

ISO 14001

**ENVIRONMENTAL
MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS**

An easy-to-use checklist
for small business

Are you ready?





**International Organization
for Standardization**

ISO Central Secretariat
1, chemin de la Voie-Creuse
Case postale 56
CH - 1211 Genève 20
Switzerland
www.iso.org



**International Trade Centre
(ITC)**

Palais des Nations
CH -1211 Geneva 10
Switzerland
www.intracen.org

© ISO/ITC, 2010
All rights reserved

ISBN 978-92-67-10531-4

ISO 14001

ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

An easy-to-use checklist for
small business.

Are you ready?

The International Trade Centre (ITC)

ITC: Export impact for good

The International Trade Centre (ITC) is the joint agency of the World Trade Organization and the United Nations.

ITC mission

ITC enables small business export success in developing and transition countries by providing, with partners, sustainable and inclusive trade development solutions to the private sector, trade support institutions and policymakers.

ITC objectives

- Strengthen the international competitiveness of enterprises through ITC training and support
- Increase the capacity of trade support institutions to support businesses
- Strengthen the integration of the business sector into the global economy through enhanced support to policymakers.

International Organization for Standardization (ISO)

ISO has a membership of some 163 national standards bodies from countries large and small, industrialized, developing and in transition, in all regions of the world. ISO's portfolio of more than 18 400 standards provides business, government and society with practical tools for all three dimensions of sustainable development : economic, environmental and societal.

ISO standards make a positive contribution to the world we live in. They facilitate trade, spread knowledge, disseminate innovative advances in technology, and share good management and conformity assessment practices.

ISO standards provide solutions and achieve benefits for almost all sectors of activity, including agriculture, construction, mechanical engineering, manufacturing, distribution, transport, medical devices, information and communication technologies, the environment, energy, quality management, conformity assessment and services.

ISO only develops standards for which there is a clear market requirement. The work is carried out by experts in the subject drawn directly from the industrial, technical and business sectors that have identified the need for the standard, and which subsequently put the standard to use. These experts may be joined by others with relevant knowledge, such as representatives of government agencies, testing laboratories, consumer associations and academia, and by international governmental and non-governmental organizations.

An ISO International Standard represents a global consensus of the knowledge in a particular subject or process, whether it is the state of the art in that subject, or what is good practice.

Foreword

Awareness of environmental problems is growing in most countries and it is felt by many that current development patterns cannot be sustained in the long term. Governments are increasingly enacting legislation aimed at protecting the environment, and consumers in industrialized countries are requiring suppliers, including those from developing countries, to demonstrate compliance and good practice in environmental matters.

The publication of the ISO 14001 standard for environmental managements systems (EMS) in 1996 and then revised in 2004 has proved to be very successful, as it is now implemented in more than 159 countries and has provided organizations with a powerful management tool to improve their environmental performance. More than 223 149 organizations have been certified worldwide against ISO 14001 at the end of 2009, which is an increase of 18% compared to 2008. Many companies have improved their operations and reduced the impact of their activities, processes, products and services on the environment by using a systematic approach that seeks continual improvement.

The benefits of positively addressing environmental issues therefore not only cover the preservation of the environment, but are also linked to business performance and profitability while improving the corporate image, enhancing access to export markets, providing a common reference for communicating environmental issues with customers, regulators, the public and other stakeholders, etc.

One major advantage of implementing ISO 14001 is that it can be done in an organization of any size or type, since the requirements of an EMS are the same for all – although the manner of implementing one will vary according to the size and activity of the organization.

Experience shows that small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) can also implement an effective EMS and realize a variety of benefits. However, EMS implementation can present some challenges. This checklist aims at helping organizations to understand the requirements for environment management systems and identify the main areas for improvement. It will therefore be of value even if the ultimate aim is not third party certification of the organization.

ISO and ITC have been collaborating to assist enterprises, especially those in developing countries and economies in transition, to improve their exports. We have jointly published *ISO 9001 – A workbook for service organizations* and *ISO 9001 for Small Businesses*, and *ISO 22000 Food safety management systems – An easy-to-use checklist for small business – Are you ready?* We hope that this new handbook to help achieve the benefits of ISO 14001 will be of practical use to small businesses whatever their activity and wherever they may be, but especially in developing countries and economies in transition.



Patricia Francis
Executive Director
International Trade Centre
UNCTAD/WTO



Rob Steele
Secretary-General
International Organization
for Standardization

Introduction

This checklist guides the user through the setting-up, implementation and, if required, certification of an environmental management system¹⁾ (EMS), the requirements for which are specified in ISO 14001:2004, *Environmental management systems – Requirements with guidance for use*.

There are many benefits to implementing an EMS. These include a potential for:

- Reduction in waste production
- The avoidance in use, and costly disposal of, other hazardous or potentially polluting materials (with associated, potential costs savings)
- A planned approach to compliance with regulations and the consequential reduced risk of prosecutions and fines.

Other benefits can include increased profitability, better access to markets and improved relationships with stakeholders (e.g. customers, regulators, investors, insurers, neighbours). In some cases it may also be of further value to have the EMS independently certified in order to demonstrate that it meets the requirements of ISO 14001:2004.

