TECHNICAL SPECIFICATION

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Environmental statements and programmes for products — Mutual recognition of environmental product declarations (EPDs) and footprint communication programmes

Déclarations environnementales et programmes pour les produits — Reconnaissance mutuelle des déclarations environnementales de produits (DEP) et des programmes de communication d'empreinte

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Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) is a worldwide federation of national standards bodies (ISO member bodies). The work of preparing International Standards is normally carried out through ISO technical committees. Each member body interested in a subject for which a technical committee has been established has the right to be represented on that committee. International organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO, also take part in the work. ISO collaborates closely with the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) on all matters of electrotechnical standardization.

The procedures used to develop this document and those intended for its further maintenance are described in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1. In particular, the different approval criteria needed for the different types of ISO documents should be noted. This document was drafted in accordance with the editorial rules of the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2 (see www.iso.org/directives).

Attention is drawn to the possibility that some of the elements of this document may be the subject of patent rights. ISO shall not be held responsible for identifying any or all such patent rights. Details of any patent rights identified during the development of the document will be in the Introduction and/or on the ISO list of patent declarations received (see www.iso.org/patents).

Any trade name used in this document is information given for the convenience of users and does not constitute an endorsement.

For an explanation of the voluntary nature of standards, the meaning of ISO specific terms and expressions related to conformity assessment, as well as information about ISO's adherence to the World Trade Organization (WTO) principles in the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT), see www.iso.org/iso/foreword.html.

This document was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 207, *Environmental management*, Subcommittee SC 3, *Environmental labelling*.

Any feedback or questions on this document should be directed to the user's national standards body. A complete listing of these bodies can be found at www.iso.org/members.html.

Introduction

This document is a part of the ISO 14020 family of standards. There are various environmental communication programmes around the world including product declarations and footprints. ISO 14025, ISO 14026 and ISO/TS 14027 relate to developing environmental product declarations (EPDs) and footprint communication programmes, and include both administrative duties as well as technical work. However, because there are no standards for mutual recognition arrangements (MRAs) as recommended in ISO 14025 and ISO 14026, programme operators need guidance to manage their programmes in accordance with these standards.

NOTE   ISO 14065:2020, 3.3.3, introduces the term "programme owner" as a "person or organization responsible for developing and maintaining an environmental information programme". A programme owner can also be the scheme owner, i.e. a programme operator. For the purpose of this document, the term "programme operator" is used as having full operational control of the programme.

This document provides principles and procedures for establishing MRAs between EPDs and footprint communication programmes. When applied by EPD and footprint communication programme operators, this document will ensure that such arrangements follow the requirements in accordance with ISO 14025, ISO 14026 and ISO/TS 14027.

This document covers all types of footprint communication programmes. Currently, two International Standards address footprints: ISO 14046 on water footprints and ISO 14067 on carbon footprints.

MRAs are mainly intended to promote various ways of cooperation for harmonization between EPD and footprint communication programmes with a specific ambition to make better use of available product category rules (PCR) and reduce the risk for proliferation of PCR on the market for the same product categories. They can consider collaboration in a local or regional context relevant to the area where EPDs and footprints are being marketed and used for various applications aiming at:

a)   enhanced cooperation and communication between programme operators that raises the quality of supporting information for decision-making, aiming to reduce potential environmental impacts from consumption and production;

b)   increased comparability and reliability of EPDs and footprints provided from different programmes;

c)   provision of different approaches for cooperation to facilitate market assessment and evaluation of EPD and footprint communication programmes.

This document is intended to ensure that MRAs between EPD and footprint communication programmes, regardless of the programme stage of development, emerging or fully established, have to follow the same principles and procedures.

The anticipated benefit is the harmonization of the process of MRAs between EPD and footprint communication programmes, leading to a structured and cost-effective way of cooperation.

