

Summary Brochure

From Ecodynamique Enterprise Label to EMAS

Benefits of a Step-up from Ecodynamic Enterprise Label to EMAS

Many additional steps need to be taken by organisations that want to step-up from Eco-Lighthouse to EMAS, which can provide organisations with significant benefits. Environmental benefits, for example, can be expected as indirect environmental impacts of the organisation will need to be identified and evaluated under EMAS. Moreover, organisations can experience further financial benefits due to, for example, reduced use of resources, efficiency improvements and better risk management. An EMAS registration will also provide organisations with improved communication possibilities through certified third-party auditing and a validated environmental statement. Further, employee involvement and training under EMAS can lead to improved employee morale and a better implementation of the EMS. As the Ecodynamique Label is currently only implemented in the Brussels region in Belgium, organisations might also benefit from the larger geographic scope of EMAS. This might be of special interest to organisations with an international client base. 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

The Ecodynamic enterprise label was created in 1999 by Brussels Environment - IBGE, the Brussels Administration of the Environment and Energy. The EMS offers private companies and public administrations with a systematic approach to lowering their impact on the environment. The "Ecodynamic enterprise" label is an official recognition of good environmental management practices by the Brussels Region. It encourages the introduction of an EMS, with a view towards eventual EMAS or ISO 14001 registrations. There are three levels depending on the initial level of environmental performance within the organisation. Each level is symbolised by stars. Applications are evaluated based on a large range of criteria. These criteria concern specific eco-management actions, quality of the environmental review, and the plan of actions established. The process begins with the signature of the "Ecodynamic Enterprise" charter. The company benefits from free assistance from designated consultancy firms. Within a period of two years, the company's candidacy is presented to Brussels Environment IBGE for approval. The application includes an environmental review and a plan of action. Currently, 115 companies and public administrations have been accredited with the EMS label. All types of business are concerned, including non-profit organisations.

The implementing institution is Brussels Environment-IBGE. The label is awarded by a jury of 12 institutions composed of Brussels Environment-IBGE, and other organisations. As of 2009, approximately 115 organisations are certified with the Ecodynamique Enterprise Label in the Brussels region.

Objectives

The EMS aims to encourage companies in Brussels to voluntarily commit themselves to improving their environmental performance through a gradual and step-up approach.

Closeness to EMAS

The Ecodynamique Enterprise label can be considered as a stepping-stone to EMAS, as a successful certification of the Ecodynamique Enterprise label means that a number of 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.

For further information on the EMS, please contact:

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For further information on these guidelines, please contact:

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From Ecodynamic Enterprise Label to EMAS: Additional Steps

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

Step 1 - Planning

- **Environmental policy/guidelines**

The policy needs to be communicated to all employees and be made available to the public in order to comply with EMAS requirements.

Step 2 - Planning

- **Environmental aspects and review**

Indirect environmental aspects need to be evaluated.

Step 3 - Implementation

- **Roles and responsibilities**

Roles and responsibilities need to be documented (if not already done in the application file) to comply with EMAS requirements.

- **Employee involvement**

All criteria related to employee involvement need to be fulfilled to comply with EMAS requirements.

- **Training and awareness raising**

Training needs should be identified and given to those who cause significant impacts to fulfil EMAS requirements. However the organisation can request training workshops that are organised by the Brussels Institute for Management of the Environment (IBGE-BIM).

- **Documentation**

Documentation should include other documents such as records regarding operation and control to fulfil EMAS requirements.

- **Control of documents and operational control**

To fulfil EMAS requirements, procedures need to be established to control situations that might create significant environmental impacts. Procedures related to significant environmental impacts arising from the use of goods and services need to be communicated to suppliers.

- **Emergency preparedness and response**

All criteria related to emergency preparedness and response need to be fulfilled to comply with EMAS requirements.

Step 4 – Check and Act

- **Internal audit**

All criteria related to an internal audit need to be fulfilled to comply with EMAS requirements.

Step 5 - External Recognition and Environmental Report

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

An internal or external yearly audit and a written report of this is needed to fulfil EMAS requirements.

- **Environmental report/ statement**

All criteria related to an environmental report or statement should be fulfilled to comply with EMAS requirements; however the company has the option of publishing one.