
**Plastics — Test method for exposing
polyolefins outdoors combining
natural weathering and artificial
irradiation**

*Plastiques — Procédé d'exposition de polyoléfines en plein air
combinant une irradiation naturelle et artificielle*

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Contents

Page

Foreword	iv
Introduction	v
1 Scope	1
2 Normative references	1
3 Terms and definitions	1
4 Principle	2
5 Apparatus	2
5.1 General.....	2
5.2 Test chamber.....	3
5.3 Artificial radiation source.....	3
5.3.1 General.....	3
5.3.2 Metal halide lamp.....	3
5.3.3 Fluorescent UVA-340 lamp.....	3
5.4 Radiometer.....	3
5.5 Black-standard/black-panel thermometer.....	3
5.6 Specimen holder.....	3
5.7 Apparatus to assess changes in properties.....	4
6 Test specimens	4
7 Test conditions	4
7.1 Radiation.....	4
7.2 Relative humidity of air inside the chamber.....	4
7.3 Temperature.....	4
7.3.1 Black-standard and black-panel temperature (BPT).....	4
7.3.2 White-standard and white-panel temperature (WPT).....	4
7.3.3 Specimen temperature.....	4
7.3.4 Air temperature (AT).....	4
7.4 Time setting of sunrise and sunset.....	4
7.5 Exposure conditions.....	5
8 Procedure	5
8.1 General.....	5
8.2 Conditioning.....	6
8.3 Mounting of test specimen.....	6
8.4 Exposure.....	6
8.5 Radiant exposure measurement.....	6
9 Test report	6
Annex A (informative) Outdoor weathering supported with artificial radiation at Seosan	8
Annex B (informative) Apparatus for outdoor weathering supported with artificial radiation	13
Bibliography	17

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 61, *Plastics*, Subcommittee SC 6, *Ageing, chemical and environmental resistance*.

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

The performance of polyolefin plastics and products exposed outdoors is reduced by various environmental factors such as UV radiation, heat, humidity, acid rain, etc. Therefore, the estimation of the lifetime is an important consideration in designing against performance degradation of materials and products for the outdoor use. Although the outdoor exposure test method provides degradation caused by the actual environmental factors, it carries a disadvantage of requiring a prolonged testing period. Outdoor weathering supported with artificial radiation are also available. In all cases, these methods are often not effective in regions with a low amount of direct radiation. In response to the questionnaire conducted, over 150 experts by an expert committee on weathering, the majority of respondents agreed on the need of a method for outdoor weathering supported with artificial radiation that would be appropriate for the regional climate, especially for the cloudy regions. That is, a document to be developed which comprise the advantage of outdoor exposure that would generate actual environmental exposure and the advantage of shortening the exposure time by utilizing the artificial irradiation. This test method is developed to provide outdoor weathering supported with artificial irradiation by continuously and sequentially exposing specimens to natural weathering during daytime and artificial radiation at night time.

The International Organization for Standardization (ISO) draws attention to the fact that it is claimed that compliance with this document may involve the use of patents concerning apparatus described in [Annex B](#).

ISO takes no position concerning the evidence, validity and scope of this patent right.

The holder of this patent right has ensured ISO that he/she is willing to negotiate licences under reasonable and non-discriminatory terms and conditions with applicants throughout the world. In this respect, the statement of the holder of this patent right is registered with ISO. Information may be obtained from the patent database available at www.iso.org/patents.

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Plastics — Test method for exposing polyolefins outdoors combining natural weathering and artificial irradiation

1 Scope

This document specifies methods for exposing specimen to alternating outdoor weathering supported with artificial radiation. This method utilizes, as much as possible, the natural outdoor exposure which are then assisted by the artificial radiation during night time and in cloudy conditions.

This document is applicable to polyolefin materials as well as to products and portions of products.

The artificial and natural outdoor exposures and their practices applicable to this document are described in ISO 4892-1, ISO 4892-3 and ISO 877-1, ISO 877-2 and ISO 877-3, respectively.

