



Going Beyond Compliance

In addition to legal compliance, it is beneficial for trades and industries to seek for continual improvement and to go beyond legal compliance. To achieve this, there are a number of environmental best practices, tools, schemes and standards available locally and overseas that are all on a voluntary basis and not mandatory under the Hong Kong legislation. You are encouraged to consider adopting the practices appropriate to your operations, which will in return bring the following added values to your business.

Provide Cost-effective Control Over Environmental Issues: Having good environmental practices in place, environmental issues associated with your operations can be identified at early stage and reviewed regularly and hence environmental impacts can be prevented and minimized.

Improve Efficiency and Achieve Cost Savings: Through both the identification and control of environmental issues of your operations, good environmental practices may provide opportunities to conserve materials and energy inputs, to reduce waste and to improve process efficiency. Cost savings and improved productivity may then be realized.

Reduce Environmental Incidents and Liability: A systematic approach and good environmental practices for managing environmental issues can help reduce environmental incidents, breaches to legislation, and the negative impacts to business and environment. Consequently, environmental liability and associated expense of recovery can be reduced.

Strengthen the Competitiveness and Improve Market Opportunities: Business operations, in particular manufacturing sectors, suppliers/contractors are increasingly required by their customers/clients to demonstrate good environmental performance. Adopting good environmental practices and hence achieving good environmental performance and going beyond compliance will certainly increase competitiveness in the market.

Enhance Corporate Image: It is evident that there are increasing concerns over environmental protection world-wide. Demonstrating good environmental performance through implementing effective practices will definitely improve corporate image to stakeholders, community and the general public at large.

The various environmental best practices/standards applicable to both generic and specific trades/industries are highlighted in this section.

Environmental Best Practices/Standards for Generic Trades and Industries

Environmental Management System

Rather than dealing with existing and potential environmental impacts and management issues in an ad hoc manner, organizations are realizing the benefits of a planned and formalized management system to manage and even improve their environmental performance. Among various standards of environmental management system (EMS), the ISO 14001 [61] has become the most prevalent and internationally recognized one. In essence, an ISO 14001 EMS operates in much the same Plan-Do-Check-Act principles as quality management systems do. An ISO 14001 EMS facilitates the management or control of all potential “significant” environmental aspects resulting from an organization’s activities, operations, and services and provides a system to facilitate continual improvement. For details, visit the webpage: www.epd.gov.hk/epd/english/how_help/tools_ems/overview.html

Environmental Auditing

Environmental auditing is a systematic, documented, periodic and objective process in assessing organizations’ performance in relation to compliance with legal and other requirements applicable to the organization. Conducting an environmental audit is no longer an option but a sound precaution and a proactive measure in today’s regulated environment. Indeed, evidence suggests that environmental auditing has a valuable role to play in encouraging systematic incorporation of environmental perspectives into many aspects of an organization’s overall operation. Benefits of conducting environmental auditing include:

- Understanding organizations’ environmental performance levels;
- Facilitating management of environmental practices;
- Monitoring compliance with environmental legislation and requirements;
- Promoting good environmental management;
- Maintaining credibility with the public;
- Enhancing staff awareness; and
- Exploring improvement opportunities.

For more information, visit the webpage:

www.epd.gov.hk/epd/english/how_help/tools_ea/tools_ea.html



Further Reading

- [61] ISO 14001:2004 Environmental Management Systems – Requirements with Guidance for Use

OHSAS 18001

The Occupational Health and Safety Assessment Series (OHSAS) 18001 [62] which shares the same management model as the ISO 14001 EMS Standard, provides a framework for managing occupational health and safety responsibilities so that they become integrated into the everyday business functions. Similar to other ISO standards, organizations may also seek certification to the OHSAS 18001 from a number of certification bodies. For more information about the OHSAS 18001, please contact the relevant certification bodies. You may contact the Hong Kong Accreditation Service (www.itc.gov.hk/en/quality/hkas/about.htm) for contact details of certification bodies.

Sustainability Reporting

Sustainability reporting is a public presentation of information about an organization's sustainability performance – environmental, economic and social – over a specified period. Nowadays, release of a corporate sustainability report is recognized as an important mechanism to demonstrate commitments, transparency and accountability. Such corporate reporting may be voluntary or mandatory requirements depending on government policies. For local reporting guidelines, visit the webpage:

www.epd.gov.hk/epd/english/how_help/tools_epr/tools_epr.html

One of the most popular overseas reporting guidelines is the Sustainability Reporting Guidelines published by the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) (www.globalreporting.org).

