

Australian/New Zealand Standard™

**Environmental labels and declarations—
Self-declared environmental claims
(Type II environmental labelling)**

[Modified and including the full text of ISO 14021:1999]



AS/NZS ISO 14021:2000

This Joint Australian/New Zealand Standard was prepared by Joint Technical Committee EV-003, Environmental Labelling. It was approved on behalf of the Council of Standards Australia on 29 February 2000 and on behalf of the Council of Standards New Zealand on 25 February 2000.

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The following are represented on Committee EV-003:

Australian and New Zealand Environment and Conservation Council
Australian Association of Certification Bodies
Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry
Australian Food & Grocery Council
Australian Industry Group
Australian Retailer Association
Consumers Federation of Australia
Department of Industry Science and Resources (Australia)
Environmental Protection Authority (New Zealand)
Institution of Engineers Australia
Nature Conservation Council of N.S.W.
Packaging Council of Australia
Telarc New Zealand

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PREFACE

This Standard was prepared by the Joint Standards Australia/Standards New Zealand Committee EV-003, Environmental Labelling to supersede AS ISO 14021(Int)—1998 which was adopted from the inquiry draft ISO/DIS 14021.2.

This Standard is an adoption with national modifications of ISO 14021:1999, *Environmental labels and declarations—Self-declared environmental claims (Type II environmental labelling)*. The modifications to ISO 14021 are listed below and the text affected is indicated by a marginal bar.

The objective of this Standard is to harmonize the various national guidelines on environmental claims used in product labels and in marketing generally, in order to facilitate trade in the global marketplace and to give consumers confidence in environmental claims.

Attention is drawn to Clause 5.2 of the Standard, which the Committee has decided to delete in the Australian/New Zealand Standard. It has been suggested that ISO 14020 adds nothing to the content of the Standard; and because of some potential contradictions between ISO 14020 and this Standard, referencing ISO 14020 was felt to detract from the clarity of the Standard.

Clause 5.4 of ISO 14021 has also been modified because it is generally accepted within Australia and New Zealand that claims of ‘. . . free’ are rarely literally true and hence are potentially misleading to the consumer. It has also been agreed that a clause allowing a claim of ‘. . . free’ when trace amounts are present goes against the general requirement that ‘claims shall be accurate and not misleading’.

The term ‘informative’ has been used in this Standard to define the application of the annex to which it applies. An ‘informative’ annex is only for information and guidance.

For the purpose of this Standard, the ISO text should be modified as follows:

- (a) Its number appears on the cover and title page while the International Standard number appears only on the cover.
- (b) In the source text, ‘this International Standard’ should read ‘this Australian/New Zealand Standard’.
- (c) A full point substitutes for a comma when referring to a decimal marker.
- (d) Delete Clause 5.2 and the reference to ISO 14020 in Clause 2.
- (e) Replace Clause 5.4 with the following:

Claims of ‘. . . free’

Environmental claims of ‘. . . free’ should be avoided because they can generally not be demonstrated to be literally true owing to the presence of trace contaminants and background levels of the substance in question in the product. A more appropriate claim is one of ‘no added . . .’ which can be verified using documentary evidence relating to the production process in accordance with 6.5.3(b).

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INTRODUCTION

The proliferation of environmental claims has created a need for environmental labelling standards which require that consideration be given to all relevant aspects of the life cycle of the product when such claims are developed.

Self-declared environmental claims may be made by manufacturers, importers, distributors, retailers or anyone else likely to benefit from such claims. Environmental claims made in regard to products may take the form of statements, symbols or graphics on product or package labels, or in product literature, technical bulletins, advertising, publicity, telemarketing, as well as digital or electronic media, such as the Internet.

In self-declared environmental claims, the assurance of reliability is essential. It is important that verification is properly conducted to avoid negative market effects such as trade barriers or unfair competition, which can arise from unreliable and deceptive environmental claims. The evaluation methodology used by those who make environmental claims should be clear, transparent, scientifically sound and documented so that those who purchase or may potentially purchase products can be assured of the validity of the claims

AUSTRALIAN/NEW ZEALAND STANDARD

Environmental labels and declarations — Self-declared environmental claims (Type II environmental labelling)

1 Scope

This International Standard specifies requirements for self-declared environmental claims, including statements, symbols and graphics, regarding products. It further describes selected terms commonly used in environmental claims and gives qualifications for their use. This International Standard also describes a general evaluation and verification methodology for self-declared environmental claims and specific evaluation and verification methods for the selected claims in this standard.

This International Standard does not preclude, override, or in any way change, legally required environmental information, claims or labelling, or any other applicable legal requirements.

2 Normative references

The following normative documents contain provisions which, through reference in this text, constitute provisions of this International Standard. For dated references, subsequent amendments to, or revisions of, any of these publications do not apply. However, parties to agreements based on this International Standard are encouraged to investigate the possibility of applying the most recent editions of the normative documents indicated below. For undated references, the latest edition of the normative document referred to applies. Members of ISO and IEC maintain registers of currently valid International Standards.

ISO 7000, *Graphical symbols for use on equipment — Index and synopsis*.

ISO 14020:1998, *Environmental labels and declarations — General principles*.

3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this International Standard, the following terms and definitions apply.

3.1 General terms

3.1.1

coproduct

any two or more products from the same unit process

[ISO 14041:1998]

3.1.2

environmental aspect

element of an organization's activities or products that can interact with the environment

3.1.3

environmental claim

statement, symbol or graphic that indicates an environmental aspect of a product, a component or packaging

NOTE An environmental claim may be made on product or packaging labels, through product literature, technical bulletins, advertising, publicity, telemarketing, as well as through digital or electronic media such as the Internet.