From ISO 14001:2015 to ISO 14001:2026 – Differences you need to know

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Prepare effectively for ISO 14001:2026 now that it is published.

ISO 14001:2015 vs. ISO 14001:2026 - what really changes in practice.

Environmental managers, auditors, consultants and implementation teams.

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Agenda

- ISO 14001:2026 is now published – what this means for your preparation
- Clause-by-clause key differences: what is new, clarified, or more explicit
- What remains essentially the same
- What organizations may need to revisit in their EMS
- Frequent transition questions and discussion

ISO 14001:2026 published – what this means for your preparation

What to do

- Perform (or update) a gap analysis against the published 2026 edition
- Determine what needs to change in your EMS
- Update documents, procedures, objectives, and training plans
- Begin planning your transition actions with your certification body

Structured preparation and implementation of the changes must begin now.

The big picture of changes

Looks modest by clause title... but not by application

Main changes (major impact)

- 4.1 Context
- 4.2 Interested parties
- 4.3 Scope
- 6.1.2 Aspects
- 6.3 Planning of changes
- 8.1 Operational control

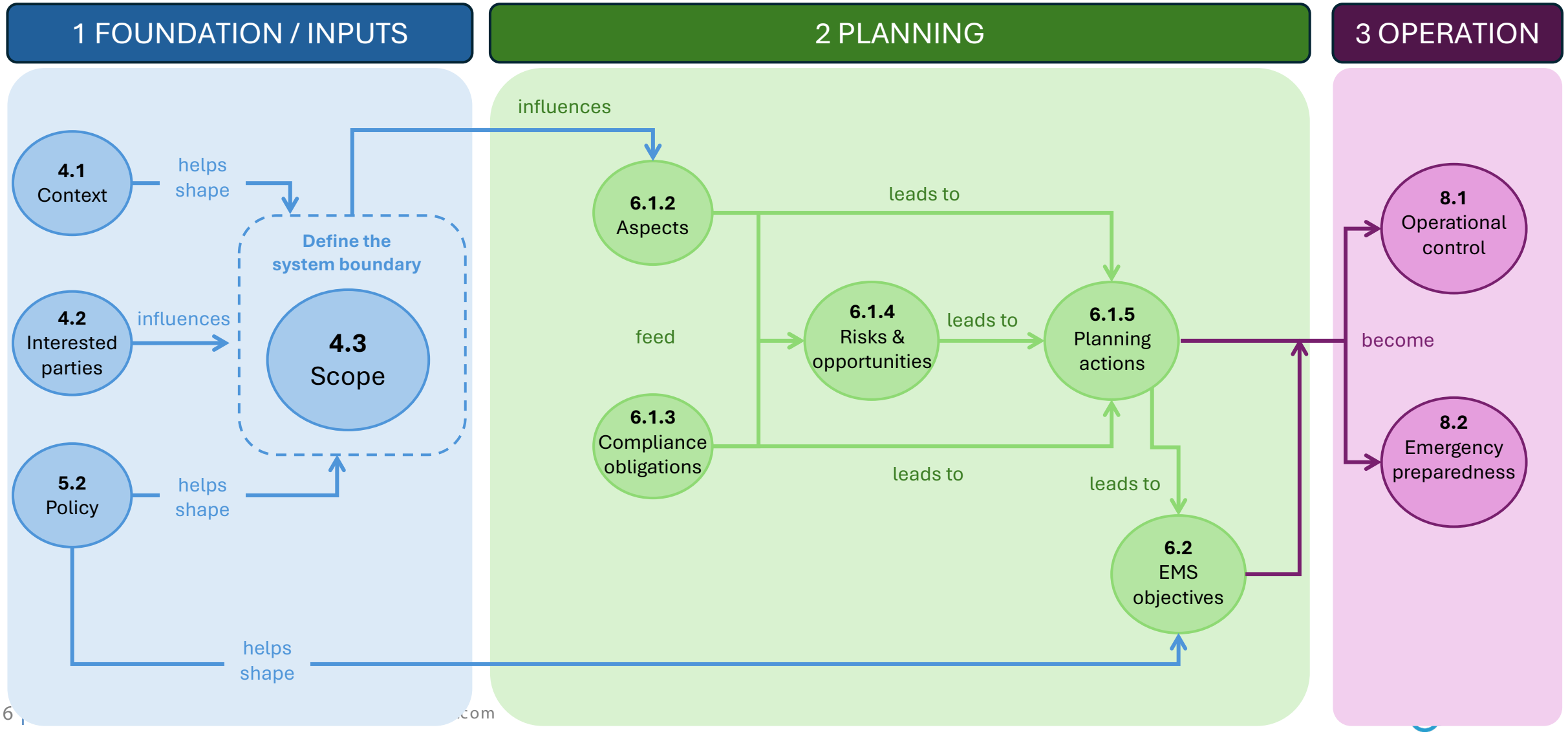
Moderate changes

- 5.1 Leadership
- 5.2 Policy
- 6.1.4 Risks, opportunities
- 6.1.5 Planning actions
- 9.2.2 Audit program
- 9.3 Management review

Important caution

Do not read only the clauses. Read Annex A too.

The 2026 revision is not mainly about new boxes. It is about making the arrows between the boxes real.



Main changes

- 4.1 Context – including environmental conditions
- 4.2 Interested parties - relevant requirements that drive the EMS + Note 1
- 4.3 Scope - stronger logic behind it
- 6.1.2 Aspects – across the life cycle + emergency situations
