European Business Awards for the Environment

A pan-European award scheme organised by the Directorate-General for the Environment, European Commission

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1. OVERVIEW OF THE EUROPEAN BUSINESS AWARDS FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

The European Business Awards for the Environment (EBAE) aim to reward businesses which successfully combine innovation and economic viability with the protection of the environment.

The Awards highlight eco-innovative practices, processes and products from all sectors of business in the EU, which make a contribution to the transition to a circular economy, by reducing the environmental impact of our production and consumption, thereby enhancing nature’s resilience to environmental pressures and achieving a more efficient and responsible use of natural resources.

Details of the EBAE are set out in EBAE Handbook, the document which explains the scheme for the public, offering an overview of the awards, but at the same time giving a good understanding to potential applicants of how the scheme works.

The aim of this document is to set out the procedures governing the European Business Awards for the Environment. It focuses on internal issues, such as the functioning of the Steering Committee, the role of the Secretariat, as well as the appointment of the jury panel and the evaluation process.

2. THE EBAE STEERING COMMITTEE

a. Role and functions

The EBAE Steering Committee gives its input to the development of the following:

- Timing (from which a reverse-planned schedule will be drawn up)
- Model entry forms
- Eligibility criteria and evaluation procedure
- Appointment of the jury panel responsible for evaluating the entries
- Award criteria
- Public awareness campaign strategy
- Promoting the European Business Awards for the Environment
- Guiding and assisting potential applicants who plan to submit an entry form.

b. Decision-making process

When judged appropriate, DG Environment will submit modification proposals to the Steering Committee for their comments and/or approval. EBAE Steering Committee members will have ten working days to give their comments.

Modifications to this Handbook and to EBAE procedures can be suggested by any Member of the EBAE Steering Committee. Failure to comment on the proposed modifications within the allotted time will be considered as tacit agreement with the proposed change(s). A simple majority rule will apply to this process.
The Handbook cannot be modified between February and the date of the Awards ceremony in the year the competition will take place. Consequently, any suggestions for modifications to the Handbook can be sent to the EBAE Secretariat one month before 1 February of the year of the competition to give time to the European Commission to analyse and validate the request.

c. Meetings

The regular EBAE Steering Committee meetings are held at least once a year, either in Brussels, hosted by a National Coordinator in his/her own country or in another venue as suggested by DG Environment. The meetings are chaired by a representative of the European Commission. Additional meetings may be organised at the request of the EBAE Steering Committee with the agreement of the European Commission. Meeting minutes are drafted and circulated by the EBAE Secretariat.

d. Travel expenses

Travel expenses are reimbursed in accordance with Commission regulations. Further details of reimbursement guidelines and procedures are circulated with each meeting invitation, as these may vary.

3. THE JURY PANEL

a. Selection of jury members

The EBAE Steering Committee plays a key role in the appointment of the jury panel as follows:

- The European Commission asks each National Coordinator to nominate a candidate before an established deadline;
- The European Commission sends out a proposal for the jury members, including some candidates nominated by the European Commission, for agreement by the EBAE Steering Committee;
- The final decision is taken by the European Commission.

Jury members should be representatives of or experts from industry, governmental, and non-governmental bodies, the media and academia who are interested and involved in implementing environmental practices in the business sector.

The European Commission will ensure a geographical, gender and sector balanced representation.

The **President of the jury panel is appointed by the European Commission, and should, if possible, come from the country which holds the EU Presidency at the time of the Award Ceremony.**

b. Role of the jury panel
The jury panel evaluates the entries on the basis of the award criteria. It selects a shortlist and one winner for each Award, providing short feedback on each entry.

The jury panel is divided into **six groups depending on the number of applications received in the management category.** It is collegially responsible for choosing winners in all categories, but members individually evaluate the entries of the category assigned to them. Each group will have a chair nominated by the European Commission.

The jury panel has the right to perform a switch of categories if an application appears to be submitted under the wrong category.

**c. Evaluation process**

All entries and supporting documents will be available online in the Registration and Evaluation Platform together with an online Scorecard for each entry. Access to the platform will be granted to jury members, by the EBAE Secretariat, at least one month before the Jury meeting.

