



VIRTUAL COURSE ON PARTICIPATION IN ISO/TC 207

IMPROVE THE PARTICIPATION OF COPANT MEMBERS IN THE ISO COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

On October 19-21, 2016, the First Virtual Course on Participation in the ISO¹ Technical Committee on Environmental Management, ISO/TC 207, was conducted via WebEx. The course was prepared and delivered by Maria Aurora Agulló IRAM (Argentina) and was co-funded by PTB (Physikalisch-Technische Bundesanstalt), within the framework of our Regional Project on Biodiversity and Climate Change.

The following experts supported the presentations, sharing experiences, and practices learned Daniel Trillos from ICONTEC (Colombia), Alexandra Rodríguez from INTECO (Costa Rica) and Roberto from Aceredo from UNIT (Uruguay).

Nine National Standards Bodies participated, following the course with the members of their National Mirror Committees and in some cases they invited the Presidents and Secretaries of their Technical Committees. Countries that were connected to follow the course are Argentina, Bolivia (2 subsidiaries: La Paz and Cochabamba), Colombia (3 subsidiaries: Bogota, Medellin and Quito), Costa Rica, Ecuador (4 subsidiaries: Quito, Guayaquil, Azuay and Guayas), Peru, St. Lucia, Uruguay and Venezuela.



Participants in INACAL, Peru



Participants in INEN, Ecuador

¹ International Organization for Standardization

The course objective was to improve the participants' knowledge on the structure of ISO/TC 207 and enhance their participation in its subcommittees and working groups by creating mirror national committees in their countries. The content of the course included the structure and work plan of ISO/TC 207, the composition of subcommittees and working groups of the committee, standards developed and under study, and the mechanisms and tools needed to participate in ISO/TC 207.

About ISO/TC 207

Achieving a balance between the environment, society and the economy is considered essential to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs. Sustainable development as a goal is achieved by balancing the three pillars of sustainability.

Societal expectations for sustainable development, transparency and accountability have evolved with increasingly stringent legislation, growing pressures on the environment from pollution, inefficient use of resources, improper waste management, climate change, degradation of ecosystems and loss of biodiversity.

This has led organizations to adopt a systematic approach to environmental management by implementing different tools (standards) with the aim of contributing to the environmental pillar of sustainability.

ISO/TC207 focus is to develop and maintain standards in the field of environmental management systems that meet stakeholder needs, are market based and support 'sustainability'.

ISO/TC 207 has a great portfolio of standards that can help users (but it is not a requirement) to refer to other standards as they develop their environmental management system (EMS) or to help deepen their work in specific areas.

These reasons between others make NSB have to get involved in the study of ISO documents, with the aim to reach a national and regional position in the subjects under study.

Conclusions and recommendations

Participants were strongly motivated to take part in the pilot project with PTB to receive further training and advice for their national mirror committees. Also, to participate actively in the COPANT Focal Group on ISO/TC 207 and in meetings through WebEx, in order to share information and comments to be able to establish, if possible, joint regional positions for the sending of comments and votes to ISO/TC 207.