MRAs between EPD and footprint communication programme operators aim to improve the environmental performance of products. They are also intended to improve cost-effectiveness by offering companies to avoid duplicate verification of similar EPD or footprint communication programmes on common markets. Therefore, EPD and footprint communication programme operators should fully understand the intent of the MRA to achieve this goal and meet all the standards and procedures established for the MRA.

Environmental statements and programmes for products — Mutual recognition of environmental product declarations (EPDs) and footprint communication programmes

1 Scope

This document specifies requirements for mutual recognition arrangements (MRAs) and gives guidance on how to initiate developments on MRAs between environmental product declaration (EPD) and footprint communication programme operators. It addresses administrative and operational duties, through evaluation of such programmes, and how to externally communicate the results of the cooperation as well as plans for future related activities.

This document is primarily applicable to MRAs but can also be a basis for bilateral agreements.

2 Normative references

The following documents are referred to in the text in such a way that some or all of their content constitutes requirements of this document. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

ISO 14025:2006, *Environmental labels and declarations — Type III environmental declarations — Principles and procedures*

ISO 14026:2017, *Environmental labels and declarations — Principles, requirements and guidelines for communication of footprint information*

ISO/TS 14027:2017, *Environmental labels and declarations — Development of product category rules*

ISO/IEC 17030, *Conformity assessment — General requirements for third-party marks of conformity*

ISO/IEC 17040:2005, *Conformity assessment — General requirements for peer assessment of conformity assessment bodies and accreditation bodies*

3 Terms and definitions

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

ISO and IEC maintain terminology databases for use in standardization at the following addresses:

— ISO Online browsing platform: available at https://www.iso.org/obp

— IEC Electropedia: available at https://www.electropedia.org/

3.1
administrative duty
task or action administratively required for the operation of an *environmental product declaration* (3.11) and *footprint communication* (3.17) programme

3.2
operational duty
task or action of the *programme operator* (3.10) performed to demonstrate the conformity of the operation of an *environmental product declaration* (3.11) and *footprint communication* (3.17) programme

3.3
dual registration
registration of an *environmental product declaration* (3.11) or footprint statement based on the same principles and procedures and indicated by carrying the logotypes of the cooperating environmental product declaration and *footprint communication* (3.17) *programme operator* (3.10)

3.4
general programme instructions
GPI
guidelines for the operation of an *environmental product declaration* (3.11) or *footprint communication* (3.17) programme

3.5
interested party
person or a body interested in, or affected by, the development and use of an *environmental product declaration* (3.11) and *footprint* (3.16)

Note 1 to entry: To "perceive itself to be affected" means the perception has been made known to the *programme operator* (3.10).

Note 2 to entry: The interested parties for *environmental statement* (3.12) programmes may include, but are not limited to, material suppliers, manufacturers, trade associations, purchasers, users, consumers, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), public agencies and, when relevant, independent parties and certification bodies.

3.6
product category
group of products that can fulfil equivalent functions

[SOURCE: ISO 14025:2006, 3.12]

3.7
product category rules
PCR
set of specific rules, requirements and guidelines for developing Type III environmental declarations for one or more *product categories* (3.6)

[SOURCE: ISO 14025:2006, 3.5]

3.8
programme dossier
collection of all documents relevant for duties to be carried out by an *environmental product declaration* (3.11) and *footprint communication* (3.17) *programme operator* (3.10)

3.9
programme element
separate activities for an *environmental product declaration* (3.11) and *footprint communication* (3.17) *programme operator* (3.10) relating to the various duties to be carried out

3.10
programme operator
body or bodies that conduct a Type III environmental declaration programme

Note 1 to entry: A programme operator can be a company or a group of companies, industrial sector or trade association, public authorities or agencies, or an independent scientific body or other organization.

[SOURCE: ISO 14025:2006, 3.4]

3.11
environmental product declaration
EPD
environmental declaration providing quantified environmental data using predetermined parameters and, where relevant, additional environmental information

Note 1 to entry: The predetermined parameters are based on the ISO 14040 family of standards, which is made up of ISO 14040 and ISO 14044.

