
Environmental Aspects in Standards

Ur KB:s samlingar

Digitaliserad år 2015



National Library
of Sweden

Swedish Governmental Committee Proposal.
Environmental Aspects in Swedish
Standardization Work.

SOU 1997:173

Environmental Aspects in Standards

Swedish Governmental Committee Proposal.
Environmental Aspects in Swedish
Standardization Work.

SOU 1997:173



KUNGL.
BIBLIOTEKET
STOCKHOLM

500
1997:1773 B



Government Official Reports
1997:173
Ministry of Industry and Trade

Environmental Aspects in Standards

*Utredningen om miljöhänsyn i det svenska standardiserings-
arbetet*

Swedish Governmental Committee Proposal.
Environmental Aspects in Swedish Standardization Work.
Stockholm 1997



This report is on sale in Stockholm at Fritzes Bookshop, which supplies Swedish official government reports and departmental series (SOU and Ds) and also, on behalf of the Central Services Office for the Ministries, arranges for them to be circulated to the competent parties for comments.

Address: Fritzes, Customer Services
SE-106 47 Stockholm
Sweden

Telefax: 08-690 91 91 (national)
+46 8 690 91 91 (international)

Telephone: 08-690 91 90 (national)
+46 8 690 91 90 (international)

E-mail: fritzes.order@liber.se
Internet: www.fritzes.se

NORSTEDTS TRYCKERI AB
Stockholm 1997

ISBN 91-38-20774-5
ISSN 0375-250X

Summary

Commission

In November 1996, the Swedish Government decided to appoint a special investigator commissioned to propose a method for how environmental aspects can be integrated in the Swedish standardization work. The investigator is supposed to make recommendations on how Swedish standardizing bodies and Swedish technical experts can take environmental aspects into account in all standardization work. In addition, the investigator is supposed to define various environmental aspects, devise a plan of action and identify prioritized areas. Occupational health and safety and general health aspects are not included in the Committee's proposals.

95 % of all standards adopted in Sweden today have been developed in international cooperation. The Committee's proposals are therefore primarily aimed at building up a strong Swedish national programme that can serve as a basis for effective efforts to integrate environmental aspects in European and international standardization.

Swedish standardization

SIS (the Swedish Standards Institution) is the central body for standardization in Sweden. SIS is an independent, impartial, non-profit organization with members from both the private and public sectors. The Government wrote its charter and appoints its chairperson. SIS adopts Swedish standards and publishes and sells standards.

Standardization in Sweden is decentralized. SIS authorizes standardizing bodies that take responsibility for standardization within their particular industrial sectors or specialty fields. These standardizing bodies, at present eight, are independent organizations with their own members and executive boards. All technical committees, project teams and working groups are associated with one of these standardizing bodies.

A total of about 6,300 experts participate in 600 technical committees in Sweden today. Each year some 2,000 new or revised Swedish standards are adopted, of which more than 95 % are transposed international or European standards.

Committee

The investigator has been assisted by a committee of 10 experts and a secretariat. The investigator has had informal contacts with SIS, the eight standardizing bodies, and with the National Board of Trade and the Swedish Board for Accreditation and Conformity Assessment (SWEDAC). The international work with inclusion of environmental aspects in standards has been studied in reports and minutes of meetings, as well as on a visit to DIN, Deutsche Institut für Normung e.V.

Objective

The objective has been formulated in two basic aims, which have guided the work of the Committee. The first basic aim is that efforts to promote the inclusion of environmental aspects in the standardization work should eventually lead to environmentally assessed standards. Each proposed standard should undergo an environmental assessment, a defined process, for example established in a standard document such as ISO Guide 64, IEC Guide 109, or a checklist. The results of the environmental assessment should be reported in the standard, as informative text, as alternative material or process choices, as warning text or in another manner. The committee proposes that a special heading – Environmental Assessment – be added to the editing rules of the standardization organizations.

Another basic aim is that the environmental assessment should be a normal and natural part of all standardization work. Environmental assessment is done in the line organization, in the ordinary committee. This is where the technical competence is, and this is where the environmental competence is, which must also be further developed. Information and training in environmental matters is therefore a major element in our concrete recommendations. The Committee sees this as the most effective and cost-saving way to environmentally assessed standards.

The Committee's recommendations must be viewed in the context of the culture and tradition of standardization. Standardization is by

principle voluntary and based on consensus. The standardizing bodies – national, European or international – provide a work process. The standardizing work is done by those who employ the process. These users, stakeholders, determine the technical content of the standard and provide resources and funding for the work. Influencing the standardization work, particularly internationally, is largely a question of motivating, stimulating and persuading the various stakeholders of the benefits of environmental consideration.

