FIRST STEPS TO GREEN COMPETITIVENESS

ENVIRONMENTAL GUIDEBOOK FOR SERVICES/OFFICE BASED COMPANIES

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1.0   Introduction

Enterprise Ireland's core mission is to work in partnership with its client companies to develop a sustainable competitive advantage leading to a significant increase in profitable sales, exports and employment.   There is increasing recognition that good environmental performance makes good business sense. In the current economic climate, companies are adopting greener strategies in areas such as, resource efficiency, energy efficiency and reduction in carbon footprint, which will impact current performance and provide improved efficiencies.

Many companies find it difficult to incorporate environmental improvements into the day to day running of their businesses. However, it is possible for a business to install an environmental management system thereby introducing better environmental performance without requiring a major commitment in time and resources. When such a system is in place, its practices become second nature and can be developed over time, as required.

The system outlined in this guidebook includes templates for the installation of an environmental policy statement and provides a foundation for the basic management of a business's environmental impacts. The policy statement demonstrates that good environmental practice is in place throughout the business. An Environmental Management System will lead to increased environmental awareness and performance. This will help a business achieve improved competitive advantage (greater resource efficiency in energy/water/waste costs) and a greater market share through enhanced environmental/green credentials.

2.0   Environmental Policy Statement

An Environmental Policy Statement is a document that sets out a company's commitment to identifying and managing its environmental impacts in the best possible way. The statement should indicate that the company communicates its Environmental Policy, as appropriate, with relevant stakeholders such as, the Local Authorities, local communities and customers. It should also aim to communicate that staff have been adequately trained in awareness of the company's Environmental Policy and that the company is striving towards continual improvement with regard to environmental issues.

A statement can also include sector specific information regarding reduction of carbon footprint, reduced packaging, reduced transportation, use of hazardous chemicals or use of sustainable raw materials.

A typical example statement follows, showing how it is laid out, on company headed paper and signed off by the Managing Director. This indicates senior management commitment to the process.

The ensuing template is a generic example and can be modified to suit a company's needs. However, as a minimum, the statement should refer to the areas covered in the first section in black type (A).   The second part, in italic type (B), gives optional statements which may be included/omitted, as appropriate.

Example : Environmental Policy Statement

ACME ENTERPRISES

(A)

Acme Enterprises (change to company name) is aware that its business activities impact upon the environment and is committed to ensuring these activities have the least possible detrimental effect.

We are committed to:

- Complying fully with all relevant legal requirements, codes of practice and regulations
- Assessing the environmental impacts of our operations, continuously seeking to reduce these impacts and improving our resource efficiency through reduction of energy, water use and waste
- Promoting environmental and energy awareness in our employees through participation and training
- Working with our customers to make more environmentally sensitive choices
- Monitoring our progress to ensure ongoing improvements in our environmental performance
- Communicate this policy to stakeholders and the public and work with our neighbours to reduce the impact of our operations

These commitments will be carried out in line with our environmental policy

J. Jones
Managing Director

(B)

Other specific issues related to your company can be included, such as:

Energy

- *Reducing our carbon footprint as part of a carbon management strategy*
- *Optimise energy efficiency and conservation in all operations*
- *Controlling and managing energy efficiency in our business and promoting energy efficiency*
- *Reducing the impact of transportation in our business activities*

Waste

- *Actively promote reduce, reuse and recycling both internally and amongst our suppliers and customers*
- *Reducing packaging on all our products where feasible*
- *Minimising waste generation by applying reuse and recycle options where possible*
- *Minimise waste generation and unnecessary resource usage during the stages of planning, design and operation of new and existing business activities*

Continuous Improvement

- *Setting specific improvement targets, monitoring progress and communicating results internally*
- *Develop specific objectives to continually improve our environmental performance*
- *Set objectives and targets for continuous improvement. Measure and review our performance regularly and communicate the results*
- *Continual performance improvement in minimising environmental impacts of our business*
- *Promoting continuous improvement by setting, monitoring and reviewing our environmental targets and objectives*

Procurement

- *Choosing suppliers and contractors that adopt best environmental practices and make this the procurement policy of our company*
- *Purchasing products and services that have the least environmental impact, where this is feasible*
- *Encouraging suppliers and contractors to implement sustainable environmental systems*
- *Minimizing the use of hazardous chemicals and solvents*
- *Using materials, fittings and furnishings from sustainable sources*

