



# New ISO Guidance Standard for Sustainable Procurement nears Completion

## ISO 最新可持續採購指引標準接近完成

**Dr Nigel H Croft**  
Associate Technical Director, HKQAA  
Chairman, ISO Technical Subcommittee on Quality Systems (ISO/TC176/SC2)

**倪國夫博士**  
香港品質保證局技術總監  
國際標準化組織質量體系技術委員會 (ISO/TC176/SC2) 主席



In the past, many organisations have based their purchasing decisions on price alone, without even considering the quality of the products and services being acquired or the “total life cycle cost”. Today, most organisations recognise that achieving the right balance between cost and quality is important, but in the current sustainability-focused business environment, we need to look beyond these economic factors and include social and environmental aspects of the so-called “triple bottom line” approach into the purchasing decision-making process. These decisions can have a very broad impact on topics ranging from the carbon or water footprint associated with raw materials, manufacture and transport of the products and services being purchased, to the quality of life of the workers involved throughout the supply chain.

The new ISO 20400 guidance standard on Sustainable Procurement is currently at the second Draft International Standard (DIS) stage, and is forecast to be published in 2017. It will provide guidelines for organisations wanting to integrate sustainability into their procurement processes, and will complement ISO 26000 (“Guidance on Social Responsibility”) specifically in the procurement context. Sustainable procurement is an opportunity to provide more value to the organisation by improving productivity, assessment of value and performance, better communication between purchasers, suppliers and all stakeholders, and encouraging innovation.

Procurement in the public sector alone accounts for around 12% of GDP and 29 % of government expenditure in OECD member countries, so the impact of sustainable procurement practices can have a significant effect on the ability of nations to meet their overall goals and targets under the UN’s 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Sustainable procurement should not only be the domain of governmental purchasing policies, though. Any organisation can maximise its positive social, environmental and economic impact by making smart choices with all its purchases, including everything from raw materials, energy providers, outsourced call centres, caterers and building materials to mention only a few.

過往，很多機構在規劃採購決策時，只側重於產品及服務的價格，較為忽略其品質或「整體生命週期成本」。時至今日，大多數企業都認識到適當地平衡成本和品質的重要性。可是，在現時這個強調可持續發展的營商環境，我們必須把目光放遠，除了這些經濟因素外，更要考慮到對社會和環境這兩方面的影響，將「三重底線」經營方針應用到採購決策流程。這些採購決策對供應鏈所涵蓋的各個項目均影響深遠，當中包括從購買原材料、產品和服務的生產運輸過程中所留下的碳足跡或水足跡，以及工作人員的生活質素等。

最新的 ISO 20400 可持續採購指引標準正處於國際標準草案 (DIS) 的第二草稿階段，預計於 2017 年正式發布。此標準為期望將可持續發展應用到採購流程的機構，提供適切指引，並可在採購的範疇，作為 ISO 26000 社會責任指引的補充。可持續採購為企業帶來效益契機，不但能提高生產力，有效評估採購價值和表現，更能加強採購人員、供應商和各持份者之溝通，鼓勵創新。

在經濟合作與發展組織的成員國，單是公營部門的採購比例，已佔國民生產總值 12%，亦佔政府開支 29%。

換言之，實踐可持續採購的影響力將很大，甚至有助成員國符合聯合國 2030 年就可持續發展議程所訂明的全面目標和成績。當然，可持續採購不僅局限於政府採購政策，任何機構進行採購時，亦應作出明智選擇，積極達至社會、環境和經濟最大效益。這些採購決策包括選購原材料、能源供應商、外判商、食品供應商及建材等。







## Development of ISO 20400

ISO 20400 will standardise guidelines and principles for all stakeholders working with internal and external purchasing processes – including contractors, suppliers, buyers, and local authorities – as part of an effort to demonstrate good practices for sustainable purchasing. Work on the new standard began in 2013 and is being coordinated by an ISO Project Committee (ISO/PC277) with active participation from 36 countries, and 14 observer members. ISO 20400 is currently in its final stages of development, with the 2nd DIS (Draft International Standard) being circulated for approval among ISO member bodies.

## Structure and content of ISO 20400

It is important to recognise that ISO 20400 will only provide guidelines – it is not a Management Systems standard, nor does it specify any mandatory requirements. This means that its structure and content does not align with the ISO “Annex SL” criteria that have been adopted by standards such as ISO 9001, ISO 14001 and others. Its aim is to help organisations to meet their sustainability responsibilities and objectives by providing an understanding of what sustainable procurement means; what the sustainability impacts and considerations are in terms of an organisation’s procurement policy, strategy, organisation, and processes; and how to implement sustainable procurement in practical terms.

