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GOOD REASONS FOR EMAS

Improve your environmental performance with the premium standard in environmental management



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ABOUT THIS BROCHURE

There are many good reasons for why an organisation – private or public, large or small – should register with EMAS. In this brochure we share the nine most important reasons with you.

This publication is based on the brochure »7 Good Reasons for EMAS« released by the Office of the German EMAS Advisory Board in 2009 | 2011. The brochure is available both in German and English at www.emas.de/service/pdf-downloads/ugags-broschueren

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INTRODUCTION

EMAS › ENHANCED PERFORMANCE, CREDIBILITY AND TRANSPARENCY

Excellence in environmental performance is becoming a strong business advantage. Organisations with a proactive approach to environmental challenges look for ways to continually improve their environmental performance and to communicate their environmental achievements to stakeholders and society in general.

The Eco-Management and Audit Scheme (EMAS) is the EU's voluntary environmental management instrument that helps organisations achieve this. EMAS Environmental Management Systems are used worldwide by companies and organisations of all sizes and types. EMAS registered organisations commit themselves to evaluate, manage and improve their environmental performance. Implementing the premium environmental management instrument leads to enhanced performance, credibility and transparency of registered organisations.

With EMAS you find answers to three of today's key management challenges which organisations of all types face: resource efficiency, climate change and Corporate Social Responsibility. Furthermore, EMAS strengthens your organisation's ability to cope with risks and identify opportunities by implementing systematic environmental management processes and structures. Finally, with the distinctive features of EMAS such as environmental disclosure through the environmental statement or the application of Key Performance Indicators your organisation will successfully navigate through complex sustainability challenges.

EMAS GLOBAL › PREMIUM ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT WORLDWIDE

Stakeholders like governments, consumers, non-governmental organisations and the media demand a better environmental performance from companies all over the world. The systematic improvement of the environmental performance of EMAS registered companies enhances their competitiveness and boosts their image and reputation. Through the EMAS Global mechanism, EMAS is available worldwide, just like ISO 14001.

EMAS AND ISO 14001 › COMPLEMENTARITIES AND DIFFERENCES

The EN ISO 14001: 2004 environmental management system requirements are an integral part of EMAS. However, by going the extra mile, EMAS is the most credible and robust environmental management instrument on the market. The superior quality of EMAS rests upon:

- *stricter requirements for 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 organisations' validated environmental statements which provide information to the general public; and*
- *registration by a public authority after verification by an accredited / licensed environmental verifier.*

3 × 3 GOOD REASONS FOR EMAS › AN OVERVIEW

KEY MANAGEMENT CHALLENGES

RESOURCE EFFICIENCY: Resource efficiency rests upon a straightforward concept: minimise resource use and its environmental impact, and operating costs decrease while revenues grow. As experience shows, systematic environmental management decreases the costs of waste generation and energy and water consumption considerably.

CLIMATE PROTECTION: EMAS registered organisations are well prepared to meet stakeholders' expectations of companies' contribution to climate change. Greenhouse gas emissions can be reduced significantly. Moreover, EMAS registered companies monitor their environmental performance. This means they possess comprehensive data sets on their energy consumption and emissions.

CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY: Merely talking about Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) commitment is not enough. Companies have to demonstrate a commitment in their daily operations. EMAS is regarded as a reliable management and reporting instrument which provides support for the practice of CSR.

RISKS & OPPORTUNITY MANAGEMENT

LEGAL COMPLIANCE: EMAS helps organisations demonstrate compliance with legal requirements. The independent third party verification improves the legal and liability security for organisations while simultaneously maintaining their reputation. This can result in an increased market value.

SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT & GREEN PUBLIC PROCUREMENT: EMAS organisations are encouraged to take into account their indirect environmental impacts, i.e. environmental aspects across their value chain (supply chain management). Sectoral Reference Documents are developed for priority sectors, which show the way towards best management practice to minimise environmental impacts where it most

matters. The obligation to continuously improve performance and the reliable EMAS system constitute a guarantee of good environmental performance. Thus, EMAS organisations may leverage their environmental performance when participating in GPP tenders. Additionally, they might want to use ›green‹ business to business procurement to make their own supply chain more sustainable.