Note 2 to entry: The additional environmental information may be quantitative or qualitative.

[SOURCE: ISO 14025:2006, 3.2, modified — "environmental product declaration" replaced "Type III environmental declaration" as the term, "EPD" added, "family of standards" replaced "series of standards" in Note 1 to entry.]

3.12
environmental statement
information on one or more environmental aspect of a product, which intends to inform an intended audience or influence the market of this product

3.13
recognition of a conformity assessment result
acknowledgement of the validity of a conformity assessment result provided by another person or organization

Note 1 to entry: The expression "conformity assessment result" signifies the output of any conformity assessment activity (e.g. a report or certificate) and can include a finding of nonconformity.

[SOURCE: ISO/IEC 17000:2020, 9.5, modified — "recognition" has been removed as the preferred term.]

3.14
acceptance of a conformity assessment result
use of a conformity assessment result provided by another person or organization

Note 1 to entry: The expression "conformity assessment result" signifies the output of any conformity assessment activity (e.g. a report or certificate) and can include a finding of nonconformity.

[SOURCE: ISO/IEC 17000:2020, 9.6, modified — "acceptance" has been removed as the preferred term.]

3.15
recognition arrangement
arrangement whereby participating bodies acknowledge to others that the conformity assessment results of the other participating bodies have been produced by competently performed, equivalent procedures

[SOURCE: ISO/IEC Guide 68:2002, 3.1]

3.16
footprint
metric(s) used to report a component of *life cycle assessment* (3.18) results addressing an area of concern

EXAMPLE   Carbon footprint of a product (CFP) within the area of concern of climate change.

Note 1 to entry: Requirements for environmental *footprint communication* (3.17) are given in ISO 14026.

[SOURCE: ISO 14050:2020, 3.7.17, modified — "a component of" added to the definition, example and note to entry added.]

3.17
footprint communication
result of the preparation, provision and dissemination of a *footprint* (3.16), supporting information and explanatory statement

[SOURCE: ISO 14050:2020, 3.7.18]

3.18
life cycle assessment
LCA
compilation and evaluation of the inputs, outputs and the potential environmental impacts of a product system throughout its life cycle

[SOURCE: ISO 14044:2006, 3.2]

4 Mutual recognition arrangement principles

4.1 General

The application of these principles is relevant to ensure that the recognition fulfils the applicable requirements and will guide the application of this document. The principles are the basis for the subsequent requirements specified in this document.

4.2 For the mutual recognition

4.2.1 Competence

To become a part of the MRA, the programme operator fulfils the requirements of ISO 14020, ISO 14025 and ISO 14026 in addition to this document.

4.2.2 Openness

The MRA party provides access or discloses information to be reviewed by peer evaluators.

4.2.3 Comparability

The EPDs or footprint communications that follow the same PCR and fall into the same product category supported by the MRA party are comparable with the other party(ies) in the MRA.

4.2.4 Documentation

The approval of the EPD or footprint communications process is documented for the purpose of decision-making regarding the fulfilment of the applicable requirements.

4.3 For the programme operator

4.3.1 Impartiality

The programme operator acts objectively, avoiding any conflict of interest.

4.3.2 Participation

The programme operator ensures that the development of PCR for EPDs or footprints includes all the interested parties and open consultation.

4.3.3 Confidentiality

The programme operator respects the ownership and confidentiality of proprietary information and data as outlined in the general programme instructions (GPI).

4.4 For the mutual recognition process

4.4.1 Fairness

MRAs are based on objective pieces of evidence and are not influenced by the interests of other MRA party or parties; therefore, findings and conclusions are truthful and accurately reflected.

4.4.2 Proficiency

Peer evaluators fulfil specific required competences and are designated by the MRA party or parties. Competence requirements for peer evaluators are given in 9.2.

4.4.3 Procedural approach

The mutual recognition process follows established documented procedures.