Environmental aspects and environmental consideration

The Committee is responsible for defining environmental aspects. We have opted to give environmental aspects and environmental consideration as broad a definition as possible, in line with Agenda 21. Agenda 21 has an environmental philosophy that is characterized by a broad scope. It embraces all of the natural environment and all human activities. It also includes the social environment and the cultural environment. We are dealing here with an ongoing process of development. We are also convinced that "environmental aspects" is a concept that is still vague in its implications. Environmental consideration can be given a narrower definition. Environmental consideration comprises all activities that restrict environmental impact.

As mentioned, occupational health and safety and general health aspects are not included in the committee's work.

Recommendations

To achieve these objectives, the Committee has made a series of recommendations. The recommendations focus on what the state, other interested parties and the standardization organizations can do. As an introduction to the recommendations, we suggest a statement from all governing bodies – in both government and industry – that environmental consideration (incorporating environmental aspects in the standardizing work) is an urgent priority. We propose that the recommendations set forth below should be fully implemented within 5 years of approval.

We recommend that the Government charge the concerned authorities to work to ensure that general rules on environmental consideration be incorporated in contracts, regulations and agreements, regarding standardization. Swedish representatives in international negotiations where general standardization issues are discussed are

charged to oversee inclusion of environmental aspects. This will improve the chances of introducing environmental consideration into European and international standards.

We recommend that the Government give Swedish representatives who participate in groups that prepare EC directives a direct admonishment to work for the inclusion of environmental aspects in the EC directives and in the terms of reference, standardizations mandates, to CEN/CENELEC. Environmental requirements in the directives should then be incorporated in standards and be included in the CE marking of products that is covered by the directives.

The state's representatives in SIS and the executive boards, general assembly and other governing bodies of the standardizing bodies are directly charged to promote and oversee inclusion of environmental aspects. Information on the environmental work should be included in the annual reports of SIS and the standardizing bodies.

We recommend that the representatives of SIS and the standardizing bodies in the governing bodies of the international standardization organizations be directly charged to promote and oversee inclusion of environmental aspects.

We recommend that industrial and trade organizations decree that environmental consideration is an important task for all participants in the work of standardization.

The process of circulation for comment is an important step in the work of standardization. We recommend that the Government decree that concerned authorities should participate in the environmental scrutiny of proposed standards. We believe that the scrutiny of proposals must, during a long introductory phase, be prioritized to cases where a standardizing body requests an authority's viewpoints on a clearly defined environmental issue.

We recommend that SIS and the standardizing bodies form a network or competence centre for the environmental work. One or two persons from SIS and each standardizing body should be appointed environmental liaisons. These persons should then initiate and pursue the integration of environmental aspects in standards, under the responsibility of the management. We also recommend that the standardization management group (STL) should appoint a liaison group for the environmental work within SIS and the standardizing bodies. It should be incumbent upon SIS and the standardizing bodies to find an optimal organizational form for presenting a Swedish front in the European and international standardization work.

We recommend that the Government allocate special funds and assign SIS and the standardizing bodies the task of arranging the training activities mentioned below. A course of study entitled

"Environmental aspects in standards" should be developed and held in a two-stage programme. In the first stage (a three-day course), the aforementioned environmental liaisons and other key persons should be trained. In the second stage, a one-day course, these persons should in turn train nearly 3,000 experts from 600 technical committees during a total of 100 course days. The courses should be free of charge. The assignment also includes developing the course material, a manual entitled *Environmental Consideration*.

We recommend that a series of pilot projects entitled "Environmental aspects in standards" be started within the standardization organizations. The main purpose of the pilot projects is to build up competence, routines and experience, and to get concrete activities going quickly at the basic level.

The work of incorporating environmental aspects in standards must mainly be pursued internationally. We recommend that Sweden initiate a revision of ISO Guide 64 and IEC Guide 109 in a few years. We also recommend that sector guides be developed within the different standardization fields, something which would greatly enhance clarity, concretion and usefulness. Sweden should be prepared for active participation here, which could mean, for example, assuming responsibility for chairmanships and secretariats.

Finally, we recommend that SIS and the standardizing bodies draw up administrative rules and routines in their line organization for including environmental aspects in standards. Each proposed standard should undergo an environmental assessment, in accordance with ISO Guide 64, IEC Guide 109 or a checklist in accordance with appendix 2.2. The environmental assessment should be documented in an assessment protocol and a cover letter and accompany the proposed standard on its circulation for comment and until its adoption. It must be clearly stated in the standard that it has undergone environmental assessment. Sweden should act internationally to see to it that a new heading, "Environmental Assessment", is added to the international editing rules.

