

Identification of environmental objectives and targets for Newood's Environmental Management System

As part of the permit for the Huon Wood Centre, Newood has to develop an environmental management system (EMS) for the site operations; the proponents will need to develop a system that dovetails with this EMS.

A key element of the EMS required by ISO 14001 is the establishment of the environmental policy and identification of environmental objectives and targets. This paper describes the process Newood intends to use to formulate the policy, objectives and targets using input through the Community Consultative Committee.

What the Standard requires

The Standard states:

The organisation shall establish and maintain documented environmental objectives and targets, at each relevant function and level within the organisation.

When establishing and reviewing its objectives, an organisation shall consider the legal and other requirements, its significant environmental aspects, its technological options and its financial, operational and business requirements, and the views of interested parties.

The objectives and targets shall be consistent with the environmental policy, including the commitment to prevention of pollution.

The guidelines to the Standard state that the objectives should:

- be specific
- be measurable where ever possible
- take preventative measures into account where appropriate.

ISO 14004 (General Guidelines on EMS) states that objectives are the overall goals for environmental performance identified in the organisation's environmental policy. Environmental targets should be set to achieve these objectives within a specified time frame. Measurable performance indicators should be set and used as a basis for evaluation of the system. Objectives and targets can apply broadly across the organisation or more narrowly to site-specific or individual activities. They should be periodically reviewed and revised and should take into consideration the views of interested parties.

Definitions

For the purposes of the EMS the following definitions are used, based on ISO 14001.

Objective: the overall environmental goal arising from the environmental policy that we aim to achieve, and which is quantified where possible

Target: the performance result, quantified where possible, that needs to be met in order to meet the objective

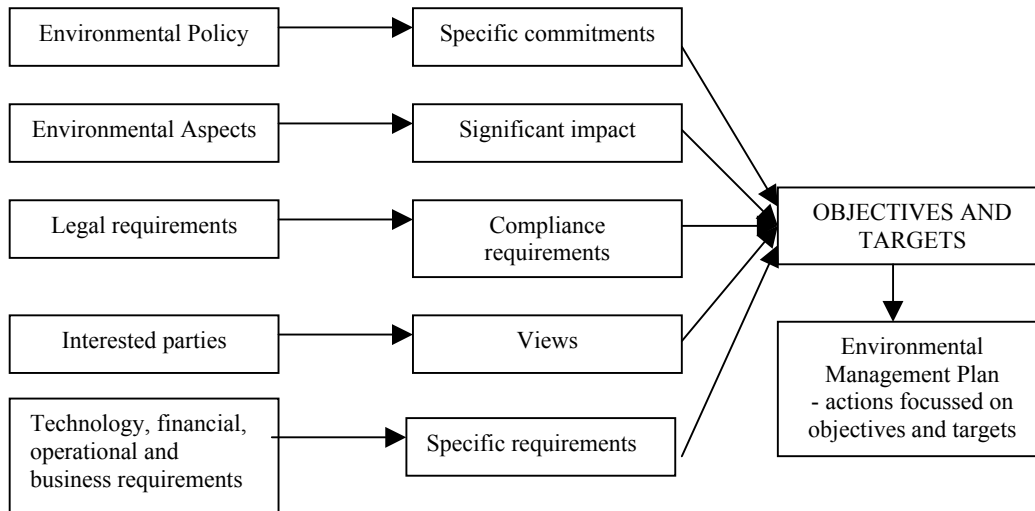
Indicator: the factor to be measured to monitor achievement of a target

Formulation of objectives

The Standard requires that in formulating the objectives consideration is give to:

- legal responsibilities
- significant environmental aspects
- available technology, business, financial and operational requirements
- the views of interested parties.

The process of formulating objectives can be illustrated thus:



Environmental Policy commitments

A wide range of commitments were provided as part of the DPEMP and several have subsequently been incorporated into the permit. The key commitments that Newood would seek to incorporate into an environmental policy include:

- To conduct operations to meet or exceed relevant environmental legislative and regulatory requirements and standards
- To identify and adopt environmentally sound best practice in sustainable production, waste minimisation and prevention of pollution
- To involve the Huon Valley community in and communicate with the community our environmental practices and performance.

Significant environmental aspects

A detailed set of environmental aspects have been identified as part of the DPEMP, however these will need further “proving up” as the design of the project proceeds.

In summary these are:

General Aspect	Environmental Impacts
Aspects of construction	A, B, N, R, S, G, W
Aspects of operation of plant and equipment	A, N, R, W

Aspects of storm water management	S, W
Air-borne emissions from processes	A, N, W
Use and maintenance of roads and operating areas	W
Irrigation	N, W
Transport, storage and use of fuels, chemicals and fertilisers	B, W
Transport operations	A, B, N
Sewage from toilets and waste water from processes	R, N, W
Solid waste	A, N, R
Water supply	R, W

- A= air quality
- B = biodiversity (flora and/or fauna)
- C= cultural heritage
- N= public nuisance (dust, noise, vibration, visual)
- R = resource use/waste
- S = soil structure, erosion
- G = geoheritage
- W = water quality/quantity

Legal compliance requirements

A list of acts, regulations, codes and state policies are contained in the DPEMP these will need to be reviewed and increased.

Views of Interested Parties

ISO 14004 defines an *interested party* as *an individual or group concerned with or affected by the environmental performance of an organisation*. ISO 14001 requires that an organisation consider the views of interested parties in formulating its environmental objectives.

The Standard does not define the extent or method of obtaining those views. It is proposed for the purpose of development of the site EMS that consultation will occur with the Community Consultative Committee and encourage that group to seek wider community views as they see necessary. With the Committee’s agreement working papers etc can be placed on the website and at the wood centre shop to provide the community with an opportunity to comment during the process.

Once the committee has provided assistance and input to a draft set of objectives and targets these should be provided for general information and further public submission.

We have already consulted the DPWIE and HVC on a range of issues and these bodies would be actively engaged in further development of the EMS.

Through the DPEMP and public hearing processes we are aware of the major environmental issues of concern to the public and they are aware of our plans, this process will help to formulate an approach that is consistent with community aspirations.

Technological, financial, operational and business requirements

In formulating the objectives, targets and indicators and important consideration is the ability to measure performance. Indicators have to be developed which are measurable using existing and economically feasible technology.

The principle of continuous improvement will require regular reviews of the initial objectives, targets and indicators as technology changes and financial and business requirements dictate.

Structure of Objectives

Our objectives should demonstrably relate to sustainable forest management and environmentally sound best practice. The objectives should be based on commitments made in the DPEMP, consistent with the ISO requirement that the objectives be consistent with the site Environmental Policy.

The aim is to have an initial set of objectives, targets and indicators that:

- is manageable in number
- reflects the policy objectives
- addresses the significant environmental aspects
- is measurable and reportable
- is consistent with the corporate objectives.

The objectives will need to be reviewed annually and will need to be revised and possibly expanded as the EMS develops, as new issues are identified, as initial objectives are met, as financial, operational and business requirements change and as other indicators become measurable through research or technology.

Next steps

The CCC will be requested to engage in a series of workshops to assist in defining the objectives in accordance with the commitments provided in the DPEMP and the permit conditions.

The aim is to have a document ready for public comment by end April 2004 and a final document for the Newood Board to endorse by end June 2004.

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