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 877-1, *Plastics — Methods of exposure to solar radiation — Part 1: General guidance*

ISO 877-2:2009, *Plastics — Methods of exposure to solar radiation — Part 2: Direct weathering and exposure behind window glass*

ISO 877-3, *Plastics — Methods of exposure to solar radiation — Part 3: Intensified weathering using concentrated solar radiation*

ISO 4582, *Plastics — Determination of changes in colour and variations in properties after exposure to glass-filtered solar radiation, natural weathering or laboratory radiation sources*

ISO 4892-1, *Plastics — Methods of exposure to laboratory light sources — Part 1: General guidance*

ISO 4892-3, *Plastics — Methods of exposure to laboratory light sources — Part 3: Fluorescent UV lamps*

ISO 9370, *Plastics — Instrumental determination of radiant exposure in weathering tests — General guidance and basic test method*

IEC 60068-2-5, *Environmental testing — Part 2-5: Tests — Test S: Simulated solar radiation at ground level and guidance for solar radiation testing and weathering*

3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the terms and definitions given in ISO 877-3 and the following apply.

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

- ISO Online browsing platform: available at <https://www.iso.org/obp>
- IEC Electropedia: available at <http://www.electropedia.org/>

3.1 outdoor weathering supported with artificial radiation

continuous exposure to natural and artificial weathering sequence in outdoors that provides accelerated weathering

Note 1 to entry: In general, exposure sequence of natural outdoor weathering during the daytime and artificial irradiation at night time (or cloudy day) is used.

4 Principle

The basic principle of this method is to combine both, the natural weathering (to solar radiation) and the laboratory weathering/irradiation, as described in ISO 877-1, ISO 877-2, ISO 4892-1, and ISO 4892-3, respectively, in continuous cycles of exposures all outdoors. Specimens prepared from the material or taken from parts of the products or full product are exposed to natural weathering (to solar radiation) [see [Figure 1 a\)](#)] and then continue to subject the specimens to artificial radiation source with other factors controlled during the night time [see [Figure 1 b\)](#)]. A similar combination would also apply when cloudy condition prevents direct solar radiation exposure. After the prescribed exposure combination in time intervals, the specimens are removed from the exposure and tested for changes in visual, optical, mechanical and/or other properties of interest. The exposure stage may be given as interval of time, or may be expressed in terms of a given total solar or solar ultraviolet radiant exposure, separately for natural and for artificial exposure whichever is found to be more appropriate for that particular property of interest. In general terms, the sun tracking may be used and an automated device for changing from daylight exposure to artificial exposure is recommended.

NOTE According to the World Meteorological Organization, cloudy conditions mean at least 50 % of the sky will be covered by clouds — there will be more clouds than sunshine. “Mostly cloudy” means that 80 % to 90 % of the sky will be covered by clouds.



a) Day time (natural)



b) Night time (artificial)

Figure 1 — Outdoor weathering supported with artificial radiation

5 Apparatus

5.1 General

The design of the apparatus may vary, but it shall be constructed from an inert material and provide uniform irradiance in accordance with ISO 4892-1, during the artificial irradiation step, along with means for measuring the temperature. In general, day and night automatically operates according to sunrise and sunset time. Cloudy, rain condition operates either manually or automatically depending on the equipment available. When necessary, the equipment for sun-tracking or humidity control of test chamber or spraying water on the specimen surface or occurrence of condensation should be prepared.

The general requirement of the apparatus for natural outdoor and artificial exposures are given in ISO 877-1, ISO 877-2, ISO 4892-1 and ISO 4892-3, respectively.

5.2 Test chamber

An example of an apparatus is shown in [Annex B](#). It consists of a box containing artificial radiation sources and a screen for preventing bugs to the artificial radiation source during night time hours. In [Figure B.1](#), the test chamber is positioned on an actuator that moves in axis as well as on a tracking actuator which enables the sample holder to move in longitudinal and lateral directions. The box is made to allow specimen exposure to solar radiation and artificial radiation source by a simple movement at each exposure cycle. The artificial radiation sources should be placed in such a way to provide maximum exposure uniformity.

