



Case Study

From Ecodynamique Label to EMAS



Background

BTC is the Belgian agency for development cooperation. On behalf of the Belgian government, BTC supports developing countries in their fight against poverty. Apart from this public service, BTC also executes contracts on behalf of other national and international organisations that work toward sustainable human development.

In 2006, BTC obtained EMAS registration and also reached the highest level of the Ecodynamique label (3 stars). BTC is also certified ISO 14 001.

Reasons for EMAS Registration

The EMAS registration of BTC fits into the policy of the Belgian federal government, which has suggested that all public services and federal institutions implement an environmental management system such as EMAS. BTC felt that the best way to implement EMAS was to start at the local level using the Ecodynamique Label.

The Implementation Process

The environment team, which includes an environmental manager, was responsible for EMAS implementation. Overall, EMAS registration took approximately one year. In addition, the Belgian government provided support in the form of training and assistance from external consultants during the EMAS implementation process.

Principal difficulties in the EMAS implementation process included the complexity of certain requirements such as documentation and ensuring information is updated regularly. Other difficulties included involving and informing the different departments of the company and as many employees as possible. External consultants were called in to help with these issues.

Top management and directors are also regularly involved and committed to supporting EMAS at BTC. Of the 3 environmental management systems that are in place, approximately 30 to 50 % of time spent by the environmental manager is devoted to EMAS.

Benefits of an EMAS Registration

Some of the greatest benefits of EMAS for BTC include the well-structured management system, as well as the transparency aspect that involves validation by external auditors. This ensures that reports and figures are accurate and transparent. Finally, EMAS has helped the visibility of the company through external and internal communications.

Advice for other Organisations

Organisations wishing to implement EMAS are advised to ensure that the organisation is fully committed by allocating sufficient time and resources (both staff time and financial resources). In addition, the involvement of top management and Directors is critical in ensuring that the process is successful and brings an added value to the organisation.