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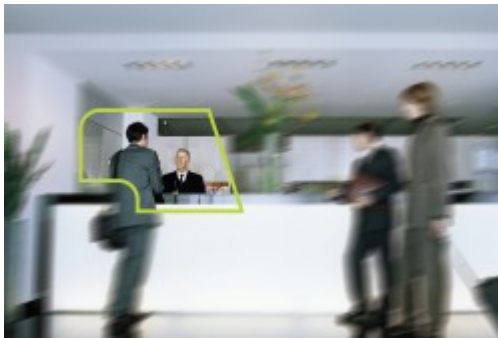
EMAS - The Eco-Management and Audit Scheme

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EMAS (Eco-Management and Audit Scheme) is a voluntary environmental management system (EMS), under which companies and other public organisations evaluate, manage and continuously improve their environmental performance.

CORE ELEMENTS OF EMAS: PERFORMANCE, CREDIBILITY AND TRANSPARENCY

EMAS has been operative since 1995. The latest revision (EMAS III) came into effect on 11 January 2010. Currently, more than 4,400 organisations and approximately 7,600 sites are EMAS registered.



The core elements of EMAS are performance, credibility and transparency. By carrying out annual updates of environmental policy targets and actions to implement and evaluate them, registered organisations continually improve their environmental performance and provide evidence that they comply with all environmental legislation that is applicable to them. Third party verification from independent auditors significantly adds credibility to registered organisations by guaranteeing the value of both the actions taken and the disclosed environmental information.

Transparency is generated by the environmental statement, which an organisation is required to provide as part of EMAS registration. The communication tool makes available to the public information on the environmental impact and performance of the organisation.

EMAS REGISTRATION PROCEDURE: SIX STEPS TO REGISTRATION

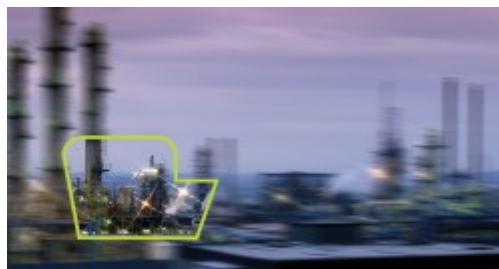
The EMAS registration process involves several steps that need to be taken by organisations before they can register to the scheme:

- 1) The first step for an organisation is to adopt an environmental policy, which entails commitment both to comply with relevant environmental legislation and achieve continuous improvements in environmental performance;
- 2) Following this, the organisation conducts an environmental review. It is important to consider all environmental aspects of the organisation's activities, products and services;
- 3) An effective environmental management system will be established, aimed at achieving the organisation's environmental policy objectives;
- 4) An environmental audit will be carried out by assessing the environmental management system in place and reviewing compliance with relevant environmental regulatory requirements;
- 5) The organisation will provide and make publicly available an environmental statement detailing its environmental performance and including a summary of the results achieved and the steps necessary for future improvements;
- 6) Once the environmental statement has been validated by the accredited verifier, the organisation will receive a registration certificate. The organisation now has the right to use the EMAS logo.

EMAS integrates the management requirements of the widely acknowledged environmental management standard ISO 14001:2004. A successful certification of ISO 14001:2004 means that the most important steps toward EMAS certification have been taken. However, as a premium EMS, EMAS goes beyond the ISO 14001:2004 requirements.

BENEFITS OF THE SCHEME: ADDED VALUE FOR ORGANISATIONS

Registration to EMAS adds value to various types of organisations. Benefits can be created not only for larger and multi-site organisations or public authorities, but also for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) with few financial resources and limited in-house EMAS expertise.



EMAS can enable organisations to identify opportunities for better management of resources. For instance, cost reductions can be achieved via increased efficiency and energy savings. Moreover, by assessing their operational procedures, organisations can find opportunities to reduce associated risk levels. This is particularly relevant for companies in the manufacturing sector, where risks associated with industrial processes are significant. Furthermore, greater awareness of regulatory requirements can lead to improved relations with regulators. Hence, authorities may choose to relax regulatory requirements for EMAS-registered organisations. Improved relations may also be achieved with additional stakeholders. For instance, employee involvement and training under EMAS can lead to improved employee morale and a better implementation of the EMS. In addition, EMAS registration of a site in close proximity to residential areas can enhance transparency and credibility of an organisation, which, in turn, may lead to better relations with residents and local non-governmental organisations. Finally, EMAS registration can lead to increased market access and improved relations with customers. Both the EMAS logo and the environmental statement can be used in marketing and communications activities.

EMAS III: STRENGTHENING THE SCHEME

The latest modifications to the EMAS Regulation have been made to ensure that EMAS remains a high-quality EMS. The main objectives of EMAS III are improving the applicability of the scheme for organisations – particularly for SMEs – and strengthening EMAS information and communications activities.



In order to improve the applicability of the scheme, EMAS III allows flexibility in the frequency with which SMEs are required to publish their environmental statement and updates. This flexibility will help SMEs save financial and human resources. The scheme also allows for organisations with sites located in more than one European Union Member State to make use of a single corporate registration of all or some of its sites. This allowance will ease the administrative and financial burden on organisations. Furthermore, special assistance in the development and implementation phases of EMAS registration will be given to clusters of organisations such as industrial associations. Additionally, environmental core indicators, which are introduced to achieve a harmonised and thorough consideration of environmental effects, help organisations precisely document their environmental performance. The indicators focus on key environmental areas such as energy efficiency, material efficiency or emissions. Finally, reference documents will be developed by the European Commission to facilitate the practical implementation of EMAS requirements. For instance, information will be given on best environmental management practices and the use of environmental indicators in specific sectors.

In addition to improving the applicability of the scheme, the latest revision helps to both disseminate information on EMAS more effectively and broaden the geographical scope of the scheme. In order to communicate EMAS in one coherent and distinctive way, only one logo will be used. Registered organisations may use the logo for promotion and marketing activities.

EMAS III also encourages the global uptake of the scheme. Member States are entitled to decide if they allow registration of organisations or single sites located outside the EU. Finally, both Member States and the European Commission will actively promote EMAS and make available information on the scheme.

For more information on EMAS and its latest revision, please visit the [official European Commission EMAS website](#).