

## GERMANY

### Deutsches Institut für Normung (DIN) Standards to address climate change (SDG 13)

#### Overview

Protecting the climate and adapting to its changes will be top of the agenda in decades to come. Based on scientific model calculations, the diverse national and multinational agreements form a political framework that should allow us to achieve our climate protection goals (United Nations Paris Agreement, 2015).

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted by all United Nations Member States in 2015, comprises at its heart 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that act as an urgent call for action by all countries in the global partnership. In particular, SDG 13 (Climate Action) urges us to take action to combat climate change and its impacts on the world. Likewise, the European Commission's European Green Deal is striving to transform Europe into the world's first climate-neutral continent.

Building on these political intentions, technical measures and social action are the main factors that can contribute to climate change mitigation. Simply put, this involves taking steps to prevent or reduce the release, use or unsustainable disposal of greenhouse gases. Adaptation measures will also be required to lessen the consequences of climate change, for example through the development of new technologies in sustainable water management or by promoting circular economy concepts for the textile and timber industries. Standardization plays a vital part in helping stakeholders in the political, industrial and social arenas identify relevant practices and products that support these measures.

The project launched by Germany's standards institute, DIN, in early 2021 has two main objectives:

- Identify existing international, European and national standards that may contribute to the fight against climate change
- Perform a gap analysis of standardization needs and create a roadmap to help stakeholders identify specific areas that are insufficiently represented in standards development so far

The project is limited to national standards committees working in the timber and furniture industries, textiles and textile machinery, water management, and technical fundamentals. However, results will be shared with other standards committees with a view to launching similar initiatives in other areas of work.

## Outcomes and benefits

Of the two thousand or so deliverables that make up the DIN portfolio, about five hundred have legal relevance, most of which in the context of German and European environmental law. These can be assumed to be directly or indirectly linked to climate-relevant aspects, including soil and water protection, CCS (carbon capture and storage), biodiversity, the circular economy, and so forth.

Among the best approaches to combat climate change and its impacts, participating in standardization is shown to be a strategic move for any stakeholder group, be it in the realm of industry, research, politics or public interest. Taking an active part in standards development work helps introduce technologies and ideas into standards while, at the same time, ensuring that safety, environmental and consumer protection and occupational health are given due consideration. Moreover, innovations that have been brought to the standardization process have been more likely to be successful once they reached the market. By mapping existing standards and uncovering gaps in the framework, the project helps stakeholders better link standardization to market and political needs.

## Partners involved

The German Standardization Strategy puts strong emphasis on environmental issues, consumer protection, healthcare and the safety of buildings as essential targets that must continue to be met. Rising to the challenge, DIN's technical subgroup "Resources and Technology" launched this wide-scale project which covers international, European and national standards.

## Timeline

The goals and scope for this project were approved in late 2020 and the project was launched in January 2021. It is expected to be completed by the end of the year.

### References

- United Nations Paris Agreement, 2015
- United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, 2015
- European Commission, European Green Deal, 2019
- European Union, [\*Sustainable development in the European Union – Overview of progress towards the SDGs in an EU context\*](#), 2020, 44 pp.