



SVENSK MILJÖBAS

The Swedish Environmental Base
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The Swedish Environmental Base - standard (4:2017)

Issuers – Auditors – Organizations

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Introduction

The Swedish Environmental Base is an association formed with the aim to create a unite level of requirements, for different types of environmental certifications in Sweden. The main purpose was to bring these certifications together and to unite them under one shared standard and to contribute to reducing the environmental impacts from organizations' using this standard. The Swedish Environmental Base standard is directed towards smaller organizations' and caters their needs, to be able to present a well-functioning and documented environmental work to clients and to other stakeholders'. The Swedish Environmental Base standard was published for the first time on the 5th of December 2005. This version of the standard is the fourth and it was admitted by the association on the 26th of April 2017. The standard is becoming valid on January the 1st 2018 and it shall be implemented in to issuers' methods at the latest on the 31st of December 2017. The standard is being overhauled and updated every third year. The association of The Swedish Environmental Base has interpretation rights regarding the requirements of this standard. In the text below the three main chapters of this standard, which is developed for issuers, auditors and organizations, are described. A fourth part is at the moment being developed which is directed towards organizations arranging sustainable events. Therefore it will soon be possible to hold an environmental certificate for sustainable events and it will complement this standard ahead.

Issuers

The requirements developed for issuers are to ensure that organizations, which issue certificates with The Swedish Environmental Base logotype, have a long-term commitment to their environmental work and that they carry on working with concrete environmental improvements. Issuers that issue certificates, according to The Swedish Environmental Base standard, shall make sure that their methods fully include all the requirements of this standard.

Auditors

The requirements developed for auditors are to ensure that auditors approved by The Swedish Environmental Base have the right knowledge of the requirements in this standard, that they follow good auditing procedures and encourage organizations to carry on working with concrete environmental improvements.



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Organizations

An organization with the aim to hold an environmental certificate, according to The Swedish Environmental Base, shall employ an issuer that can provide an approved method.

Organizations shall, at the least, fulfil the requirements in this standard set by The Swedish Environmental Base. In addition to the requirements in this standard, individual issuers have the possibility to set and follow-up further requirements on organizations.



Terms and definitions

Indicators: Measures and describes the development and the improvements of the environmental performance over time.

Method: The issuer shall in their method provide guidance in terms of the issuers written guiding materials and also as practical support, which can guide an organization in their work to fulfil The Swedish Environmental Base requirements set on organizations.

Responsible of methods: A person working for the issuer who is responsible for their method.

Environmental certificate: A certificate which is proving that an organization, at the time of the audit, is fulfilling the requirements of this standard.

Audit instructions: The issuer's written guiding materials for auditors.

The audit counsel: An authority for questions for/about audits and auditors, dealing with applications from auditors, before approval of the board, and dealing with complaints with issuer's and auditors.

Auditor: A person who is approved by The Swedish Environmental Base to audit organizations according to the requirements in this standard, set on organizations.

The Swedish Environmental Base: The association The Swedish Environmental Base or its standard.

Application audit: An audit at an organization which is performed by the issuer according to the requirements set in this standard. The auditor ensures that the organizations environmental management system corresponds and fulfills all requirements set on organizations. The audit is normally performed together with a review of the organizations documentation.

Third-party audit: An audit performed by an auditor who hasn't been participating in the implementation of the environmental management system in the organization, which is being audit. An auditor who is connected to the issuer or to the organization, which the certificate regards, shall not perform a third-party audit. A third-party auditor must be approved by The Swedish Environmental Base.

Issuer: A member of The Swedish Environmental Base with the right to issue certificates with the association's logotype.

Organizations: A business, or another type of organization, that has or wishes to receive an environmental certificate according to The Swedish Environmental Base requirements set on organizations.



1. Demands on issuers

Issuers of certificates **shall**¹ according to The Swedish Environmental Base fulfil the following requirements set on issuers.

1.1 General

An organization that wants to become issuer of certificates with The Swedish Environmental Base logotype **shall**²:

- Become a member of the association
- Hand in a member application to the association
- Provide a method that eases the implementation of the environmental management system and fulfils the requirements according to The Swedish Environmental Base national environmental management standard
- Provide written audit instructions for auditors
- Select a person within the organization who is responsible for the method.

