

# EMS Factsheet

## EcoCompass



### Overview

#### Origin and development

The EcoCompass EMS is an easier and less expensive version of ISO 14001 and EMAS; however it also allows companies to progress up to these EMS later. EcoCompass is a three-year joint municipality project that was launched in the Helsinki Metropolitan area in 2008. The project aims to strengthen environmental management in small and medium-sized companies in the area.

An operating model for voluntary environmental cooperation between the cities and the SMEs is created, and customised environmental advice is offered to the companies. The EcoCompass EMS includes initial analysis of the situation, evaluation of the environmental impacts and the creation of an environmental management programme together with the company. After fulfilling the programme for 6 to 12 months, the company reports on its implementation to the City of Helsinki Environment Centre. After reporting, an external audit is performed. If the company passes the audit, it receives the EcoCompass certificate, which is valid for three years.

#### Objectives

The aim of EcoCompass is to encourage real actions that enable the companies to both enhance their business operations and decrease their environmental impact. The EcoCompass system is developed specifically for SMEs: the companies receive easy tools and customised support for the implementation and maintenance of the system.

#### Implementation structure

The project is coordinated by the City of Helsinki Environment Centre and funded by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the Uusimaa Regional Environment Centre. The EcoCompass project works in close cooperation with the economic and enterprise services by training the business advisors to include environmental issues in their advisory work.

### EMS in brief

#### Key characteristic

EcoCompass consists of an easy to use template that companies can use to fulfil their environmental management requirements.

#### Implementing institution

City of Helsinki Environment Centre

#### Available since

2009

#### Geographical scope

Helsinki Metropolitan Area, Finland

#### Target group

Pilot businesses: Tourism and printing industries, and SMEs in all sectors after 2011.

#### Size of targeted companies

Small and medium sized companies

#### Total number of certifications

N/A

#### Number of participants in the process of certification

25

### 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"/>	<b>Commitment of top management:</b> It is required that top management sign the environmental policy.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Environmental review:</b> Under the EMS, the environmental review identifies the most important environmental impacts and environmental risks presented by the company.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>Environmental policy or guidelines:</b> The environmental policy acts as the basis of the company's environmental goals.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>Proof of legal compliance:</b> The EMS should be implemented according to existing environmental legislation and regulations.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>Objectives and environmental management programme:</b> The environmental management programme is based on the company's environmental performance for which goals have been set to reduce the most significant environmental impacts.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>Definition of the organisational structure at company level:</b> Each company must designate an environmental officer.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>Training and education requirements:</b> Personnel participate in at least half-a-day (3h) of environmental training. Training materials and sessions are also available for all staff members. Seasonal workers are instructed to pay attention to the environmental consequences of their actions.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>Communication (internal and external):</b> All employees in the company must be provided with environmental management information. Municipalities also use media sources to communicate Eco Compass activities, such as new certifications.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>Documentation requirements:</b> Documentation requirements include those needed to report on operational activities (electricity and water bills, etc.), an environmental policy, action plan and report is also required.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>Internal follow-up/checking and corrective action/ continuous improvement:</b> Companies must report yearly to EcoCompass on the progress of the environmental action plan (including the annual energy consumption, amounts of refuse and fractions, use of chemicals, use of fuel and purchases). As continuous improvement is a key requirement of the EMS, the EMS acts as a stimulus for innovation.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Management review:</b> Not required.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Environmental report/statement or similar publication by participants of the EMS:</b> The environmental report is required and is available to all of the company's employees, however it is not made public.
<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 the external audit and qualifications needed:** Auditors are independent and are selected through a tendering process based on experience and qualifications relevant to environmental auditing.

**External audit periodicity:** 3 years

**Certification:** If the company passes the external audit, it receives the EcoCompass certificate.

## Similarities to EMAS

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

Relation of the EMS to EMAS: **Very close**

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