

## **Eco-Management and Audit Scheme (EMAS)**

The **Eco-Management and Audit Scheme (EMAS)** is a voluntary [environmental management](#) instrument, which was developed in 1993 by the [European Commission](#). It enables organizations to assess, manage and continuously improve their environmental performance. The scheme is globally applicable and open to all types of private and public organizations

### **3 -core elements**

- Performance

Actions implemented by the organisation improve environmental performance and legal compliance, in line with policy targets

- Transparency

These achievements are made public through the annual environmental statement

- Credibility

The environmental statement is verified by independent environmental verifiers who guarantee the value of the information disclosed

### **EMAS superior quality rests upon:**

- stricter requirements on the measurement and evaluation of environmental performance against objectives and targets, and the continuous improvement of that environmental performance;
- compliance with environmental legislation ensured by government supervision;
- strong employee involvement;
- environmental core indicators creating multi-annual comparability within and between organisations
- provision of information to the general public through the validated environmental statement; and
- registration by a public authority after verification by an accredited/ licensed environmental verifier.

EMAS is designed to help organisations improve their environmental performance while simultaneously enhancing their competitiveness, e.g. through a more efficient use of resources.

## Who can participate in EMAS?

EMAS is applicable in all sectors and open to all types of organisations in the public and private sector that seek to improve their environmental performance. The EMAS easy methodology even enables the introduction of the scheme in small and medium- sized enterprises (SMEs) with few financial and human resources or limited in-house expertise.

The possibility for a single corporate registration lowers administrative and financial burdens for organisations with several sites. For local authorities, EMAS helps streamlining environmental activities and requirements, e.g. in administration, construction, health and education.

### **To achieve EMAS certification an organisation has to:**

1. Contact your local Competent Body to get customised technical support (e. g. a list of qualified EMAS consultants) and information about funding opportunities.
2. Conduct an environmental review

The organisation needs to conduct a verified initial environmental review, considering all environmental aspects of the organisation's activities, products and services, methods to assess them, the organisation's legal and regulatory framework and existing environmental management practices and procedures.

3. Adopt an environmental policy

Registration to EMAS requires an organisation to adopt an environmental policy and to commit itself both to compliance with all relevant environmental legislation and to achieving continuous improvement in its environmental performance.

4. Establish an EMS

Based on the results of the environmental review and the policy (objectives), an EMS needs to be established. The EMS is aimed at achieving the organisation's environmental policy objectives as defined by the top management. The management system needs to set responsibilities, objectives, means, operational procedures, training needs, monitoring and communication systems.

5. Carry out an internal environmental audit

After the EMS is established an environmental audit should be carried out. The audit assesses in particular if the management system is in place and in conformity with the organisation's policy and programme. The audit also checks if the organisation is in compliance with relevant environmental regulatory requirements. Check the

effectiveness of EMS by follow appropriate indicators, including EMAS core indicators.

6. Prepare an environmental statement

The organisation needs to provide a public statement of its environmental performance. The environmental statement lays down the results achieved against the environmental objectives and the future steps to be undertaken in order to continuously improve the organisation's environmental performance.

7. Independent verification by an EMAS verifier

An EMAS verifier accredited with an EMAS accreditation body of a Member State must examine and verify the environmental review, the EMS, the audit procedure and the environmental statement.