This guide is aimed at small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), both in developed and developing countries. By guiding the user to ask and answer a series of questions regarding the environmental activities of their organization, the checklist provides an overview of the requirements of ISO 14001:2004 and promotes the guidance offered in ISO 14004:2004, *Environmental management systems – General guidelines on principles, systems and support techniques*²⁾. Working through the questions in a step-by-step manner will enable managers of an organization to determine its present environmental performance, and will help them identify areas for improvement.

The checklist is in 16 parts, each of the first 15 parts covering a particular stage in the EMS implementation process. Each part provides a brief explanation of the relevant requirement(s) as well as guidance on how to incorporate these requirement(s) into an EMS, which will meet the needs of a particular organization. Part 16 provides a list of sources of potentially useful help, guidance and information.

The stages in this checklist do not need to be completed in one go. Each question is formulated to be answered as *Yes* or *No*. By answering *Yes*, you confirm that you understand the action being considered and have included it in your EMS. Answering *No* means that you are either not sure about that action and/or have not included it

1) Part of an organization's management system used to develop and implement its environmental policy and manage its environmental aspects (Source: ISO 14001 : 2004)

2) Readers will find ISO 14004:2004, *Environmental management systems – General guidelines on principles, systems and support techniques* helpful in developing their EMS.

in your system. The checklist will then provide you with additional information and guidance as to how to address this action.

ISO 14001:2004 and ISO 9001:2008, *Quality management systems – Requirements*, are closely related. Many components of these two management systems are very similar. However, there are also significant technical differences between the requirements of each standard. Part of this checklist explains the similarities and differences between these and other standards. If an organization is already certified to ISO 9001, it should have in place many of the core components common to most management systems, for example, control of documentation, keeping of records, identifying training needs, etc. The task will then be to develop and implement the environment-specific content, which is required under ISO 14001:2004.

Since this checklist does not include the text of ISO 14001:2004, users are recommended to obtain a copy from their national standards body or from ISO, either directly via sales@iso.org or via the Internet from www.iso.org.

Acknowledgements

ISO and ITC gratefully acknowledge the dedicated work of

Nigel Carter (author)
Principal Advisor
En-Venture
10 Market Place
Devizes
Wiltshire SN10 1HT
United Kingdom
E-mail en.venture@btconnect.com

Simon Cordingley (reviewer)
Principal Consultant
Compass Professional Development
Ltd
PO Box 2024
Preston
Lancashire PR5 8WT
United Kingdom
E-mail simon@compasspd.com

in the development and revision of this checklist.

Nigel Carter and **Simon Cordingley** are both expert members for the United Kingdom in ISO working groups (WG). Nigel Carter was a member of the joint working group (JWG) of ISO technical committee ISO/TC 176, *Quality management and quality assurance*, subcommittee SC 3, *Supporting technologies*, and ISO/TC 207, *Environmental management*, SC 2, *Environmental auditing and related environmental investigations*, which developed ISO 19011:2002, *Guidelines for quality and/or environmental management systems auditing*. Simon Cordingley is the convener of ISO/TC 207/SC 1, *Environmental management systems*, WG 3, preparing ISO 14005, *Guidelines for a staged implementation of an EMS*. They were assisted in their work by comments from five other experts members of SC 1 : José Luis Valdés (Spain), Maiko Okuno (Japan), Horacio Martirena (Argentina), and Anne-Marie Warris and José Alcorta (United Kingdom). The work was coordinated by Shyam K. Gujadhur and Ludovica Ghizzoni (from ITC) and Juan Simon (from ISO).

Disclaimer

“The designations employed and the presentation of the material in this publication do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the International Trade Centre (ITC) nor on that of the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries”.

Table of contents

Part 1 – Environmental management	13
Part 2 – Scope of the environmental management system	19
Part 3 – Environmental policy	23
Part 4 – Environmental aspects and legal requirements	27
Part 5 – Environmental objectives, targets and programmes	31
Part 6 – Resources, roles, responsibility and authority	35
Part 7 – Competence, training and awareness	39
Part 8 – Communication	43
Part 9 – Documentation	45
Part 10 – Operational control	49
Part 11 – Emergency preparedness and response	53
Part 12 – Checking and Internal audit	55
Part 13 – Management review and continual improvement	65
Part 14 – Demonstrating conformity	69
Part 15 – Integration with other management systems	81
Part 16 – Further information – Web sites	85

Part 1

Environmental management

1.1 Does your organization understand the need for procedures to help avoid or minimize pollution, and comply with environmental regulations ?

- Yes ➔ Go to next question
- No ➔ See guidance below

Accidental or excessive emissions to air, water or soil, causing loss of air, water and soil quality, may have harmful and lasting effects on sensitive receptors – people, animals and vegetation.

Effective procedures can help to reduce the risk of polluting events, excessive waste and breaches of regulation.

In circumstances where enforcement agencies are assessing the organization for the purpose of issuing permits or authorisations, the existence of well-understood and effective operating procedures can give greater confidence to these agencies and can even reduce regulatory costs.

The existence of an EMS does not guarantee that the organization will not breach environmental regulation or cause a polluting incident. However, it suggests to interested parties that the organization takes its responsibilities for the environment seriously and is endeavouring to manage its significant environmental aspects accordingly.

There are many commercial advantages to implementing an EMS. These can include:

- Competitive advantage
- Better access to investment
- Reduced cost of regulation, insurance and finance