

Working Material 1.11

Setting Environmental Objectives That Mean Something

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This sheet puts the working parts of subchapter 1.11 into editable form: the Verification Pact, the review questions, the common mistakes as a self-check and the Operative Synthesis as an action plan. The empty columns are for your property. The reasoning behind each row is in the book.

GUIDING QUESTION

A target that is measurable is not automatically a target that means something. What happens when the easiest way to hit a number is to damage the very thing the policy promised to protect?

Verification Pact: Market Claims Against the Standard

The first three columns are copied from the book. In the last one, note whether this claim circulates in your property — in a proposal, a brochure, a supplier’s pitch or your own documents — and what you now hold instead.

What is claimed	Binding?	What actually holds	In our property
A single group-wide percentage target satisfies clause 6.2.1 across an entire portfolio	No	The clause requires objectives to take into account each context’s significant environmental aspects — a uniform figure applied without regard to property-specific aspects does not meet this requirement, however measurable it is	
Measurability is the primary requirement for a sound environmental objective	No	Measurability is one of five listed requirements, alongside consistency with policy, and taking significant aspects and compliance obligations into account; a measurable target that fails the others is not, for that reason, a sound objective	
An objective tied to individual performance assessment is inherently more likely to be achieved legitimately	No	Attaching personal consequence to a poorly designed target increases the likelihood of exactly the kind of gaming the Jaipur case describes, not the likelihood of genuine improvement	
A corporate-level objective automatically satisfies the “relevant functions and levels” requirement for every property beneath it	No	The phrase anticipates objectives set at the functions and levels where they are relevant; a group objective can serve, but only where it was built with knowledge of each property’s context and allows property-level adjustment where baselines differ	
An objective that improves its headline metric has, by definition, been achieved successfully	No	An objective achieved through means that damage a different significant aspect, or undermine the policy the objective was meant to support, has not been achieved in any sense the standard intends	

What is claimed	Binding?	What actually holds	In our property
Objectives set at group headquarters do not need property-level input before being finalised	No	Establishing objectives that take significant aspects into account requires knowledge of what those aspects actually are at each specific property — knowledge that usually sits at property level; how the group gathers it is the organisation's own choice	

A Checklist for the Next Objective-Setting Cycle

Answer each question with Yes, Partly, No or N.A., and name the evidence: a record, a date, a person, a place someone can go and look. An answer without evidence is an opinion.

Question	Why it matters	Answer	Evidence
Was this objective set with specific knowledge of this property's significant aspects, or applied to it from a figure set elsewhere?	The single distinction the entire Jaipur case turns on		
Have we set explicit floors for essential or protected uses before layering a reduction target on top?	A floor set in advance prevents the trade-off from ever becoming a live decision under pressure		
Is there a documented, accessible escalation path for someone who identifies a conflict between this objective and another significant aspect?	Informal encouragement to "find creative solutions" is not a channel — it is an absence of one		
Does our performance assessment examine how an objective was achieved, not only whether the number was hit?	This is what would have caught the garden damage before it became public		
Is this target normalised against a relevant variable, or compared flatly to a prior year regardless of changed conditions?	A flat comparison can reward or punish a property for weather or occupancy shifts unrelated to genuine performance		

Common Mistakes — Self-Check

Tick every mistake you recognise in your own property today, and write next to it where you saw it. A ticked box is not a nonconformity; it is a place to look before an auditor or an incident does.

☐	Mistake (from the book)	Where we see it
☐	Setting a single portfolio-wide percentage target without reference to individual properties' baselines or significant aspects.	
☐	Treating measurability as the primary or sole requirement for a sound environmental objective.	
☐	Tying an objective to individual performance assessment without a mechanism to flag that the target itself may be poorly designed for a specific context.	
☐	Failing to establish objectives at the property or functional level where relevant significant aspects are actually known.	
☐	Rewarding achievement of a headline metric without examining whether it was achieved at the expense of a different significant aspect.	
☐	Responding to a perverse outcome with an apology or a one-time fix rather than a structural change to the objective-setting process.	

☐	Mistake (from the book)	Where we see it
☐	Assuming a target achievable at one property is proportionately achievable at every other property regardless of its starting position.	
☐	Failing to set explicit floors for essential or protected uses before layering efficiency objectives on top.	
☐	Providing no escalation channel for a property-level manager who identifies a conflict between an assigned objective and another significant aspect.	
☐	Normalising resource-consumption targets against a flat prior-year comparison rather than a relevant variable such as occupancy or seasonal conditions.	

Operative Synthesis — Action Plan

The three horizons and their actions are copied from the book. Owner and due date are yours to fill: an action without both is a wish.

Horizon	Action from the book	Owner	Due date
Act on immediately	Review every current environmental objective and ask whether it was set with specific knowledge of this property's significant aspects, or applied to this property from a figure set without that knowledge. Any objective in the second category deserves an immediate, explicit re-examination.		
Plan for	Establish explicit floors for essential or protected uses — heritage assets, guest health and safety standards, fire and life-safety systems — before setting any reduction target that could otherwise be pursued at their expense; and create a documented, accessible escalation path for property-level staff who identify a conflict between an assigned objective and another significant aspect.		
Monitor going forward	Track not only whether headline objectives are achieved, but how — reviewing, for any objective tied to individual performance assessment, whether achievement came at the expense of a different significant aspect the organisation had separately committed to protecting.		

WHAT THIS SHEET IS NOT

ISO 14001 does not prescribe this form. No clause asks for this worksheet, its columns or a register of market claims; the standard sets requirements and leaves the means to the organisation. This sheet is a working aid drawn from the book: use it, change it or set it aside. Where it touches a requirement, the text of ISO 14001:2026 is the authority, not this page — and nothing on it replaces your own reading of that text.

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