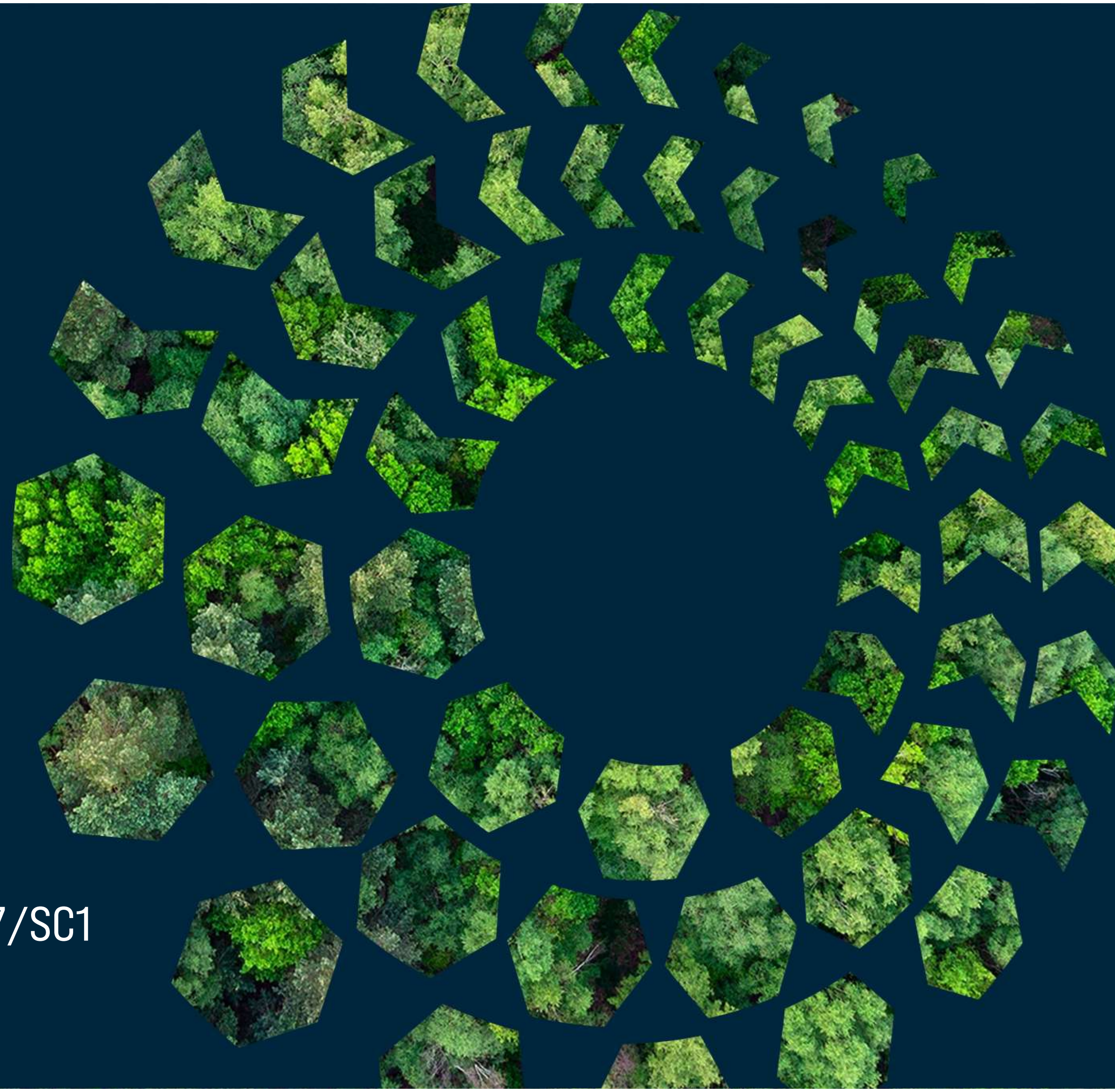
ISEP
Institute of Sustainability & Environmental Professionals

The Future of Environmental Management Systems

ISO 14001:2026



Martin Baxter, Deputy CEO, ISEP

Chair – ISO EMS subcommittee TC207/SC1

m.baxter@isepglobal.org

Housekeeping

Welcome!

1. Please be advised that this session is being recorded.
2. Kindly keep your microphones muted.
3. If possible, turn on your cameras to help make the session more engaging.
4. If you have any questions, feel free to raise your hand or type them in the chat.
5. For closed captions, click on **More** > **Language and Speech** > **Turn on Live Captions**.

