EMAS - Factsheet

EMAS and ISO 14001: complementarities and differences

EMAS goes further than ISO 14001

EMAS – Adds value through:

- **Environmental performance**
  Stricter requirements on the measurement and evaluation of environmental performance against objectives and targets, and the continuous improvement of that environmental performance;

- **Legal security**
  compliance with environmental legislation ensured by government supervision;

- **Strong employee involvement;**

- **Environmental core indicators creating multi-annual comparability within and between organisations;**

- **Transparent communication**
  Provision of information to the general public through the validated environmental statement; and

- **Reliability**
  Registration by a public authority after verification by an accredited/licensed environmental verifier.

Beyond ISO 14001 - EMAS as the premium environmental management tool

EMAS is the most credible and robust environmental management tool on the market, adding several elements on top of the requirements of the international standard for Environmental Management Systems EN ISO 14001:2004 (Hereafter: ISO 14001).

What sets EMAS apart from ISO 14001?

The ISO 14001 Environmental Management System requirements are an integral part of EMAS (Annex II). However, EMAS takes into account additional elements to support organisations that continuously improve their environmental performance. These additional elements are illustrated below (Table 1):

Table 1: Main differences between EMAS and ISO 14001

Elements	EMAS	ISO 14001
General aspects		
Legal status	· European Regulation (EC) No 1221/2009	· International, commercial standard under private law
Participation	· Voluntary	· Voluntary
Geographical Outreach	· Globally applicable	· Globally applicable
Focus and objective	· Focus on continual improvement of environmental performance of the organisation	· Focus on continual improvement of the Environmental Management System
Planning		
Environmental aspects	· Comprehensive initial environmental review of the current status of activities, products and services	· Requires only a procedure to identify environmental aspects · Initial review is recommended, but not required
Legal compliance	· Proof of full legal compliance is required	· Only commitment to comply with applicable legal requirements · No compliance audit
Employees involvement	· Active involvement of employees and their representatives	· Not required (ISO 14001 and EMAS both foresee training for employees)
Suppliers and contractors	· Influence over suppliers and contractors is required	· Relevant procedures are communicated to suppliers and contractors
External Communication	· Open dialogue with external stakeholders is required · External reporting is required on the basis of a regularly published environmental statement	· Dialogue with external stakeholders not required · External reporting is not required
Checking		
Internal environmental auditing	· Environmental Management System audit · Performance audit to evaluate environmental performance · Environmental compliance audit	· Includes only the Environmental Management System audit of the requirements of the standard
Verifier/Auditor	· Environmental verifiers are accredited/licensed and supervised by governmental bodies · Independence of the environmental verifier is required	· Certification bodies are accredited through a national Accreditation body · Independence of the auditor is recommended
Audits	· Inspection of documents and site visits to be carried out according to Regulation · Check for improvement of environmental performance · Data from environmental statement needs to be validated	· No certification rules in standard (other standards for auditing and certification) · Check of Environmental Management System performance, but no frequency specified or required
Derogations for SMEs	· Extension of verification intervals from three to four years · Updated environmental statement needs to be validated only every two years (instead of every year) · Environmental verifier takes into account special characteristics of SMEs	· No derogations foreseen
Official registration by authorities	· Publicly accessible register records each organisation · Each registered organisation receives a registration number	· No official register
Logo	· Yes	· No

EMAS
Performance, Credibility, Transparency

environment

Frequently asked questions:

1. Does EMAS registration lead to an ISO 14001 certificate?

Yes. EMAS registration attests that the EMAS participant has an environmental management system and complies with the requirements of ISO 14001. The ISO 14001 Environmental Management System requirements are an integral part of EMAS. The environmental verifier is authorised to issue an ISO 14001 certificate. When an organisation decides to upgrade from ISO 14001 to EMAS, the audit can concentrate on the fulfilment of additional EMAS requirements (Table 2).