CREDIBLE INFORMATION: EMAS facilitates the communication of organisations' environmental performance in a clear and credible manner because of its requirement to publish an annual public environmental statement that is independently validated. This builds trust and confidence because EMAS registered organisations show the public they have nothing to hide.

EMAS DISTINCTIVE FEATURES

PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT: The six environmental core indicators of EMAS help adequately measure and monitor environmental performance against set targets and create multi-annual comparability within and between organisations. This way EMAS provides comparability on how organisations provide information.

EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT: EMAS registered organisations systematically engage their employees in environmental protection activities and reap the benefits of this. Engaged employees are highly motivated, identify themselves with the organisation and are thus more loyal. This in turn creates a positive working atmosphere and leads to improved performance.

STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT: Relationships with stakeholders are complex because suppliers, public authorities, civil society organisations, customers, local communities, media and other interested parties are involved. EMAS provides registered organisations with tools to develop and improve these relationships.

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RESOURCE EFFICIENCY

The first good reason to become EMAS registered is the scheme's key role in resource efficiency. Resource efficiency is the straightforward concept of increasing revenues by lowering resource use, environmental impacts and operating costs. Systematic environmental management decreases the costs of waste generation and energy and water consumption considerably. This is even more important because shortages in the supply of raw materials and unsustainable resource extraction practices have reached critical levels. During the 20th century alone, the use of fossil fuels and the extraction of material resources increased by a factor of ten worldwide. With forecasts of the world population reaching 9 billion by 2050, pressures on natural resources will mount.

ENHANCING COMPETITIVENESS THROUGH INCREASED EFFICIENCY

Business activities rely upon continuous access to natural resources. Consequently, the increasing scarcity of resources and rising prices turn resource efficiency into an important economic factor. Surveys show that EMAS registrations often result in significant reductions in material and energy consumption – particularly in resource-intensive sectors. The resultant cost reductions often outweigh the implementation costs of EMAS.¹

➔ *Through the implementation of EMAS, the Mahou-San Miguel Group, a brewery from Spain, achieved significant improvements in resource efficiency. The brewery, a 2010 EMAS Awards winner, introduced Best Available Technology-measures resulting in a 20% reduction of water consumption at all their plants since 2000 and a 34% reduction of total energy consumption.²*

➔ *The 2010 EMAS Award winner in the small organisation category is Ecoprint, an Estonian printing company. In the course of implementing EMAS, the small enterprise developed »Green Print«, the first environmentally friendly printing service on the Estonian market, by means of which Ecoprint's resource efficiency could be improved remarkably. Notable achievements include the use of rainwater in the printing-house damping system – which is estimated to reduce water consumption by as much as 60% – a 44% reduction in office paper use in 2009, and energy savings through the use of wind turbines and solar panels.³*

➔ *A third noteworthy example of an efficient use of resources is an EMAS registered German University of Applied Sciences. A vital element of their Environmental Management System is students' involvement. By making suggestions, students help to improve the environmental management system and thus the university's environmental performance. Student involvement is achieved through a student survey focusing on key resource efficiency issues. For example, the total measures used by the university to reduce electricity consumption (e.g. through the procurement of energy-efficient computers, or setting the computers at the IT-cluster to shut off automatically at night) have resulted in annual savings of 62.1 tons of CO₂, worth €15.525.⁴*



EMAS AND RESOURCE EFFICIENCY › THE FIRST STEPS

EMAS registered organisations are perfectly equipped to increase their resource efficiency. By addressing resource efficiency issues in all EMAS implementation steps the best results are achieved. The first step of an EMAS registration is to identify all significant environmental impacts in an environmental review. This enables all organisations to discover the main drivers of their operational costs. This comprehensive inventory of all energy and resource consumption flows within the organisation is suitable for global players and smaller enterprises alike.

For the evaluation of efficiency potentials, the use of environmental indicators is advisable. Environmental improvements become measurable and comparable by using EMAS core environmental performance indicators such as material efficiency, waste or water.

THE LOW-HANGING FRUITS AND BEYOND

By »harvesting« the low-hanging fruits large savings can be achieved with comparatively small efforts (e.g. upgrading lighting systems with highly efficient lightbulbs and light sensors). The return on investment from these initial measures ensures full commitment of top management and employees. Employee involvement is particularly important, because employees know best »where the shoe pinches«.

