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Characterisation principles for soils, buildings and infrastructures contaminated by radionuclides for remediation purposes (ISO 18557:2017)

Táto norma obsahuje anglickú verziu európskej normy.
This standard includes the English version of the European Standard.

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Characterisation principles for soils, buildings and infrastructures contaminated by radionuclides for remediation purposes (ISO 18557:2017)

Principes de caractérisation des sols, bâtiments et infrastructures contaminés par des radionucléides, à des fins de réhabilitation (ISO 18557:2017)

Charakterisierungsgrundsätze für mit Radionukliden kontaminierte Böden, Gebäude und Infrastrukturen zu Sanierungszwecken (ISO 18557:2017)

This European Standard was approved by CEN on 6 January 2020.

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EN ISO 18557:2020 (E)

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European foreword

The text of ISO 18557:2017 has been prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 85 "Nuclear energy, nuclear technologies, and radiological protection" of the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) and has been taken over as EN ISO 18557:2020 by Technical Committee CEN/TC 430 "Nuclear energy, nuclear technologies, and radiological protection" the secretariat of which is held by AFNOR.

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Endorsement notice

The text of ISO 18557:2017 has been approved by CEN as EN ISO 18557:2020 without any modification.

INTERNATIONAL STANDARD

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Characterisation principles for soils, buildings and infrastructures contaminated by radionuclides for remediation purposes

*Principes de caractérisation des sols, bâtiments et infrastructures
contaminés par des radionucléides, à des fins de réhabilitation*



Reference number
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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).

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For an explanation on 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 the following URL: www.iso.org/iso/foreword.html.

This document was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 85, *Nuclear energy, nuclear technologies, and radiological protection*, Sub-committee SC 5, *Nuclear fuel cycle*.

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Introduction

The remit of WG 13 covers all aspects of the decommissioning phase, and thus it interfaces with other Sub-Committees and Working Groups whose work intersects with this phase.

[Figure 1](#) below indicates some of the topics that could be included in SC 5 and/or WG 13. It provides a view of how the scope of this ISO Standard links with both generic and more detailed topics.

This document contains both guidance and references to documents which may be useful in relation to this work area. Read in conjunction with the supporting references, it gives a generic approach to the topic. It also may have connections with many other blocks across the whole diagram (e.g. Decommissioning strategy, Waste Management, Site remediation, Dismantling/Demolition, Cost issues, Safety).

Moreover, it was not intended to establish this document as a stand-alone document. When a member country already has national tools in this field (e.g. regulatory requirements, national standards), these requirements and national standards are applicable in conjunction with this document.