4.4.4 Disclosure

Supporting information for any conformity assessment activity is available only to the MRA parties involved in the recognition of the conformity assessment results under conditions of confidentiality.

5 Getting started based on a memorandum of understanding (MoU) or other cooperative approaches

5.1 Agreeing to work together

EPD and footprint communication programme operators may choose to initiate exploratory discussion and assessment of the mutual benefits of an MRA if an MRA does not yet exist or for other reasons. Such informal cooperation should, after a period, if found of interest for both parties, translate into a formal arrangement for cooperation captured in an MoU before a formal MRA is agreed.

5.2 Consideration in relation to a cooperation MoU

When the parties decide to start working together on some of the MRA steps (see 6.3) and but not initially on all of them, an MOU can be extended to a cooperation MoU. A cooperation MoU is likely to include considerations such as:

— confidentiality;

— aim of cooperation;

— scope of cooperation and intended outcome;

— cooperation parties and their relevant details;

— the validity of the MoU and other relevant contractual requirements.

5.3 Transition to an MRA

A cooperation MoU may include a plan to enter into an MRA which conforms to the requirements specified in this document. An MRA can have several purposes depending on the cooperation agreed

between EPD programme operators. An MRA shall also be flexible with regard to the steps taken and their order to best accommodate the goal of the cooperation.

The procedures for setting up an MRA are usually separated into three steps:

a) initiation and preparation of a programme dossier;

b) examination of EPD programmes and setting the scope of the MRA;

c) setting up the agreement, follow up and external communication.

Step-by-step guidance when setting-up a mutual recognition agreement is described in Annex A.

6   Goals and scope of an MRA

6.1   MRA general goals

MRAs between EPD and footprint communication programme operators aim at improving:

— the environmental performance of products by minimizing market misunderstandings and providing more accurate cooperative environmental information about products;

— harmonization of the implementation of relevant standards (e.g. ISO 21930 for EPDs in the construction sector);

— cost-effectiveness by avoiding duplication in the preparation of similar EPD, footprint communication and/or PCR from separate programmes available to the market.

6.2   MRA scope

EPD and footprint communication programme operators that wish to establish an MRA with each other shall agree on its scope. The scope can encompass, but is not limited to:

— the types of environmental statements covered and the respective International Standards, e.g. EPD or footprint communication;

— the alignment of GPI;

— the level of common quality assurance.

An MRA can be developed between programmes for different environmental statements, e.g. EPD and footprint communication.

6.3   Specific requirements for an MRA between EPD and footprint communication programmes

6.3.1   Specific requirements for an EPD MRA

Sector-specific EPDs can be used for comparison when their functional specifications and assumptions for calculation are the same (see ISO 14025:2006, 6.7). This can be the case even if the PCR do not regulate every detail. Even within very specific PCR, MRA parties wishing to compare products will have to check the description of the functional unit/declared unit.

6.3.2   Specific requirements for a footprint communication MRA

All MRAs related to a footprint communication shall as a minimum conform with the requirements given in ISO 14026:2017, Clause 8.

6.3.3 Specific requirements for PCR MRA

The product category to which the PCR apply shall be defined and described in the PCR. The description of the product category and the structure of the PCR shall be in accordance with the programme operator's GPI (in accordance with ISO/TS 14027:2017, 6.5.1). The programme operator shall make sure that product categories are defined using a transparent procedure. When products are recognized as having similar functions and applications, product categories should be defined as a group of products to which the same functional unit can be applied (see ISO 14025:2006, 6.6).

Programme operators can select any hierarchical level for developing PCR. If the choice is on a comparatively low hierarchical level, the PCR can cover product groups for entire sectors, resulting in secto- specific EPDs. A low hierarchical level has general PCR independent of applied materials and describing a general function. More specific PCR specify conventions that still comply with the general PCR.

6.4 Specific requirements for equivalence between EPD or footprint communication programmes

An MRA shall decide on the appropriate level of compatibility and consistency required between EPD programmes or footprint communication programmes. Depending on the level of compatibility, requirements may be equivalent or identical.

