

Protection of biodiversity: ISO gives the green light

The international standardization organization - ISO - has charged France with leading the preparation, with all volunteer countries, of international standards promoting the protection of biodiversity. AFNOR is launching a call for participation, with projects already on the table.

At the initiative of AFNOR, responsible for representing France within ISO, the first 20 countries have already indicated their desire to participate in the drafting of international voluntary standards. Whether they are identified as “lungs of the planet”, like the Amazon forest, the Congo basin, or from Europe and other regions of the world, the five continents are represented. Public and private actors, researchers and representatives of NGOs will therefore come together to develop, by consensus, methods and reference frameworks which will make it possible to strengthen everyone's action in favor of the protection of biodiversity.

A French contribution already well advanced

Since 1 year, [around twenty socio-economic actors](#) French people are working with the ambition of making their first contributions at the international level. The future NF X32-001 standard ([open to comments from all until September 6, 2020](#)) will be part of it: it offers any organization a methodology for systematically screening biodiversity issues, analyzing the impacts of activities and leading to a constructed approach in this area (definition of strategy, an action plan, evaluation of results and improvement). This tool, which will be finalized at the end of the year, will help integrate the issues of conservation, restoration and sustainable use of biodiversity and ecosystem services from which humans benefit.

Create common denominators

The project initiated within the ISO will be carried out in line with those of international bodies directly involved with biodiversity issues. The IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature) has already provided its support. Beyond common terms and project management methods, at the scale of an organization or a territory, the ISO project will also make it possible to promote successes in terms of preserving biodiversity. Participants will be able to

thus share their experiences on concrete cases, thus benefiting from the opportunity to make their approaches known for a specific ecosystem, beyond borders.

The first working meeting will be held at the end of 2020. Alternating discussions on a national and international scale, the technical committee will present its first standards by 2023.

Normalize: an action of influence

AFNOR supports the strategies of French organizations on an international level by helping them combine innovation and standardization. This was, for example, the case in 2019 on the issue of the circular economy: [more than 60 countries are now involved](#) via ISO to develop reference frameworks, recommendations, support tools and requirements to implement this business model.

The 2020 edition of [international standardization barometer](#) makes France appear at 2^e place on the European scene (CEN-CENELEC) and at the 3^e place on the international scene (ISO-IEC). At the ISO, France took over the 5^e place in the ranking, tied with Japan, with 76 secretariats, a figure it has not reached since 2008.

About AFNOR

AFNOR is the French reference organization for voluntary standards. It manages the collection of existing documents and leads the work of interested parties for the creation and revision of standards and to identify subjects that could provide material for developing new ones. Launched at the initiative of market players, the voluntary standard is a reference framework which aims to provide guidelines, technical or qualitative requirements for products, services or practices serving the general interest. Anyone can participate in its creation and any organization may or may not use and refer to it. This is why the standard is called voluntary. As coordinator of standardization in France, AFNOR has one ambition: to contribute to the dissemination of good practices and effective solutions, for the benefit of all. www.normalisation.afnor.org

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