Each juror evaluates the entries assigned to their group remotely against the award criteria in the EBAE handbook, submitting scores and comments via the online registration and evaluation platform, prior to attending the jury panel meeting.

In order to facilitate the jury panel’s work, the EBAE Secretariat will prepare ranking lists to reflect the remote evaluation scores for each category and for Business and biodiversity entries, which will be distributed prior to the jury meeting.

The jury and its President will follow the procedure agreed at the meeting in line with the Handbook and the Procedures and the award criteria presented in the Handbook.

The jury panel selects up to 24 shortlisted companies (four per Award) – companies that have shown they can make the environment one of their primary concerns while strengthening their competitiveness.

From the 24 shortlisted companies, the jury panel chooses six winners, one from each subcategory of the Management category, one from each of the other three categories and one for the Business and Biodiversity Award. All nominees will be promoted during the ceremony and in the subsequent two years before the next EBAE ceremony is held.

*Documentation:*  
As part of the move to a “paper-free” Awards scheme, no hard copies of entries or supporting documents will be sent directly to the jury members. However, access to all entries and supporting documentation will be made available at the jury meeting if needed.

**d. Voting system**

Simple majority voting is used to select nominees and winners. In the event of a tie, the President has the casting vote.

**e. Jury panel meetings**

The jury panel meeting is a crucial part of the European Business Awards for the Environment scheme. The panel meets once every other year to evaluate the entries. The meeting (usually a two-day meeting) is held upon invitation in the country holding the EU Presidency, a few months before the EBAE ceremony. The National Coordinator of the country of the President of the jury should help with the organisation of the meeting.
4. THE EBAE SECRETARIAT

The European Commission outsources the Secretariat of the European Business Awards for the Environment. The Commission and Steering Committee are supported by the EBAE secretariat.

a. Role and function

The role and function of the EBAE Secretariat are:

- To provide secretariat support to implementation of the EBAE award scheme. This includes the production of documents (model entry forms, invitations, minutes, jury packs, etc.).
- To manage the award selection procedure. This includes managing the online platform and liaising between the EC, the EBAE Steering Committee and the jury.
- To update and implement the promotional strategy, including the production of the newsletters, the website and the brochure.
- To co-ordinate preparations for the EBAE Awards Ceremony.
- To collect data to enable an evaluation on efficiency and effectiveness of the EBAE scheme to be carried out.

5. ANNEXES

ENTRY FORMS

There are four entry forms, one for each of the following categories: Management, Product & Services, Process, International Business Cooperation.

Each form includes a specific question asking if the applicant wishes to be considered for the Business & Biodiversity Award.

Each entry form is composed of:

Part 1 – Introduction in which the company briefly presents itself (one to two pages maximum).

Part 2 – Application form including: a) summary (one page maximum), b) application (three pages maximum).

The entry forms are available electronically and are to be filled in online. This procedure will ease the application process, avoid data loss and ensure the equal treatment of all entries.
Please specify if you have already participated in the European Business Awards for the Environment

☐ Yes  ☐ No

If yes, please give: Year/s: __________________

Award category/ies: _____________

Title of previous proposal/s: ______________

Please indicate if your company is a Micro, Small, Medium or Large entity (refer to table on page 5 for criteria).

☐ Micro  ☐ Small  ☐ Medium  ☐ Large

Please indicate if your company is Independent, a joint venture or a subsidiary

☐ Independent  ☐ Joint Venture  ☐ Subsidiary

Please confirm that your company is a business entity with an industrial or commercial character, not a body governed by public law (refer to page 7 of the EBAE handbook for details).
1. What status was the company granted at the national level competition?

