



Summary Brochure

From Green Key to EMAS



Benefits of a Step-up from Green Key to EMAS

Most steps towards an EMAS registration have already been taken by organisations that are Green Key certified. However, the few additional steps that are required can provide further benefits: improved operational control, control of documents and emergency preparedness and response are likely to lead to risk minimisation and efficiency improvements within organisations. In addition, they can lead to environmental benefits, due to a reduced number of environmental incidents. The publication and verification of an environmental statement that is required under EMAS provides organisations with improved communication possibilities. Finally, EMAS offers the advantage of being legally recognised through a European Council Regulation and certified organisations are listed in a public register.

Introduction

Origin and development

Green Key was developed for hotels in Denmark in 1994, and in 1998 France joined and started labelling camping sites. Today, criteria are available for hotels, camping sites, hostels, summer houses, restaurants, leisure facilities, and conference facilities. Not all criteria are available in all countries. It is an ongoing work to develop criteria for the international campaign. The Green Key is awarded to companies within the tourism industry: hotels, youth hostels, conference- and holiday centres, campsites, holiday houses, leisure facilities and restaurants. The Green Key is an international programme and is supported by consumer groups, NGOs, authorities, and business associations. To obtain the Green Key a company has to meet a detailed list of environmental requirements. Besides environmental demands, the criteria also include requirements concerning policy and action plans. Today, criteria are available for hotels, camping sites, hostels, summer houses, restaurants, as well as leisure and conference facilities. Not all criteria are available in all countries but work on this is in progress. The Green Key is made available by the FEE (Foundation for Environmental Education) in 54 countries.

At this point, the Green Key is implemented in 14 countries and five other countries are preparing implementation. The Green Key coordination is hosted by FEE Netherlands. In each country, a national steering group, or a national jury, with representatives from authorities, NGOs, and business associations, monitors national Green Key activities and approves all applications from new Green Key businesses. Periodically each awarded business receives a control visit from the national Green Key operator.

As of 2009, approximately 650 organisations are Green Key certified in many EU Member States and other countries around the world.

Objectives

The comprehensive demands put on the labelled businesses comprise demands on environmental management, on technical measures, on communication, and on environmental education. The Green Key is unique in the sense that it focuses on environmental education.

Closeness to EMAS

Green Key can be considered as a stepping-stone to EMAS, as a successful Green Key certification means that a number of important steps towards an EMAS certification have been taken. However, its easier implementation also means that a few additional steps will have to be taken in order to register under EMAS. The most fundamental of these additional steps lie in the areas of control of documentation, emergency preparedness and response, and third-party auditing. These steps are outlined on page 2 of this brochure.

For further information on the EMS, please contact:

Mr. Erik van Dijk - International Coordinator Green Key
Tel: +31 (0) 343 - 524720
Email: erik@kmvk.nl
Website: www.green-key.org

For further information on these guidelines, please contact:

EMAS Helpdesk
Tel: +33 (0)1 53 90 11 75
Email: emas@biois.com
Website: ec.europa.eu/environment/emas



From Green Key to EMAS: Additional Steps

Please note that this document provides an overview of additional steps that need to be taken by an organisation to 'step-up' from Green Key to EMAS. For further details on each requirement, please see the EMAS website on www.ec.europa.eu/environment/emas.

Green Key already fulfils all EMAS requirements under Step 1, Step 2, and Step 4. However, to obtain EMAS registration, the additional steps that would need to be taken in addition to those already required under the Green Key include:

Step 3 - Implementation

- **Control of documents and operational control**
Procedures need to be established to control situations that might create significant environmental impacts.
- **Emergency preparedness and response**
Procedures to mitigate potential risks need to be defined and tested periodically.

Step 5 - External Recognition and Environmental Report

- **Third-party auditing and audit frequency**
The role and tasks of an external auditor need to be sufficiently clarified. The certificate needs to be issued under one of the accreditation procedures recognised by the European Commission.