Session Outline

1. Introduction
2. Background to the updated version
3. Key changes to requirements
4. Transition arrangements
5. Q&A
6. Karakia

Welcome

Introductions from our ISEP Groups in:

- Australia
- New Zealand
- Hong Kong
- Singapore

We have ISEP members in more than 125 countries – we're actively growing our global network

ISEP's Strategic Priorities - Maximizing our Impact

ISEP's purpose: empower members to become global changemakers, so they can **transform the world today for a sustainable future**.

Skills

- World class professional standards recognised globally
- Enhancing the individual competence of sustainability and environmental professionals

Membership

- Growing our global membership
- More people driving sustainability & environmental protection in their organisation
- Organisations enhancing overall capability

Influence

- Leveraging the expertise of members to influence policy, legislation and standards
- "Changing the rules of the game"

Effectiveness

- Great place to work
- Maximise our effectiveness to deliver value and impact

ISEP
Institute of Sustainability & Environmental Professionals

Background

Why this matters.

Global risks ranked by severity over the short and long term

	Short term (2 years)		Long term (10 years)
1.	Geoeconomic confrontation	1.	Extreme weather events
2.	Misinformation and disinformation	2.	Biodiversity loss and ecosystem collapse
3.	Societal polarization	3.	Critical change to Earth systems
4.	Extreme weather events	4.	Misinformation and disinformation
5.	State-based armed conflict	5.	Adverse outcomes of AI technologies
6.	Cyber insecurity	6.	Natural resource shortages
7.	Inequality	7.	Inequality
8.	Erosion of human rights and/or of civic freedoms	8.	Cyber insecurity
9.	Pollution	9.	Societal polarization
10.	Involuntary migration or displacement	10.	Pollution

Source
World Economic Forum Global Risks Perception Survey 2025-2026

Risk categories
Economic | Environmental | Geopolitical | Societal | Technological

Source: World Economic Forum (2026) Global Risks Report

Global Risks - interconnections

Source: World Economic Forum (2026) Global Risks Report

Global biodiversity loss, ecosystem collapse and national security

UK National Security Assessment (2026)

1. What are the most significant implications of global biodiversity loss and ecosystem collapse for UK national security?
2. Which ecosystems are more critical for UK national security?
3. What would be the impact on UK national security from the collapse of individual critical ecosystems?

Highlights the link between global environmental risks and national social, economic and environmental impacts

The same conversation is happening across APAC

Ecosystem collapse and resilience — parallel assessments across APAC

1. Australia — National Climate Risk Assessment (Australian Climate Service, Sep 2025)
2. New Zealand — 2026 National Climate Change Risk Assessment (He Pou a Rangi Climate Change Commission, May 2026)
3. Singapore — Third National Climate Change Study V3 (Centre for Climate Research Singapore, Jan 2024) + revised "30 by 30" food strategy (Singapore Food Agency, Nov 2025)
4. Hong Kong — Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan 2025–2035 (HKSAR Government, Dec 2025)

Headline findings from each APAC assessment

What the APAC assessments are saying:

- **Australia** — identifies 63 nationally significant climate risks across 8 key systems, with 11 priority risks selected for deeper analysis covering coastal communities, critical infrastructure, ecosystems and primary industries.
- **New Zealand** — concludes that the country remains insufficiently prepared to withstand escalating climate and ecosystem impacts; identifies 10 priority risk areas requiring coordinated national action.
- **Singapore** — V3 projects higher temperatures, more wet and dry extremes and accelerating sea level rise for Singapore and Southeast Asia. The revision of the "30 by 30" food goal to 2035 (Nov 2025) reflects explicit recognition that climate-driven supply chain risk is reshaping national food strategy.
- **Hong Kong** — updated BSAP aligns with the China National BSAP (2023–2030) and is built around 4 strategic areas, 30 priority actions and 81 projects, including large-scale restoration of terrestrial and marine ecosystems and cross-border collaboration in the Greater Bay Area.

Common thread: ecosystem and climate risk now framed as material to economic resilience, supply chains and in several cases national strategic interests.

This is the external context that ISO 14001:2026 is responding to.