- 6.3 Planning of changes - if the change can affect the EMS…
- 8.1 Operational control – across the supply chain

4.1 – Example: Factory in a region with water scarcity

Before - Context (applicable environmental legislation, automotive customer requirements, energy costs, and pressure to reduce waste.)

Now - Context also includes (the region is facing increasing water stress, seasonal water withdrawal restrictions are in place, the regional government forecasts reduced water availability over the next 10 years.)

Risks

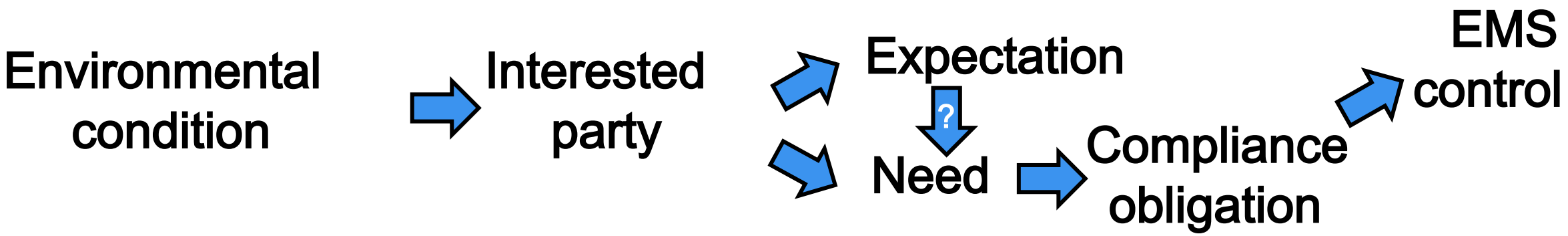
(restrictions on water withdrawal, Increase in water costs, limitations on production capacity.)

Opportunities

(industrial water recycling, closed-loop technologies, competitive advantage with customers that have ESG targets.)

4.2 – Example: Air quality of manufacturing plant located near a residential area.

Environmental condition	Relevant interested party	Need / expectation	Does it become a compliance obligation?	How it is addressed in the EMS
Air quality / pollutant levels	Environmental regulator	Compliance with emission permits	Yes - legal requirement	Operational controls, emission monitoring, compliance evaluation
Air quality / pollutant levels	Local community	Reduction of dust and odors	Yes - if the organization commits to it	



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4.3 - Scope: Same statement, stronger logic behind it

Before - Scope statement:

"Production of beverages at the Porto bottling plant."

- Focuses mainly on the physical site
- Outsourced logistics are invisible

- Where do we operate?
- What do we do?
- Where do we control or influence?

Now - Scope statement:

"Production and bottling of beverages at the Porto plant, including packaging and on -site warehousing. Distribution activities are outsourced but are subject to environmental requirements defined in supplier contracts."