2. Do EMAS participants need to pay the double costs of both the EMAS and ISO 14001 audits?

EMAS includes all the requirements of ISO 14001. Both systems can be validated and certified by one environmental verifier at the same time. Thus, only limited additional costs, if any, are incurred in doing both.
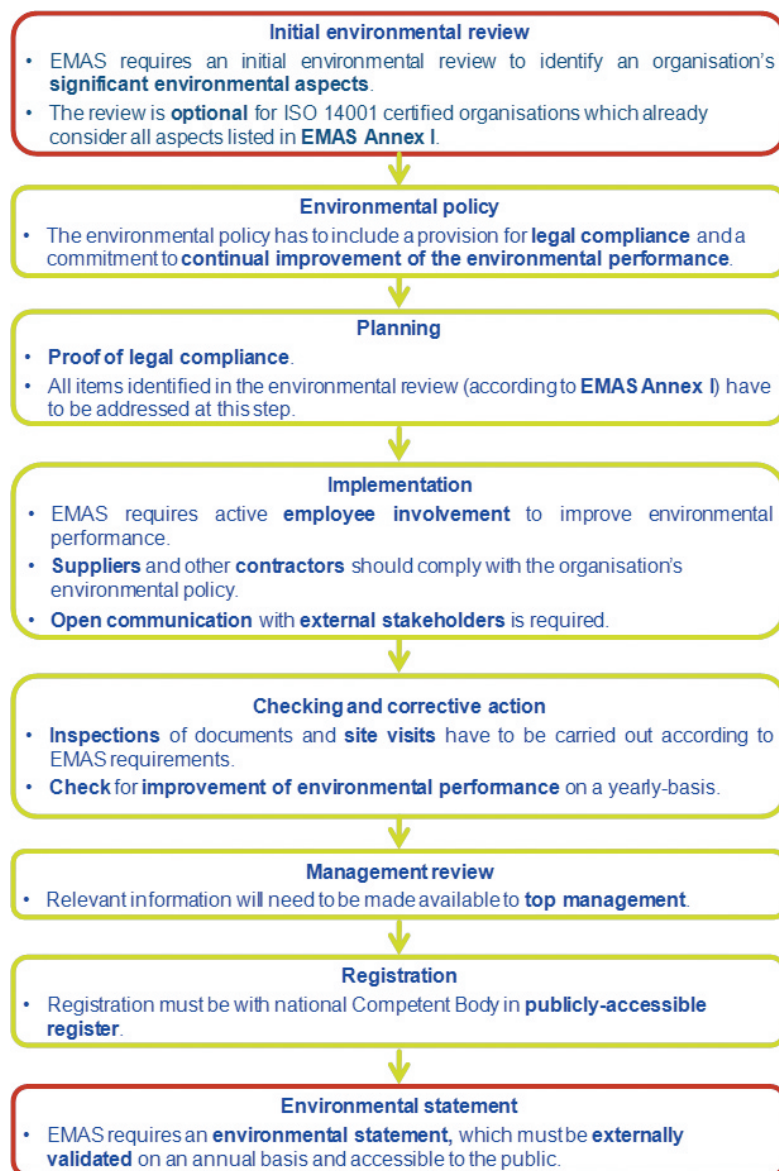
3. Do the verification/certification cycles of EMAS and ISO 14001 differ?

No. EMAS and ISO 14001 foresee a full audit on a three-yearly basis. In addition the EMAS environmental statement has to be validated annually. However, organisations should be aware that EMAS and ISO 14001 audit cycles do not correspond when EMAS derogations for SMEs are used (extended audit cycles; Article 7 of the Regulation). As a consequence, an organisation which aims to maintain its ISO 14001 certification cannot make use of the revised audit cycles introduced with the latest revision of EMAS.

How to Upgrade from ISO 14001 to EMAS:

The main steps necessary for an ISO 14001 certified organisation to upgrade to EMAS are listed below (Table 2). Additional elements and modifications within the specific steps are indicated. The steps highlighted in red are EMAS-specific **additional steps** that are not part of ISO 14001. Highlighted in green are EMAS-specific components within general requirements that both EMAS registered and ISO 14001 certified organisations need to fulfill[1].

Table 2: Ugrading from ISO 14001 to EMAS[2]

Initial environmental review
- EMAS requires an initial environmental review to identify an organisation's **significant environmental aspects**.
- The review is **optional** for ISO 14001 certified organisations which already consider all aspects listed in **EMAS Annex I**.

Environmental policy
- The environmental policy has to include a provision for **legal compliance** and a commitment to **continual improvement of the environmental performance**.

Planning
- **Proof of legal compliance**.
- All items identified in the environmental review (according to **EMAS Annex I**) have to be addressed at this step.

Implementation
- EMAS requires active **employee involvement** to improve environmental performance.
- **Suppliers** and other **contractors** should comply with the organisation's environmental policy.
- **Open communication** with **external stakeholders** is required.

Checking and corrective action
- **Inspections** of documents and **site visits** have to be carried out according to EMAS requirements.
- **Check** for **improvement of environmental performance** on a yearly-basis.

Management review
- Relevant information will need to be made available to **top management**.

Registration
- Registration must be with national Competent Body in **publicly-accessible register**.

Environmental statement
- EMAS requires an **environmental statement,** which must be **externally validated** on an annual basis and accessible to the public.

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[1] Both EMAS registered and ISO certified organisations have to implement a "planning" step. However, the level of details of the components of these steps differs. This means for example that the "proof of legal compliance" for an EMAS registered organisation is part of the step that both EMAS registered and ISO certified organisations have to take but in a different level of detail.

[2] Please note that this document provides an overview of additional steps that need to be taken by an organisation to upgrade from ISO 14001 to EMAS but does not constitute a legal guarantee of correctness. ISO 14000 certified organisations still need to review individual prerequisites or requirements when implementing an Environmental Management System according to EMAS.