5.3 Artificial radiation source

5.3.1 General

UVA-340 radiation source given in ISO 4892-3 and metal halide radiation source specified in IEC 60068-2-5 can be used. Irradiance uniformity shall be in accordance with the requirements specified in ISO 4892-1. Requirements for periodic repositioning of specimens, when irradiated within the exposure area is less than 90 % of the peak irradiance, are described in ISO 4892-1.

5.3.2 Metal halide lamp

The tolerances of the spectral irradiance of metal halide radiation source should be in line with IEC 60068-2-5 for global solar radiation. The irradiance between 280 nm and 3 000 nm shall be $> 1\,000\text{ W/m}^2$ but $< 1\,200\text{ W/m}^2$.

5.3.3 Fluorescent UVA-340 lamp

UVA-340 (type 1A) lamps according to ISO 4892-3 shall be used.

NOTE Fluorescent UVA-340 lamps do not simulate the entire global solar irradiance. Only the short-wave UV radiation of the global solar radiation up to 360 nm is appropriately simulated.

5.4 Radiometer

When radiometers are used, they shall be in accordance with the requirements of ISO 9370.

5.5 Black-standard/black-panel thermometer

The black-standard or black-panel thermometer used shall be in accordance with the requirements given in ISO 4892-1.

5.6 Specimen holder

Specimen holders can be in the form of an open rack, leaving the backs of the specimens exposed, or they can be made to provide the specimens with a solid backing. They shall be made from inert materials that will not affect the results of the exposure, e.g. non-oxidizing alloys of aluminium or stainless steel. Brass, carbon steel or copper shall not be used in the vicinity of the test specimens. The backing used might affect the results. This in particular is of concern with transparent specimens, and the use shall be agreed on between the interested parties.

5.7 Apparatus to assess changes in properties

If an International Standard relating to the determination of the properties chosen for monitoring the changes in properties exists (see, in particular, ISO 4582), the apparatus specified by the relevant International Standard shall be used.

6 Test specimens

For test specimen details refer to ISO 4892-1. A typical maximum size of the test specimen in sheet form is 70 mm × 150 mm.

7 Test conditions

7.1 Radiation

The radiant exposure shall be measured separately for natural and artificial weathering.

For natural weathering, either total solar radiant exposure or UV radiant exposure shall be measured, according to ISO 9370.

NOTE Total solar radiant exposure can be measured by means of a calibrated pyranometer which is mounted in the specimen plane.

For artificial weathering, irradiance shall be controlled at the levels indicated in [Table 2](#). The respective radiant exposure shall be measured. Other irradiance levels may be used when agreed on by the interested parties. The irradiance and the pass band in which it was measured shall be included in the test report.

7.2 Relative humidity of air inside the chamber

The specimen may be exposed under the condition in which the relative humidity is allowed to vary or adjusting the relative humidity to the designated level.

7.3 Temperature

7.3.1 Black-standard and black-panel temperature (BPT)

Black-standard or black-panel temperature (BPT) shall be measured.

7.3.2 White-standard and white-panel temperature (WPT)

White standard or white-panel temperature (WPT) shall be measured.

7.3.3 Specimen temperature

The specimen temperature is measured on the back of the sample and shall be monitored during the test.

7.3.4 Air temperature (AT)

The air temperature (AT) shall be monitored during the test. If the box containing the artificial radiation source is placed in front of the samples and irradiated, the air temperature shall not exceed the specimen's on-set temperature (OST) for thermal oxidation. Report this on-set temperature in the test report.

7.4 Time setting of sunrise and sunset

Sunrise and sunset time of the exposure location are to be used.

7.5 Exposure conditions

Exposure condition shall follow the exposure cycle given in [Table 1](#) and [2](#). Other conditions may be specified upon agreement between interested parties.

Table 1 — Test conditions for natural weathering (Day)

Method A — Exposures using solar radiation (natural weathering)						
Cycle No.	Exposure period	Radiation ^a		BPT [°C]	WPT [°C]	Relative humidity [%]
		Total solar radiant exposure (280–3 000) nm [MJ/m ²]	UV radiant exposure (280–400) nm [MJ/m ²]			
1	to be set considering the sunrise time and the sunset time depending on the region and latitude	according to latitude		maximum surface temperature	lowest maximum surface temperature	not controlled

^a The sun tracking method is to be set in agreement by the interested parties. The radiant exposure during the day shall be monitored with a pyranometer, and the UV radiant exposure is to be collected.

