
Biodiversity in standards and (environmental) management systems

**A presentation
by**

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Biodiversity in ISO standards: Two examples

In the following attention should be drawn to biodiversity aspects in ISO standards:



- On the one hand the prominent standard for environmental management systems → ISO 14001,
- On the other hand the newly elaborated management system standard focussing on sustainable development in cities and communities → ISO 37101

Biodiversity in the ISO 14001: Mentioning after the revision

Since its actual revision – published in September 2015 – this version makes several references to the aspects of biodiversity.

One of the main reasons for that can be seen in the need for a revision: The revision of the ISO 14001 had the „future challenges“ taken into account.

And combating against loss of biodiversity *is* a future challenge !

The approach of the new ISO 14001: In favour for more biodiversity

The approach of the revised ISO 14001 can be described as change of perspective.

For example the identification of (environmental) impacts – a main duty for building up a sound environmental management system in a organisation:

For a long time the question was: „What are the impacts our company has on the environment?“

Now perspectives are changed and we have to ask: „What are the impacts from the environment that are effecting our company?“

This approach-change has also influence on the biodiversity issue: It should be given more attention to it (even in a management system).

Where are the references to biodiversity in the text of the ISO 14001?

The new version of ISO 14001 refers to biodiversity on several places:

- In its introduction,
- In a note on the definition of the term “environment”,
- In a note about potential aspects of environmental policy,

and

- Twice in the annex (informative).

But: We should not overestimate the relevance of biodiversity in the ISO 14001

In comparison with EMAS III, it's not used as a performance indicator. ISO 14001 gives no indication in this way.

Biodiversity in ISO 14001 is generalised and unspecific.

What means:

A lot depends on the external consultant and how he strives for continuous improvement in this field of biodiversity.



ISO 37000:

A new standard family is entering the stage

The ISO 37000series represent a whole set of standards, focussing on sustainable development in communities and cities.

In the center stands the International Standard ISO 37101 which sets the requirements to build up and maintain a (certified) management system for more sustainability in cities.

The title is:

„Sustainable development of cities and communities — Management system with guidance for resilience and smartness — Requirements for use“

Looking to the future challenges of urbanization biodiversity plays a important role!

The concept of respecting the planetary boundaries

It's the first time an International Standard refers directly to the concept of respecting the planetary boundaries.



As it says in the words of standard text: „In order to become more sustainable, a community faces another challenge: to respect planetary boundaries and to take the limitations they imply into account.“

And further on: „The Planetary Boundaries can be broken down in order to select measures addressable at community level while taking into account the specific situation.“

Biodiversity *and* Ecosystem Services

In the ISO 37101 Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services are seen in a interwoven context.

The Philosophy behind this approach:

„The preservation and improvement of the local, regional and global environment, especially the protection, restoration and enhancement of biological diversity and ecosystem services, including fauna, flora and genetic diversity, is crucial to ensure safe and pleasant living conditions.“
(ISO 37101)

It will enhance the attractiveness of cities and communities and bolster their economic development.

„Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services“: An own chapter in the ISO 3701

Under the headline „Cities and communities issues“ there is a own chapter in the ISO 37101 adressing biodiversity named „Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services“ (Chapter 4.7.13).

The standard text offers So called „help boxes“: In form of guiding questions user get helpful hints how to handle the issues of biodiversity and ecosystem services.

In the end this gives a better basis for a sound judgement.



ISO 37101: A more integrating approach

In comparison to ISO 14001 – also a Management System Standard – the ISO 37101 follows a more integrating approach.

For example the reference to resilience:

The term “resilience” in the title refers to the integrating approach of the standard when it comes to maintaining the natural spaces within cities and communities to reinforce the natural resilience of a system.

The latter is an important aspect in the light of (more) biodiversity.





**Thank You for Your
Attention**