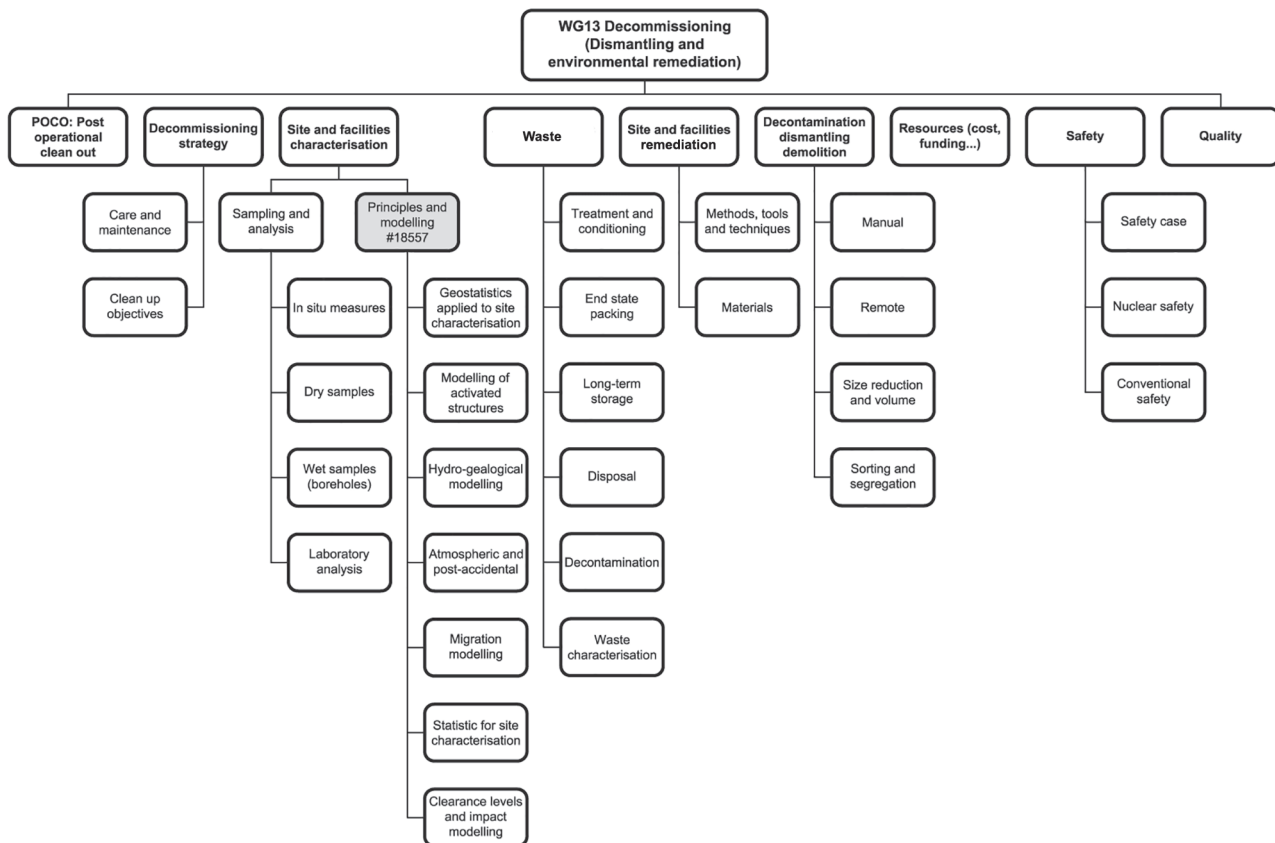


Figure 1 — Indicative chart of the topics included in WG 13, showing how this document is linked to other topics

This work stream structure can be used to clarify the scope of WG publications and to ensure that areas of joint interest between ISO teams and working groups are coordinated. The ISO shadow committee for a member body identifies proposals for further work and, if appropriate, submits them to the Working Group for international consideration as potential new work items. [Figure 1](#) can be a useful prompt in this process. This document is part of an overall decommissioning and environmental remediation strategy including, for example, the monitoring and/or remediation of groundwater which might be addressed in a new work item.

Since the discovery of radioactivity at the end of the 19th century, numerous laboratories and facilities have dealt with radioactive substances (notably radium). In addition, the development and considerable expansion of the nuclear industry, both civilian and defence, has generated many nuclear facilities built since the 1940s, resulting today in legacy sites.

More recently, nuclear operators and state organisations have intensively undertaken the dismantling and remediation of shutdown nuclear facilities. Remediation projects also concern former mining sites, other legacy sites and industrial sites having produced NORM (Naturally Occurring Radioactive Material) and TENORM (Technologically Enhanced NORM) waste, where the main issue is the large volume of waste involved. The aim is primarily to demonstrate that the entire nuclear cycle is well managed. A large number of issues need to be considered:

- The nuclear regulatory framework did not exist at the beginning and it has evolved over time (release procedures, health and safety, environmental considerations...). In addition, there is more and more stakeholder involvement today, and this needs to be considered at the early stages of any project.
- The availability of waste management facilities and disposal sites varies between countries and through time. The classification based on activity levels: e.g. very low level waste (VLLW), low level waste (LLW), intermediate level waste (ILW), high level waste (HLW) and nuclide half-lives (short-lived or long-lived radionuclides) impacts remediation projects. These factors sometimes result in the partial clean-up of sites, due to the absence of a final solution for waste disposal. Waste may also have had to be temporarily stored on site for economic reasons.
- Remediation costs and schedules are optimized and rationalized using a graded approach, as these projects are generally expensive and time consuming. They also need to be securely funded and planned.
- In order to optimize waste categories, volumes and costs, characterization is a crucial issue enabling the best knowledge of the radiological state of the site (soils, buildings and infrastructures) to be obtained before making project decisions.

