



STRATEGIC BUSINESS PLAN

ISO/TC 218 Timber

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The market products, covered by the scope of TC 218 are round timber, sawn and processed timber, wood flooring and parquet, excluding timber used for structural (i.e. designed) purposes. The timber will mostly be dried but may be unseasoned and may be treated with chemicals for resistance to insects, fungi or protection from fire. Bodies participating in trade in this commodity are primarily manufacturers, builders, wholesalers, and importers.

The materials used to manufacture processed wood products comprise a wide variety of raw materials, including industrial roundwood (in various forms).

At the broadest level, roundwood is subdivided into roundwood and wood fuel. Roundwood is further subdivided into sawlogs and veneer logs, pulpwood and other industrial roundwood.

The first two subdivisions cover the roundwood that is used in the forest processing sector. Each of these product categories can also be subdivided into species groups (e.g. coniferous and non-coniferous).

TC 218 aims to develop standards which will establish terminology for sawn and processed timber and floorings, classified and specified in a manner that is consistently understood by and equitable to all active and potential traders.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 *ISO technical committees and business planning*

The extension of formal business planning to ISO Technical Committees (ISO/TCs) is an important measure which forms part of a major review of business. The aim is to align the ISO work programme with expressed business environment needs and trends and to allow ISO/TCs to prioritize among different projects, to identify the benefits expected from the availability of International Standards, and to ensure adequate resources for projects throughout their development.

1.2 *International standardization and the role of ISO*

The foremost aim of international standardization is to facilitate the exchange of goods and services through the elimination of technical barriers to trade.

Three bodies are responsible for the planning, development and adoption of International Standards: [ISO](#) (International Organization for Standardization) is responsible for all sectors excluding Electrotechnical, which is the responsibility of [IEC](#) (International Electrotechnical Committee), and most of the Telecommunications Technologies, which are largely the responsibility of [ITU](#) (International Telecommunication Union).

ISO is a legal association, the members of which are the National Standards Bodies (NSBs) of some 164 countries (organizations representing social and economic interests at the international level), supported by a Central Secretariat based in Geneva, Switzerland.

The principal deliverable of ISO is the [International Standard](#).

An International Standard embodies the essential principles of global openness and transparency, consensus and technical coherence. These are safeguarded through its development in an ISO Technical Committee (ISO/TC), representative of all interested parties, supported by a public comment phase (the ISO Technical Enquiry). ISO and its [Technical Committees](#) are also able to offer the ISO Technical Specification (ISO/TS), the ISO Public Available Specification (ISO/PAS) and the ISO Technical Report (ISO/TR) as solutions to market needs. These ISO products represent lower levels of consensus and have therefore not the same status as an International Standard.

ISO offers also the International Workshop Agreement (IWA) as a deliverable which aims to bridge the gap between the activities of consortia and the formal process of standardization represented by ISO and its national members. An important distinction is that the IWA is developed by ISO workshops and fora, comprising only participants with direct interest, and so it is not accorded the status of an International Standard.

2. BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT OF THE ISO/TC

2.1 Description of the Business Environment

The following political, economic, technical, regulatory, legal and social dynamics describe the business environment of the industry sector, products, materials, disciplines or practices related to the scope of this ISO/TC, and they may significantly influence how the relevant standards development processes are conducted and the content of the resulting standards:

ISO's vision concerning emphasis on sustainable economic development and promoting the values of safety and environmental protection has special relevance to the TC 218 work. All products relevant to the scope of TC 218 are based on forest resources. Forests represent a vital part of the world's biosphere and have important environmental and social functions in addition to its role as a major raw material source.

TC 218 aims to develop globally recognized test method standards that will provide the physical and mechanical characteristics of sawn and processed timber for hardwood and softwood. These test standards will aim to provide transparency, as well as facilitate broad-based acceptance and conformity.

Technical barriers to trade have been identified as:

- Different cultural expectations of quality and performance.
- The need for wood to be considered on the same basis as non-wood products in regard to fire.
- Non-transparent approval systems for the acceptance of new wood products.
- Recognition of foreign testing methods and/or data.
- Existing prescriptive codes and standards, trading procedures, and traditional preferences.

