

The recent activities of the Strategic Advisory Body on Environment of CEN and CENELEC (SABE)

Newsletter – 1st CEN-CENELEC SABE edition
January 2021

Introduction

The Strategic Advisory Body on Environment (SABE) was conceived in the late 1990s to provide CEN/BT with strategic advice on environmental matters in relation to standardization. Its function is to promote and monitor the incorporation of environmental aspects into the work of CEN, whilst also providing the CEN/BT with forward-looking strategic advice on how the environmental challenges of the future might best be addressed through the medium of standards making.

In May 2020 SABE became a CEN and CENELEC SABE. The environmental aspects are relevant and important for both CEN and CENELEC and the creation of the joint SABE shows the commitment of the two organisations to join their forces in dealing with the strategically important environmental and related issues.

The role of SABE became even more important now as it was when it was conceived. With the Green Deal policy initiative of the new European Commission, linked with the environmental and climate issues and circular economy being very high on the political agenda, standardization has to play its role at every milestone of the implementation of these policies and support the change that benefits the environment and society.

To reach out and better inform the standardization community on the main and strategically important activities carried out, SABE continues to issue a Newsletter at regular intervals.

Greetings from Ronald Boon, new SABE Chair



Dear readers,

In September 2020, SABE has made a new start. SABE now represents the CEN and CENELEC members and advises to both the CEN and CENELEC Technical Board. The responsibility of SABE has not only grown because of its new members, but also because of the priority environmental issues have on the European agenda. The European Green Deal is one of the highest priorities of the European Commission!

SABE can contribute to make standardization as relevant as possible to reach the objectives of the Green Deal. SABE can focus on the European actions related to climate change,

circular economy, biodiversity and a toxic free environment. The challenge is to have clear priorities on the actions in order to follow the numerous policy initiative the European Commission will undertake during the implementation of the Green Deal. I am convinced that SABA, together with the Technical Committees and National Standardization Bodies, can make a difference.

In September, also the new leadership of SABA started. DIN has offered to take over the Secretariat: SABA is in very good hands with Wiebke Meister. Jaqi Lee provides SABA with a fresh look to move forward and brings in very valuable expertise on sustainable development. I have been participating in SABA for the last seven years and am honoured to have been named its chairman soon after it became a combined CEN and CENELEC advisory board. I would like to thank Richard Allan, Michael Schemmer and Andrea Nam for the great job they have done in mainstreaming environmental issues in the standardization world as former chairs and secretary.

The structure of the CEN and CENELEC SABA

In May 2020, the CEN and CENELEC BTs decided to have a joint Strategic Advisory Body on Environment. After its establishment, Mr Ronald Boon, nominated by NEN, was elected as SABA chair and Ms Jacquetta Lee, nominated by BSI, the vice chair.

The SABA Secretariat was taken over from CCMC by DIN from September 2020. The new email address of the SABA secretariat is SABA@din.de.

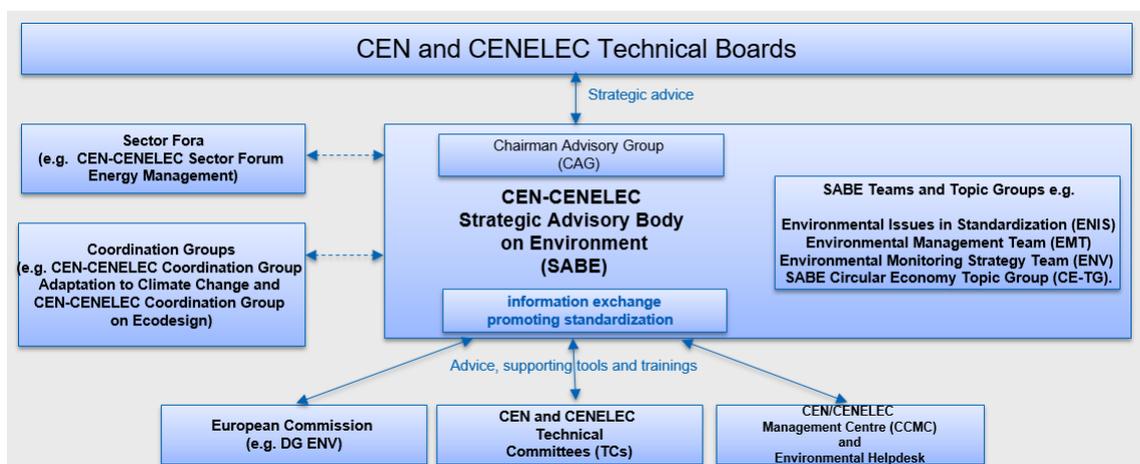
SABA will keep its horizontal teams that had existed before. These are dealing with issues which are universally applicable in the field of environment. Three teams exist today:

- Environmental Issues in Standardization (ENIS)
- Environmental Management Team (EMT)
- Environmental Monitoring Strategy Team (ENV)

SABA can also create “Topic Groups” to co-ordinate ongoing or initiate new work on a specific subject in the environmental field. The topics of these groups would be derived largely from the EC Green Deal in the following years. SABA has currently one Topic Group:

- Circular Economy Topic Group (CE-TG).