In the following years, EMAS registered organisations can reap the long term benefits of EMAS by introducing systematic (learning) processes to continuously improve their environmental performance. Studies indicate that the financial performance of organisations improves when employees increase their knowledge on environmental management.⁵ Blending EMAS into strategic management decisions ensures that the entire organisation contributes to the continuous improvement of environmental and economic performance.

FURTHER INFORMATION: ↻

Further information on how EMAS boosts resource efficiency is available in this fact sheet: www.ec.europa.eu/environment/emas/pdf/factsheet/EMASResourceEfficiency_high.pdf

Information on resource efficiency provided by the European Commission is available at: www.ec.europa.eu/environment/resource_efficiency

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CLIMATE PROTECTION

The second good reason to become EMAS registered is the scheme's key role in tackling climate change. Stakeholders increasingly hold companies accountable for the impact of their business activities on the global climate. They expect businesses to actively contribute to mitigating climate change. EMAS registered companies (and other organisations) are well prepared to meet these expectations. Greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions can be reduced significantly. Moreover, EMAS registered organisations monitor their environmental performance. This means they possess comprehensive data sets on their energy consumption and (industrial) emissions. Apart from meeting reporting requirements, these data also help identify cost-effective possibilities for lowering emissions.

EMAS AND ENERGY MANAGEMENT STANDARDS

Energy efficiency is high on the political and business agenda. In 2011 a new standard for energy management systems, ISO 50001, was published. This standard defines the organisational requirements for companies in order to improve their energy efficiency continuously and systematically. The structure of the standard is similar to the structure of the EMAS scheme because of its requirements for performance improvement and reporting duties.

EMAS registered organisations already meet most of the ISO 50001 requirements. They need only take some small additional steps to meet ISO 50001 requirements. Alternatively, companies with ISO 50001 certification only need to take a few additional steps to implement EMAS.

EMAS AND GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS REDUCTIONS

With EMAS, organisations constantly monitoring their energy consumption and are in a good position to take part in the European Union Emissions Trading System (EU ETS). EU ETS is the first and biggest international system for the trading of GHG emission allowances. Reporting of GHG emissions is essential for the effective operation of EU ETS. The verification that EMAS requires is taken into consideration during the review of an organisation's emissions data. Some EU Member States translate the EU ETS reporting provisions into tangible benefits for EMAS registered organisations by linking the EMAS scheme to EU ETS.

In Germany, for example, EMAS environmental verifiers are authorised to verify the emissions report required under EU ETS in the sector for which they are licensed. Furthermore, they may verify applications for GHG emissions permits. In practice, this means that environmental verifiers in Germany may assume that the emissions section of the environmental statement of an EMAS registered organisation also meets the requirements of EU ETS.



Hence, the amount of work necessary for data collection and preparation under EU ETS is reduced for EMAS registered organisations. Spot check to determine the data are obligatory though.

REPORTING ACCORDING TO E-PRTR

European law requires that emissions data from companies in several industry sectors must be made available to the public. For this reason, the European Pollutant Release and Transfer Register (E-PRTR) was established. Because EMAS registered organisations also report publicly on their environmental performance, the scheme facilitates emissions reporting for organisations covered under E-PRTR. This synergy simplifies the collection, processing and analysis of data on emissions.

FURTHER INFORMATION:



Synopsis of all EN 16001 and EMAS requirements: www.emas.de/service/pdf-downloads

ISO 50001: www.iso.org/iso/iso_catalogue/management_and_leadership_standards/specific-applications_energy.htm

Information about EU ETS: www.ec.europa.eu/clima/policies/ets/index_en.htm

Information about the emissions register E-PRTR on: www.prtr.ec.europa.eu

Guide for companies and organisations about EN 16001 published by the German Federal Ministry for the Environment: www.bmu.de/english/economy_products/downloads/doc/46418.php

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CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Companies not only have a commercial but also an environmental and social responsibility. Ideally, these three pillars – economy, environment and society, also known as people, planet, profit – are in harmony with one another. Today Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is a well-established concept »whereby companies integrate social and environmental concerns into their business operations on a voluntary basis«⁶.