- Physical boundary still clear
- Life -cycle acknowledged
- Scope is more transparent

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6.3 – Example: New solvent introduced in production

Before

- Production changes solvent
- Environment team is informed late
- Storage, training, emissions, and spill response are reviewed afterward

Now

- Change is flagged before implementation
- Environmental aspects and compliance implications are assessed
- Temporary and permanent controls are defined
- Training, documentation, and emergency response are updated
- Early results are reviewed for unintended consequences

Moderate changes

5.1

- Management roles → roles
- Culture + trust with interested parties (Annex)

5.2

- The commitment to protect the environment has a new emphasis on preservation or conservation of natural resources.

6.1.4

- Prioritization
- Flexibility in how to assess

6.1.5

- Prioritization
- Examples of actions

9.2.2

- Audit objectives

9.3 Management review

- Time intervals

What does not change

Largely unchanged in clause structure or core intent

- **4.4** EMS and its processes
- **5.3** Roles and responsibilities
- **6.1.3** Compliance obligations
- **7.1-7.5** Support
- **8.2** Emergency preparedness and response
- **9.1** Performance evaluation
- **9.2.1** Internal audit process
- **10.2** Nonconformity and corrective action

Not a new EMS model

- Same Clause 4-10 structure
- Same PDCA logic
- Same focus on environmental performance

Bottom line

Same model.

Sharper expectations.

What changed in clause 8.2

8.2 Emergency preparedness and response

The organization shall establish, implement and maintain the process(es) needed to prepare for and respond to potential emergency situations determined in 6.1.2.

The organization shall:

a) prepare to respond by planning action(s) to prevent or mitigate adverse environmental impacts from emergency situations;

b) respond to actual emergency situations;

c) take action to prevent or mitigate the consequences of emergency situations, appropriate to the magnitude of the emergency and the potential environmental impact;

d) periodically test the planned response action(s), where practicable;

e) periodically review and revise the process(es) and planned response action(s), in particular after the occurrence of emergency situations or tests;

f) provide relevant information and training related to emergency preparedness and response, as appropriate, to relevant interested parties, including persons working under its control.

The process(es) needed for 8.2 shall be available as documented information to the extent necessary to have confidence that the process(es) is (are) carried out as planned.

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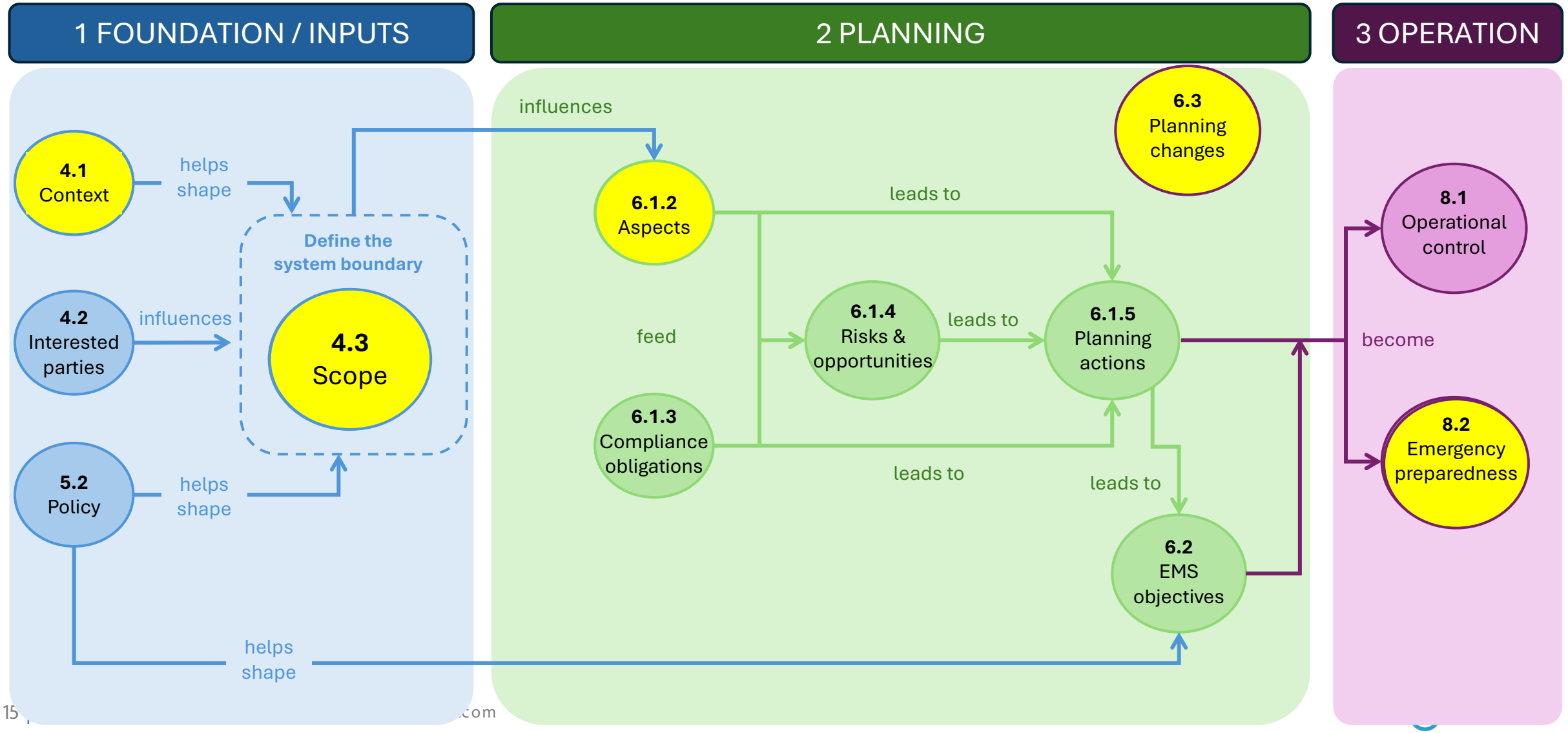