**Clauses 1 - 3** of ISO/DIS2 20400 explain that the scope of the standard is to provide guidance to organisations, independent of their activity or size, on how to integrate sustainability within their procurement activities, as described in ISO 26000 - Guidance on social responsibility. The standard is intended for stakeholders involved in or impacted by procurement decisions and processes. It includes no formal normative references, and the terms and definitions used in the standard are mentioned in Clause 3.

Some examples of definitions that are relevant for sustainable procurement include the following:

- procurement - activity of acquiring goods or services from suppliers (internal and external)
- sustainable procurement - procurement that has the most positive environmental, social and economic impacts on a whole life basis
- sphere of influence - range/extent of political, contractual, economic or other relationships through which an organisation has the ability to affect the decisions or activities of individuals or organisations
- supply chains - sequence of activities or parties that provides goods or services to the organisation
- local supplier - provider that offers goods or services to the organisation and that is based in the same geographic market
- stakeholder engagement - activity undertaken to create opportunities for dialogue between an organisation and one or more of its stakeholders with the aim of providing an informed basis for the organisation’s decisions
- fair operating practices - practices that concern ethical conduct in an organisation and with other organisations, such as suppliers, with which it has relationships

*Note: In a sustainable procurement context, fair operating practices can potentially extend to include the relationships between organisations, their suppliers and organisations and others that interact with the suppliers. These include interactions with government agencies, partners, suppliers, sub-contractors, and communities, with the aim of promoting a healthy relationship between the companies that buy goods or services and those providing them.*

## ISO 20400的發展

ISO 20400 將為內部及外部採購流程的所有持份者，包括承包商、供應商、採購人員和當地政府人員，提供標準化的指引和原則，以展示可持續採購的良好做法。自2013年起，新標準的籌備工作便已開展，由ISO計劃委員會(ISO/PC277)負責協調，並獲得來自36個國家和14個觀察成員國積極參與。ISO 20400 現正處於最後發展階段，其國際標準草案第二草稿現正由ISO成員傳閱審批。

## ISO 20400的架構和內容

ISO 20400 只提供指引，並不是管理體系標準，更不會訂明強制性要求，這點一定要認清。換言之，它的架構和內容並不對應 ISO「附件SL」的準則，與其他已採用此準則的ISO標準如ISO 9001和ISO 14001等有所不同。ISO 20400 旨在透過協助企業了解何謂「可持續採購」；了解企業的採購策略、方針、組織和流程，會帶來哪些可持續影響和考慮；以及了解如何切實可行地實踐可持續採購，讓企業達至可持續發展的責任和目標。

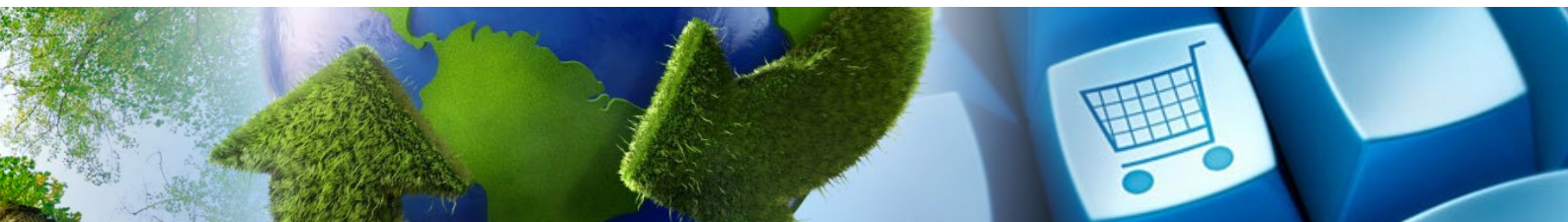
**條款 1- 3** ISO/DIS2 20400 條款 1- 3 闡明標準的適用範圍，為不同業務性質或規模的機構，就如何將可持續發展納入採購活動中，提供相應指引。正如 ISO 26000 社會責任指引一樣，此標準為採購決策及流程所牽涉或影響的持份者而設，不能作為正式的規範性引用文件。而本標準所運用的詞彙和釋義則詳載於條款 3。

以下為與可持續採購相關的詞彙定義例子：

- 採購 – 從供應商獲取產品或服務的活動（內部或外部的）
- 可持續採購 – 以整體生命週期而言，對環境、社會和經濟帶來最正面影響的採購。
- 影響範圍 – 企業對個人或機構的決策或活動具有影響力的範圍，涉及政治、契約、經濟或其他方面的交往關係。
- 供應鏈 – 提供產品或服務予機構的一系列相關活動或單位。
- 本地供應商 – 處於相同地區市場，為機構提供產品或服務的供應商。
- 持份者參與 – 製造機會予機構與單一或更多持份者對話的活動，旨在讓各方獲悉機構的決策。
- 公平營運實務 – 在機構內奉行符合道德操守的做法，亦應用於其他有交往關係的機構如生產商。

