



Meetings of the BRICS National Standards Bodies during the Brazilian presidency

ISSUE NOTE

BRICS 2025

1. Background Information

The role of standardization in the international context is crucial for fostering global economic development. International standards of voluntary adoption facilitate trade, reduce barriers, and promote the seamless flow of goods and services across borders. For the Global South, particularly, engaging in the development of these standards presents both challenges and opportunities. Countries with less developed economies often face difficulties in participating in international standardization processes, which can hinder their competitiveness. On the other hand, by actively participating, these nations can enhance their market access, improve consumer safety, and support sustainable development initiatives.

Since the establishment of BRICS in 2009, the National Standards Bodies (NSBs) of member countries - ABNT (Brazil), BIS (India), GOST-R (Russia), SABS (South Africa), and SAC (China) - have recognized the importance of collaboration in standardization. Periodic meetings have been held to discuss cooperation and the development of standards that address common challenges, such as technical barriers to trade and climate change. The recent expansion of BRICS to include five additional countries (Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, the United Arab Emirates - UAE, and Indonesia) further underscores the need for a common approach as regards standardization, ensuring that the interests of emerging economies are represented in global discussions.

The objective is not harmonization of standards among BRICS countries, but rather to develop mutual cooperation in the international arena of standardization, as well as sharing of technical knowledge to avoid unnecessary technical barriers to trade and favor trade of BRICS members.

2. Priorities

During the Brazilian presidency of BRICS in 2025, the following priorities are envisaged to guide the discussions and initiatives related to standardization:

2.1. Strengthening Cooperation: Enhance collaboration among BRICS NSBs to address common challenges and leverage collective strengths in international standardization forums.

2.2. Promoting Awareness: Raise awareness of the importance of standardization among government, industry, and the public in developing countries, emphasizing its role in economic stability and growth.

2.3. Sustainable Development: Focus on developing international standards that support the UN Sustainable Development Goals, particularly in areas such as climate change, health security, and digital integration.

These priorities aim to create a strategic framework for BRICS countries to effectively participate in international standardization efforts, ensuring that their voices are heard and their interests are represented.

Topics of common interest among the countries already identified during previous meetings of BRICS NSBs are, among others:

- E-commerce;
- Semi-conductive lighting;
- New Energies for vehicles;
- Information technology on the internet and network security;
- Aerospace;
- New energy technology;
- Renewable Energies;
- Carbon Neutrality;
- Smart cities;
- Artificial Intelligence.

The Brazilian chairship suggests the following areas for discussions among the BRICS NSBs during this year:

- **ESG – Environmental, Social and Governance.** As the global emphasis on ESG principles continues to grow, establishing a standardized framework is essential for BRICS countries to align with international best practices. Such alignment can enhance their credibility and increase their attractiveness to global investors, who are placing greater value on sustainability and ethical governance in their decision-making processes. The recent publication of ISO IWA 48:2024 offers a structured and practical approach for implementing ESG principles. This framework can serve as a valuable guide for BRICS nations as they develop their own policies and practices, ensuring they are both comprehensive and effective in addressing key environmental and social challenges. Looking ahead, it is expected that ISO will continue to develop formal international standards on ESG. By actively engaging in the creation and adoption of these standards, BRICS countries have the opportunity to position themselves as leaders in the ESG domain. This proactive participation can strengthen collaboration among member states and amplify their influence in global sustainability and governance dialogues. Adopting ISO ESG frameworks can also contribute to long-term economic growth by promoting sustainable development. By addressing environmental and social concerns through a standardized approach, BRICS nations can build more resilient economies that deliver value to all stakeholders.
- **Management systems to prevent and combat violence against women in organizations.** Violence against women is a global problem that affects all societies, regardless of their location, culture, or stage of development. Violence against women can manifest in various forms, from physical and psychological violence to discrimination and harassment in the workplace. The creation of an international standard for management systems to prevent and combat violence against women in organizations is a crucial measure to promote fairer, safer, and more equitable work environments. The relevance of this standard for the BRICS countries, which share great socioeconomic and

cultural diversity, is immense. Implementing a management system dedicated to preventing violence against women could be a game-changer in promoting healthier organizational environments. Moreover, by adopting this standard, organizations contribute to the creation of a social environment that values respect for human rights and the integrity of women. This is an essential step for the corporate world to align with a more equitable and responsible future, in which violence against women has no place. BRICS has a historic opportunity to lead this movement, showing that social responsibility and human progress are interconnected, and that organizations can be agents of meaningful change in combating one of the greatest injustices of our time.

