



EMAS REGISTRATION FOR MULTISITE ORGANISATIONS

Why register multiple sites with EMAS?

EMAS brings many benefits to organisations:

- ✓ **Enhanced environmental and financial performance**
- ✓ **Enhanced risk and opportunity management**
- ✓ **Enhanced credibility, reputation and transparency**
- ✓ **Enhanced employee empowerment and motivation**

By registering several of your sites at the same time, you set up an ambitious environmental strategy for your organisation. You can maximise the benefits of EMAS, by using your experience in your different sites, and increase the credibility of your commitment.

In the past it was necessary to have all sites audited on a three year basis, which could be time consuming and costly for large organisations. The multisite registration was introduced to alleviate this burden while keeping the reliability of the scheme.

How to perform a multisite registration?

Organisations with multiple sites can now benefit from the use of a sampling method for verification, without compromising complete implementation of the management system at each site. **In practice, this means that you should define group(s) of similar sites representative of your activities and have a sample of each group verified as part of the verification process of your organisation.** The procedure is described in the EMAS User's Guide, which can be accessed on the EMAS website (emas.eu).

IMPORTANT!

Your environmental statement should clarify the reasoning behind the method used for grouping the sites and justify the selected sample size. It should also include a list of all sites (visited and non-visited sites).

4 steps to implement a sampling method

1. **Prepare** a clear description of the scope suggested for applying the sampling method: number of sites, listing of sites covered and description of their activities, and sites excluded from the sampling.
2. **Divide** the sites you want to suggest in one or more groups of similar sites. Similar sites operate the same kind of activities, face the same legal requirements and have similar environmental impacts. Make sure the similarity level of a group of sites guarantees that the verification of a sample of sites will be highly representative of the whole group.
3. **Wait** for the verifier to agree with the suggested scope.
He/she will define the character of each group of sites and draft a verification plan.
4. **Document** this sampling/verification plan in your environmental statement
The verification plan shall include a description of the methodology and criteria used to define:
 - the groups of sites
 - the method that will be used to select which sites will be verified
 - the timing of verification
 - the key activities and processes of each group of sites
 - the significant environmental aspects related to each group of sites
 - an estimate of the risk levels of environmental accidents related to these aspects

The sampling method

A representative sample shall be taken from each group of similar sites:

- The minimum number of site that should be included in the sample taken from each group of sites is derived by the following formula:

Number of sites in the sample equals the square root of the number of sites comprised in each group multiplied by 2 and rounded to the upper whole number (e.g. for a group of 100 sites: $\sqrt{100} \times 2 = 20$).

- Within each group, at least 50% of the sample of sites (rounded to the upper whole number) shall be selected randomly (non-selective). The environmental verifier must document the procedure used to complete this random selection.
- The methodology for the remaining selective sampling part shall make sure that the differences among the sites selected is as large as possible, and take into account the following aspects:
 - Results of environmental review and internal site audits or previous verifications
 - Records of incidents, complaints and other relevant aspects of corrective and preventive action;
 - Significant variations in the size of the sites;
 - Variations in, and the complexity of the management system and processes conducted at the sites;
 - Modifications since the last verification;
 - Maturity of the management system and knowledge of the organisation;
 - Differences in culture, language and regulatory requirements; and
 - Geographical dispersion

Taking those aspects into account the verifier shall also aim at including in the sample as much as possible sites that have not been verified yet.

EXAMPLE OF MULTISITE ORGANISATION VERIFICATION USING SAMPLING METHOD

Taking the example of a company active in the clothes retail sector with the following sites:

- 100 stores > 150 m²
- 400 stores < 150 m²
- 3 warehouses of various size and content
- 1 headquarters

1. Sites grouping for application of the sampling method:

- Group 1: 100 stores > 150 m²
- Group 2: 400 stores < 150 m²
- Individual sites (3 warehouses, 1 headquarters)

2. Verification prior to first registration:

- All individual sites (3 warehouses, 1 headquarters)
- Group 1: at least $\sqrt{100} \text{ stores} \times 2 = 20 \text{ stores}$
- Group 2: at least $\sqrt{400} \text{ stores} \times 2 = 40 \text{ stores}$

3. Verification prior to registration renewal:

- All individual sites should be visited
- Group 1: at least $\sqrt{100} \text{ stores} \times 2 = 20 \text{ stores}$
- Group 2: at least $\sqrt{400} \text{ stores} \times 2 = 40 \text{ stores}$

They will be different every 3 years, based on the methodology for selection described above.