

EMS Factsheet

EcoStart



Overview

Origin and development

EcoStart was launched in 2006, with the goal of developing a less formal EMS for small and medium sized enterprises. EcoStart was developed by the Employment and Economic Development Centres of South-Savo, the Regional Council of South-Savo, and the Jyväskylä Regional Development Company Jykes Ltd. Employment and Economic Development Centres (T&E Centres) in Finland operate under the Ministry of Trade and Industry and are based on the combined forces of the Ministry of Trade and Industry, the Ministry of Labour and the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry. EcoStart can be implemented in either a manufacturing or a service company. A total of 7 companies have successfully implemented the programme so far and 58 companies are currently in the process of certification.

Objectives

EcoStart is being conducted for SMEs to improve eco-efficiency and to enhance their environmental performance. The basic programme is 4-10 days consisting of initial review, workshop sessions, the development of an environmental programme and a follow-up session. One of the criteria concerning EcoStart was to build it so that it would be easy for a company to continue on to ISO14001 or EMAS.

Implementation structure

EcoStart is a subsidised service model, where consultants are closely involved in the EMS process together with the representatives of the company. EcoStart consultants are environmental experts approved by the Employment and Economic Development Centre, who is the authority responsible for running the EcoStart EMS. Management and other key persons of a company receive guidance on maintaining the environmental management system after an initial consultation.

EMS in brief

Key characteristic

Focus on eco-competitiveness and eco-efficiency

Implementing institution

Employment and Economic Development Centre for South Savo, Finland

Available since

2006

Geographical scope

Finland

Target group

Manufacturing and Services

Size of targeted companies

SMEs

Total number of certifications

7

Number of participants in the process of certification

58 (from 2006 to the end of 2008)

Most important drivers and barriers

Drivers

- ☒ Available marketing tools
- ☒ Cost/resource savings
- ☒ Customer/supplier demand
- ☒ Environmental benefits
- ☒ Legal security
- ☒ Political support/financial incentives
- ☒ Proof of corporate social responsibility
- Other: n/a

Barriers

- ☐ EMS not widely recognised
- ☐ High implementation costs
- ☐ Little similarities to EMAS or ISO 14001
- ☐ Perceived complication/unattainability
- Other: n/a

☒ Yes

☐ No

The EMS in detail	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Commitment of top management: Commitment of top management is a prerequisite for EcoStart.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Environmental review: The first step in EcoStart is to collect input data before the initial consultation starts. The data includes the use of raw materials, energy consumption and emissions, environmental aspects of the production or services process, finished products, and procurement. These aspects are included in the review.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Environmental policy or guidelines: The environmental policy and programme of the company is determined at the end of a series of "think tank sessions" defining the goals and objectives for improving environmental performance and enhancing environmental competitiveness of the company.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Proof of legal compliance: It is required that companies comply with relevant legislation.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Objectives and environmental management programme: Objectives of the company's environmental management programme are customised according to the company's situation and results of the environmental review.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Definition of organisational structure at company level: Companies nominate persons responsible for environmental matters.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Training and education requirements: EcoStart consultants give guidance to the key persons during the process and ensure the participation of the relevant personnel during the EMS process. No further training or education is required.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Communication (internal and external): Companies nominate persons to communicate their environmental information; however the procedures for internal/external communication are not indicated.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Documentation requirements: Documentation of the environmental policy and programme is required for auditing and certification purposes.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Internal follow-up/ checking and corrective action/ continuous improvement: Companies can decide on several internal auditing routines. Results of the environmental review acts as a basis for deciding improvement measures. EcoStart is based on the idea of continuous improvement and therefore acts as a stimulus for innovation.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Management review: Companies decide the method for review. There are guidelines included to assist in management review.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Environmental report/ statement or similar publication by the participants of the EMS: Not required.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes/Required <input type="checkbox"/> Partially addressed <input type="checkbox"/> Not indicated or not required	

External audit/certification

Is an external audit required? Yes.

Responsibility for external audit and qualifications needed: An external auditor authorised by the Employment and Economic Development Centre. Auditors need to pass specific requirements.

Audit period: One year after the implementation of EcoStart, then three-yearly.

Certification: After having complied with the EcoStart EMS for one year, the company may request a programme audit and an EcoStart Certificate in recognition of its commitment to continually improving its environmental performance. Certification is valid for three years and can be renewed following a re-audit.

Similarities to EMAS

- ☒ Initial environmental review
- ☒ Environmental policy
- ☒ Legal compliance
- ☐ Employee involvement
- ☒ Planning
- ☐ Implementation
- ☒ Checking and corrective action
- ☒ Continuous improvement
- ☐ Management review
- ☒ Certification
- ☐ Environmental statement
- ☐ Validation of environmental statement

Relation of the EMS to EMAS: Close

For further information on the EMS, please contact:

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