1.2 Audit of issuer's method

The issuer's method **shall**³ be audited and approved.

The audit **shall**⁴ take place every fifth year or when larger changes within the organization occur.

The audit **shall**⁵ be performed by two persons elected by the board of The Swedish Environmental Base.

The issuer **shall**⁶, if The Swedish Environmental Base board asks, provide documentation from the certificated organizations.

In case of liquidation of the issuer's organization, the issuer **shall**⁷ ensure that the certified organizations receive information regarding how they can continue the certification with another issuer according to The Swedish Environmental Base.

1.3 Audit instructions

Audit instructions **shall**⁸ include:

- Routines for third-party auditing
- All the further requirements on organizations that the issuer has set, beyond the requirements that the standard already contains.



1.4 Issuing of certificates

The issuer **shall**⁹ after an approved audit of an organization, hand out a certificate that follows The Swedish Environmental Base logo manual.

The issuer **shall**¹⁰ revoke a certificate if an organization chooses not to follow environmental legislation or other relevant requirements.

1.5 Reporting

The issuer **shall**¹¹ report to The Swedish Environmental Base:

- Which organizations' that have valid certificates.
- Large changes in their method.
- If the association requests changes in its own method after audit of the standard.

1.6 Audit of organizations

The issuer **shall**¹² make sure that the audit of the organization is being performed in accordance with The Swedish Environmental Base standard.

1.7 Information and exchange of experiences

The issuer **shall**¹³ have information about their method available.

The issuer **shall**¹⁴ participate in gatherings for experience exchange arranged by The Swedish Environmental Base within one year from the time of the method's approving and thereafter at least every second year.

If the issuer **shall**¹⁵ ensure that employed subcontractors and collaborators have understood both their method and The Swedish Environmental Base standard.

2. Requirements on auditors

2.1 General

An auditor who wishes to be approved by The Swedish Environmental Base **shall**¹ hand in an application to the association.

An auditor **shall**² fulfil all the requirements set on auditors in The Swedish Environmental Base standard and thereafter the auditor can be approved by the association's board.



An auditor **shall**³ control and ensure that an organization has fulfilled the requirements in The Swedish Environmental Base standard set on organizations.

2.2 Basic education and experience

An auditor **shall**⁴ have:

- Post-secondary education within the area of environmental science
- At least one year of working experience within the environmental field
- Participated in at least five extern audits of environmental management systems whereof at least one should be performed independently
- Participated in an auditing technique education
- Participated in an environmental legislation education

2.3 Specific qualifications

All auditors, regardless of organizational affiliation, **shall**⁵ have participated in an education about The Swedish Environmental Base standard of requirements arranged by The Swedish Environmental Base.

2.4 Maintenance of competence

An auditor **shall**⁶:

- At least every third year participate in an education about The Swedish Environmental Base standard of requirements arranged by The Swedish Environmental Base.
- Maintain current competence regarding The Swedish Environmental Base standard of requirements.

2.5 Reporting

An auditor **shall**⁷:

- Follow the issuer's instructions for auditors and current interpretation instruction from The Swedish Environmental Base
- Also hand in a documented audit report to the issuer and to the revised organization, indicating the organization's status in relationship to The Swedish Environmental Base set requirements, possible nonconformities and suggestions of improvement.



2.6 Revocation of approval

The approval of the auditor **shall**⁸ be withdrawn if an auditor no longer proves to fulfil the requirements in this standard.

3. Requirements on organizations

3.1 General

Organizations that wish to implement an environmental management system according to The Swedish Environmental Base standard of requirements **shall**¹ employ an approved issuer.

3.2 Management, responsibility and participation

The management of an organization **shall**² be responsible for a functional environmental management system and make sure that it leads to continual environmental improvements.

The management **shall**³:

- Ensure economical and personnel resources for implementation and operation of the environmental management system
- Distribute the responsibility within the management system through defining rolls, responsibility and authority
- Create engagement and participation through the whole organization.

