

Green management systems: coming of age

Environmental management systems and standards have grown in stature in the 20 years since the ISO 14001 was introduced, says **BSI**

BSI is very proud to sponsor and welcome you to this ENDS special report on green management systems, and how to get the best from them.

Being the sister to last November's report on green certification standards, BSI is again delighted to work with ENDS, as they look further into what BSI believes are key tools for driving sustainability and delivering continual business and organisational improvement.

Twenty one years ago, in the same year as the Earth Summit in Rio, BSI produced the world's first environmental management standard, what became ISO 14001.

Now as ISO 14001 comes of age, its relevance, impact and stature have never been more important, as it provides more than 250,000 organisations with the cornerstone management system for their commitment to sustainable activity. Proof of this can be found in the training and certification numbers, which continue to grow, across all types of organisations, and all parts of the globe, despite the economic instability and recession of the past few years.

Indeed BSI has a spectrum of clients, from those new to ISO 14001, to a significant number who have been certified with us for 15 years or more.

For organisations with such a long-term commitment, this report addresses how they continue to benefit from their mature environmental management systems.

What the report finds is that once these

organisations have realised annual benefits from energy efficiency, water usage and waste management, they work to expand the profile of ISO 14001 and sustainability throughout their organisation. By getting staff involved from all areas, and all levels, they tap into ideas for improvement and saving that the environmental manager would not have known about. This adds to staff engagement and commitment, as well as company reputation. Their step after this is to take a strategic view of how to drive even more benefits from sustainability, by influencing their supply chains and customers to implement environmental management standards.

The report goes on to consider the revision of ISO 14001, due in 2015, and how this will impact organisations, as it broadens the requirements they need to consider, such as wider sustainability issues like climate change and water scarcity. BSI, through the committee lead by Martin Baxter, policy director of IEMA, is leading the UK's input into this revision process.

This work, just over two decades since Rio, maintains BSI's role at the forefront of best practice in sustainability, as we continue to do what we've done for over a century. That is through our role as the UK's national standards body, work with business experts, government bodies, trade associations and consumer groups to capture best practice and structure the knowledge all organisations need to succeed.

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