

Summary Brochure

From ISO 14001 to EMAS



Benefits of a Step-up from ISO 14001 to EMAS

A step-up from ISO 14001 to EMAS can provide organisations with significant additional benefits. EMAS offers organisations increased legal security based on its strict requirements regarding legal compliance. Additional environmental benefits can also be expected as direct and indirect environmental impacts of the organisation will need to be identified and evaluated under EMAS. Moreover, organisations can experience further financial benefits due to reduced resources use and efficiency improvements. Further employee involvement and training under EMAS can lead to improved employee morale and a better implementation of the EMS. An EMAS registration will also provide organisations with improved communication possibilities through certified third-party auditing and a validated environmental statement. Finally, EMAS offers the advantage of being legally recognised through a European Council Regulation and certified organisations are listed in a public register.

Introduction

Origin and development

ISO 14001:2004 is part of a series of international standards, which lay down the requirements for environmental management systems. ISO 14001:2004 is one of ISO's most well known and widely implemented standards. It is used worldwide by large and small businesses and organisations, in public and private sectors, by manufacturers and service providers, and in all sectors of activity. It is based on the Plan-Do-Check-Act cycle, and specifies the most important requirements to identify, control, and monitor the environmental aspects of any organisation, as well as how to manage and improve the system.

In a first step, the existing management system of the company is analysed, and environmental impacts and potential environmental risks are assessed. In addition, a catalogue of all applicable environmental legislation is prepared. These documents are used as a basis to prepare detailed, annually revised environmental programmes. Upon completion of the consultancy process, independent experts evaluate the environmental management system, and if the system complies with the standards, the enterprise receives the ISO14001 certification. The International Standards Organisation (ISO) is the responsible institution for the scheme while independent external experts are in charge of the certification. Most independent external experts qualified to issue ISO 14001: 2004 certifications are accredited, meaning they are formally recognised by a specialised body. As of 2009, approximately 26 400 organisations are ISO 14001 certified worldwide.

Objectives

ISO 14001 sets out how organisations can put in place an effective EMS. The standard is designed to address the balance between maintaining profitability and reducing environmental impacts with the commitment of the entire organisation.

Closeness to EMAS

ISO 14001 can be considered as a stepping-stone to EMAS, as a successful certification means that most important steps towards an EMAS certification have been taken. However, certain additional steps will have to be taken in order to register under EMAS. The most fundamental of these additional steps lie in the areas of the environmental review, training, documentation, emergency preparedness, and the environmental statement. These steps are outlined on page 2 of this brochure.

Furthermore, an EMAS registration automatically qualifies an organisation for an ISO 14001 certification as all ISO 14001 requirements are fulfilled as part of the EMAS registration.

For further information on the EMS, please contact:

ISO Central Secretariat
International Organization for Standardization (ISO)
Geneva, Switzerland
Tel.: +41 22 749 01 11
Website: www.standardsinfo.net

For further information on these guidelines, please contact:

EMAS Helpdesk
Tel: +33 (0)1 53 90 11 75
Email: emas@biois.com
Website: ec.europa.eu/environment/emas



From ISO 14001 to EMAS: Additional Steps

Please note that this document provides an overview of any additional steps that need to be taken by an organisation to 'step-up' from ISO 14001 to EMAS. For further details on each requirement, please see the EMAS website on www.ec.europa.eu/environment/emas.

Step 2 - Planning

- **Environmental aspects and review**

An initial environmental review needs to be implemented.

- **Proof of legal compliance**

Legal compliance and implementation of procedures that enable the organisation to constantly meet requirements is necessary.

- **Definition of objectives, targets and programmes**

Ability to prove that EMS and audit procedures are based on the current environmental performance is required.

Step 3 - Implementation

- **Employee involvement**

An employee participation scheme at all levels, and both informing and participation of employees in continuous improvement, is necessary.

- **Communication**

Open dialogue with the public, openness/ transparency and periodic revision of environmental information needs to be established.

Step 5 - External Recognition and Environmental Report

- **Third-party auditing and audit frequency**

In order to fulfil all EMAS requirements, the necessary information will need to be made available to top management; the maximum frequency of external recognition needs to be limited to 3-4 years; and a written audit report needs to be produced.

- **Environmental report/ statement**

All criteria related to the environmental report/statement need to be fulfilled to comply with EMAS requirements.