*備註：在可持續採購環境下，公平營運實務可延伸至機構與機構之間的關係、機構與供應商的關係，以及供應商與其交往機構的關係。這些亦包括與政府部門、合作伙伴、供應商、分包商和社區的交往關係，目的是促進服務和產品之買方與賣方的健康關係。*





- life cycle - consecutive and interlinked stages of a product system, from raw material acquisition or generation from natural resources to final disposal
- circular economy - an economy that is restorative and regenerative by design, and which aims to keep products, components and materials at their highest utility and value at all times, distinguishing between technical and biological cycles

**Clause 4** (“Understanding the Fundamentals”) provides an overview of the concept of sustainable procurement. It describes the principles, core subjects, drivers and key considerations, how to manage risks and opportunities; how to set priorities, exert influence on suppliers and avoid complicity.

**Clause 5** (“Integrating sustainability into the organisation’s procurement policy and strategy”) provides guidance, in particular to top management, about how sustainability considerations should be integrated at a strategic level within the procurement function of an organisation to ensure that the intention, direction and key sustainability priorities are documented and understood by all parties involved in sustainable procurement.

**Clause 6** (“Organising the procurement function towards sustainability”) describes the organisational conditions and management techniques needed in order to successfully implement and continually improve sustainable procurement. Procurement management should ensure that such conditions and practices are in place in order to help individuals with responsibility for procurement of goods or services integrate sustainability considerations into the procurement and management of contracts. Topics addressed include:

- Governance of procurement processes
- Enabling people within the procurement process
- Identifying and engaging stakeholders
- Setting sustainable procurement priorities
- Measuring and improving performance
- Establishing grievance mechanisms

**Clause 7** (“Integrating sustainability into the procurement process”) addresses the details of the procurement process and is intended for individuals who are responsible for the actual procurement carried out within their organisation. It addresses topics that include:

- Building on the existing procurement process
- Planning
- Integrating sustainability requirements into specifications
- Selecting suppliers
- Managing contracts
- Reviewing and learning from the contract

**Annex A** of ISO/DIS2 20400 provides additional guidance on issues that are important for sustainable procurement. It emphasises the need for organisations and their procurement functions to look at sustainability issues holistically. This means that when developing a sustainable procurement policy, the organisation should consider the seven core subjects of ISO 26000 as a foundation – governance; human rights; labour practices; the environment; fair operating practices; consumer issues, and the involvement and development of the community.

- 生命週期 – 產品生命的各個連續和緊扣的階段。從獲取原材料或開發天然資源，到最終產品棄置，都包括在內。
- 循環經濟 – 一個可復原和可再生的經濟體系，旨在讓產品、部件和材料時刻都物盡其用，發揮最大價值，並區分了技術性循環和生物性循環。

**條款 4**（「認識基本原理」）提供可持續採購總體概念，並詳述其原則、核心主題、推動力和主要的考慮因素、怎樣管理風險和機遇、怎樣釐定優先項目、對供應商構成影響，以及避免串通行為。

**條款 5**（「將可持續發展納入機構的採購方案和策略」）就如何將可持續發展納入採購工作的決策層面，提供指引予機構及最高管理層，以確保其目標、方針和可持續發展的優先事項，均記錄在案，讓各個涉及到可持續採購的單位都能了解清楚。

**條款 6**（「組織符合可持續發展的採購功能」）簡述若要成功實踐和不斷改善可持續採購，機構應有的條件和管理層必須具備的技能。採購部管理層須確保這些條件和做法已準備就緒，以協助個別負責採購產品和服務的員工，將可持續發展考量納入採購和合約管理事宜中。處理的議題包括：

- 採購流程的管治
- 讓採購流程工作人員具備相關能力
- 識別各持份者，並促使他們一起參與
- 設定可持續採購的優先事項
- 評估和改善相關表現
- 建立申訴機制

**條款 7**（「將可持續發展納入採購流程」）詳述採購流程細節，為機構裏真正負責採購工作的人員而設。針對的議題包括：

- 建基於現有採購流程
- 規劃
- 將可持續發展要求納入規格中
- 選擇供應商
- 管理合約
- 檢討合約並從中汲取經驗

**附件 A** ISO/DIS2 20400的附件 A 對可持續採購的重要議題，提供附加指引，並強調機構與其採購部門須要對可持續發展議題作全面探討。換言之，在制訂可持續採購方針時，機構應考慮到 ISO 26000 提到的七個核心主題——管治、人權、勞動實務、環境、公平營運實務、消費者議題，以及社區參與和發展。