3.3 Environmental survey

The organization **shall**⁴ have a documented environmental survey including:

- Business and organizational description
- Identifying of significant environmental aspects
- Assessment of significant environmental aspects

The description of the organization **shall**⁵ include:

- The environmental management systems extent
- Type of organization
- Products and/or services provided
- Number of employees



- Current environmental work and environmental competence

The organization **shall**⁶, with focus on core business, identify their environmental aspects, positive as well as negative linked to:

- Use of: energy, propellant, goods, services, water and chemical products etc.
- Products and/or services provided by the organization
- Waste
- Emissions to air, water and soil
- Noise, vibrations and smell.

The organization **shall**⁷, on a yearly basis, based on the environmental survey asses, determine and document which environmental aspects that are significant.

3.4 Environmental policy

The organization **shall**⁸ have a documented environmental policy that reflects the intentions of the environmental management system and guides the environmental work.

The environmental policy **shall**⁹:

- Approved by the organizations management and be relevant according to the organization's business and its environmental aspects
- Contain a commitment of continual improvement and prevention of pollution
- Contain a commitment of adhering to the relevant environmental legislation
- Be guiding for the environmental objectives
- Be well anchored within management, amongst employees and by others working for the organization
- Be available to stakeholders'.

3.5 Environmental objectives and action plans

The organization **shall**¹⁰, based on their significant environmental aspects, establish documented and timed environmental objectives and action plans.

The environmental objectives and action plans **shall**¹¹ be possible to follow up and verify and shall correspond with the environmental policy.

The action plan **shall**¹² include:

- Actions presenting how the objectives shall be achieved



- Who is responsible for the implementation each action
- Resource requirements for implementing the actions.
- When the implementation and the review of the objectives shall be completed.

3.6 Routines and/or instructions

The organization **shall**¹³, from their significant environmental aspects, evaluate the need for routines and/or instructions.

The organization **shall**¹⁴ follow-up routines and, when necessary, document routines and instructions.

3.7 Handling of nonconformities and suggestions of improvement

The organization **shall**¹⁵ have a documented description of how nonconformities and suggestions of improvement are being handled.

3.8 Legal requirements

The organization **shall**¹⁶:

- Identify and document which requirements linked to environmental legislation and other requirements (from authorities within the environmental area) the organization have to comply with
- Have a up to date description of how the legislation is complied with.

Any injunctions from authorities' **shall**¹⁷ be resolved within a specified time.

3.9 Emergency preparedness

The organization **shall**¹⁸ make an assessment of environmental risks and adequately prevent or plan how the organization will respond if accidents or incidents occur.

3.10 Training needs and competence requirements

The organization's employees' **shall**¹⁹ have the appropriate competence for personnel performing in an environmentally correct manner.

The organization's employees and others working for the organization **shall**²⁰ undergo basic environmental educating.

The organization **shall**²¹ identify the need for environmental education and based on the identified needs, determine and document a training plan.



3.11 Follow-up and continual improvement

The organization **shall**²² at the time of the audit have made continual environmental improvement.

The organization **shall**²³ pre-audit: follow-up, compile and document the improvements and changes within the organizations environmental work.

Organizations with offices/branches at different physical locations and/or with varied activities **shall**²⁴ have procedures to monitor the environmental work in the various business branches.

3.12 Environmental report

The organization **shall**²⁵, on a yearly basis, summarize the result of the environmental work in an environmental report.

The environmental report **shall**²⁶ include:

- The environmental management system's delimitation and extent
- A description of the environmental work and the improvements and changes taken place over time
- Relevant indicators.

The environmental report **shall**²⁷ be accessible for stakeholders.

3.13 Internal and external communication

The employees of the organization and other stakeholders **shall**²⁸ be informed of the organizations environmental work.

3.14 Management review

The organizations management **shall**²⁹, on a yearly basis, review and document an evaluation of the environmental management system and decide if changes are needed for reaching continual improvements.

3.15 Audit

The audit **shall**³⁰ be performed, on a yearly basis, by auditors approved by the Swedish Environmental Base.



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At the latest at the second audit and thereafter at least every fourth year **shall**³¹ a third-party audit take place by an auditor not connected to the issuers organization.

If the organization is spread on several physical places a plan for reviewing all places **shall**³² be documented.