

3 **What is an Environmental Management System?**

All organisations have some impact on the environment. An EMS is a structured system designed to help an organisation to reduce these impacts through targeted continuous improvement in its environmental management, leading to improvements in its environmental performance, while delivering bottom line benefits through reduced operating costs.

An EMS is the part of an organisation's overall management system which enables it to manage its environmental risks, achieve and control the expected level of environmental performance and provide a structured process for achievement of continual improvement. An EMS supports environmental protection, biodiversity conservation, ecologically sustainable development and resource sustainability.

An EMS may be certified, registered or incorporated into existing management systems and documentation, and can be used to enhance rather than replace existing systems. In many cases much of an EMS can be provided by existing management systems with minimal costs for adjustment.

By way of European example, an EMS can be certified by the ISO 14001 international standard or registered under the EU Eco-Management and Audit Scheme (EMAS ¹) statute by an auditor in certification of standard or an approved EMAS controller.

4 **What is an EMS used for?**

The environmental management system can be used as an aid to:

- Identify and reduce the operation's impact on the environment,
- Introduce controlling routines,
- Establish tangible environmental goals for improvement,
- Introduce an environmental management programme in order to achieve environmental goals,
- See that environmental activities are functioning,
- Continually assess and evaluate environmental activities,
- Plan, manage and act using information gained from assessments and evaluations,
- Create the basis of reliable communication surrounding environmental activities,
- Improve negotiation on proposed environmental constraints.

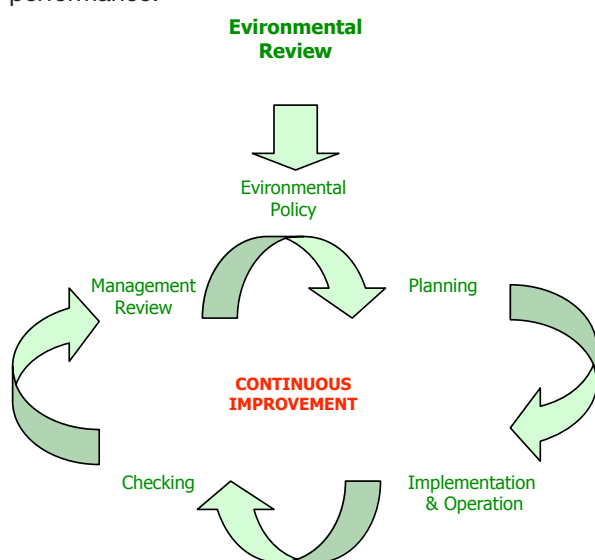


¹ http://ec.europa.eu/environment/emas/index_en.htm

7 Elements of an Environmental Management System

The primary purpose of an EMS is to determine which aspects of the business have an impact on the environment. Once identified, these components are systematically managed to achieve better control and performance.

The EMS cycle can be thought of as a Plan, Do, Check, Act process of continuous improvement, aimed at improving business and environmental performance.



Environmental Review

An initial environmental review is required to identify all the organisation's environmental aspects and impacts. The review should cover four key areas:

- Identification of activities or services that can interact with the environment,
- Identification of legislation and other requirements which affect the organisation,
- Assessment of the organisation's environmental methods and routines, including procurement and hiring of consultants, and
- Evaluation of experiences from previous incidents.

Environmental Policy

An organisation's environmental policy is the most important steering document and describes the elements of an organisation's environmental activities. It defines the ambitions and visions relating to these activities and should ensure that they are thoroughly adopted by the organisation's management group.

The contents of the environmental policy should be in accordance with an ANSP's significant activities and services that can impact with the environment, and also include a commitment to continually improve environmental activities, prevent contamination and not least incorporate environmental legislation and other relevant requirements.

All staff within the ANSP should be aware of the contents of the environmental policy; this includes those working as consultants to the organisation.

Planning

Planning should identify the legislation which applies to the organisation and which will affect its operations/activities and services from an environmental perspective. The environmental impacts identified in the initial review stage also need to be identified in this process. To obtain the objectives and targets set, necessary actions need to be planned.

Consultation with all stakeholders and interested parties is a necessity at the planning stage to confirm ANSP policy priorities; to identify the actions, deliverables, milestones, timeline and KPIs required to ensure progress towards specific objectives and targets; to allocate responsibilities; and to plan for reporting mechanisms and promulgation activities.

Implementation and Operation

Having conducted extensive planning activities all that remains is the actual implementation. The implementation and operation should describe how the operation is governed in order to achieve environmental objectives as well as reduce environmental impact of the more important environmental aspects.

The management should at this stage make available adequate resources for the functioning of the environmental management system. Implementation and management involves roles, authorities and defining responsibility, documentation and communication.

The organisation should also see that routines are established and maintained for areas such as employee training courses, and internal and external environmental organisational communication. Emergency preparedness is necessary to prevent and reduce any possible environmental impact due to incidents.

Checking

Checking involves identifying and handling deviations or improvement activities. There are a few different ways for organisations to do this. Subsequent actions include measuring, monitoring, and evaluating so-called environmental performances. Environmental performance is a means of expressing a company's environmental aspects in the form of ratios.

An environmental audit involves a systematic, recorded, objective and periodical evaluation of an organisation's EMS, environmental organisation and routines as well as equipment. An organisation normally uses external as well as internal audits. The aim of conducting checks is to verify if the environmental management system is fully functioning to the requirements specified by the management.

Management Review

During the management review, the whole of the organisation's EMS should be discussed. Management should review the system to check its suitability, adequacy, objectivity and efficiency. It is not necessary to cover all parts of the environmental management system at the same time but all should be covered within a certain time period, for example during a calendar year.

The results from both the internal and external audits, records, measurements, deviations and management plan are an aid to briefing management and assisting decision-making.

Management reviews should include all

possible needs relating to changes in environmental policy, comprehensive environmental objectives, following up of legislation and other parts of the environmental management system based on, for example, results of the revision.

Accounting documents presented by the management should contain agendas, list of participants, notes relating to subject matter and decisions, reports and minutes. In this way the whole process begins again as the demand for continual improvement should be achieved.