Lessons learned from the first sites to be remediated have demonstrated that poor characterization (based on incomplete historical information and too limited a number of data points or samples) strongly impacts the success of a remediation project, with inappropriate choices having been made (over-estimation of volumes and over-categorization of waste, unexpected contamination).

As a consequence, it is now recognized that accurate characterization is the key to successful dismantling and remediation projects. There are many characterization steps necessary throughout a project, each with specific objectives.

The main potential improvement concerns the sampling effort, sample representativeness and assessment of activity levels assessments. Combined with data analysis and processing, all the uncertainties involved are combined to deliver a result with a corresponding confidence interval. Therefore the characterization strategy and programme should be set well before the actual measurements, to ensure efficiency.

The preparation of any nuclear facility's remediation programme requires knowledge of its operational history. This covers the entire period from design, licensing and through to final shutdown, in order to establish the nature and location of potential or known radioactive contamination, together with possible associated chemical products, with the appropriate accuracy. The overall remediation strategy requires an estimation of the quantity and the volume of waste to be produced, and an assessment of its level of contamination. This enables appropriate optimized waste management.

In addition, a final characterization is compulsory for sites to be released and/or re-used in order to demonstrate compliance with remediation objectives (clearance levels, if any, or a release threshold set by, or agreed with, the regulatory body).

This document outlines the principles of characterization for remediation purposes of soils, buildings and infrastructures contaminated by radionuclides and possible associated chemical pollutants.

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As the preparation of a sampling plan is an iterative process, decision-taking steps will be defined throughout this document taking into account constraints imposed by operations, budgets and regulations, while respecting the ALARA and ALARP principles.

The application of this methodology will aid the user to obtain the information necessary for compiling the files associated with remediation operations, as required by the regulatory authorities. It is applicable to each of the steps necessary for the remediation of sites, depending on the objectives (release into the public domain, re-use). It can enable an assessment to be established for contaminated soils, or in preparing to carry out post-remediation checks (even including the facility's civil engineering structures), in order to confirm that the remediation objectives have been met.

With regards to the recommendations of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), a graded approach should be considered for the characterization of soils, buildings and infrastructures for remediation purposes. The characterization strategy, programme and planning should be commensurate with the complexity of the remediation problem and with the established end state. A graded approach can limit occupational exposure for workers, as well as saving time and money [ref. IAEA = DeSa project (Evaluation and Demonstration of Safety for Decommissioning of Facilities Using Radioactive Material)].

Characterisation principles for soils, buildings and infrastructures contaminated by radionuclides for remediation purposes

1 Scope

This document presents guidelines for sampling strategies and characterization processes to assess the contamination of soils, buildings and infrastructures, prior to remediation and/or to check that the remediation objectives have been met (final release surveys). The principles presented need to be appropriately graded as regards the specific situations concerned (size, level of contamination...). *It can be used in conjunction with each country's key documentation.*

This document deals with characterization in relation to site remediation. It applies to sites contaminated after normal operation of older nuclear facilities. It could also apply to site remediation after a major accident, and in this case the input data will be linked to the accident involved.

The document complements existing standards, notably concerning sampling, sample preservation and their transport, treatment and laboratory measurements, but also those related to *in situ* chemical and radiological measurements. *References in the Bibliography contain links to appropriate documentation and techniques as required by individual member countries.*

The document does not apply to the following issues: execution of clean-up works, sampling and characterization of waste (conditioned or unconditioned) or to waste packages.

It does not apply to groundwater characterization (saturated zone).

Given the case-by-case nature of site remediation and decommissioning, the principles and guidance communicated in this document are intended as general guidance only, not prescriptive requirements.

2 Normative references

There are no normative references in this document.

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