

# EMS Factsheet

## ISO 14001: 2004

### Overview

#### 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.

#### 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.

#### Implementation structure

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.

### EMS in brief

#### Key characteristic

Internationally recognised and well-known standard

#### Implementing institution

International Standards Organisation (ISO)

#### Available since

1996

#### Geographical scope

Global

#### Target group

All sectors

#### Size of targeted companies

All sizes

#### Total number of certifications

26 361 (indicates approximate number of certificates issued for the latest date available in 2007)

#### Number of participants in the process of certification

n/a

### Most important drivers and barriers

#### Drivers

- ☒ Available marketing tools
- ☒ Cost/resource savings
- ☒ Customer/supplier demand
- ☒ Environmental benefits
- ☒ Legal security
- ☒ Political support/financial incentives
- ☒ Proof of corporate social responsibility
- Other: n/a

#### Barriers

- ☐ EMS not widely recognised
- ☒ High implementation costs
- ☐ Little similarities to EMAS or ISO 14001
- ☒ Perceived complication/unattainability
- Other: Complex legal documents

☒ Yes

☐ No

## The EMS in detail

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>Commitment of top management:</b> Commitment of senior management is required.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Environmental review:</b> Initial review is recommended but not required.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>Environmental policy or guidelines:</b> Contains commitment by an organisation and its senior management to attaining a working environmental management system and to maintaining that system. It must provide a framework for setting and reviewing environmental objectives and targets.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Proof of legal compliance:</b> Only requires an organisation to identify and have access to legal and other requirements to which it subscribes, and not necessarily to comply with environmental regulations and rules.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Objectives and environmental management programme:</b> Planning of the environmental management programme should include reasonable and achievable objectives. Goals should include the environmental impacts that the organisation can control <i>and</i> that it can influence.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>Definition of organisational structure at company level:</b> Organisations are required to define precise roles and responsibilities and communicate this throughout the company. The appointment of a specific environmental manager is also required.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>Training and education requirements:</b> For the EMS to be most effective, organisations are required to provide training to employees to enable them to understand and appreciate the EMS.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Communication (internal and external):</b> Documents and information such as the organisation's environmental policy should be communicated to all employees and made available to the public.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>Documentation requirements:</b> Required documentation includes the company's environmental policy, plans, and objectives. Procedures also have to be put in place and to maintain all required documents for control.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>Internal follow-up/ checking and corrective action/ continuous improvement:</b> There have to be appropriate established monitoring and review procedures to ensure functioning of the EMS and the implementation of corrective measures in due time. Improvement is required periodically without a defined frequency. The implementation of the EMS will therefore act as a driver for innovation.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>Management review:</b> A periodic review of the performance of the EMS by top management through the involvement of management in the assessment of the EMS and audit is required.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Environmental Report/ statement or similar publication by the participants of the EMS:</b> Publication of an environmental report is not required but the environmental policy must be made available to the public.

☒ Yes/Required   
 ☐ Partially addressed   
 ☐ Not indicated or not required

## External audit/certification

**Is an external audit required?** Yes

**Responsible for external audit and qualifications needed:** Independent external auditors have to be accredited by a recognised accreditation body.

**Audit period:** 3-yearly

**Certification:** An ISO 14001:2004 registration means that the auditing body records the certification in its client register.

## Similarities to EMAS

- ☐ Initial environmental review
- ☒ Environmental policy
- ☐ Legal compliance
- ☐ Employee involvement
- ☒ Planning
- ☒ Implementation
- ☒ Checking and corrective action
- ☒ Continuous improvement
- ☒ Management review
- ☒ Certification
- ☐ Environmental statement
- ☐ Validation of environmental statement

**Relation of the EMS to EMAS:** **Close**

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](http://www.standardsinfo.net)

For further information on these factsheets, please contact:

EMAS Helpdesk  
Tel: +33 (0)1 53 90 11 75  
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Website: [ec.europa.eu/environment/emas](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/emas)

