

Environmental Management System (EMS) developed and implemented

Benefits

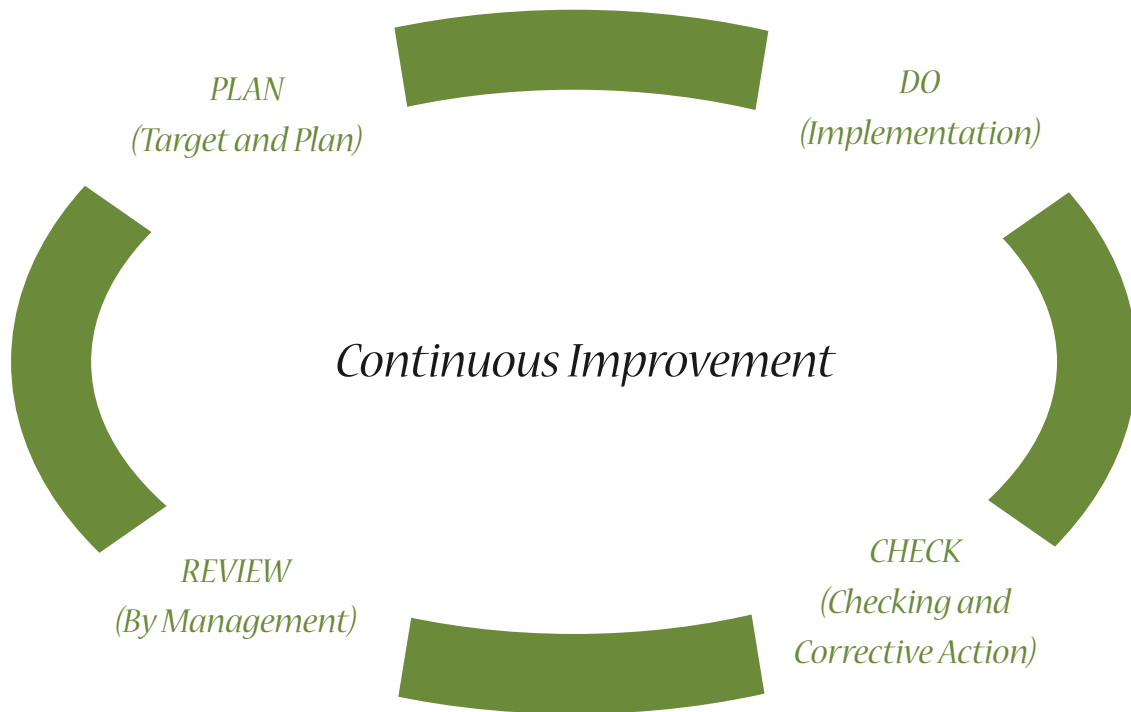
- An EMS can allow an establishment to integrate environmental and social practice into its operations in a systematic way
- An EMS allows an establishment to monitor and assess its successes and failures related to environmental and social issues, identifying problems and improve its performance based upon this information.
- Having a single, public EMS can facilitate the buy-in of staff, guests, business partners and local communities.

Overview of the intervention

An Environmental Management System (EMS) is a system that directs the environmental performance of an establishment. It consists of a set of processes and practices that identify areas in the establishment that impact on the environment and develop ways to mitigate and address these impacts. A typical EMS will include the following :

- An environmental policy
- Identification of the environmental impacts of the services and activities in the establishment;
- Defining the environmental targets and objectives for the establishment
- It identifies the legal and regulatory requirements
- It sets up training for the employees on environmental issues affecting the establishment and the global environment
- It sets up the mechanism for monitoring and measuring the progress against the targets, objectives and policy.

ISO 14001 is an environmental management standard that was developed by the International Organisation of Standardisation (ISO). The standard is the internationally recognised framework for environmental management systems and has been designed to be applicable to all types of operations.



Certified or not, an EMS is a tool that can be used by any organisation to identify potential areas of efficiency, which leads to better management of the operation and improved environmental performance. A key focus in an EMS is of continuous improvement and that the development of an EMS is not a once-off task, but needs to be reviewed and updated on a regular basis based on changes in the establishments and its environmental performance.

How to implement an EMS

Appoint a task team that includes staff from all departments and levels to design, implement and evaluate the EMS;

1. Conduct a thorough review of current practices at the establishment, identifying opportunities for improvement and setting priorities for action. This review should include energy use, water use, waste management, chemical use, product purchasing, community relations and potential impacts on the local environment.

2. Work with staff and other relevant parties to develop an environmental and social mission statement, standards, goals and action plan. The mission statement should be publicly displayed and be advertised through marketing material.
3. Designate a specific staff member or group to have responsibility for each component of the action plan and then report back to the task team.
4. Educate staff about goals and activities, through orientation, briefing, memos, incentives programmes, performance reviews and other methods
5. Communicate goals and activities to guests and advise them on how they can reduce their environmental impact and support local conservation and community development projects
6. Regularly assess if goals have been met and evaluate successes and failures
7. Use information collected during regular assessments to review your policy, goals and action plan, to determine what changes need to be made;
8. Provide regular feedback to staff, guests and the local community on achievements and acknowledge outstanding individual performance.

For more information, visit:

- 1) ISO 14001 (Environmental Management Systems) : http://www.iso.org/iso/iso_catalogue/management_standards/iso_9000_iso_14000/iso_14000_essentials.htm
- 2) NETREGS – Guiding Small Businesses through Environmental Regulations (Environmental Management Systems) http://www.netregs.gov.uk/netregs/275207/587836/?version=1&lang=_e
- 3) US Environmental Protection Agency (Environmental Management Systems) <http://www.epa.gov/EMS>
- 4) Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment <http://www.iema.net/readingroom/show/283/c146>