Consistency between programmes can be achieved by reaching an agreed level of equivalence of their respective GPI requirements for the EPD or footprint communication programmes issued by the programme operators.

Equivalence shall be addressed in the MRA related to:

— ISO 14025:2006, 6.7.2;

— data quality and the integrity of data, e.g. in databases (which are essential for the credibility of an MRA); the MRA shall define the intended common level of data quality;

— PCR development;

— rules for defining product categories.

6.5 MRA additional requirements

MRA additional requirements may include issues related to the following:

— the extent to which information and data are to be comparable or equivalent among the parties in the MRA;

— respective procedures for developing PCR that lead to the same level of quality;

— the intended level of quality of life cycle assessment (LCA) results and EPD and footprints that result in the same verification procedures;

— opportunities to adapt and align the respective programmes with upcoming changes in international standards or through practical experiences, when found relevant.

7 MRA requirements on EPD and footprint communication programme operators

7.1 MRA and PCR requirements

PCR applied within an EPD or footprint communication programme that is to be part of an MRA shall meet the requirements for an MRA as given in 7.2.3 and 7.2.4.

7.2 Consistency between EPD or footprint communication programmes

7.2.1 General

A goal for an MRA is to ensure high consistency and compatibility between EPD or footprint communication programmes participating in the MRA. When examining the programmes, one key activity shall be determining and documenting the extent to which the programmes are similar or dissimilar.

It is not unusual for programmes vary when practised in different parts of the world because local environments and values differ.

An MRA shall agree on common commitments primarily to:

a) agree that the respective verification procedures of LCA results and EPD and footprints lead to the same level of quality;

b) agree that when both programme operators' trademarks are officially displayed (referred to as "dual registrations"), this indicates that the same rules are followed in both programmes;

c) seek opportunities to adapt and align the respective programmes with upcoming changes in international standards or through practical experiences, when found relevant;

d) agree that their respective procedures for developing PCR lead to the same level of quality.

Programme operators shall establish a regular internal monitoring procedure to keep up consistency. The internal monitoring exercise may be made in a matrix format and indicate whether specific programme elements (goals, programme scopes, procedures, methodologies, etc.) are judged to be equivalent or identical. In that sense, this document gives guidance for understanding to what extent the programmes participating in the MRA are compatible and consistent. Some guidelines are presented in Annex A.

This procedure should also clarify and document to what extent and when previously identified common goals, programme scopes, procedures, methodologies and issues not covered by ISO 14025 or ISO 14026 (e.g. tool verification, product category definition) between the programmes of the participating operators have changed.

The consequence of identified changes is to update the MRA.

7.2.2 Requirements related to data, databases and data integrity

Data quality and the integrity of data (e.g. in databases) are essential for the credibility of an EPD or footprint communication as part of the development of an MRA. Programme operators shall agree and document processes related to data quality and integrity to ensure credibility.

7.2.3 Documentation requirements for EPD and footprint communication programme operators

EPD and footprint communication programme operators should prepare documents describing the operation of the programme including, but not limited to, the following information:

a) the objective of the programme;

b) scope of programme;

c) the framework of programme;

d) the PCR development process, including the PCR database;

e) other information as given in the MRA.

These documents can be useful for the internal dossier (see 7.2.4).

7.2.4 Internal dossier for the EPD or footprint communication programme

Programme operators shall collect key documents in an internal EPD or footprint communication dossier. This dossier does not need to be externally available. Some information in the dossier can be confidential, e.g. project reports for the assurance process.

7.2.5 A common language for all relevant documents

The EPD programme operators shall provide all relevant publicly available documents in English including programme rules and procedures on the EPD programme requirements for independency, qualification/competence and conformity to ISO 14025, including a list of verifiers (if external), the verification checklist and reporting formats (if any).

