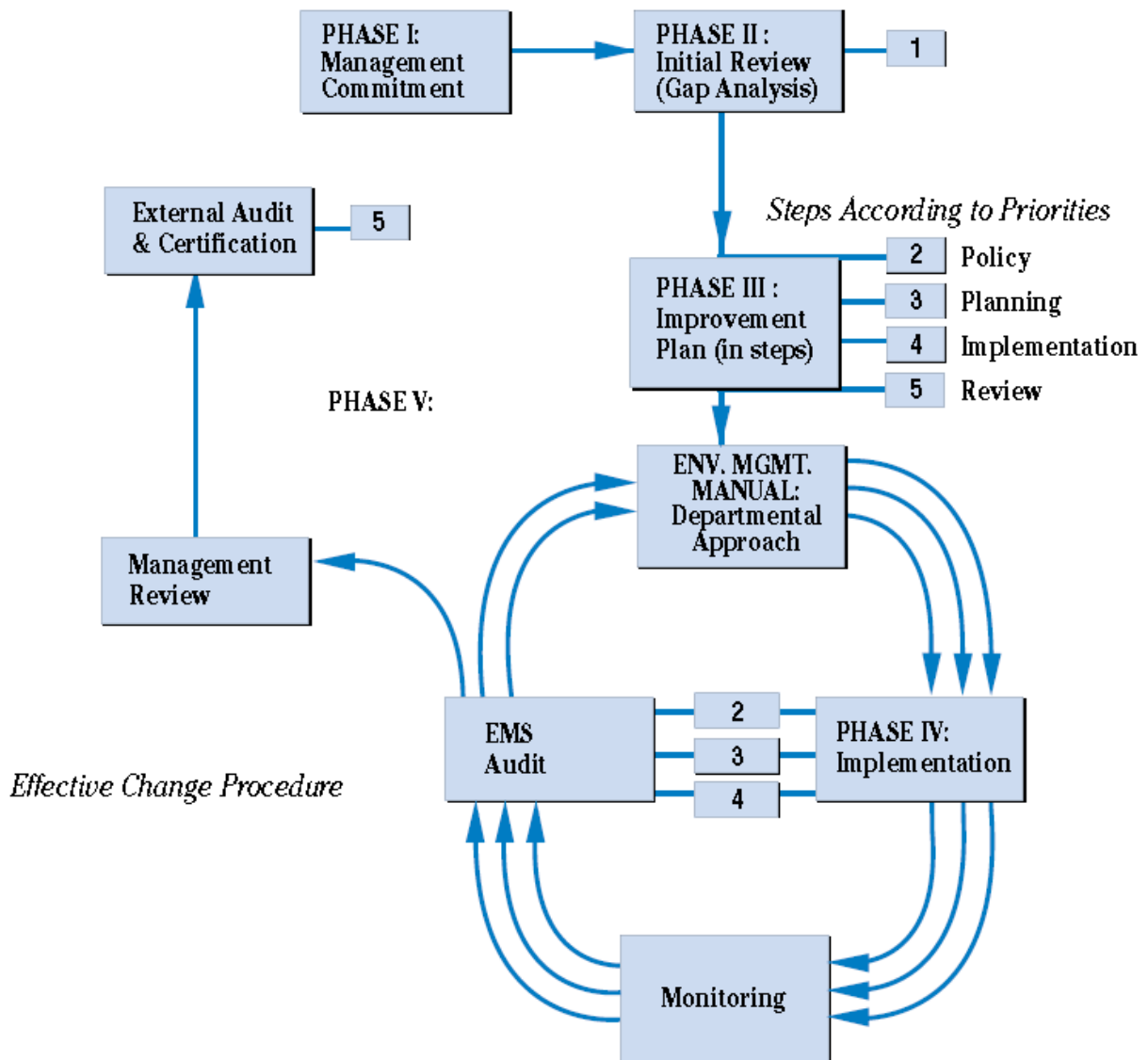


What is an Environmental Management System?

The international environmental management system (EMS) standard ISO 14001 seek to provide all businesses with the means to develop systematic approaches to improve environmental performance. Below is a diagram of what an EMS is and the functional structure of an EMS. In the preceding “Services”, the EMS is systematically broken down into phases.



Below are set out the six phases, broken down, that will lead to the implementation of a full Environmental Management System, ISO 14001. You will have the option to receive an Acorn certification at phase 3 alternatively continue to phase 6 and be assessed for the ISO14001 certification.