☐ Winner
☐ Runner-up
☐ Special recommendation

2. Specify one or more sources where this information can be verified (website and/or contact details):

3. Title of project or initiative:

4. Company name:

5. Company address:

6. Country:

7. Contact person:

8. E-mail:

9. Telephone number:

10. Website:

11. Specify if you have included any supporting materials in annex to this entry form:

☐ Yes ☐ No

12. If yes, please mention the name and the type of the annex/es (brochure, pdf document, other):

Annex 1: _______________
Annex 2: _______________
Part 2: Application Form
(4 pages maximum – Arial 11)

Summary: (one page maximum)
1. Provide a description of the company and a description of the specific initiative/project submitted, including information on the phase of development (prototype/on the market; pilot/full scale adoption) and a summary of its main benefits and significance

Strategic Integration
2. Explain how the environmental, economic, social and ethical aspects of sustainability have been integrated into the overall mission, the policies and the business model of the organisation. What mechanisms have been integrated within the overall organisation management to help make progress towards the environmental objectives? How has your organisation’s management of environmental issues contributed to good financial performance?

Performance improvement
3. Provide tangible evidence and examples of how the performance has been evaluated and how it has resulted in continuous improvement against key environmental targets. Provide details of measurements and other evidence to show what has been achieved through the initiative/project.
4. In addition, what other steps have been taken to improve the organisation’s performance on social responsibility issues such as human rights and community involvement? Provide evidence to demonstrate the impact of your activities.

Transparency
5. What mechanism is used to report regularly and to provide public information about the environmental performance of the organisation?

Credibility
6. Has performance improvement been validated by external environmental verifiers recognized by public authorities? Please provide details.
7. Has the organization achieved an environmental management scheme publicly confirmed through a registration by public authority (e.g. EMAS or ISO14001 registration)?

Accountability
8. What steps are taken to consult or engage with stakeholders on environmental (or social) issues arising from the organisation’s operations?

Employee involvement
9. What steps are taken to ensure the involvement of employees of all levels in environmental management?

Replication potential
10. What steps have been taken to share good practice on management for sustainable development with other organisations (e.g. through involvement in business networks, dissemination at conferences)? Show how you are not just driving change in your own organisation but also inspiring change in your customers, suppliers and other stakeholders.

Business and biodiversity
11. Does your business address biodiversity at a management level? Is biodiversity protection included in your business policy and/or strategy and how?
12. Specify if you wish to be automatically considered for the Business and Biodiversity Award. Yes □ No □

13. If you have answered yes to question 12, please answer the following questions:
   - Does your activity contribute to the protection of ecosystems/habitats/species or genetic diversity? Otherwise, does your activity contribute to alleviate a relevant pressure on biodiversity? How?
   - What is the direct impact of your action on biodiversity and does it also protect and improve biodiversity in a broader context? How?
   - How sustainable is it? For example: is biodiversity an added value for your company? Is sustainable financing in place? How is awareness raised with other actors, your value chain and within your company?
Please specify if you have already participated in the European Business Awards for the Environment

☐ Yes  ☐ No

If yes, please give:
Year/s: __________________
Award category/ies: ____________
Title of previous proposal/s: ____________

Please indicate if your company is a Micro, Small, Medium or Large entity (refer to table on page 5 for criteria).

☐ Micro  ☐ Small  ☐ Medium  ☐ Large

Please indicate if your company is Independent, a joint venture or a subsidiary

☐ Independent  ☐ Joint Venture  ☐ Subsidiary

Please confirm that your company is a business entity with an industrial or commercial character, not a body governed by public law (refer to page 7 of the EBAE handbook for details).

☐ Yes, a business entity

1. What status was the company granted at the national level competition?
   ☐ Winner
   ☐ Runner-up
   ☐ Special recommendation

2. Specify one or more sources where this information can be verified (website and/or contact details):

3. Title of project or initiative:

4. Company name:

5. Company Address:
6. Country:

7. Contact person:

8. E-mail:

9. Telephone:

10. Website:

11. Specify if you have included any supporting materials in annex to this entry form:

   □ Yes          □ No

12. If yes, please mention the name and the type of the annex/es (CD-ROM, brochure, .pdf document, other):

    Annex 1: ___________________
    Annex 2: ___________________
Summary: (One page maximum)
1. Provide a description of the company and a description of the initiative/project submitted, including information on the phase of development (prototype/on the market; pilot/full scale adoption) and a summary of its main benefits and significance.