Organisational Environmental Risks (and opportunities)

Impacts on the Environment

- GHG emissions
- Air emissions
- Water quality & resources
- Biodiversity
- Land contamination

Environmental Change Impacting Organisations

- Climate change
- Natural resource depletion/availability
- Financial impacts
- Operational (inc. supply chain) impacts

Complexity and Context

- Interconnections (inc. cascading risks)
- Interdependencies
- Policy, Market and Technological Responses

ISEP Fellows leading international standards development

1. Paul Pritchard FISEP
   - **Sustainable finance** — Net zero transition planning for financial institutions
2. Stephanie Hime FISEP
   - **Natural capital accounting** for organizations — Principles, requirements and guidance
3. Nigel Leehane FISEP
   - **Net Zero** Aligned Organizations
4. John Dora FISEP
   - **Climate adaptation** standards' strategy
5. Nick Blyth FISEP
   - Chair of ISO **Climate Change** Coordination Committee
6. Martin Baxter FISEP
   - Chair **Environmental Management Systems ISO 14001**, Material Flow Cost Accounting, Monetary Evaluation of Environmental Costs, Eco-Design
7. Jos Baars PISEP (**Netherlands**) Amarjit Kaur FISEP (**Malaysia**) Andrew Marlow FISEP (**UK**) Ann Smith FISEP (**New Zealand**) Anne Marie Warris FISEP (**CASCO**) Matt Gantley FISEP (**IAF**) Lesley Wilson (**Biodiversity**)

Background to the new edition

Key inputs to inform decision on whether to **revise** or **amend** 2015 edition:

- ISO 14001 user survey results
- EMS Future Challenges
- Changes to the harmonised structure (HS) for management system standards
- External context (e.g. sustainability, disclosure and reporting)

Decision to amend 2015 edition – only new requirements introduced through HS; clarify terms and concepts to aid users.

Reminder - Disclosure & Reporting

ISO 14001:2015 (clause 7 Communications) requires organisations to:

- Externally communicate information relevant to the EMS **and its compliance obligations**
- Ensure that information that is communicated is consistent with information in the EMS and **is reliable**
- Includes **contractual requirements**, **product** information, wider organisational disclosures (e.g. **ISSB, CDP, GRI, CSRD, TNFD** etc)

Structure

1. Starting point is the harmonised structure for management systems standards (MSS)
2. Scope – no change, retains the focus on enhancing environmental performance, meeting compliance obligations & achieving environmental objectives – overall contribution to environmental sustainability
3. No normative references
4. Terms and definitions – minor updates, including to notes. **Risk** & **Outsource** deleted
5. Requirements (clauses 4-10)
6. Annex A – Guidance (extensive & a must-read)
7. Bibliography

A Note on Terminology – check the Annex!

Check the Annex as well as the Terms and Definitions section – examples include:

1. “consider” means it is necessary to think about the topic but it can be excluded,
2. “take into account” means it is necessary to think about the topic but it cannot be excluded.
3. Normal, abnormal and emergency situations – all mean something different
4. “ensure” means the responsibility can be delegated, but not the accountability

Clause 4 – Context of the Organisation

1. Addressed the MSS requirement to determine whether climate change is a relevant consideration by specifying a range of issues:
   - including reference to **pollution** levels, availability of **natural resources**, **ecosystem health** and **climate change**....recognising the overall focus of an EMS is wider than climate change
   - retaining the '**double-materiality**' approach – environmental conditions affecting or being affected by an organisation
2. Clarified that when setting the EMS scope, consideration should be given to an **organisation's authority and ability to control/influence over the life-cycle of activities, products and services**

Clause 5 - Leadership

No changes to requirements – although note inputs to management review in “Performance Evaluation” have been enhanced.

Some terms have been amended in 5.2 Environmental Policy but there is no change to their meaning:

i. “meet compliance obligations” replaces the phrase “fulfil compliance obligations”

