

Greening the Ministry

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Organisation: Ministry of the Environment (MoE)

Country: Poland

Level of government: Central government

Sector: Environmental protection, General public services

Type: Organisational Design

Launched in: 2007

Overall development time: 22 months

Link to the innovation's website

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Description

“Greening the Ministry” aims at reducing the negative, direct and indirect impact on the environment which is caused by the central administrative unit of the Polish Ministry of the Environment (MoE). The practical implementation of the mission includes the promotion of sustainable consumption patterns and environmental management systems (EMAS) within the public administration.

The following actions have, for instance, been undertaken:

- Replacement of the lighting with energy-saving lighting (since 2008).
- Introduction of central printing (since 2010).
- Electronic document circulation system (ESOD - since 2009).
- Implementation of the sustainable consumption patterns and environmental management systems (EMAS), an EU scheme (since 2009).
- Electronic personnel information (EIK - since 2012).
- Using recycled paper (since 2007).
- Internal education campaigns on environment protection addressed to employees (since 2009), e. g. contest among departments to promote healthy and environmentally friendly solutions in everyday transportation, especially on short distances.

Why the innovation was developed

EMAS in the Ministry of the Environment has been implemented to reduce the impact of governmental authority as an organisation under the provisions of Regulation EC No 1221/2009, on the environment. Implementation of the innovation aimed to achieve not only economic benefits by reducing the consumption of natural resources and office supplies, but also to raise awareness of the office staff.

Objectives

Improve effectiveness, Improve efficiency, Other

- Improve service outcomes by being a good example for the rest of the government thereby earning credibility for educational programmes.
- Improve service quality by introducing the electronic personnel information (EIK) which should help save time allowing employees to check documents, levels of earning and free days to use on their own.
- Improve efficiency by reducing the consumption of fuel, water, and garbage production.
- Improve employee satisfaction:
- The programme helps build the consciousness of working in a place which is environmentally friendly, and as a result, the employees' satisfaction should rise.

Main beneficiaries

General population, Government bodies, Government staff

- Ministry employees (495 people).
- The environment.

Existing similar practices

Green presidency

In public administration of my country

All Ministries

The Presidency in the Council of the European Union provides an opportunity to apply and promote some environmentally friendly activities. This range of activities was initiated by the Ministry of the Environment in cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as the “Green Presidency” project, which promoted saving natural resources and meeting environmental protection standards when organising events and meetings.

In 2011, the Ministry of the Environment announced the second edition of the competition for non-governmental organisations carrying out public tasks including "Environmental priorities of the Polish presidency." All these activities have increased the public awareness of the environmental priorities of the Polish EU presidency.

http://pl2011.eu/en/green_presidency

Eco-management and audit scheme

In public administration of my country

Wroclaw City Hall

The “administration” sector has the highest amount of organisations registered in the EMAS scheme among all service sectors in Europe.

Eco-management and audit scheme in Regional Fund for Environmental Protection and Water Management

In public administration of my country

Regional Fund for Environmental Protection and Water Management in Katowice

Results

Efficiency

“Greening the Ministry” initiative started in 2009. Comparing data collected in 2009 to data from 2011, the ministry used:

- 50 918 m3 of gas less (ca. PLN 81 000 saving).
 - 4 114 l of petrol less (ca. PLN 20 000 saving).
 - 800 m3 of water less (ca. PLN 6 100 saving).
 - 115.37 MWh less (2010 - 2011) (ca. PLN 67 000 saving).
 - 97.7 m3 communal waste less (ca. PLN 1 330 saving).
 - 1.38 mg paper waste less (ca. PLN 100 saving).
 - 193 000 A4 paper less used (2010 - 2011) (ca. PLN 6 000 saving).
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Service quality

Other:

Ministry of the Environment after the implementation of the EMAS system has improved the quality of service by having transparent procedures, the possibility of correspondence via e-mail, and the ability to report complaints and raise environmental awareness.