THE BENEFITS OF CSR

More and more companies realise that good social and environmental performance is beneficial for their image and also results in costs savings and new business opportunities. CSR reduces costs, for example by reducing the risk of lawsuits and by reducing negative consumer perception. At the same time, CSR creates additional value through positive media coverage and »free« or »word-of-mouth« advertising, increased employee retention, enhanced recruitment and increased productivity.

Global international frameworks have been set up to guide companies in managing and reporting their social and environmental impacts and activities in a comprehensive way, such as the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI), the UN Global Compact, the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises and ISO 26000, which is a guideline for social responsibility. CSR is becoming the rule instead of being the exception among large multinational companies: it is estimated that almost 80% of the 250 largest companies in the world report on their sustainability performance.⁷ Close to 1.900 organisations published a GRI based sustainability report in 2010.⁸

EMAS AS THE ENVIRONMENTAL PILLAR OF CSR

Environmental Management Systems, especially those that meet the requirements of EMAS, cover the environmental dimension of CSR completely. EMAS registered organisations worldwide systematically manage and improve the environmental aspects of their production processes. EMAS registered organisations are also already fully transparent on their environmental performance. The EMAS Regulation clearly defines the demanding criteria that EMAS registered organisations must meet. EMAS registered organisations report on the improvements of their environmental performance in an environmental statement. This includes mandatory reporting on a set of environmental core indicators.

All information in the EMAS environmental statement is validated by an accredited/licensed environmental verifier. EMAS environmental verifiers are independent and subjected for their part to an independent quality control by the EU Member States (the EMAS Competent Bodies, and EMAS Accreditation/Licensing Bodies). The external and independent nature of the EMAS registration process ensures the credibility and reliability of the scheme and of the information provided by registered organisations.



This robust EMAS registration process results in EMAS environmental statements always being third party validated, whereas CSR reports are not necessarily. Furthermore, EMAS registered organisations have the obligation to actively involve employees in environmental management activities and provide them with training. EMAS demonstrates how organisations benefit from systematic involvement of employees as in-house environmental experts and owners of the system. This often results in an improved employee morale and thus has indirect positive effects on social performance since committed employees are key to successful CSR management as well.

Comparison of the content of the environmental sections of randomly selected CSR reports based on self-declarations with EMAS environmental statements issued by the same organisations, leads to the observation that the level of detail of data included in the latter exceeds that of the first with regard to direct environmental aspects related to production aspects. Thus, EMAS environmental statements provide for a reliable and strong basis for an environmental section in a CSR report.

FURTHER INFORMATION:



European Commission's Website on CSR: www.ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sustainable-business/corporate-social-responsibility/index_en.htm

.....
An in-depth comparison between EMAS and ISO 26000 is available in the fact sheet »The links between EMAS and ISO 26000«, which is available on the EU EMAS website.

.....
International Organisation for Standardization: Discovering ISO 26000: www.iso.org/iso/iso_catalogue/management_and_leadership_standards/social_responsibility/sr_discovering_iso26000.htm.

.....
GRI: www.globalreporting.org

.....
UN Global Compact: www.unglobalcompact.org

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LEGAL COMPLIANCE

As a result of the increased public focus on business ethics, ensuring legal compliance is key for organisations to thrive in the long-term. EMAS is an excellent instrument for organisations to demonstrate compliance with legal requirements. This reduces the risks of environmental liability issues and increases legal security. Accordingly, the risks of negative headlines related to environmental issues are also minimised. Consequently, this can increase the market value of an organisation. Because verified legal compliance is a precondition for registration under EMAS, separate compliance audits become redundant.

ASSURING LEGAL COMPLIANCE

In order to be EMAS registered organisations must demonstrate legal compliance. Due to this requirement, EMAS verifications always have the character of a compliance check. This is a check that is executed by an independent and external environmental verifier, who is in turn subjected to quality checks by national government authorities. The combined use of internal environmental (compliance) audits, verification by external verifiers, and finally cross checking with responsible environmental authorities before registration, is the best possible assurance for legal compliance.

Hence, the EMAS logo assures credibility among stakeholders such as customers, governmental authorities, civil society organisations and the public. Additionally, EMAS registration is the best way to guarantee that no negative headlines related to environmental issues appear in the media.

