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Third edition  
2023-01

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## Soil quality — Effects of pollutants on earthworms —

### Part 2: Determination of effects on reproduction of *Eisenia fetida*/*Eisenia andrei* and other earthworm species

*Qualité du sol — Effets des polluants vis-à-vis des vers de terre —*

*Partie 2: Détermination des effets sur la reproduction de Eisenia fetida/Eisenia andrei et d'autres espèces de vers de terre*



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## Contents

	Page
Foreword.....	iv
Introduction.....	v
<b>1 Scope.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2 Normative references.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>3 Terms and definitions.....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>4 Principle.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>5 Reagents and material.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>6 Apparatus.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>7 Procedure.....</b>	<b>6</b>
7.1 Experimental design.....	6
7.1.1 General.....	6
7.1.2 Preliminary test.....	7
7.1.3 Definitive test.....	7
7.2 Preparation of test mixtures.....	7
7.2.1 Testing of contaminated soil.....	7
7.2.2 Testing substances added to the control soil.....	8
7.2.3 Preparation of control container.....	8
7.3 Addition of the earthworms.....	9
7.4 Test conditions and measurements.....	9
7.5 Reference substance.....	9
<b>8 Calculation and expression of results.....</b>	<b>10</b>
8.1 Calculation.....	10
8.2 Expression of results.....	10
<b>9 Validity of the test.....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>10 Statistical analysis.....</b>	<b>10</b>
10.1 General.....	10
10.2 Single-concentration tests.....	10
10.3 Multi-concentration tests.....	11
10.3.1 Preliminary test.....	11
10.3.2 Definitive test.....	11
<b>11 Test report.....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Annex A (informative) Determination of the chronic toxicity of chemicals on <i>Eisenia fetida</i>/ <i>Eisenia andrei</i> under tropical conditions.....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Annex B (informative) Culturing and testing procedures for assessing the effects of contaminants on juvenile production using the earthworm, <i>Dendrodilus rubidus</i>.....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Annex C (informative) Culturing and testing procedures for assessing the effects of contaminants on adult survival and cocoon production and hatchability using the earthworm, <i>Aporrectodea caliginosa</i> s.s.....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Annex D (informative) Culturing of <i>Eisenia fetida</i> and <i>Eisenia andrei</i>.....</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Annex E (normative) Determination of water holding capacity.....</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Annex F (informative) Techniques for counting juvenile worms hatched from cocoons.....</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>Annex G (informative) Experience with performance criteria of the test.....</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>Bibliography.....</b>	<b>33</b>

## Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) is a worldwide federation of national standards bodies (ISO member bodies). The work of preparing International Standards is normally carried out through ISO technical committees. Each member body interested in a subject for which a technical committee has been established has the right to be represented on that committee. International organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO, also take part in the work. ISO collaborates closely with the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) on all matters of electrotechnical standardization.

The procedures used to develop this document and those intended for its further maintenance are described in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1. In particular, the different approval criteria needed for the different types of ISO documents should be noted. This document was drafted in accordance with the editorial rules of the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2 (see [www.iso.org/directives](http://www.iso.org/directives)).

Attention is drawn to the possibility that some of the elements of this document may be the subject of patent rights. ISO shall not be held responsible for identifying any or all such patent rights. Details of any patent rights identified during the development of the document will be in the Introduction and/or on the ISO list of patent declarations received (see [www.iso.org/patents](http://www.iso.org/patents)).

Any trade name used in this document is information given for the convenience of users and does not constitute an endorsement.

For an explanation of the voluntary nature of standards, the meaning of ISO specific terms and expressions related to conformity assessment, as well as information about ISO's adherence to the World Trade Organization (WTO) principles in the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT), see [www.iso.org/iso/foreword.html](http://www.iso.org/iso/foreword.html).

This document was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 190, *Soil quality*, Subcommittee SC 4, *Biological characterization*, in collaboration with the European Committee for Standardization (CEN) Technical Committee CEN/TC 444, *Environmental characterization*, in accordance with the Agreement on technical cooperation between ISO and CEN (Vienna Agreement).

This third edition cancels and replaces the second edition (ISO 11268-2:2012), which has been technically revised.

The main changes are as follows:

- modification of the concentration for the reference substance (boric acid);
- inclusion of alternative species of earthworms – *Dendrodrilus rubidus*, *Aporrectodea caliginosa* – in informative annexes; information on their taxonomy and ecology as well as their specific testing requirements have also been added.

A list of all the parts in the ISO 11268 series can be found on the ISO website.

Any feedback or questions on this document should be directed to the user's national standards body. A complete listing of these bodies can be found at [www.iso.org/members.html](http://www.iso.org/members.html).

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## Introduction

Ecotoxicological test systems are applied to obtain information about the effects of contaminants in soil and are proposed to complement conventional chemical analysis (see ISO 15799 and ISO 17616). ISO 15799 includes a list and short characterization of recommended and standardized test systems and ISO 17616 gives guidance on the choice and evaluation of the bioassays. Aquatic test systems with soil eluate are applied to obtain information about the fraction of contaminants potentially reaching the groundwater by the water path (retention function of soils), whereas terrestrial test systems are used to assess the habitat function of soils.

This document describes a method that is based on the determination of sublethal effects of contaminated soils on adult earthworms of the species *Eisenia fetida* (Savigny 1826) and *Eisenia andrei* (André 1963). Optionally, the method can be used for testing chemicals added to standard soils (e.g. artificial soil) for their sublethal hazard potential to earthworms. Finally, information is provided on how to use this method for testing chemicals or test soil under tropical conditions (see [Annex A](#)).

*Eisenia fetida* and *Eisenia andrei* are considered to be representatives of soil fauna and earthworms in particular in temperate regions. Background information on their earthworm ecology and their use in ecotoxicological testing is available. However, these species do not occur regularly in agricultural lands (crop sites and grasslands) or forests in these regions. In addition, they are not representative of boreal or tropical regions. Therefore, other species such as *Dendrodilus rubidus* (an epigeic litter inhabitant in boreal regions) and *Aporrectodea caliginosa* (an endogeic mineral dweller in temperate regions) have been added as potential alternative test species (see [Annexes B](#) and [C](#)). These alternative earthworm species have been used as ecotoxicological test species for some time, however, testing experience has been limited to specific countries.

This document has been drawn up taking into consideration test procedures adopted by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development<sup>[45][46]</sup> and by the European Union<sup>[29]</sup>.