Table 2 — Test conditions for artificial exposure (Night)

No.	Radiation source	Irradiance		AT [°C]	BPT [°C]	WPT [°C]	Relative humidity [%]
		Total solar irradiation [W·m ⁻²]	Narrowband [W·m ⁻² ·nm ⁻¹]				
1	UVA-340 (type 1A)	—	0,76 W/m ² at 340 nm	not controlled — shall not exceed OST ^b	maximum surface temperature	lowest maximum surface temperature	not controlled
2	Metal halide ^a	1 000 W/m ² at (280 nm to 3 000 nm)	—	not controlled — shall not exceed OST ^b	maximum surface temperature	lowest maximum surface temperature	not controlled

NOTE At present experience of using Xenon radiation source on this method is not available.

^a The filter which simulates global solar radiation shall be used.

^b OST: On-set temperature.

8 Procedure

8.1 General

It is recommended that at least three specimens of each material evaluated be exposed in each run to allow statistical evaluation of the results.

The parties involved should agree upon the cloudy condition^{1) 2)} of which the artificial radiation is used.

- 1) World Meteorological Organization
- 2) Koppen-Geiger climate classification

8.2 Conditioning

The test specimen shall be stored for at least 24 hours at (23 ± 2) °C before conducting the exposure. For final or intermediate evaluations, samples should be stored 24 h at (23 ± 2) °C before the subsequent measurement.

8.3 Mounting of test specimen

The specimen shall be fixed flat on the sample holder. For other applicable details ISO 4892-1 and ISO 877-1 shall be followed.

8.4 Exposure

The specimen shall be exposed to the day and night cycle given at the site where the exposures are being performed.

8.5 Radiant exposure measurement

If radiometers are used, mount the radiometers to display the radiant exposure at the exposed surface of the test sample.

8.6 Determination of change in properties after exposure

The change in properties after exposure shall be determined as specified in ISO 4582 as far as possible. Other property may be used, if agreed upon by all interested parties.

9 Test report

The test report shall contain at least the following information:

- a) a reference to this document, i.e. ISO/TS 21488:2020;
- b) sample details as supplied by the person or body requesting the test:
 - 1) a full description of the sample and its origin,
 - 2) compounding details, including cure time and temperature, where appropriate;
- c) the method of preparation of the test specimens;
- d) the method of exposure used:
 - 1) Day: ISO 877-2:2009 — method A (open-backed) or sun-tracking,
 - 2) Night: ISO 4892-3 [UVA-340 (type 1A)], or IEC 60068-2-5 (metal halide);
- e) details of the exposure:
 - 1) the exposure aspect (e.g. tilt and azimuth orientation),
 - 2) the location and, if required, additional details about the exposure site, such as latitude, longitude and altitude,
 - 3) if required, the climate class and type (refer to [Annex A](#) for more detailed information),
 - 4) the nature of masking, backing support and attachments, if used,
 - 5) the procedure used to determine the exposure stages, as required by the person or body requesting the test,
 - 6) the natural weathering time,

- 7) the total solar radiant exposure or UV radiant exposure of the natural weathering, including the respective spectral range, measured in accordance with ISO 9370,
 - 8) the irradiance set points of the artificial weathering, including the respective spectral range,
 - 9) the total radiant exposure or UV radiant exposure of the artificial weathering, including the respective spectral range, measured in accordance with ISO 9370,
 - 10) if required, details of water spray cycles and the procedures used for temperature and/or irradiance control,
 - 11) details of specimen washing, if any;
- f) the test results:
- 1) the exposure stages used, the corresponding intervals between removal of the specimens from exposure and any property measurements that were conducted and, if specimens were re-exposed, the total time between removal from exposure and when the specimens were returned to exposure,
 - 2) climatic data,
 - 3) recorded humidity,
 - 4) the results, presented as required by ISO 4582;
- g) the date(s) of testing.

