

## EMAS III

### Call for Re-Think on EMAS from European Environmental Management Professionals

The European Commission's proposed revision of the Eco-Management and Audit Scheme (EMAS - COM draft 402 / 2, 16.07.08) requires a fundamental rethink and Europe-wide debate about its future role, according to **EFAEP**, the European Federation of Associations of Environmental Professionals.

Is EMAS (III) the most appropriate mechanism to stimulate organisations to voluntarily improve their environmental performance beyond legal limits?

**EFAEP** believes that there are a lot of missed opportunities for improvement:

The European Commission and Member States should ensure EMAS to be easily workable and understandable. The approach is not to deteriorate EMAS' future conditions, i.e. not to make additional costly and complicated demands on participating organisations without providing benefits. It is necessary either to support EMAS actively or, alternatively, to transfer the expenditure from supporting EMAS to encouraging the use of ISO 14001.

The EMAS Regulation has already included ISO 14001 as its core management system. Thus, the European Commission / Parliament could come full circle to the development of an EMAS version nearly similar to EMAS I without including ISO 14001. This would underline, besides legal compliance, the importance of corporate environmental performance as one of the main issues of the EMAS-philosophy in order to achieve the European Environmental and Climate agenda objectives. The requirements could be kept strict and ambitious, but simple, strengthening again EMAS against ISO 14001.

The key distinguishing feature of EMAS is the requirement to publish an independently validated environmental statement which leads to the entry onto national and European public registers. This statement and the EMAS-logo should be promoted much more to show that EMAS-companies act officially controlled and responsible. For this the Commission could use existing structures within CEN to develop a voluntary environmental and sustainability reporting standard which would have far greater market appeal. Member States could additionally develop national registers of ISO 14001 certified organisations as a means to support greener products / services, more responsible organisations and demands of market in the context of sustainability and environmental protection.

By working with the market and improving any real or perceived deficiencies, greater value and benefits for organisations and the environment would result. **EFAEP** calls on the European Parliament and Council to lead the debate not only on details to be changed but on a more fundamental rethink on EMAS.

**EFAEP / EMS-Expert Group**