Implications for organizations and EMS professionals
What organizations may need to revisit in their EMS

What companies should do now:

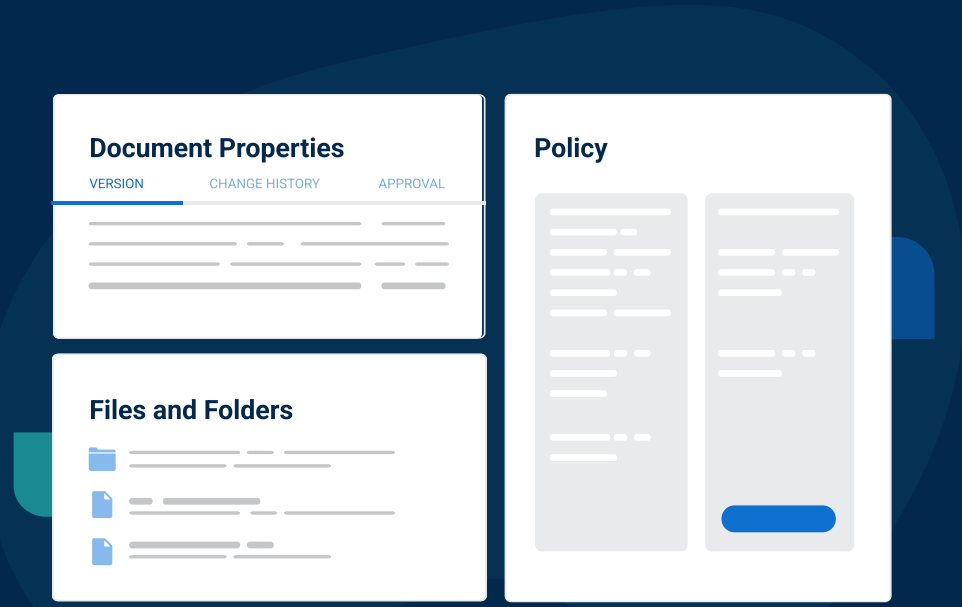
- Read the clauses together with Annex A
- Refresh context, interested parties, and scope
- Revisit aspects, risks/opportunities, and actions
- Strengthen operational controls and change management
- Prepare leadership, auditors, and process owners
- Build a practical transition roadmap.

Frequent transition questions and discussion

- Is ISO 14001:2026 now official?
- Is ISO 14001:2015 still valid?
- What is the transition period?
- What should organizations do now?
- Who should we listen to?
- Changes in the new version and how to implement them
- Risk, opportunity, and alignment with ISO 9001
- Audit, certification, and evidence expectations

Conclusion

Changes are evolutionary, not revolutionary but they will require preparation



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Q&A

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Thank You

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