Phase 1

Phase One aims to secure commitment to environmental management and performance improvement, identify the main environmental issues and opportunities, and initiate the participation of people within the organisation in developing and implementing environmental improvement initiatives.

Main Requirements

- Ensure an explicit top management commitment to the EMS implementation project and to environmental performance improvement
- Plan the development and implementation of your EMS
- Conduct a baseline assessment in order to develop an understanding of the environmental impacts and issues facing the organisation. This is done by reference to your existing management programmes and practices, stakeholders, and by identifying the environmental aspects and impacts of the organisation's activities, processes, products and services. This assessment will also help to identify opportunities for cost savings and achieving competitive advantage
- Formulate a draft environmental policy, and establish initiatives for environmental improvement, based on the findings of the baseline assessment
- Develop and implement some initial environmental performance indicators that address key environmental issues
- Develop initial approaches to employee involvement in continual improvement, environmental training and awareness raising

Phase 2

Phase Two aims to help you identify relevant environmental legal and other requirements and develop and implement controls measures to ensure continued compliance with these requirements on an ongoing basis.

Main Requirements

- Identify applicable environmental legislation
- Identify any other environmental requirements that apply to you (including codes of practice, industry standards, voluntary agreements, internal management requirements, and contractual requirements)
- Identify where and how exactly these requirements apply within the organisation
- Check the actual level of compliance with the requirements throughout the organisation, identifying areas of non-compliance and the effectiveness of controls in ensuring compliance
- Develop and implement action plans to address non-compliance situations and strengthen controls
- Develop and implement operational control procedures, emergency response procedures, and relevant training programmes.

- Develop compliance indicators
- Continue the process of organisational culture change and environmental performance improvement

Phase 3

Phase three aims to establish the core elements of a functional EMS and develop a structured framework for ongoing systematic environmental management and performance improvement.

Main Requirements

- Refine the aspects & impacts developed in the initial (Phase1) baseline assessment
- Develop and apply an approach for assessing the significance of aspects, appropriate for the nature and scale of the organisation
- Finalise the environmental policy, checking that aspects identified as being significant are addressed within it
- Develop objectives and targets for performance improvement, which support the policy commitments and address significant aspects and impacts
- Identify and implement environmental performance indicators to help track progress against specified objectives and targets
- Define environmental management programmes with designated responsibilities, timescales and resource requirements for meeting stated objectives and targets
- Establish effective operational control procedures in response to the assessment of significance
- Communicate the finalized policy, objectives, targets, indicators, and management plans as required and provide any necessary training, information and support for their implementation
- Continue the process of organisational culture change and training

Phase 4

Phase Four aims to enhance the management elements of the EMS to support effective ongoing operation, and to ensure that changes that affect the organisation can be integrated into the system without causing any drops in performance. This Phase also helps to address specific requirements of ISO14001.

Main Requirements

- Define the environmental management structure, assigning roles & responsibilities with respect to the EMS
- Define the relationships and interactions between different elements of the EMS
- Structure the training and awareness raising programmes, and implement processes for identifying training needs and planning training delivery and review
- Establish clear communication practices and processes internally and externally if so decided
- Implement effective documentation, including control and record keeping systems
- Review and test environmental emergency preparedness and response procedures
- Develop management performance indicators to identify the effectiveness of the EMS in operation

Phase 5

Phase 5 introduces the discipline of auditing the EMS and undertaking a management review. This will close the continual improvement loop for the organisation's environmental performance, and bring them into line with the full requirements of ISO14001.

As part of this Phase, the organisation will:

- Establish internal EMS audit procedures, programmes, and competence. (NB. These are in addition to the 'Phase Audits' that would have taken place at the end of each implementation Phase).
- Ensure that audit findings are communicated and reviewed by management
- Establish corrective and preventative action procedures, both in relation to audits and other areas of the organisation as required
- Implement periodic management reviews to assess progress against stated objectives and targets, environmental performance, and the performance and suitability of the EMS itself
- Focus on continual improvement initiatives that take the organisation forward to meeting their policy commitments

At the end of Phase 5, the organisation should have a fully functional EMS in place. The organisation will then be in a good position to be assessed against the requirements of ISO14001 or the management system requirements of the EMAS regulation.

Phase 6

As part of this final stage, the organisation will where appropriate:-

- Provide evidence that the EMS has been implemented and managed prior to a final certification audit against all the requirements of ISO14001. An organisation will also have conducted a full internal environmental audit and at least one comprehensive management review