Prioritization

Prioritization should take place in a three-stage process. It can be seen as a chronological sequence for the implementation of the recommendations.

In the first stage, the procedure should start as soon as possible with very clear signals from the Government, SIS and the business community that environmental consideration in the standardization

work is an urgent priority. This is necessary for the work to be pursued with full force on the basic level. Different governing bodies and representatives are charged to oversee and pursue the integration of environmental aspects.

In the second stage, the concrete work within SIS and the standardizing bodies must start. The Government should allocate special funds and instruct SIS and the standardizing bodies to do the following:

- * form a network or competence centre for the environmental work
- * start a broad training of environmental liaisons, project leaders and experts in the technical committees and produce manuals etc.
- * establish routines for environmental assessment of standards
- * start a series of pilot projects within the standardizing bodies.

The third stage is a vigorous international initiative, which in itself requires a national base of knowledge and experience. Authorities should by this stage have acquired resources and competence for an effective participation in the circulation of proposed standards for review and comment. We propose that the recommendations should be completely implemented within 5 years of approval.

Costs

The Committee's basic view is that the work of incorporating environmental aspects in the work of standardization is a normal part of the standardization activities. This means that we believe in principle that the environmental costs of standardization should be borne by the stakeholders in the standardization process, in keeping with the usual funding routines. The state is also one of the stakeholders in standardization, with special responsibility for the life, health, safety and environment of its citizens.

We recommend that the Government should give public authorities and other state representatives clear directives to oversee inclusion of environmental aspects in international negotiations. The same applies to the representatives of trade and industry and the standardizing bodies. We believe that these mandates lie completely within the framework of the ordinary activities of these bodies. The participation of the authorities in the circulation of proposed standards for comment can be burdensome. However, with the right division of labour among concerned authorities and with the prioritization rules we give in the recommendations, this task should also be able to be included in their ordinary activities.

It is urgent to get started with the integration of environmental aspects in the standardization work as soon as possible. We therefore recommend that the Government make a special appropriation for SIS called "Environmental aspects in Swedish standardization work". The appropriation is limited to a five-year period in our proposal. The cost of planning and carrying out the proposed training activities has been estimated at SEK 2.6 million. For management, administration and above all following and participating in the international environmental standardization work, SEK 200,000 should be allocated annually over a period of five years. The appropriation should amount to SEK 3.6 million over a five-year period, with the emphasis on the first three years.

We recommend that the standardizing bodies start a series of national pilot projects to get going and to acquire knowledge and experience. There are fields in which clear-cut and financially strong stakeholders are lacking but where environmental issues may be very urgent. State funds within a framework of SEK 1.0 million should be set aside for such urgent actions.

The ultimate success of the project "Environmental aspects in Swedish standardization work" hinges to a large extent on what happens internationally. We recommend that Sweden should take various initiatives here, including participating in revisions of ISO Guide 64 and IEC Guide 109. State funds within a framework of SEK 1.2 million should be set aside for these activities.

Altogether, this means that the Committee recommends that the Government allocate to SIS and the standardizing bodies a special appropriation of SEK 3.6 million and in addition make a special provision of SEK 2.2 million which can be disposed of as needed by special agreement. The cost estimates are time-limited and specified.

Informative parts

Chapters 1-3 are summarized above. The two following chapters are informative. In Chapter 4 the Committee presents background facts for the Committee's recommendations. It describes methods for incorporating environmental aspects, explains environmental aspects and environmental consideration, and gives an account of ongoing environmental standardization. Chapter 5 gives a concise and complete account of the standardization work and all national, European and international standardization organizations.

built as urgent to get started with the initiation of environmental aspects in the standardization work as soon as possible. We therefore recommend that the Government make a special appropriation for SIS called "Environmental aspects in Swedish standardization work". The appropriation is limited to a five-year period in our proposal. The cost of planning and carrying out the proposed training activities has been estimated at SEK 2.6 million. For management, administration and above all following and participating in the international environmental standardization work SEK 500 000 should be allocated annually over a period of five years. The appropriation should amount to SEK 3.6 million over a five-year period, with the emphasis on the first three years. It is to be used for the following activities:

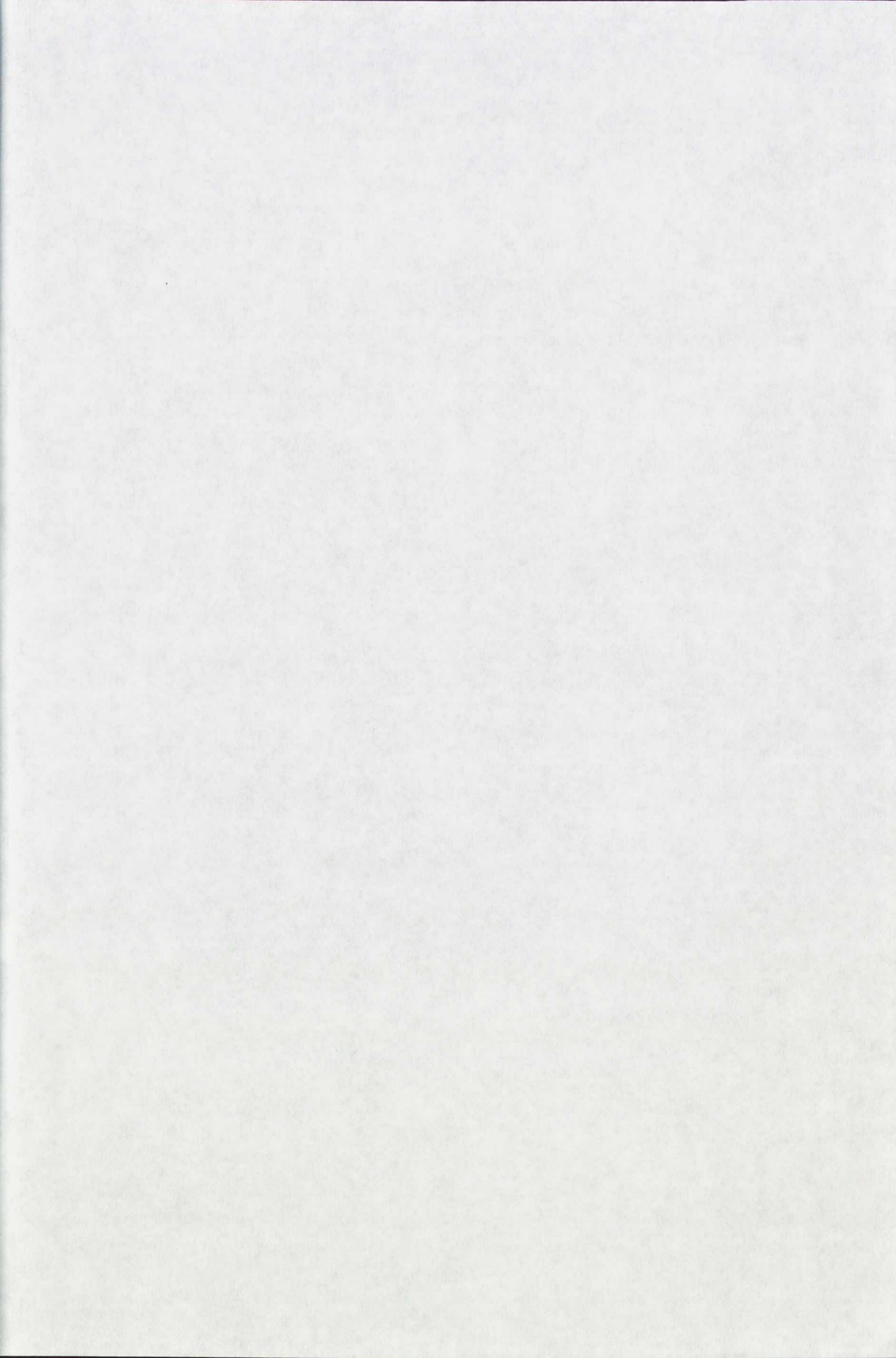
We recommend that the standardizing bodies start a series of national pilot projects to get going and to acquire knowledge and experience. There are fields in which clear-cut and financially strong stakeholders are lacking but where environmental issues may be very urgent. State funds within a framework of SEK 1.0 million should be set aside for such investigations and reports. A national pilot project