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Annex A (informative)

Outdoor weathering supported with artificial radiation at Seosan

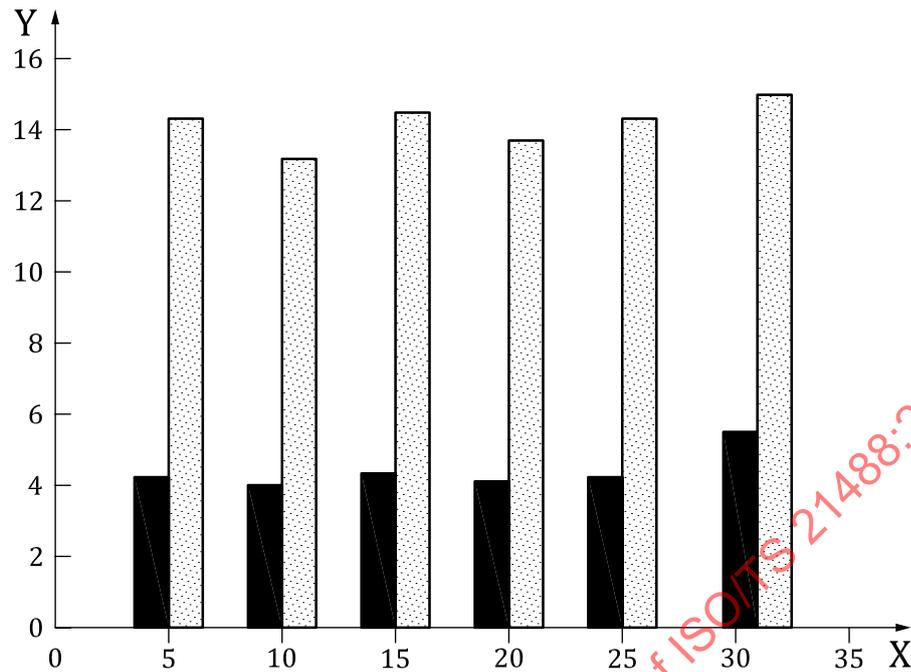
A.1 Seosan outdoor exposure site

Latitude 36°55'N; longitude 126 31'E; 6,5 m above sea level; average temperature 12,9 °C; average humidity 71 %; average rainfall 1 175 mm; average annual radiant exposure 5 846 MJ/m²; distance from coastline 200 m; average sunrise and sunset (05:52 — 19:23).

A.2 Comparison of outdoor weathering supported with artificial radiation and natural weathering (open rack)

[Figure A.1](#) illustrates UV radiant exposure measured on five day increment at the site during the month of August, 2019. The outdoor weathering supported with artificial radiation is seen to provide about three time higher radiant exposure (cumulative) as compared to natural weathering. The following example (see [Figure A.1](#)) of the natural and outdoor weathering supported with artificial radiation test method applies only to polystyrene. The exposure details are:

- a) Irradiance UV sensor: CUV 5 broadband UV-radiometer (280 nm to 400 nm)
- b) Measurement angle: 37° (south)
- c) Radiation source: Metal halide lamp
- d) Exposure: Natural weathering (day) + + artificial weathering (night) cycle for 1 month period (August)

**Key**

X day

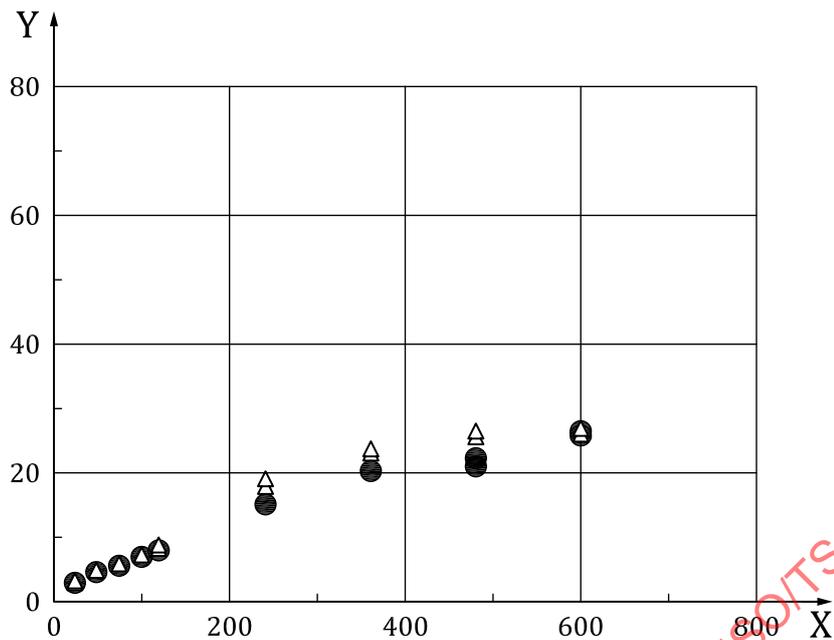
Y radiant exposure in MJ/m²/5 dnatural weathering (37° South) (total: 29,5 MJ/m²)outdoor weathering supported with artificial radiation (total: 87,1 MJ/m²)