Labelling and Award Schemes

There are a number of voluntary environmental labelling and award schemes currently available for various trades and industries to adopt. One of the major objectives of these schemes is to provide recognition to those trades/industries/products demonstrated with good environmental performance as well as incentive and momentum for achieving continual improvement. Some of the common schemes are highlighted below:



Further Reading

[62] OHSAS 18001:1999 Occupational Health and Safety Management Systems – Specification

<i>Name of the Scheme</i>	<i>Outline of the Scheme</i>	<i>Where to Find More Information?</i>
Wastewi\$e Scheme	This scheme is organized by EPD to encourage Hong Kong business in adopting measures to reduce the amount of waste generated within their establishments or generated through the services and products they provide. Qualified companies will receive the Wastewi\$e certificate and logo.	www.epd.gov.hk/epd/english/environmentinhk/waste/prob_solutions/wpp_wastewise.html
Hong Kong Energy Efficiency Registration Scheme for Buildings	This scheme is organized by the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department to promote the application of the five Building Energy Codes. A registration certificate and “energy efficient building logo” will be issued to a building that successfully meets the Codes.	www.emsd.gov.hk/emsd/eng/pee/eersb.shtml
Energy Efficiency Labelling Scheme	Operated by the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department, this is a labelling scheme for household appliances, office equipment and vehicles.	www.emsd.gov.hk/emsd/eng/pee/eels.shtml
Hong Kong Building Environmental Assessment Method (HK-BEAM)	This scheme aims to measure, improve, certify and label the environmental sustainability of buildings throughout its entire life cycle.	www.hk-beam.org.hk
Indoor Air Quality Certification Scheme for Offices and Public Places	This scheme is operated by EPD to recognize good indoor air quality (IAQ) management practices and to provide incentives for owners of premises/buildings or property management companies to pursue the best level of IAQ. IAQ certificates will be issued if the IAQ objectives are complied with.	www.iaq.gov.hk/index_eng.asp
Overseas Green Labelling Schemes	There are a number of green labels for a wide range of products adopted in various countries around the world. Examples include the Germany’s Blue Angel, the Canada’s Environmental Choice Program, Japan’s Ecomark, the White Swan in 5 Nordic Countries, New Zealand’s Environmental Choice, European Community’s Eco-label Award Scheme, China’s Green Labelling Scheme, etc.	www.gen.gr.jp/members.html
Local Environmental Awards	In Hong Kong, there are a number of environmental awards established for the purpose of recognizing organizations’ commitments and achievements in environmental protection. These awards include <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eco-Business Awards • Hong Kong Awards for Industries: Environmental Performance • Hong Kong Eco-Products Award • Hong Kong Energy Efficiency Awards 	www.ecc.org.hk/english/core/core_detail_list.php?catid=22 www.bec.org.hk/programmes/e_programmes.php www.bec.org.hk/programmes/e_programmes.php www.eeawards.emsd.gov.hk/en/index.htm

Environmental Best Practices/Standards for Specific Trades and Industries

ISO 22000

The ISO 22000 [58] is an international standard on the requirements for a food safety management system aiming to ensure that food is safe at the time of human consumption. The Standard is applicable to all types of organizations within the food chain for example, food manufacturers, feed producers, transport operators, retail outlets and other relevant trades such as manufacturing of equipment, packaging materials, cleaning agents, additives and ingredients.

Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP)

HACCP is a methodology to systematically identify, evaluate and control risk elements (hazards) resulting from the services or products that your organization provides, affecting consumables to market or consumers. While HACCP is particularly useful for the food sector, it can also be applied to other sectors of industry where risk is critical.

Accredited Fish Farm Scheme

The Accredited Fish Farm Scheme is a voluntary scheme launched by the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department to assist local fish farmers to provide quality and safe aquaculture products to the public. For details, visit the webpage: www.hkaffs.org/en/index.html

Quality Seawater Assurance Scheme in Hong Kong

The Quality Seawater Assurance Scheme is a voluntary scheme launched by the HKSAR Government to assist relevant traders such as seafood restaurants, supermarkets and markets and seawater suppliers in controlling their fish tank water quality. For details, visit the webpage: www.hkpc.org/qsas

Good Manufacturing Practice (Drugs and Finished Pharmaceuticals)

This Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) requires manufacturers, processors, and packagers of drugs, pharmaceutical products, medical devices, etc. take proactive steps to ensure that their products are safe, pure, and effective.



Further Reading

[58] ISO 22000:2005 Food Safety Management Systems – Requirements for Any Organization in the Food Chain