The new SABA organizational structure:



SABE started to work on its new strategy that aligns with the European Green Deal and other European policy priorities. The strategy is expected to be ready in 2021.

What this means for you:

Are environmental-related issues such as sustainable development, climate-change, biodiversity, zero-pollution (air, water, and noise pollution, water quality, hazardous chemicals), circular economy, sustainable production and consumption, sustainable financing relevant to your CEN or CENELEC committee's work? Please contact the SABE Secretariat (SABE@din.de) in order to discuss a possible cooperation with SABE and/or an involvement in the relevant SABE group.

More information:

<https://www.cencenelec.eu/standards/Topics/Environment/Pages/SABE.aspx>

The latest activities of the Circular Economy Topic Group of SABE



The Circular Economy Topic Group (CE-TG) of SABE was set up to provide a faster and more coordinated response to the horizontal and cross-sectorial standardization needs related to the European Circular Economy-related initiatives.

The SABE CE-TG focuses on identifying and discussing strategic standardization issues and needs related to Circular Economy within CEN and CENELEC and their coordination with other standard organisations. It supports SABE in advising the CEN and CENELEC Technical Boards on standardization priorities, for instance in support of the implementation of the Circular Economy Action Plan.

The new Circular Economy Action Plan (CEAP) was released by the European Commission on 11 March 2020 in support of the European Green Deal. It focuses on the sectors that use most resources and where the potential for circularity is high, such as electronics and ICT, batteries and vehicles, packaging, plastics, textiles, construction and buildings, food, water and nutrients. In contrast to the former Circular Economy Package of 2015, which was largely based on sector-specific incentives with very little regulation, the new CEAP is regulatory-based with a number of major new regulations in the pipeline along with amendments of existing directives to include stricter targets and actions for these sectors. Some crosscutting measures that concern all sectors will also be implemented. The aim of these measures is to integrate sustainability and circularity throughout the whole European economy: "To achieve climate-neutrality by 2050, to preserve our natural environment, and to strengthen our economic competitiveness, requires a fully circular economy," said Frans Timmermans, the Commission's vice-president in charge of overseeing the European Green Deal.

This new Action Plan for the Circular Economy will have impacts on most – if not all – businesses in Europe. The need for constant, systematic monitoring of upcoming legislation is now higher than it has ever been for companies to best undertake this transition without affecting their profitability.

In light of the above, the first big task of the CE-TG is to map the ongoing standardization initiatives and standardization needs related to the activities and policies such as the Circular Economy Action Plan (CEAP) and the European Green Deal. An initial mapping was completed in September 2020 and this will be further developed in 2021.

To know more about the CEAP, [click here](#).

What this means for you:

Are aspects related to the circular economy action plan or circular economy in general relevant to your committee's work? Do you want to know more of what the CEN-CLC SABE Circular Economy Topic Group is doing or get involved with it? Please contact the CEN-CLC SABE CE-TG Secretariat (Circulareconomy@nen.nl) to get in contact with this group.

Biodiversity and standards – current and future



Biodiversity is central to life on earth and our survival. This is recognised at international level in the *UN Convention on Biodiversity*, which in its '[Global Biodiversity Outlook 5](#)' conclude that "Biodiversity is declining at an unprecedented rate, and the pressures driving this decline are intensifying". At EU level the European Commission has included biodiversity as one of the

critical themes in The Green Deal and recently published its [Biodiversity strategy 2030](#) with the aim of putting "Europe's biodiversity on a path to recovery by 2030 with benefits for people, the climate and the planet".

Against this background, starting in September 2019, CEN SABE (Strategic Advisory Body on Environment) and its Environmental Management Team (EMT) started to review how standards under the responsibility of EMT contribute to supporting EC and international work on biodiversity. A map was developed which has been shared with European Commission, and further work is planned to explain and illustrate how standards support the work on biodiversity as well as add to the map. The work being developed in the new ISO TC on Biodiversity is also relevant for future support to policy makers and users of standards.

What this means for you:

If your TC is drafting standards that can be related or have impact on biodiversity or you have questions, please contact the SABE Secretariat (SABE@din.de) or the SABE Environmental Management Team leader Dr Anne-Marie Warris (anne-marie@ecorefect.com).