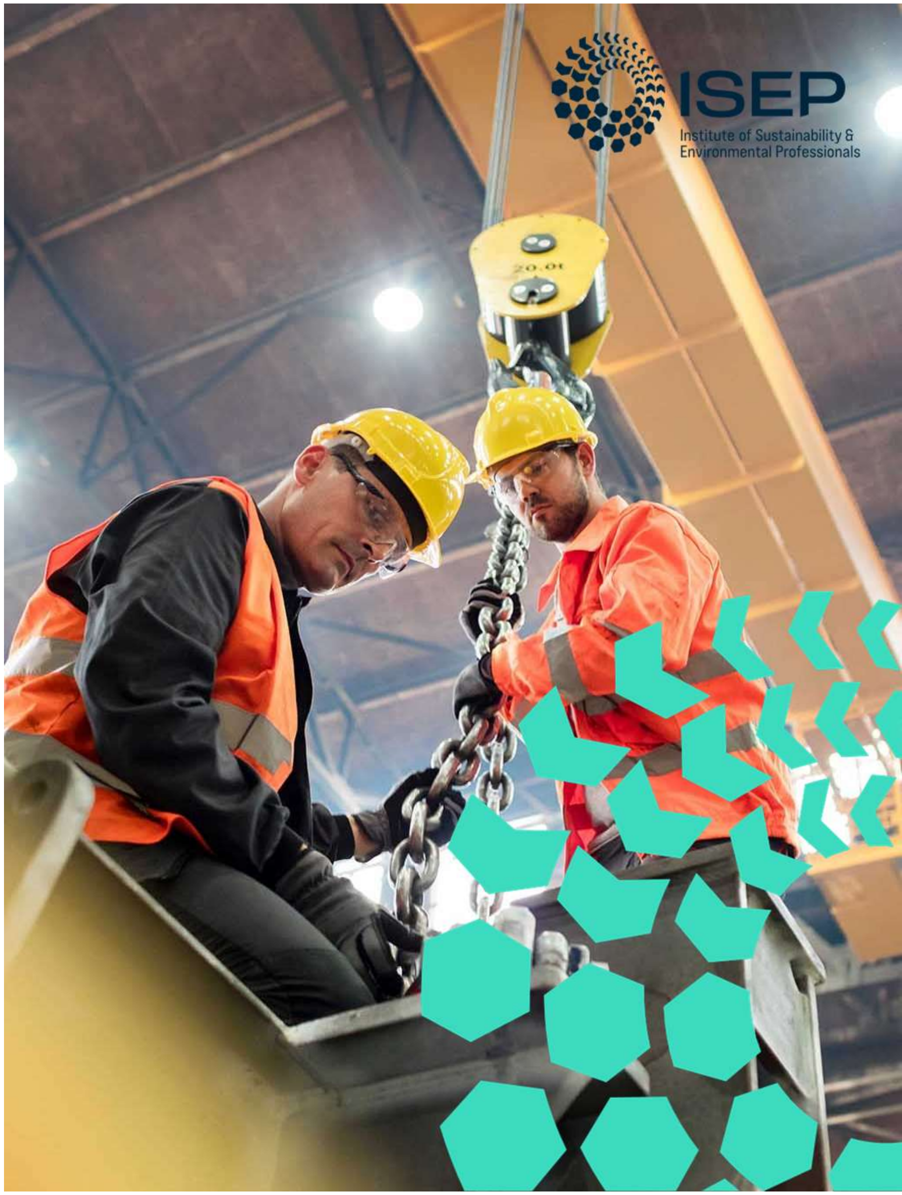
ii. “shall be available as documented information” replaces “maintain documented information” which previously referred to documentation other than records

Clause 6 - Planning

1. Clause 6.1 is restructured to give clarity to users
   - New sub-clause 6.1.4 Risks and Opportunities moved from 6.1.1 ‘general’
   - A note is added to give additional clarity on “life-cycle perspective” – inc. clarifying that **life cycle stages** include **acquisition of raw materials**, **design**, **production**, **transportation/delivery**, **use, end-of-life treatment** and final **disposal**
2. New clause 6.3 Planning of Changes – this was included as guidance in 2015 edition before being included as a requirement in HS MSS

Clause 7 - Support

No material change to requirements.



Clause 8 - Operation

- Requirement on outsourced processes is broadened to “externally provided processes, products or services that are relevant to the intended outcomes of the EMS”

This might be a significant change for some organisations.

ISEP
Institute of Sustainability & Environmental Professionals

Clause 9 – Performance Evaluation

- Prescribed list of inputs to the management review – enhances leadership accountability

Clause 10 – Continual Improvement

- Clause has been re-ordered but no material change to requirements

Next Steps

1. Publication of ISO 14001:2026 (4th Edition) was 15 April 2026
2. “Smartification” of ISO 14001 new edition is currently being considered
3. Expect 3yr transition period for accredited conformity assessment – awaiting formal document from Global Accreditation Cooperation/IAF

