested parties should be the minimum requirement. The final wording of the consensus agreement was included in N14 Rev 3, clause 3.2.

#### **5.3.3. Independent verification**

Argentina, Austria and France had provided comments related to verification, all requiring flexibility and disapproving requirements for certification. Zenichi Murata presented the verification process of the Japanese program – ECO-LEAF. It was concluded that all existing programs have an element of independent verification. Experts pointed out that a mechanism for assuring accuracy of data is essential. It was agreed that this must be done by an independent body. However, this independent body does not necessarily have to be the same as a third party. It could be someone from within the company developing the declaration, without own interests in the data to be verified. All details on how the independent verification should be done can be solved when/if a future standard is developed.

**Conclusion:** The group agreed on the principle that independent verification of data shall be mandatory. The verification can be done either internally or externally. The final wording of the consensus agreement was included in N14 Rev 3, clause 3.3.

#### **5.3.4. Other issues**

Except for the three selected issues above the group decided to include a reminder of the previous methodology gaps, resolved together with SC 5, in the report to SC 3. The final wording of the consensus agreement was included in N14 Rev 3, clause 3.4.

### **6. Report from the Type III environmental declarations Workshop (N13)**

The Type III environmental declarations workshop, arranged in co-operation with GEDnet and focusing on the role of developing countries, was held the 12 June. The secretary reported from the morning presentations and result of the group discussions. The convenor, who chaired the afternoon session, summarised of the presentations and the following discussions.

All the given presentations will be published at the homepage of WG 4 by the secretariat.

### **7. Any other business**

No other business related to the WG 4 work was raised.

### **8. Conclusions/summary**

See N14 Rev3, clause 4.

### **9. Planning of future activities**

The secretary of ISO/TC 207/SC 3, John Henry informed of the formal procedures for the handling of the future of ISO/TR 14025:

- Normally a review of a TR gives three options - confirm, revise or withdraw. But as the publication form of ISO/TR 14025 (Technical Report type 2) doesn't exist any more confirmation of the document is out of question. Consequently the two remaining options are:
  - 1) To revise the document – to start standardisation within the existing work item
  - 2) To withdraw the document
- Starting the standardisation will not call for a NWIP as the work item already exists within SC 3.
- The vote will be in form of a letter ballot for three months. The report from WG 4 will go along with the ballot. As soon as the report is completed the ballot can start. The ballot will be sent to both P- and O-members of SC 3, but only P-members votes will count. The ballot might include a SVAT – Standards Value Added Tool. To start standardisation approval by a simple majority of the P-members of SC 3 are required.

If SC 3 decides to start standardisation of Type III environmental declarations the following draft scenario was agreed:

SC 3/WG 4 meeting in February/March – Preparing a first WD

SC 3 meeting in June – Discussing the WD, possibly approve for registration as CD

SC 3/WG 4 meeting in June – Depending on SC 3 mandate

## **10. Report to ISO/TC 207/SC 3**

The report to SC 3, N14 Rev3, agreed at the meeting, will only be amended with some details in the Appendix and editorial corrections, before being sent to SC 3 by the secretariat.

## **11. Next meeting**

The decision on next meeting of WG 4 has to be taken after the SC 3 vote on the 14025 document. If the decision is that the WG 4 shall start a standardisation process, the secretariat was given the task to find a suitable date and place for a next meeting.

Mexico announced that it might be possible to hold a meeting in Mexico in February. The secretariat will contact the Mexican standardisation body for confirmation of the possibilities to host the meeting.

**The convenor thanked all participants for their contributions and South Africa for their hosting of the meeting. The third meeting of ISO/TC 207/SC 3/WG 4 was closed.**