8 MRA governance

8.1 General

ISO 14025 specifically encourages programme operators to work cooperatively to achieve harmonization of the programmes and develop MRAs to meet the principle of comparability. This document can be used for such cooperation in its widest sense, including all EPD and footprint communication programmes for , parties planning to establish a programme, and emerging programmes as well as those in the early phase of market introduction. It is of vital importance for those types of programmes to get involved in early discussions with other programme operators to learn from their experiences and prepare for a closer contact, hopefully with the future aim of joining an existing MRA or to start establishing a new one.

The type of MRA governance can vary depending on the intent of the cooperation. This variation can depend, for example, on whether MRAs include all or select some of the steps (see Clause 5). Examples of different cooperation intents are:

a) setting up a first structure for the establishment of a programme;

b) opening discussions with programme operators to establish a contact for future cooperation, starting with an MoU;

c) being informed about the resources (time and costs) needed to enter into a future MRA;

d) getting involved in existing MRAs;

e) acting fully integrated in an MRA.

Depending on the various intents of and types of MRA, the programme operators shall determine what level of governance is applied. Programme operators may choose for their programme to focus on first-, second- and/or third-party conformity assessment in accordance with ISO/IEC 17000.

8.2 Administrative requirements for third-party conformity assessment

MRA administrative requirements shall as a minimum include the following:

a) The administrator shall be independent from the hierarchy structures of the interested parties as well as for programme operators for EPD and footprint communication.

b) The administrator shall include a representative of all EPDs or footprint programme operators included in the MRA. The administrator shall set out procedures for how representation is accomplished and how elections and appointments are managed.

c) The MRA administration shall include a process for how decisions are managed in line with the principles in <u>Clause 4</u> and the details given in <u>8.4</u> and <u>8.5</u>. The processes shall be clear on when consensus is acceptable and what vote is required to agree.

The decision process shall as a minimum include the following decisions:

— approval of new parties;

— cancellation of partnerships if they fail to comply with MRA requirements;

— review of peer-evaluation reports and approval (excluding the parties being peer-evaluated from the decision);

— review of appeals, whether from peer evaluation, communication decisions, etc.

Additionally, the decision process shall include decisions related to the operation of the MRA, such as:

— oversight of administrative activities;

— management of costs and resource sharing.

The definition of and processes related to administrative responsibilities shall include decisions such as:

— maintain and regularly check the database of peer evaluators including competence in specific areas, etc.;

— manage peer evaluations;

— report to the MRA group for review of peer evaluations.

8.3 PCR harmonization

ISO 14025:2006 states, in its Introduction, that harmonization of PCR should be encouraged between EPD programmes to meet the principle of comparability. Establishing an MRA is a good foundation for EPD programme operators to work together to achieve this goal.

Typically, there are four different opportunities for EPD programme operators to harmonize PCR:

a) jointly developing new PCR;

b) merging PCR in the same product categories;

c) application of existing PCR;

d) adaption of existing PCR.

There are many advantages if programme operators in an MRA prioritize jointly developing new PCR. Information for PCR development is described in ISO 14025:2006, 6.7. Additional information when publishing PCR is described in ISO/TS 14027:2017, 8.1.1.

An increasing number of PCR have been made available by EPD programme operators. Merging PCR in the same product categories supports PCR harmonization and avoids unnecessary duplication and proliferation of similar PCR on the market.

EPD programme operators can facilitate harmonization when developing PCR for a product category by making use of readily available PCR documents in the same product category (see ISO 14025:2006, 6.7.1). Applications of existing PCR shall be the preferred option.

Existing PCR can be adapted to integrate additional requirements and guidelines which increase the relevance of PCR to improve representativeness (see ISO/TS 14027:2017, 6.4.3). Any adaption of existing PCR shall:

— fulfil the requirements of applicable standards including this document and ISO 14025;

— fulfil the GPI of the programme operator.

8.4 Content of an MRA

A significant part of the MRA is what the signatories agree to undertake, or other requirements to which they commit themselves.