...and finally

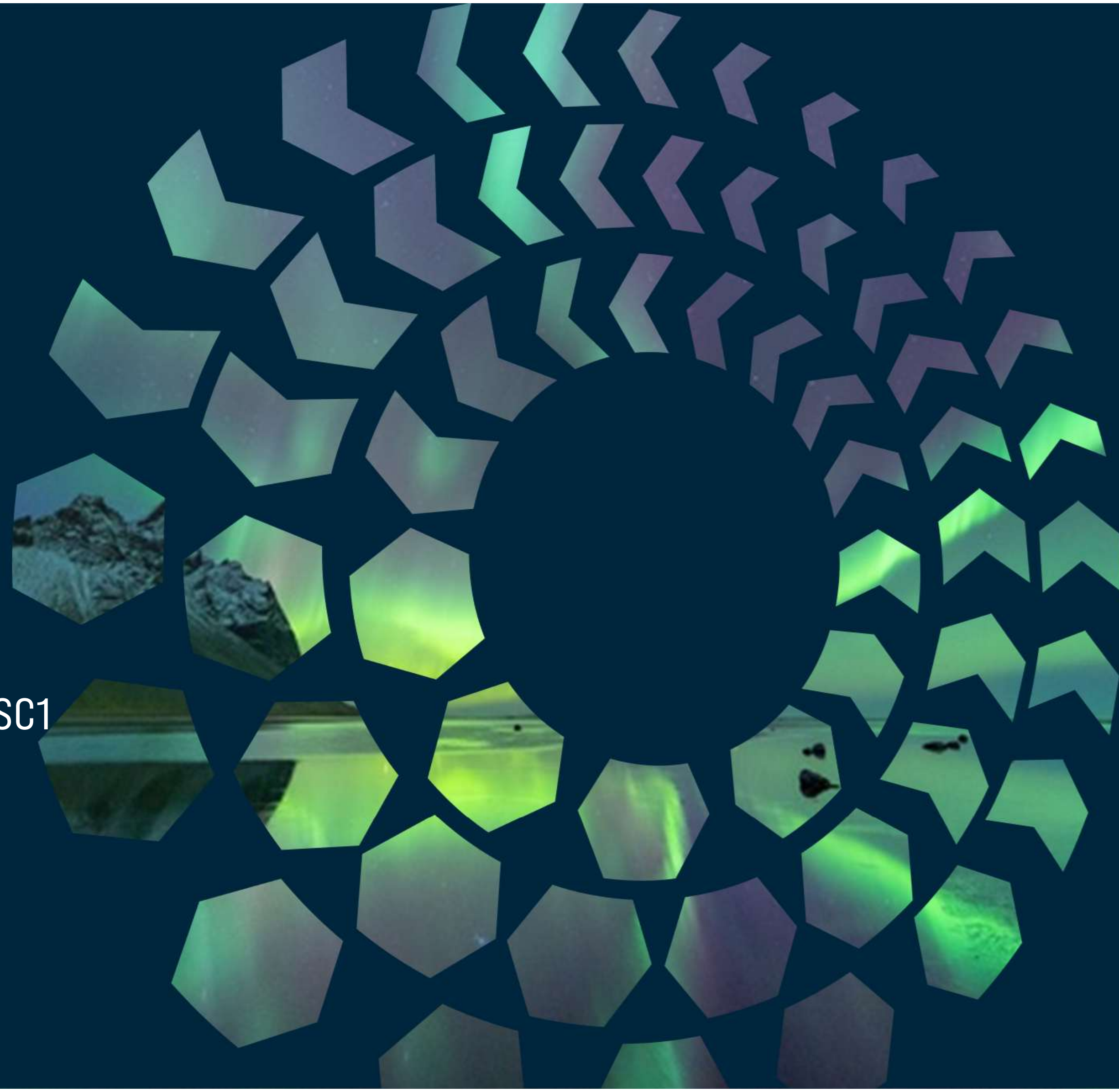
a. 2026 update gives a sharper focus on environmental sustainability
b. Raises expectations on climate awareness, lifecycle responsibility, supplier oversight, environmental governance, and leadership accountability – **these are not tick-box changes**
c. Introduces editorial improvements that make the standard easier to understand, navigate and intergrade with other MS
d. Retains key requirements that help organisations to improve performance, cut costs and stay compliant, while enhancing credibility
e. It’s a perfect opportunity to ‘refresh’ your organisation’s approach and engagement with leadership – supporting value creation as well as value protection through environmental sustainability

ISEP

Institute of Sustainability & Environmental Professionals

Thanks!

Martin Baxter
Deputy CEO – ISEP
Chair – ISO EMS subcommittee TC207/SC1
m.baxter@isepglobal.org



Institute of Sustainability & Environmental Professionals

Karakia

Ko Ranginui e tū nei
Ko Papatūānuku e takoto nei
Kia haumanutia ko te taiao kia ora
Kia kumanutia ko te taiao kia mau
Kia tina! TINA!
Hui, ē; TĀIKI, E!

This is the force of the heavens above
This is the force of the earth below
May the environment be restored to total health
May the environment be fostered to last
forever steadfast