Support for the Technical Committees

Revised 'CEN environmental approach' and additional guidance in CEN/TC meeting agenda template



In 2010, CEN/BT approved the '[CEN approach on addressing environmental issues in product and service standards](#)' elaborated by SABE. CEN/BT requested SABE to revise the approach which was completed by SABE in the second half of 2020.

As the revision of the CEN environmental approach started before SABE became a joint CEN and CENELEC body, the revised approach concerns only the CEN community and, in particular, the CEN/TCs.

After the approval of the revised CEN environmental approach, expected for early 2021, SABE, however, intends to initiate another revision with the objective of elaborating a joint CEN CENELEC environmental approach.

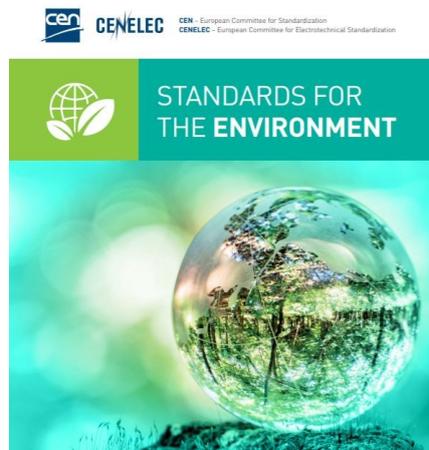
The CEN environmental approach introduced several "mandatory elements" in the standardization process, including a standing item '*Environmental actions*' on the meeting agenda of CEN Technical Committees. SABE has become aware that it is not always clear to CEN/TCs what is meant to be discussed under this agenda item. Consequently, this agenda item is often skipped or deleted from the TCs' agendas. Therefore, SABE has developed additional guidance on what a TC could address under this agenda item which has been included in a revised template for CEN/TC meeting agendas available on the new CEN BOSS.

What this means for you:

Make sure to use the revised TC template when planning your next CEN/TC meeting and, in particular, to take into account the newly introduced guidance during your meeting.

The revised CEN environmental approach will be made available in the new CEN BOSS once approved.

Brochure “Standards for the Environment – Why the public sector should get involved in standardization?”



Environmental protection is a global concern, and the challenges related to this are becoming more urgent every day. The public sector is one of the most important actors who have to address this challenge. Policy makers can safeguard environmental matters, for example through legislation and regulation.

Standards can be an effective tool to reduce environmental impact and, in that way, support the implementation of policies. Consequently, linking standards with policy making can be beneficial for environmental protection, both at national and European level. Therefore, it is crucial to make the public sector aware of the importance of standardization and its

possibilities to support policies such as the Green Deal.

SABE has developed the brochure “Standards for the Environment – Why the public sector should get involved in standardization?” which has been published by CEN and CENELEC in January 2021 and could be used by the standardization community to support the exchanges with policy makers.

What this means for you:

The brochure can help you with communicating the importance of standardization to the public sector in your country. You can use it for example to help decision makers to understand how standards support the protection of the environment and to convince them to participate in the standardization work.

You can read the brochure here:

<https://www.cencenelec.eu/news/publications/publications/2020-1112-brochureenvironnementcencenelec-5.pdf>

Webinars supporting the protection of the environment



SABE webinars

SABE decided to regularly initiate the organisation of environmental protection and climate change related webinars on issues that are high on the political agenda and are relevant for the work of the standardization community. The objective of the webinars is both awareness raising and technical support.

The following environment-related webinars were organised in **2019 and 2020**:

- CEN Guide 16 on addressing **chemicals** in standards (2019) – [link](#)
- **Climate change adaptation** within organizations - EN ISO 14090 (2019) - [link](#)
- Practical examples (plastic) for **circular economy** (2019) – [link](#)
- Standards in support of the EU **Ecodesign** framework (May 2020) - [link](#)
- Standardization's contribution to the achievement of **SDGs** on 8 June 2020- [link](#)
- European standards addressing **material efficiency** aspects – 12 December 2020 – [link](#)

In 2021, SABE plans to organise webinars on the following topics:

- ✓ Sustainable finance - (postponed from 2020) Q1
- ✓ The revised CEN Environmental approach – 10-10 webinar, **10 June**
- ✓ Water stewardship - Q2
- ✓ Biodiversity - Q2
- ✓ Design for Reuse – Q3
- ✓ Net Zero – how standards can help - Q4

What this means for you:

The webinars are recorded, and you can access the recordings on the links indicated above. You can also download the presentations and read the replies of the speakers given to the questions raised during the webinar.

The exact timing of the planned webinars will be published in due time.

You can find more information on CEN and CENELEC trainings [here](#).

SABE wish you a very Happy New Year 2021!