

Introduction

The ISO 14001:2015 standard is used to help organisations to integrate an Environmental Management System (EMS) within their business processes and operations. The standard applies to organisations of all sizes and sectors as it is bespoke to each individual organisation. The ISO 14001 standard was updated in 2015 to include a greater focus on leadership, business risks, opportunities and lifecycle analysis. There is a three year transition period for organisations with an existing certified system to ISO 14001:2004 to enable upgrade to the new standard.

An EMS provides a structured approach to managing environmental performance and planning to reduce your organisations impacts on the environment.

What are the business benefits?

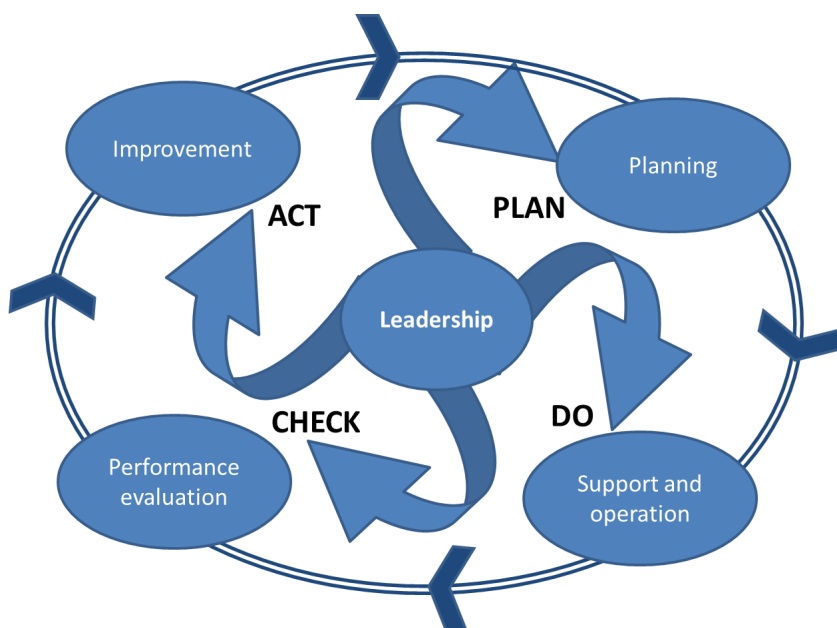
Establishing an EMS to the ISO 14001:2015 standard includes a constant leadership role from top management which will ensure that the EMS is fully integrated through the organisation. The standard adopts the need for continual improvement of environmental performance whilst allowing for good business practices and full integration into existing business practices.

Benefits of implementing an EMS in your organisation include:

- Better communication and environmental awareness in all departments
- Leadership involvement engaging and motivating other employees
- Improved organisation reputation giving confidence to stakeholders and customers
- Strategic business aims achieved through integration of environment into core business management
- Providing a competitive and financial advantage
- Encouraging a better environmental performance throughout your supply chain

Basic Structure

The EMS is designed to sit within the organisations business processes with input from all levels of management. The identified environmental objectives and targets for the business need to be integrated into normal business operations.



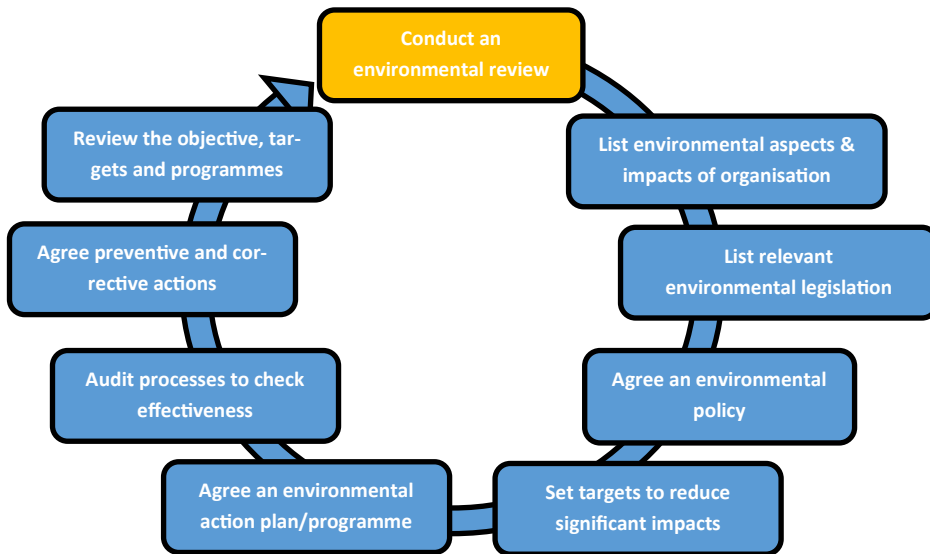
An EMS has identified outputs such as:

- Compliance Obligations Register
- Aspects and Impacts Register
- Environmental Policy
- Objectives, Targets and Programmes
- Risks and Opportunities Report
- Environmental Action Plan
- Internal Audit reports
- Operational Controls
- Management Reviews

An EMS is a process based approach looking at inputs, processes and outputs for the organisation. It will look at what your business needs to operate, what the business activities/operations are and what your final products and/or services are.

How to get started

The processes for implementing an EMS are:



The first step to establishing an EMS is to assess your organisation using an **environmental review** that will look at all aspects of the business.

Once the business baseline has been established then the EMS can be constructed to suit business activities. A key document is the **environmental policy** that states the organisations intentions regarding environmental protection. It presents a description of key issues relevant to your business and is a key method to communicate to your interested parties.

Risks and Opportunities

A new addition to the 2015 standard is the need to determine risks and opportunities related to the context of the organisation, interested parties, environmental aspects and compliance obligations. The risks and opportunities facing an organisation should be central to the strategic direction and decision making of the organisation. Identification of business risks and opportunities is usually through a management tool such as PESTLE or SWOT analysis. Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis is more suitable for smaller SMEs while PESTLE analysis (see below) is suitable for all types and sizes of business. Note that there will be multiple entries for each area.

Area	Issue	Potential impact on business	Potential risks and/or opportunities	Action Req'd (Y/N)	Action(s) to address risks and opportunities
Political	Exit from the EU	Changed requirements and operations	Change in regulations Change to business taxes	Y	
Economic	Increased fuel costs	Increased operational costs	Opportunity to change travel arrangements	Y	
Social	Market trends	Changing attitudes changes marketplace	Loss of business Gain of business	Y	
Technological	Technology improvements	Improved production line	More efficient business processes	Y	
Legal	New legislation	Ensure compliance or risk penalties	Improved environmental performance	Y	
Environmental	Increased costs for waste	Increased cost to business	Increased expenditure Opportunity for change	Y	

Certification

Certification to ISO 14001:2015 can be achieved through a certification body accredited by UKAS (www.ukas.com). Once certified your organisation can display the certificate and logo on marketing materials to demonstrate your commitment to environmental management to customers and other interested parties.

If you would like to know more contact GEP Environmental and speak to one of our consultants.