Figure A.1 — Difference of radiant exposure between outdoor weathering supported with artificial radiation and natural outdoor weathering

A.3 Results from natural outdoor weathering and outdoor weathering supported with artificial radiation (Metal halide lamp) — Material: Polystyrene

Figures A.2 and A.3 show yellow index change in polystyrene upon natural weathering versus accelerated outdoor exposure. The exposure details are:

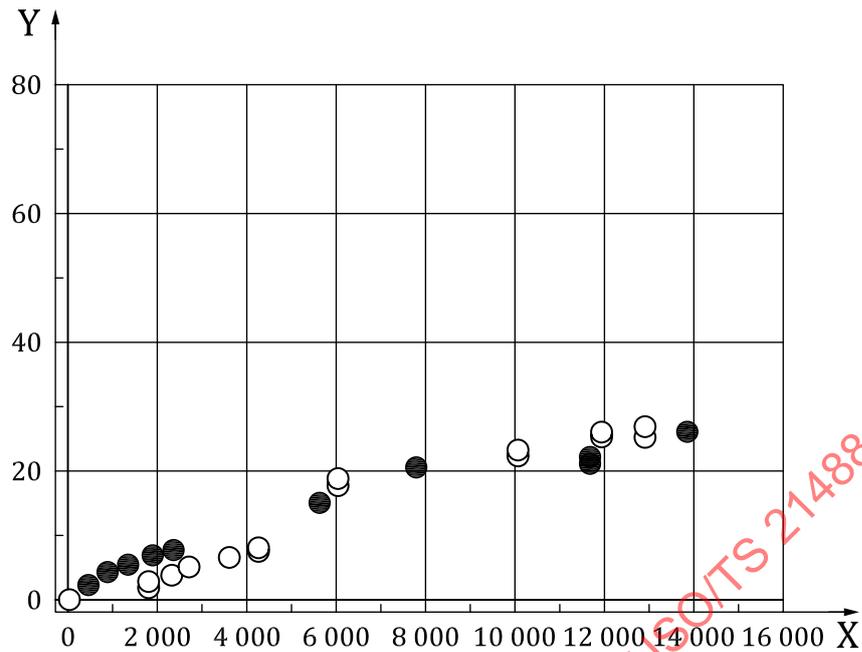
- Irradiance UV sensor: CUV 5 broadband UV-radiometer (280 nm to 400 nm)
- Irradiance total sensor: CMP 22 radiometer (280 nm to 3 000 nm)
- Measurement angle: 37° (south)
- Radiation source: Metal halide lamp
- Exposure: Outdoor weathering (day) + Laboratory weathering (night) cycle for 600 MJ/m²
- Air temperature (AT): maximum 46 °C
- Black-panel temperature (BPT): maximum 78 °C
- White-panel temperature (WPT): maximum 61 °C



Key

- X UV radiant exposure (MJ/m²) at (280 - 400) nm
- Y yellow index
- natural weathering
- △ NOW + metal halide

Figure A.2 — Comparison of natural outdoor weathering and combined natural and artificial radiation for Polystyrene (MJ/m² at 280 nm to 400 nm)

**Key**

- X total radiant exposure (MJ/m²) at (280 - 3 000) nm
- Y yellow index
- natural outdoor weathering (NOW)
- NOW + metal halide