Awareness/Training

- *Encouraging environmental awareness among our employees through appropriate communication and training programmes*
- *Promoting environmental awareness throughout our business*
- *Ensure that all employees understand our environmental policy and conform to its standards*
- *Continuous training of all staff in all environment related issues*
- *Informing and motivating all of our staff and encouraging them to play an active role in committing to our environmental policy*

3.0   Environmental Management Programme

An Environmental Management Programme is a system which assists companies in managing their environmental impacts. It helps identify areas in the business where savings can be made by addressing resource loss and indicates any issues arising in regard to environmental regulations, e.g. waste practices such as disposing of chemicals or toners in general waste. The programme is based on identifying and managing the environmental impacts of business activities or services. The main areas covered are:

- Roles and Responsibilities
- Training and awareness
- Procurement policies
- Energy
- Waste
- Water

To facilitate the maintenance of records, water bills, fuel bills, boiler service, waste collection invoices etc should be filed in a central location.

3.1   Roles and responsibilities

The Environmental Policy Statement should be prepared and signed by the Managing Director on company headed paper. This indicates senior management buy in to the Environmental Management Programme (EMP) and will show that the company is committed to reducing its impact on the environment. The EMP depends on adequate resources being made available to be successful. A Green Champion and/or Green Team should be assembled to implement and manage the EMP. Specific roles for these individuals, senior management and other staff members should be defined as required.

3.2   Training and awareness.

A programme should be devised which incorporates the required training for staff on the EMP and how it is to be implemented. This should focus on the impacts of the companies activities along with how these impacts are to be managed. This will require staff buy-in to the process which can be helped by educating on impacts, signage, information sheets etc. These programmes should be updated regularly. You can design your own signs or download examples from the internet which meet your needs.

3.3 Procurement policies.

A company can devise criteria for the types of materials which they might procure for the day to day running of their business. These can be general criteria, such as, paper from recycled or sustainable sources (e.g. FSC), non hazardous chemicals etc. (More detailed specific criteria similar to that laid out in European or National Green Public Procurement guidelines can be used) Basically, a business decides how detailed these criteria should be and how they should be implemented. The criteria should be laid out in the EMP.

3.4 Energy

Energy efficiency should be included in an EMP as an area of major focus as it has the most potential to generate cost savings and reduce Carbon Footprint

- Analysis of energy supplier's bills (sustainable supplier, bill elements, such as, unit cost, standing charge and miscellaneous charges)
- Energy efficient equipment, such as, lighting (substituting fluorescent lights), IT equipment, copiers, printers, heating and heating controls, air handling/conditioning
- Energy efficiency practice, including balancing usage to actual requirements. Inefficient practices could include heating water unnecessarily, lights/heating left on in unoccupied areas, equipment left on standby etc
- Regular and scheduled servicing of energy using equipment (gas/oil boilers, air conditioning etc.)
- Record keeping and benchmarking. Companies should monitor their energy usage and where possible, generate Key Performance Indicators. Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) have made a number of tools are available at the following link. http://www.seai.ie/Your_Business/Resources/Resources.html. These tools, including an energy tracker tool are very useful for recording monthly/annual energy usage
- Travel/transport. Managing travel/transport in an efficient manner. Promoting alternative methods, e.g. staff public transport, car pooling, bike to work scheme, efficient transport of goods/supplies

3.5 Waste

- Proper segregation of waste using the waste hierarchy (reduce, reuse, recycle)
- Particular attention should be paid to correct disposal/recycling of hazardous materials, such as: batteries, fluorescent tubes, print cartridges and ozone filters, IT hardware (WEEE waste)
- Explore packaging take back opportunities with suppliers
- Ensure use of appropriately licenced waste contractors

3.6 Water

- Monitor usage
- Identify leaks and unnecessary usage
- Replacing equipment with water efficient alternatives, such as: low flush toilets, low flow taps etc
- Explore grey water alternatives, such as: rainwater harvesting

4.0 Templates

The tables containing a Preventative/Corrective Action Sheet and Record of Savings can be used on an ongoing basis.

Preventative/Corrective Action Sheet

When an environmental issue is identified it should be listed on this table as an item requiring action. The Action Sheet should be used to assign responsibility to somebody for corrective actions along with the date it has been completed. The Action Sheet should be brought up at regular meetings to ensure actions have been assigned and/or completed.