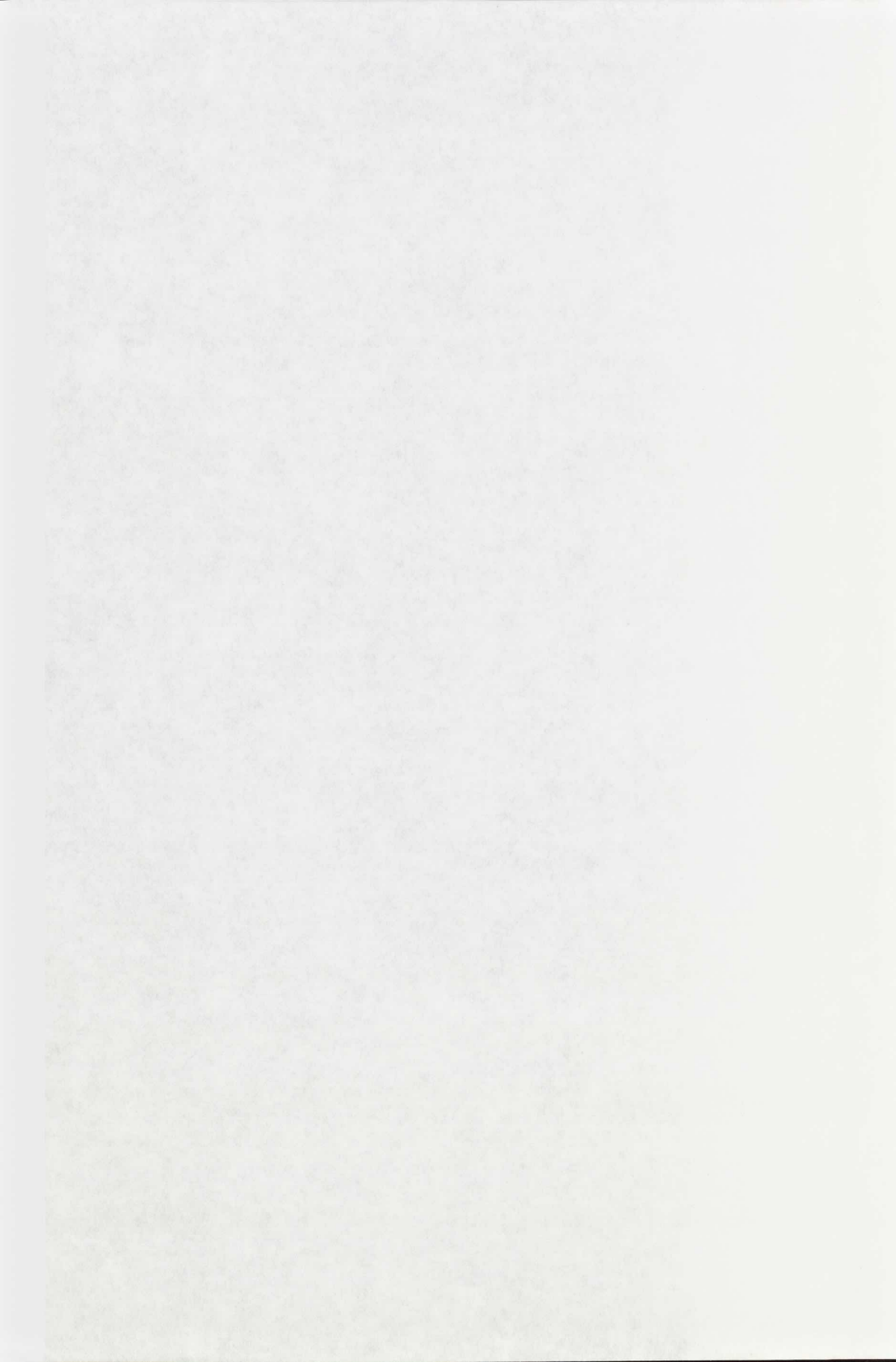
The ultimate success of the project "Environmental aspects in Swedish standardization work" hinges to a large extent on what happens internationally. We recommend that Sweden should take various initiatives here, including participating in revisions of ISO Guide 64 and ISO Guide 109. State funds within a framework of SEK 1.5 million should be set aside for these activities. A national pilot project should be initiated to ensure that the Committee recommends that the Government allocate to SIS and the standardizing bodies a special appropriation of SEK 3.6 million and in addition make a special provision of SEK 1.5 million which can be disposed of as needed by special agreement. The cost estimates are time-limited and specified in the table below, but they do not take into account the work of the standardizing bodies in the future.

Informative parts

The Swedish standardizing bodies have been asked to submit a report to the Government on the work of the standardizing bodies. The two following chapters are informative. Chapter 4 of the Committee presents background facts for the Committee's recommendations. It describes methods for incorporating environmental aspects, explains environmental aspects and environmental consideration and gives an account of ongoing environmental standardization. Chapter 5 gives a concise and complete account of the standardization work and all national, European and international standardization organizations, but it is not intended as a







FRITZES

POSTADRESS: 106 47 STOCKHOLM
FAX: 08-690 91 91, TELEFON: 08-690 91 90

ISBN 91-38-20774-5
ISSN 0375-250X