NC Environmental Stewardship Initiative

NORTH CAROLINA
Department of Environmental Quality

ISO 14001:2026 Updates

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Presentation Overview

1. Introduction & Benefits

2. 2026 Changes to the Standard

3. ESI Training Courses

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Introduction



- Standard for environmental management systems (EMS)
- Framework to design and implement an EMS
- Continually improve environmental performance

Benefits



- Global recognition
- Improve environmental performance
- Reduce waste, improve compliance
- Stay competitive

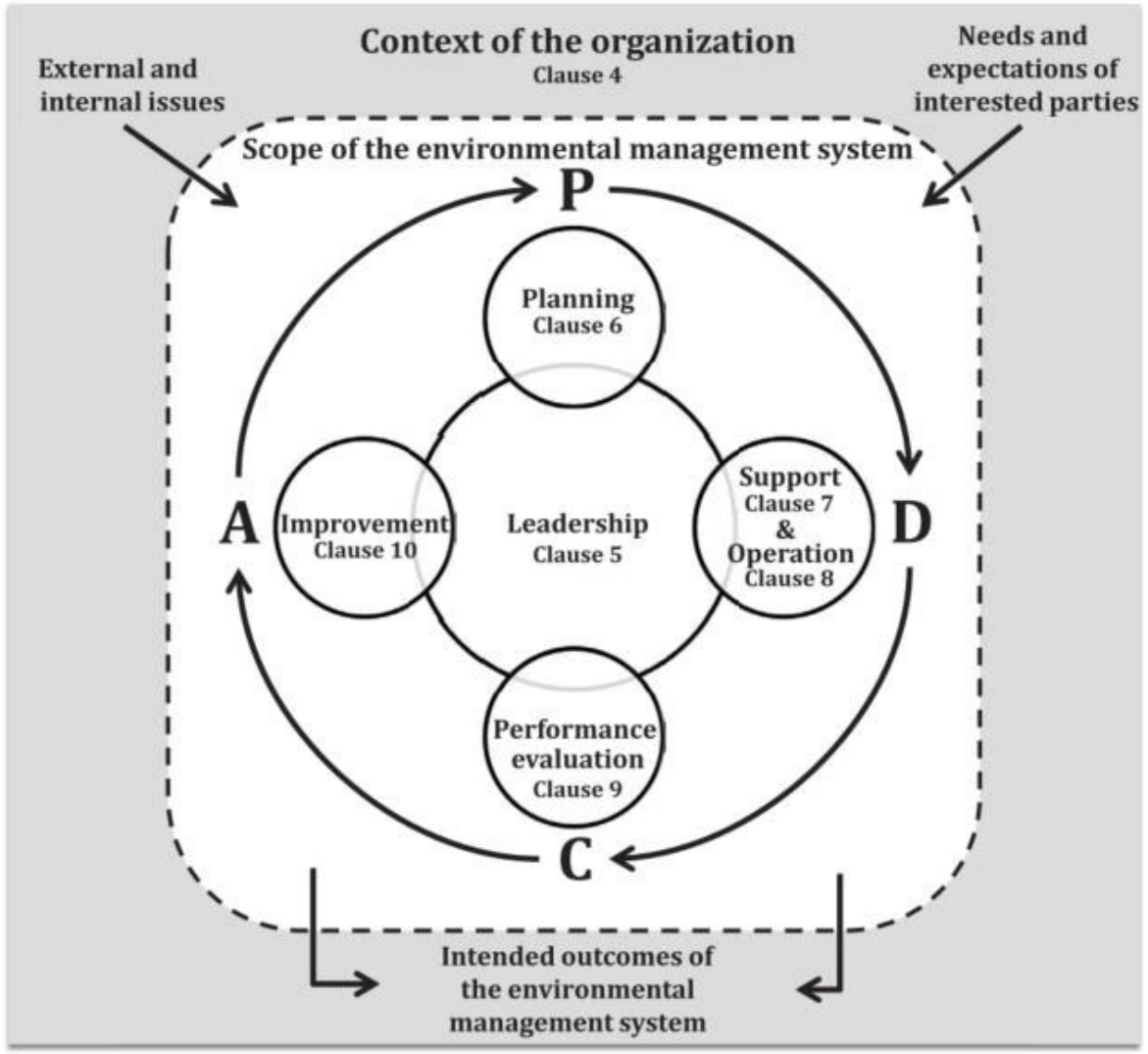
Timeline for Requirements

- **April 2026-** New standard was published
- **April 2029-** Deadline for certified organizations to conform
- **April 2030-** Deadline for ESI Functionally Equivalent organizations to conform
- **If certified**, it's suggested that you conform to new standard during your next recertification audit
- **Start now!**



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Overview of 2026 Changes



- Clarification of language & lifecycle
- More emphasis on sustainability
- Added subclause for management of change
- Reordered clauses & PDCA

Details of Changes

- 4.1 Added phrase and incorporated 2024 amendment
- 4.2 Compliance obligations & added notes
- 4.3 Added lifecycle & changed “maintained” to “available”
- Minor wording changes (meet, available, this document)
- 6.1 Reordered and new clause
- Added "normal"

NEW! Subclause 6.3 Planning of Changes

When the organization determines the need for changes that affect or can affect the EMS, **the changes shall be carried out in a planned manner**. The changes shall be managed to ensure that the organization can achieve the intended outcomes of its EMS. Notes were also added.

8.1 Operational Controls

- Changed “outsourced processes” to “**externally provided processes, products or services** that are relevant to the intended outcomes of the EMS”
- 8.2 & 9.1 minor wording changes
- 9.2 Clarity on documented information & added “objective”
- 9.3 Clarity on inputs and results

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Continual Improvement



- 10.1 & 10.2 minor changes
- Annex A
- Alignment with other ISO standards

ESI Training Courses

Fall 2026 - Gap Analysis available

February 2027- ISO 14001:2026 Requirements course

TBA/Spring 2027- ISO 14001:2026 Lead Auditor certification

Fall & winter 2027- Gap Analysis



Questions
Or comments?

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