User satisfaction

Raising environmental awareness by organising educational and information campaigns.

Other improvements

- Rising employees' knowledge on EMAS and their environmental awareness: Evaluation questionnaires filled out after each training showed that over 50% of trainees felt that they improved their professional competencies and got knowledge/capabilities needed in the ministry.
 - Employee involvement: Plenipotentiary receives many remarks, suggestions to improve the EMAS and its procedures.
 - Other positive impacts on the environment by establishing and maintaining environmental aims and targets.
 - 1 486 trees and shrubs planted by the company which sold us the ecological printing paper (respectively to the amount of paper bought).
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Evaluation

EMAS requires at least annual internal audits and external verifications which creates the basis for a voluntary scheme of self-evaluation and self-control. Techniques used are described i. a. in ISO 19011 standard and are based on sampling.

Results of audits are presented in internal reports which are analysed during management reviews in order to assess opportunities to improve and change the EMAS.

Development

Design

The Ministry of the Environment and the General Directorate for Environmental Protection are responsible in Poland for the development and promotion of the EU scheme EMAS and for the dissemination of sustainable management practices among society.

Design time: 12 months

Testing

It is impossible to test the innovation. After the design we had to implement it directly.

Implementation

Tools used:

- Carry out an initial environmental review which was commissioned to an external entity.
- A specific management representative was appointed (Plenipotentiary to Director General), responsible for the EMAS implementation.
- Find financial resources to guarantee assistance of consultants with experience in environmental management systems implementation. The ministry applied for funds of the Office of the Chairman of the Council of Ministers (housing the Head of Civil Service in Poland).
- The managing sectoral project was financed by EU funds in the frame of the Human Capital Operation Programme.
- Several working meetings with representatives of all ministry units in order to identify processes and their potential impacts on environment – over 70 days of consultations.
- Preparation of a formal documentation on the implemented environmental management system.
- Trainings for all employees on environmental management systems (1.5 h training, twice every 6 months for all employees (ca. 500 people), 3 sessions for 20 employees = “ECO Team,” 3 sessions of training for 10 candidates to become internal environmental auditors).
- External consultant (private sector representative chosen in an open call for tenders) prepared and carried out 21 full days of training (in total about 70 hours of consultations).

Resources used:

- Consultations, training, verification and validation costs.
- Implementation of EMAS (together with verification, validation and significant promotional component) cost about PLN 200 000.
- Indirect costs:
 - Involvement of employees in new tasks.
 - Logistical changes in the ministry building.
 - Implementation of new practices according to changes in some procedures.

Implementation time: 10 months

Diffusion

Parallel with the ministry, the subordinated Environmental Information Centre decided to implement EMAS, as well as the Institute of Meteorology and Water Management, a national research institute (R&D unit of the ministry).

To disseminate the idea of the EMAS implementation in public administration entities, we held a seminar and used publications.

Diffusion time: ongoing

Challenges and solutions

- Financial: No external funding could have been a key barrier for starting the project.
 - Time: Just 10-month period of implementation including the holiday season.
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Partnerships

Tenants

Private sector

Tenants renting rooms in the ministry (bank, post office, kiosk, cafeteria) took part in trainings.

Lessons Learned

Lessons Learned

- Success of any environmental initiative demands employees' involvement, first of all of the management board.
 - “Crystallisation” of environmental management systems (EMAS) needs time. The implementation phase should last at least 12 months.
 - Without having any practical experience in implementation of management systems, it is advisable to involve external consultants.
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Conditions for success

Key enablers of the innovation:

- Very high environmental awareness of employees.
 - 55% compliance of informal EMAS functioning in the ministry with ISO 14001 requirements.
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Other information

Cost efficiency described above only reflects the direct environmental aspects of the ministry's activity. At the beginning of EMAS functioning, it is relatively easy to find significant savings. Later on, the interest will focus more on indirect aspects which are difficult to measure (e.g. ecological education, rising ecological awareness, ecological campaigns).

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