3. BENEFITS EXPECTED FROM THE WORK OF THE ISO/TC

The benefits expected from the work of TC 218 are:

- Establish an international terminology for round and sawn timber;
- Reduction of nomenclature through the adoption of preferred sizes and descriptions of sawn timber products;
- Improved utilisation of alternative species through the establishment of objective performance-based standards of comparison;
- Increased market acceptability of sawn timber products through more widely understood evaluation and acceptance criteria;
- Comprehensive suite of internationally applicable test method standards which will aim toward establishing a world-wide unification of results, in turn facilitating better interchange and correlation of data;
- Developed ISO Standards on test methods will be useful as models for further customisation by individual countries and will be as flexible as possible, both for laboratory and non-laboratory environments;
- Developed ISO Standards on test methods will also be useful in providing data for development of grading rules, specifications and features of defects;
- Provide global market access for timber via use of transparent and internationally accepted test methods for determination of physical and mechanical properties.
- Agreement on test methods, definitions, classifications and specifications will facilitate trade both within and between regions around the world.

4. REPRESENTATION AND PARTICIPATION IN THE ISO/TC

4.1 Membership

Countries/ISO member bodies that are P and O members of the ISO/TC 218 committee

4.2 Analysis of the participation

Participating Countries (27) and Observing Countries (36)

Internal ISO Liaisons:

- ISO/TC 165 «Timber structures»
- ISO/PC 287 «Chain of custody of wood and wood-based products»
- ISO/TC 296 «Bamboo and rattan»

Other organizations:

International Technical Tropical Timber Association (ATIBT),
Fédération européenne de l'industrie du parquet (FEP).

5. OBJECTIVES OF THE ISO/TC AND STRATEGIES FOR THEIR ACHIEVEMENT

5.1 *Defined objectives of the ISO/TC*

ISO/TC 218 has the following objectives:

- To develop a suite of International Standards for coniferous and broadleaved round, sawn and processed timber, and flooring in the area of terminology, test methods for physical and mechanical characteristics, dimensions, moisture content, nomenclature, defects, grade, appearance classes, excluding aspects of structural use.
- To make those International Standards performance-based as far as is practicable.
- To be as efficient as possible and conduct its work by electronic correspondence where practicable.
- To develop test method procedures for nonlaboratory environments suitable for use on production sites for field testing and quality control.
- To revise and/or delete all other standards that are currently in the work program of TC 218 as per ISO periodic review procedures.
- To identify research needs where necessary to support the work of TC 218 and bring those needs to the attention of relevant organisations.
- To support the growing efforts in the world to secure the legality of timber.

5.2 *Identified strategies to achieve the ISO/TC's defined objectives*

ISO/TC 218 will:

- Identify the need for International Standards within the scope of TC 218;
- Review status of existing standards allocated from ISO/TC 55 and ISO/TC 99;
- Review status of standards of other international bodies (eg APEC, CEN etc.) within the scope of TC 218;
- Establish a Work programme of TC 218 giving priorities for standards development;
- To avoid overlapping work in CEN and ISO and to obtain the outmost profit of the Vienna Agreement;
- Establish liaison with other relevant ISO/TCs to avoid overlapping work

6. FACTORS AFFECTING COMPLETION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ISO/TC WORK PROGRAMME

Events that might delay or prevent the completion tasks assigned to TC 218 are:

- availability of the necessary expertise, especially from the smaller countries;
- lack of representation of, and participation by, members of weaker economies;
- Misunderstandings of importance of sustainable forest management, wood production and processing that lead to a refusal to this renewable natural resource with social, economical and environmental benefits in some parts of the world.
- Rejection of standards by economies which consider that they have not been adequately represented or considered.
- Lack of representation of, and participation by, all members of timber trading economies.
- European countries have to apply CEN standards drafted under European Regulation therefore are not allowed to adopt ISO standards that differ from EU standards.
- Lack of access to the internet in some parts of the world.
- Irregular participation by committee members and liaison regional organizations.

7. STRUCTURE, CURRENT PROJECTS AND PUBLICATIONS OF THE ISO/TC

Information on ISO online

The link below is to the TC's page on ISO's website:

[ISO TC 218 on ISO Online](#)

Overview of the ISO/TC's structure, scopes of the ISO/TC 218 given in Report of Secretariate 2017-2018

Information on existing and planned standardization projects, publication of the ISO/TC and its subcommittees are given in Work Programme of ISO/TC 218

Reference information

Glossary of terms and abbreviations used in ISO/TC Business Plans

General information on the principles of ISO's technical work