REDUCED RISK OF LIABILITY

A widely acknowledged benefit of EMAS is the reduction of negative incidents. The comprehensive legal review included in the EMAS registration process considerably reduces the organisation's liability and the risk of unpleasant and expensive claims based on environmental liability. Therefore, business operations run smoothly and this translates into better ratings and assessment by investors and insurance companies.



REGULATORY RELIEF

A validated environmental statement demonstrates full legal compliance with applicable environmental regulations. As a result, enforcement authorities in several EU countries have lowered their constraints, especially with respect to supervision, reporting and documentation duties. One example of administrative relief is that environmental authorities are using existing EMAS environmental statements rather than demanding new or separate statements for waste disposal issues. Furthermore, organisations applying for permissions may reduce procedural costs by using existing EMAS documentation.

Organisations which are legally compliant may be subjected to fewer environmental inspections, to less frequent renewals of permits or find their permit applications receive priority. Additionally, in several cases, regulatory authorities grant a financial advantage. For example, waste fees are reduced by 50% in the German region of Bavaria and by 30% for EMAS registered companies in the Italian region of Emilia-Romagna. In the latter region, the costs of getting an IED⁹ (Industrial Emissions Directive) permit are also lower for EMAS registered companies.¹⁰

PREPARED FOR LEGAL CHANGES

EMAS is also useful in corporate strategy processes. The scheme alerts participants to prospective legal developments. An organisation launching or reviewing its Environmental Management System can thus anticipate and integrate upcoming regulations.

FURTHER INFORMATION:



Read more about the benefits of legal compliance in the fact sheet »EMAS Benefits« available on the official European EMAS website.

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SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT & GREEN PUBLIC PROCUREMENT

Environmental protection does not stop at an organisation's gate. Acting as a responsible organisation involves systematic and strategic management of environmental aspects across the entire value chain. Two instruments are particularly relevant in this context: Supply chain management and Green Public Procurement. EMAS facilitates the use of both instruments within an organisation.

SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT

Public awareness of environmental considerations in the entire supply chain is clearly increasing. This is illustrated by the following »screaming« headline introducing a critical article in an international newspaper not too long ago: »Environmental pollution at supplier's production site. Multinational enterprise criticized by environmental organisations for irresponsible business practice«. Influencing environmental performance outside the premises of one's own company is challenging, particularly for enterprises operating in many different countries. EMAS can help you master this challenge!

Since EMAS is globally applicable, helping suppliers to implement the scheme is the best way of ensuring that supply chain risks are minimised worldwide. Learning processes and the transfer of environmental performance data will be greatly facilitated. Finally, legal compliance, and the education and training of knowledgeable and environmentally aware employees is promoted.

EMAS implementation also offers great potential for suppliers keen on entering »green« markets. Many purchasers favour the premium label EMAS and consequently award extra points when the supplier is assessed.



GREEN PUBLIC PROCUREMENT: BETTER PROSPECTS WITH EMAS

Europe's public authorities have a high purchasing power. They spend approximately 2 trillion Euros annually, equivalent to some 19% of the European Union's gross domestic product.¹¹ Many public authorities on EU, national and regional levels implement strict Green Public Procurement (GPP) policies and take environmental factors into account when buying products or services.

Contracting authorities can ask bidders to demonstrate their capacity to apply environmental management measures for the duration of the contract; for example when a bridge needs to be built in a nature protection area. Contracting may also set environmental criteria regarding the professional (environmental) training of employees. In such cases, EMAS registration can be recognised as sufficient proof of compliance with this specific selection criterion.

FURTHER INFORMATION:



Official European Union website
on GPP: [www.ec.europa.eu/
environment/gpp/index_en.htm](http://www.ec.europa.eu/environment/gpp/index_en.htm)

European Commission
»Buying Green!« Handbook:
[www.ec.europa.eu/environment/gpp/
pdf/handbook.pdf](http://www.ec.europa.eu/environment/gpp/pdf/handbook.pdf)

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CREDIBLE INFORMATION

In our »information age« almost any kind of digital information is instantly available to everyone everywhere. Governmental and business communication follows suit. In order to protect their public image and generate trust it has become vital for companies to (digitally) communicate their environmental performance in a clear and credible manner. EMAS facilitates this because of its obligation to publish an annual public environmental statement that is independently verified. This builds trust and confidence because EMAS registered organisations show the public they have nothing to hide.

ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT

EMAS environmental statements summarise significant environmental information, facts and figures in a structured manner. Independent and accredited or licensed environmental verifiers perform a thorough quality check. The environmental statement discloses results and compares them to the environmental objectives of the organisation. It also reveals future steps the organisation intends to take in order to keep improving its environmental performance. An environmental statement is paramount for an open communication with key stakeholders. EMAS environmental statements must always be disclosed to the public.

CREDIBILITY THROUGH VALIDATION

Quite a few companies issue environmental or sustainability reports with flashy examples of their performance. Often those reports selectively describe a few »cherry-picked« results that mask a much less flattering performance in other areas. Sometimes they bear a self-declared quality assurance seal. Not with EMAS!

EMAS sets clear and objective criteria for environmental reviews and environmental statements. No »cherry-picking« here. Only independent environmental verifiers that are accredited/licensed and supervised by Accreditation or Licensing Bodies are authorised to validate EMAS environmental statements. The external and independent nature of the EMAS registration process ensures the credibility of the scheme and the reliability of the information provided by registered organisations. The robust EMAS registration process results in EMAS environmental statements always being third party validated, whereas CSR reports are not necessarily.



Only registered organisations are allowed to use the EMAS quality mark – the official EMAS logo. The individual registration number of the organisation prevents the illegal use of this quality mark. All EMAS registered organisations are listed in the official EMAS Register, which is publicly accessible online.

EMAS LOGO

The EMAS logo (on the right) is an attractive visual communication and marketing tool designed to highlight an organisation's dedication to continually improving its environmental performance. The logo may only be used by EMAS registered organisations. The use of the logo raises awareness about EMAS among stakeholders. The logo also signals legal compliance, local accountability, active employee involvement, reliability and credibility of the environmental information.



FURTHER INFORMATION:



The official EMAS Register is available at: www.ec.europa.eu/environment/emas/register

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PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

Systematic environmental management is all about improving environmental performance. But everybody knows that »you can only manage what you can measure«. EMAS' six environmental core indicators help adequately measure and monitor environmental performance against set targets. On top of that, the indicators form the basis for the disclosure of key environmental information to stakeholders such as investors, lenders, rating agencies, non-governmental organisations and others.

THE NEED FOR QUANTITATIVE DATA

In an environment where energy, water and other resources are becoming increasingly important, managers – from the facility level to the C-suite – need quantitative environmental data to track progress and evaluate performance against objectives. Only then can an organisation's performance be understood, trends can be identified and decisions can be made. Furthermore, by using quantitative data performance can be compared against competitors to arrive at a benchmark. Generating quantitative data also enables a facts-based stakeholder dialogue on strengths and weaknesses of an organisation's environmental performance. Feedback received from stakeholders gives valuable insights on how to augment an organisation's competitive advantage.

EMAS PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

To measure and display a company's environmental performance in a quantitative manner, indicators are paramount. However, choosing suitable indicators is a critical ingredient to success. In contrast to the environmental management standard ISO 14001, EMAS provides registered organisations with the following six performance indicators:

1. **ENERGY EFFICIENCY**
2. **MATERIAL EFFICIENCY**
3. **WATER**
4. **WASTE**
5. **BIODIVERSITY**
6. **EMISSIONS**



The use of core indicators allows for a year on year comparison to assess the development of the environmental performance of the organisation. At the same time, they improve comparability within the same sector and across different sectors. For each indicator input and output are set into relation, i.e. energy consumption per product produced. The indicators make a statement about an organisation's process efficiency and effectiveness. They are indicators of inputs and outputs that can identify significant savings and contribute to an organisation's cost reduction.

SECTORAL REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

From 2012 onwards the European Commission, in consultation with EU Member States and other stakeholders, is developing Sectoral Reference Documents (SRDs). SRDs are valuable sources for sector-specific performance indicators. In addition to detailed technical information describing best environmental management practice to improve environmental performance, these reference documents contain sector-specific key performance core indicators, and benchmarks of excellence.