Innovation
2. Please describe the specific innovative elements that distinguish this product or service from its predecessors or others already on the market including:
   - the circumstances leading to its development and
   - evidence that it performs at least as well as a comparable alternative meeting relevant safety standards.

Environmental benefit
3. Please provide clear, detailed and quantified evidence of the environmental benefits of the product or service, over and above a comparable alternative, measured over the complete cycle. These should be stated in terms of:
   - energy and material inputs;
   - waste generation;
   - emissions to air, water and land.

Existence of a life-cycle assessment, or of a EU Ecolabel or equivalent, is considered a proof of environmental benefit.

Social benefit
4. What social benefits can be expected to arise from the product or service?

Economic benefit
5. Please provide evidence of the contribution to be made by the new product or service to the organisation’s overall financial performance (e.g. through sales performance data or credible sales projections, with an estimate of the potential market size).

Commitment
6. What commitment exists, within your organisation, to the further development and/or marketing of the new product or service and how does it reflect within the overall strategy of your organisation?

Replication potential
7. Describe the potential for the new product or service to be replicated elsewhere (market and geographical scope) and the actions to share the knowledge and expertise with other organisations.

Business and biodiversity
8. Does your business address biodiversity at a management level? Is biodiversity protection included in your business policy and/or strategy and how?
9. Specify if you wish to be automatically considered for the Business and Biodiversity Award. Yes □ No □
10. If you have answered yes to question 9, please answer the following questions:
   - Does your activity contribute to the protection of ecosystems/habitats/species or genetic diversity? Otherwise, does your activity contribute to alleviate a relevant pressure on biodiversity? How?
• What is the direct impact of your action on biodiversity and does it also protect and improve biodiversity in a broader context? How?
• How sustainable is it? For example: is biodiversity an added value for your company? Is sustainable financing in place? How is awareness raised with other actors, your value chain and within your company?
Please specify if you have already participated in the European Business Awards for the Environment

☐ Yes  ☐ No
If yes, please give:

Year/s: __________________

Award category/ies: ____________

Title of previous proposal/s: ____________

Please indicate if your company is a Micro, Small, Medium or Large entity (refer to table on page 5 for criteria).

☐ Micro  ☐ Small  ☐ Medium  ☐ Large

Please indicate if your company is Independent, a joint venture or a subsidiary

☐ Independent  ☐ Joint Venture  ☐ Subsidiary

Please confirm that your company is a business entity with an industrial or commercial character, not a body governed by public law (refer to page 7 of the EBAE handbook for details).

☐ Yes, a business entity

1. What status was the company granted at the national level competition?
   ☐ Winner
   ☐ Runner-up
   ☐ Special recommendation

2. Specify one or more sources where this information can be verified (website and/or contact details):

3. Title of project or initiative:

4. Company name:

5. Company Address:

6. Country:

7. Contact person:

8. E-mail:

9. Telephone:

10. Website:

11. Specify if you have included any supporting materials in annex to this entry form:
12. If yes, please mention the name and the type of the annex/es (CD-ROM, brochure, .pdf document, other):

Annex 1: ______________
Annex 2: ______________
Summary (One page maximum)
1. Provide a description of the company and a description of the initiative/project submitted, including information on the phase of development (prototype/on the market; pilot/full scale adoption) and a summary of its main benefits and significance.

Innovation
2. Describe the specific innovative elements that distinguish this process from its predecessors or others already in use including:
   - the circumstances leading to its development and
   - evidence that it performs at least as well as a comparable alternative meeting relevant safety standards.

Environmental benefit
3. Provide clear and quantified evidence of the environmental benefits of the new process in terms of: energy, water and material consumption; waste, air emissions, CO2 and land use reduction.

Social benefit
4. What wider social benefits can be expected to arise from the application of the new process (e.g. security of employment; working conditions; quality of life for local communities)?

Economic benefit
5. Provide evidence that the new process is economically viable (e.g. with reference to capital, return on investment and operating costs).