The formal MRA document shall as a minimum include:

a) recognition of the equivalence of the conduct of activities within the scope of the MRA by its signatories;

b) acceptance of the results produced by other signatories as applicable within the scope of the MRA;

c) promotion of public awareness of the equivalence of the performance and, where applicable, the results produced by the signatories to the MRA;

d) maintenance of the confidentiality of information so designated with respect to other signatories;

e) acceptance of legal and liability responsibilities, as well as responsibility for notifying other signatories of significant status changes.

Another significant part of the MRA is the statement of what the signatories agree to undertake collectively. Items of collective responsibility elaborate on conditions for the following:

— evaluation and resolution of complaints relative to the operation of the MRA;

— maintenance and operation of an ongoing system of evaluation or re-assessment periodically.

8.5 MRA management

MRA management requirements shall include:

a) MRA signatory status and directory;

b) use of the MRA mark and external communication;

c) multilateral recognition of EPDs among MRA signatories;

d) recognition of other MRAs;

e) changes to the MRA.

8.6 Evaluating the parties in an MRA

8.6.1 General

When evaluating the programmes, a key activity is to find out to what extent the programmes are similar, see 7.2 on equivalence on EPD and footprint communication programmes.

8.6.2 Evaluation criteria

The evaluation criteria shall be the MRA documents, the requirements of this document and the relevant standards.

8.6.3 Evaluation of new parties of an MRA

The evaluation of new parties to the MRA shall be based on the evaluation criteria and carried out in accordance with ISO/IEC 17040.

8.6.4 Evaluation of changes to the scope of parties in an MRA

The evaluation of changes to the scope of existing parties of the MRA shall be based on the evaluation criteria and shall be carried out in accordance with ISO/IEC 17040.

8.6.5 Regular evaluation of MRA parties

MRA parties shall be regularly evaluated to ensure their system, processes and deliverables meet the evaluation criteria. This evaluation shall be carried out in accordance with ISO/IEC 17040.

8.7 Complaints between the parties to the MRA and external parties

8.7.1 Between parties of an MRA

The MRA administrative arrangements shall include a process for dealing with complaints between the parties to the MRA.

8.7.2 By external bodies

The MRA administrative arrangements shall include a process for dealing with complaints and communications from external bodies, including speed of response and agreement of response between the parties to the MRA.

8.8 Use of marks on EPD/PCR

Marks on EPD and PCR shall conform to the requirements given in ISO/IEC 17030.

8.9 Communication of an MRA

From the perspective of achieving market acceptance and understanding of MRAs, it is essential to find a consensus on how the MRAs should be addressed and publicly disclosed. It is important to communicate the following:

a)   the overall intent of the MRA;

b)   the common aims of the MRA;

c)   information to the market on how to make the best use of the outcome of the cooperation.

A commonly used, successful outreach activity is to make use of each programme's website with direct links between programmes and the presence of the respective trademarks, e.g. in the form of "dual registrations".