FURTHER INFORMATION:



In-depth information on EMAS indicators is available in the fact sheet »EMAS Indicators« available on the European EMAS website.

Further information on EMAS Sectoral Reference Documents is available at: www.susproc.jrc.ec.europa.eu/activities/emas

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EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

Your own employees are your best asset when it comes to boosting your environmental performance. EMAS registered organisations have recognised this. They systematically engage their employees in environmental protection activities and reap the benefits of this. Engaged employees are highly motivated, identify themselves with the organisation and are thus more loyal. This in turn creates a positive working atmosphere and leads to an improved performance.

USING EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCE

Employees are highly skilled and best equipped to identify both quick wins and also long term measures to improve environmental performance. As they are familiar with the structure and processes of their organisation, they see potential for improvement and identify viable and cost effective solutions to environmental management challenges. Employee involvement also helps to identify innovative solutions resulting in viable new processes or products. EMAS supports sensitising employees to environmental aspects of their work. Finally, suggestions for (environmental) improvements made by employees and their subsequent implementation create and maintain support for EMAS itself.

Thus, EMAS facilitates the cooperation between employees and management, work councils and employee teams. This not only contributes to environmental improvements but also serves as a platform for establishing other thematic teams across departments, for example on occupational health and safety issues.

ENGAGEMENT LEADING TO EMPLOYEE MOTIVATION

Through EMAS employees are frequently informed about environmental achievements. This increases their motivation to achieve the environmental goals of the organisation. A positive article published in a staff magazine or an interview with a supportive employee in the environmental statement can be very motivating. EMAS registered organisations also encourage and incentivise employees' participation in environmental protection. For example, employees whose suggestions for improvements significantly contribute towards achieving the organisation's environmental goals can be rewarded.



ENVIRONMENTAL TRAINING CONTRIBUTING TO IMPROVED PERFORMANCE

Improving employees' skills and changing their daily behaviour and mind-set is vital to implementing a viable environmental management system. Through EMAS, organisations can educate employees about potential environmental impacts associated with their work and the benefits of improved personal performance. Training not only ensures an organisation's success but also helps employees to grow and develop career enhancing skills, which in turn translates into employee motivation.

ATTRACTING TALENT AND EMPLOYEE LOYALTY

The ability to attract and retain talent is key in today's business world. Experience has shown that organisations which distinguish themselves from their competitors in terms of environmental commitment find it easier to attract new talent. Long-term training measures help employees to become and remain committed to environmental awareness on the job. Furthermore, by establishing the organisation's credibility, employees of EMAS registered organisations often identify themselves much more strongly with their organisations than others.

FURTHER INFORMATION:



The six EMAS Awards winners of the 2011 edition have excelled in employee engagement. Find out more about them at: www.ec.europa.eu/environment/emas/emasawards/index.htm

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STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT

Providing information to stakeholders and actively involving them in environmental management improves environmental performance and drives innovation. Stakeholder involvement focuses on those interests and actors who affect or in turn are affected by an organisation. Relationships with stakeholders are complex because suppliers, public authorities, civil society organisations, customers, local communities, media and other interested parties are involved. EMAS provides registered organisations with tools to develop and improve these relationships.

STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT LEADING TO PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENTS

An essential commitment made by organisations is to continuously improve their environmental performance through open dialogue with stakeholders. The openness and transparency of an EMAS environmental statement differentiates EMAS from other schemes and helps build confidence. Registered organisations demonstrate that stakeholder involvement is not just a technical exercise but an integral part of their corporate culture.

For example, input from experienced suppliers can be used to improve resource efficiency along the entire value chain of a product. A company can also cooperate with an environmental organisation on a biodiversity initiative to assess the balance between its impact on biodiversity and its dependence on the ecosystem for water, raw materials and suchlike.

STRENGTHENED RELATIONSHIPS

Providing credible information is an important asset for EMAS registered organisations when engaging with stakeholders. Many organisations have indicated that through their EMAS registrations relationships with authorities have been strengthened, which in turn has led to a reduction in external inspections and to easier approval procedures. This is valuable when the public perception of a company's environmental performance is rather negative, so that applying for permits and winning planning approval is difficult.