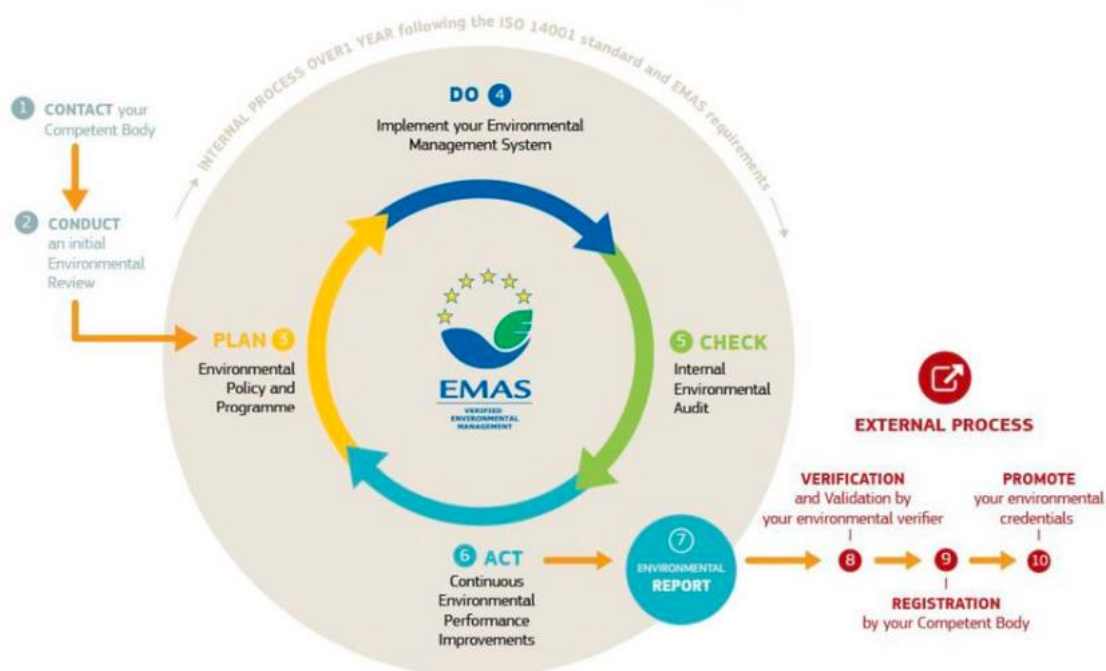
8. Register with the Competent Body of the Member State

The validated statement is sent to the appropriate EMAS Competent Body for registration and made publicly available.

9. Utilize the verified environmental statement

The environmental statement can be used to report performance data in marketing, assessment of the supply chain and procurement. The organisation can use information from the validated statement to market its activities with the EMAS logo, assess suppliers against EMAS requirements and give preference to suppliers registered under EMAS.

# How to be EMAS-registered



## EMAS is a Governmental Regulation

Another important fact about EMAS is that it is a government regulation, not an international standard. This means that it is the member state's governments that have to organise the registration process of sites within their territory. They designate the Accreditation Body, who is an independent and impartial institution or organisation responsible for the accreditation and supervision of environmental verifiers. Environmental verifiers, on the other hand, are experts on the field of EMAS and need to be both independent of the organisation being verified and that organisation's auditor or consultant. They ensure that organisations seeking registration are in compliance with EMAS requirements.

In particular they check that an organisation:

- Is in legal compliance.
- Has carried out an initial environmental review (if appropriate).
- Has a fully operational EMS which is audited in a systematic, objective and periodic way.
- Has prepared an environmental statement in accordance with the EMAS regulation.

Furthermore they verify that that all data and information in the environmental

statement and other information provided by an organisation is reliable, credible and correct.

## **Benefits EMAS**

EMAS brings many benefits to organisations participating in the scheme. These include:

- 1) Enhanced environmental and financial performance
  - high quality environmental management
  - resource efficiency and lower costs
- 2) Enhanced risk and opportunity management
  - guarantee of full regulatory compliance with environmental legislation
  - reduced risk of fines related to environmental legislation
  - regulatory relief
  - access to deregulation incentives
- 3) Enhanced credibility, reputation and transparency
  - independently validated environmental information
  - use of the EMAS Logo as a marketing tool
  - increased business opportunities in markets where green production processes are important
  - better relations with customers, the local and wider community, and regulators
- 4) Enhanced employee empowerment and motivation
  - improved workplace environment
  - enhanced employee commitment
  - greater team-building capacity

## **Other benefits**

1 Improved environmental performance: 70% of registered organisations show improvement on nearly ALL environmental indicators\*

2 Improved legislative compliance and hence less risk of sanctions

3 Better identification of overall corporate responsibilities: Better-defined roles and responsibilities, stronger awareness of teams

4 Fewer environmental accidents

5 Cost savings: Achieved through reuse, recycling, and decrease in resource use

6 Improved relations with stakeholders: Employees are more committed and external stakeholders value the transparency of the organisation

7 Regulatory relief: In some Member States, authorities provide advantages to EMAS registered organisations, such as reductions in inspections or taxes