9   MRA peer evaluation

9.1   Process for conducting peer evaluations

Peer evaluation shall be conducted in accordance with ISO/IEC 17040:2005. Figure 1 illustrates the assessment process for MRAs described in this document.
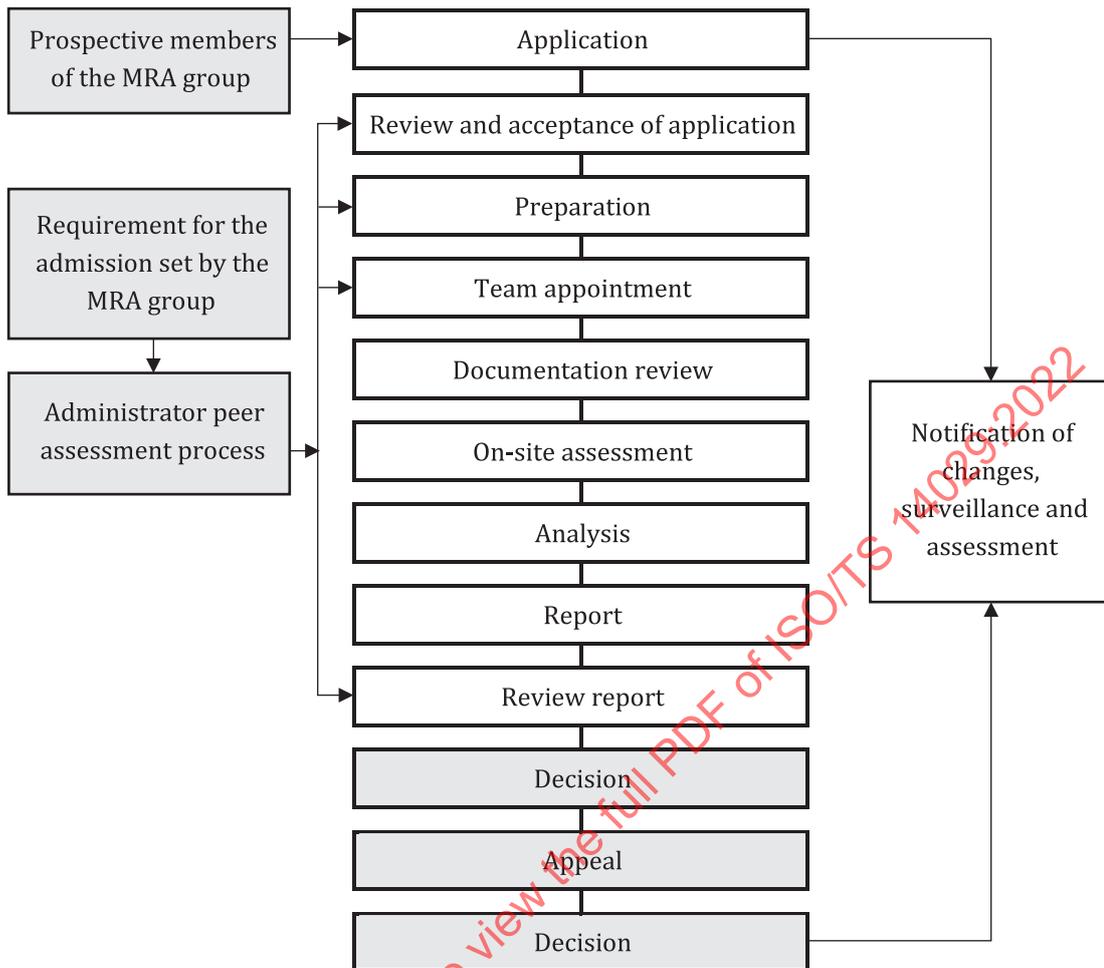
Key

☐ inside the scope of this document

▨ outside the scope of this document

NOTE   Source: ISO/IEC 17040:2005. The grey boxes on the left have been modified to the terminology used in this document.

Figure 1 — Generic peer assessment process

9.2   Competence requirements for peer evaluators

Competence requirements should be based on an analysis of knowledge and skills according to the MRA scope and described in the internal dossier, preferably in the GPI, covering:

a)   the requirements described in this document;

b)   the requirements in the specific MRA, including equivalence agreements, etc.;

c)   an understanding of the EPD programme and GRI requirements given in ISO/TS 14027;

d)   an understanding of the footprint communication programme and GRI requirements given in ISO 14026;

e)   product competence as relevant to the products covered by the MRA administrative processes as applicable to the peer review and its communication.

9.3   Peer evaluation report

The programme administrator shall adopt a relevant procedure for reporting the results of the peer evaluation. As a minimum, these procedures shall ensure the requirements given in ISO/IEC 17040:2005, 7.9.1, a) to c).

The team leader shall submit a written report containing a conclusion or recommendation and sufficient information to the management committee or person to judge the conformity of the applicant with the requirements specified by the agreement group.

A review of the peer assessment report can be made in accordance with ISO/IEC 17040:2005, 7.10.