Record of Savings

This is a record sheet to identify savings made as a result of preventative/corrective actions taken. If, for example, an energy issue is identified and rectified, the savings can be recorded from the reduction in energy bills attributable to the action.

Action Sheet

Impact Heading (procurement, energy, waste, water)	Action	Person Responsible	Date

Record of Savings

Impact Heading (procurement, energy, waste, water)	Action	Q$_1$ Savings	Q$_2$ Savings	Q$_3$ Savings	Q$_4$ Savings

5.0   Annual Micro Report

An annual environmental report should be drawn up to summarise what issues arose during the year and what actions were taken to rectify them. A Register of Opportunities table can be used to note where future opportunities for improvement exist. This can help in assigning budgets to particular cost saving projects. The report should be signed off by a senior manager and filed with the EMP. The templates provided can be used to record this information.

Annual Environmental Micro Report

Company Name: **Website:**

Address: **Date:**

Phone: **Fax:**

Contact Person: **Email:**

Annual Summary of Actions

Impact Heading (procurement, energy, waste, water)	Actions	Person Responsible	Date

Register of Opportunities

Impact Heading (procurement, energy, waste, water)	Opportunity	Comments

Completed by: _____   Approved by:_____

6.0   Operational Excellence Offers

Green Offer

As part of assisting client companies achieve improved export growth, the Enterprise Ireland Green Offer facilitates the incorporation of sustainable practices into the day-to-day running of the business. This is a two tiered offer based around building capability within companies to improve environmental best practice:

- GreenStart
- GreenPlus

Areas covered by the offer include: Environmental Management Systems, Energy Management Systems, Carbon Management Systems, Water Stewardship and Life Cycle Assessment.
Better environmental performance leads to improved resource efficiency and direct cost savings and can also increase access to customers who are increasingly demanding more environmentally friendly products and services.

For further information on our supports please contact:

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Lean Offer

Enterprise Ireland's Lean Business Offer is designed to encourage clients to adopt Lean business principles in their organisation to increase performance and competitiveness.

Lean tools and techniques are helping companies across the globe to address competitiveness issues within their businesses by building the capability of their people to identify problems and improve operations.

The Lean Business Offer is not just for manufacturing companies! Software and internationally traded services companies can avail of funding under the Lean Offer to drive improvements and efficiencies in their business.

The Lean Business Offer is made up of three levels of support:

- LeanStart
- LeanPlus
- LeanTransform

Each level of support is characterised by increasing levels of capability in implementing Lean business principles and other best practice approaches to drive company awareness, adoption and integration of Lean tools and techniques.

For further information please contact:

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Operational Excellence

The aim of the Operational Excellence offer is to support established companies (SME and Large) to address their competitive challenges and growth opportunities through a transformation project that would include investment in:

- Business Innovation: the implementation of new and innovative production, delivery or organisational methods

- Capital equipment

- Capability building through training

The identifiable project around which the growth plan is structured should involve a significant change in how the company does business and should not be focused on routine operational changes. Examples could include:

- a manufacturing company investing in new equipment and integrated software systems to implement a new production method using lean principles and training of staff

- a services company providing bespoke creative design services implementing a new production method, involving new standardised process design, automation of parts of the process and training of staff in lean principles

- company implementing new methods of doing business with suppliers and partners, including investment in new equipment, software development and training of management and staff

For further information please contact:

Financial Products Helpdesk
Tel: +353 1 727 2799
Email: Financial.products@enterprise-ireland.com

Benchmarking Company Competitiveness - Company Health Check (CHC) – Benchmarking for Success

Competitiveness is a measure of a business' ability to survive in the market place. Although a number of external factors can impact on a company's competitiveness position such as oil prices, exchange rates etc, many factors are within the control of the management team and employees. Your competitiveness is dependent on having the right design of products, making them well, selling them efficiently and supporting the customer after the sale. It requires being as effective and as efficient as the best in the world. Many companies use the Enterprise Ireland Company Health Check to identify and prioritise problem areas in their business. Enterprise Ireland can support you to benchmark your company against a database of European companies in your sector by working with you to undertake a Company Health Check (CHC). Following a programme of activities to address issues identified in the Company Health Check, you can repeat the benchmarking process to monitor improvements in performance.

For further information please contact:

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