Figure A.3 — Plot of Figure A.2 in terms of total radiant exposure for Polystyrene (in MJ/m² at 280 nm to 3 000 nm)

A.4 Test results of outdoor weathering supported with artificial radiation of PE and PP

Figures A.4 to A.5 show colour difference change in polyethylene (PE) and polypropylene (PP) measured at the following exposure conditions:

- a) Irradiance UV sensor: CUV 5 broadband UV-radiometer (280 nm to 400 nm)
- b) Measurement angle: 37° (south)
- c) Radiation source: Metal halide lamp
- d) Exposure: Natural weathering (day) + Artificial irradiation (night) cycle for 240 MJ/m²
- e) Chamber air temperature (CAT): maximum 45 °C
- f) Black-panel temperature (BPT): maximum 79 °C
- g) White-panel temperature (WPT): maximum 61 °C

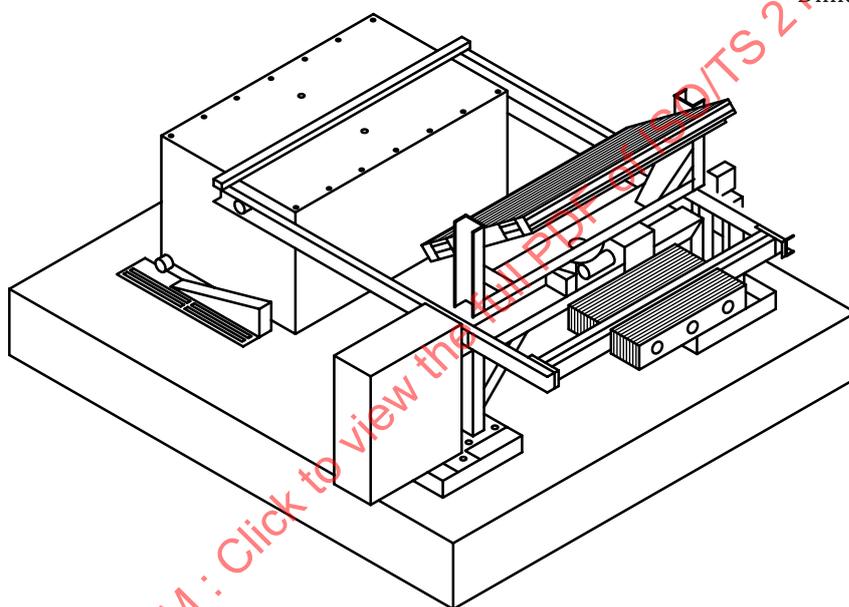
Annex B (informative)

Apparatus for outdoor weathering supported with artificial radiation

A typical apparatus for outdoor weathering supported with artificial radiation is shown in [Figure B.1](#) (see also [Figure B.2](#)).

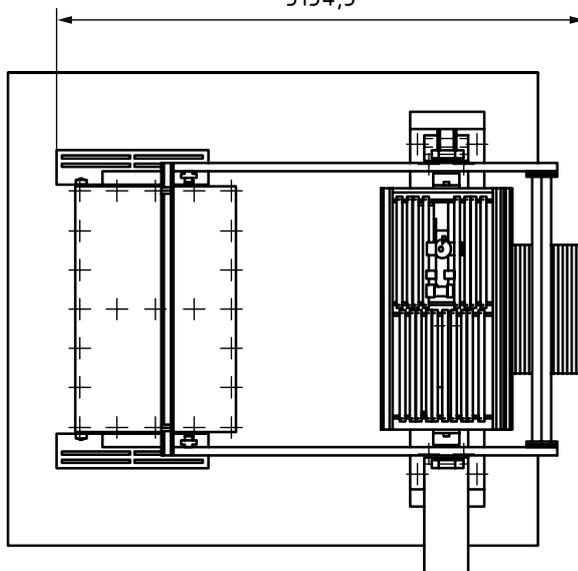
The dimensions of major components are changeable only if the irradiance uniformity is satisfied.

Dimensions in millimetre



a) Isometric view

3134,3



b) Top view