EMAS also allows companies to open a dialogue with non-governmental organisations (NGOs) so that the NGOs have the hard facts and do not have to speculate about the exact nature of processes and the amount of emissions. This increases mutual understanding and may prevent negative headlines. EMAS focuses on local accountability and helps companies act as good neighbours. This is particularly important for companies with (production) sites near residential areas.



Investing in strengthened relationships can be done by using employees as ambassadors of the company. They can provide information to the public during tours around the premises or »open house« days. In cooperation with regional schools, companies can organise site visits for students and showcase examples of practical environmental protection in an »ecologically conscious factory«.

SPURRING INNOVATION AND PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT

Engaging with stakeholders helps identify trends which can be integrated into corporate strategy. For example, through online discussion forums stakeholders as external experts can comment on the environmental statement, share innovative ideas, challenge approaches and get feedback. Another possibility is »Open Innovation«, which integrates external problem-solvers into the corporate innovation process. Stakeholders such as universities, NGOs or individual consumers can voice their needs and participate in the development of new environmentally-friendly products or services.

FURTHER INFORMATION:



The theme of the EMAS Awards 2011 was »stakeholder involvement«. Find out more about the winners and their stakeholder involvement practices at: www.ec.europa.eu/environment/emas/emasawards/index.htm

GET STARTED! THE STEPWISE IMPLEMENTATION OF EMAS

The eight steps your organisation needs to take in order to benefit from an official EMAS registration:

1. CONDUCT AN ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

Your organisation needs to conduct an 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.

2. ADOPT AN ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

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

3. DEVELOP AN ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAMME

Your organisation needs to develop an environmental programme that contains information on specific environmental objectives and targets. The environmental programme is a tool to help your organisation in your everyday work when planning and implementing the improvements.

4. ESTABLISH AN ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (EMS)

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



5. CARRY OUT AN INTERNAL ENVIRONMENTAL AUDIT

After the EMS is established, you need to carry out an environmental audit. The audit assesses in particular whether the EMS is in place and in conformity with your organisation's policy and programme. The audit also checks if your organisation is in compliance with relevant environmental regulatory requirements.

6. PREPARE AN ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT

Your organisation needs to provide a public statement of your 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 your organisation's environmental performance.

7. INDEPENDENT VERIFICATION AND VALIDATION BY AN ENVIRONMENTAL VERIFIER

An EMAS environmental verifier accredited or licensed with an EMAS Accreditation or Licensing Body of a Member State examines and verifies the environmental review, the EMS and the audit procedure and validates the environmental statement of your organisation.

8. REGISTER WITH THE COMPETENT BODY OF THE MEMBER STATE

Your validated environmental statement is sent to the appropriate EMAS Competent Body for registration and made publicly available. Your organisation is assigned an official EMAS registration number and is allowed to use the EMAS logo.

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LIST OF SOURCES

¹ According to the »Study on the Costs and Benefits of EMAS to Registered Organisations«, which was prepared by Milieu and Risk & Policy Analysts in 2009 for the European Commission. It is available at: www.ec.europa.eu/environment/emas/pdf/news/costs_and_benefits_of_emas.pdf.

² www.ec.europa.eu/environment/emas/emasawards/winners_2010.htm

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⁴ EMAS Factsheet: EMAS Boosts Resource Efficiency www.ec.europa.eu/environment/emas/pdf/factsheet/EMASResourceEfficiency.pdf

⁵ E.g. Rennings et al. 2005: The influence of different characteristics of the EU environmental management and auditing scheme on technical environmental innovations and economic performance. In: *Ecological Economics* 57, 45–59.

⁶ COM (2001) 366.

⁷ www.globalreporting.org (access: 12/2011).

⁸ www.cdproject.net/en-US/WhatWeDo/CDPNewsArticlePages/linking-up-GRI-and-CDP.aspx (access: 7 December 2011).

⁹ The Industrial Emissions Directive is the successor of the IPPC (Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control) Directive.

¹⁰ According to the »Study on the Costs and Benefits of EMAS to Registered Organisations«, which is available on the official EU EMAS website.

¹¹ www.ec.europa.eu/environment/gpp/what_en.htm (access: 12/2011).

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