Commitment
6. Describe the senior management and organisation commitment to the new process.

Replication potential
7. Describe the potential for the new process to be replicated elsewhere (market and geographical scope) and the actions to share the knowledge and expertise with other organisations.

Business and biodiversity
8. Does your business address biodiversity at a management level? Is biodiversity protection included in your business policy and/or strategy and how?
9. Specify if you wish to be automatically considered for the Business and Biodiversity Award. Yes ☐ No ☐
10. If you have answered yes to question 9, please answer the following questions:
    - Does your activity contribute to the protection of ecosystems/habitats/species or genetic diversity? Otherwise, does your activity contribute to alleviate a relevant pressure on biodiversity? How?
    - What is the direct impact of your action on biodiversity and does it also protect and improve biodiversity in a broader context? How?
    - How sustainable is it? For example: is biodiversity an added value for your company? Is sustainable financing in place? How is awareness raised with other actors, your value chain and within your company?
Please specify if you have already participated in the European Business Awards for the Environment

☐ Yes    ☐ No

If yes, please give: Year/s: ________________

Award category/ies: ________________

Title of previous proposal/s: ________________

Please indicate if your company is a Micro, Small, Medium or Large entity (refer to table on page 5 for criteria).

☐ Micro    ☐ Small    ☐ Medium    ☐ Large

Please indicate if your company is Independent, a joint venture or a subsidiary

☐ Independent    ☐ Joint Venture    ☐ Subsidiary

Please confirm that your company is a business entity with an industrial or commercial character, not a body governed by public law (refer to page 7 of the EBAE handbook for details).

☐ Yes, a business entity    ☐ No, not a business entity

1. What status was the company granted at the national level competition?
   ☐ Winner
   ☐ Runner-up
   ☐ Special recommendation

2. Specify one or more sources where this information can be verified (website and/or contact details):

3. Title of project or initiative:

4. Company name:
(information about the companies involved in the cooperation is to be provided under Part 2 – Application Form – Summary):

5. Company Address:

6. Country:

7. Contact person:

8. E-mail:

9. Telephone:

10. Website:

11. Specify if you have included any supporting materials in annex to this entry form:

   □ Yes     □ No

12. If yes, please mention the name and the type of the annex/es (CD-ROM, brochure, .pdf document, other):

    Annex 1: ________________
    Annex 2: ________________
Summary (One page maximum)
1. Provide a description of the company and a description of the initiative/project submitted, including information on the phase of development (prototype/on the market; pilot/full scale adoption) and a summary of its main benefits and significance. Include information on the companies involved in the cooperation (status, size and geographical location).

Sustainable development objectives
2. What are the environmental objectives of the business cooperation and how are these expected to contribute to:
   - environmental protection;
   - economic development;
   - social equity

Planning and resource allocation
3. Provide detailed evidence of the agreed plans and available resources to enable the cooperation to achieve its objectives.

Equity
4. Provide detailed evidence that the cooperation operates in a way that is fair and transparent to all parties and that the benefits are evenly distributed.

Synergy
5. Provide detailed evidence of the ways in which the cooperation has achieved better or greater results than if the partners had worked alone (e.g. did the cooperation lead to avoidance of duplication of efforts and costs?).

Replication potential
6. Describe the potential for the business cooperation to be replicated elsewhere (market and geographical scope) and the actions to share the knowledge and expertise with other organisations.

Business and biodiversity
7. Does your business address biodiversity at a management level? Is biodiversity protection included in your business policy and/or strategy and how?
8. Specify if you wish to be automatically considered for the Business and Biodiversity Award. Yes □ No □
9. If you have answered yes to question 8, please answer the following questions:
   - Does your activity contribute to the protection of ecosystems/habitats/species or genetic diversity? Otherwise, does your activity contribute to alleviate a relevant pressure on biodiversity? How?
   - What is the direct impact of your action on biodiversity and does it also protect and improve biodiversity in a broader context? How?
   - How sustainable is it? For example: is biodiversity an added value for your company? Is sustainable financing in place? How is awareness raised with other actors, your value chain and within your company?