Hydrogen technologies — Methodology for determining the greenhouse gas emissions associated with the hydrogen supply chain. This subject is of global relevance and is directly aligned with the priorities of “Renewable Energies” and “Carbon Neutrality”, already identified by BRICS NSBs as strategic. A recent milestone in this context is the publication of ISO/TS 19870, a globally agreed document that provides a standardized and transparent methodology for quantifying greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions across the entire hydrogen value chain — from the extraction of raw materials to the hydrogen consumption gate. Notably, the specification is technology-agnostic, ensuring applicability across all low-emission hydrogen production pathways, regardless of the technology used. Brazil, a global leader in low-emission hydrogen production, has been playing a key role in the development of ISO standards in this sector, underscoring the international importance of advancing robust methodologies to support the growth of hydrogen produced from low-emissions energy sources. By establishing a uniform approach to emissions accounting, the standard not only enhances transparency and market confidence, but also supports policy development and enables technological innovation. This is critical for accelerating the transition to a low-emission economy, promoting sustainable growth among BRICS countries and globally. New standards within the ISO 19870 series are currently under development, with active and meaningful participation from Brazil, further reinforcing its commitment in the future of low-emissions hydrogen.

- **Carbon accounting standards.**

Carbon accounting methodologies are increasingly being used in policies and initiatives by governments and the private sector, informing tools such as taxes, subsidies, emission standards and procurement criteria. These methodologies underpin decisions aimed at reducing embedded emissions at the product level, but they also present challenges. Inconsistent methodologies across sectors, countries and regions drive up measuring and reporting costs, complicate compliance and threaten the integrity of global supply chains. Setting broad guidelines for carbon methodologies at both general and sector-specific levels could enhance their coherence, comparability and alignment with economic and climate goals. There is growing momentum among international organizations and the private sector to develop a common understanding of carbon accounting with a view to supporting efforts to reduce emissions while minimizing regulatory complexity and constraints to sustainable development. The BRICS group on technical standards could analyze the challenges in promoting a cross sectoral approach for carbon accounting standards, while striving to set up parameters for assuring consistency and promote interoperability across sectors.

3. Planned Meetings

The following meetings are anticipated for the BRICS National Standards Bodies in 2025:

3.1. 1st Meeting (Virtual): Meeting of the BRICS National Standards Bodies

This meeting, to be held on 10 April, 2025, will involve the head of BRICS NSBs and focus on discussion aimed at reaching final consensus on the text of a Memorandum of Understanding on cooperation in the field of standardization, considering that BRICS counts on five new National Standards Bodies members that have not taken part on the previous discussions of this MoU. The intention is to get consensus enough as regards the text of the MoU, so that it can be signed by the BRICS NSBs during the forthcoming face-to-face meeting.

3.2. 2nd Meeting (Presential): Workshop for the Heads of BRICS National Standardization Bodies on cooperation and discussion on areas of relevance.

A face-to-face meeting of the Heads of BRICS NSBs, to be held on 17 and 18 June, 2025. This central event will focus on high-level discussions regarding strategic cooperation in standardization and is envisaged to have the abovementioned MoU signed by the BRICS NSBs. This high-level workshop is intended also to promote discussions related to the areas of relevance mentioned in 2.3 above.

3.3. 3rd Meeting (Virtual): BRICS National Standards Bodies Seminar for experience sharing on Standardization

Aimed at sharing best practices in standardization and fostering ongoing dialogue among member countries. To be held in November 2025, precise date to be defined.

These meetings are intended not only to promote cooperation in areas of common interest and facilitate the exchange of technical information, but also to contribute to foster the development of international standards that reflect the collective interests of BRICS nations, ultimately strengthening their positions in the global arena and promoting sustainable economic growth.



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