



The ACSP as an Environmental Management System Framework



No matter what your business, you can use your participation in the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program to develop an EMS and meet your environmental performance goals.

Environmental Management Systems, or EMSs, are increasingly being used by environmentally-leading firms as a means to set and meet performance goals, and improve upon them over time. The Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program (ACSP) is designed to serve your organization in the development of an EMS.

The principal components of an EMS are *plan, do, check, and act*. Within this framework are a number of key elements or steps related to the development and implementation of an EMS. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency outlines 17 key elements as follows:

1. **Environmental principles and policy-** Develop a statement of your organization's commitment to the environment. Use this policy as a framework for planning and action.
2. **Legal and other requirements-** Identify and ensure access to relevant laws and regulations, as well as other requirements to which your organization adheres.
3. **Assess significant environmental aspects and impacts-** Identify environmental attributes of your products, activities, and services. Determine those that could have significant impacts on the environment.
4. **Objectives and targets-** Establish environmental goals for your organization, in line with your policy, environmental impacts, the views of interested parties and other factors.
5. **Develop environmental management programs-** For each environmental issue, formulate an action plan. Plan actions necessary to achieve your objectives and targets.
6. **Structure and responsibility-** Establish roles and responsibilities for environmental management and provide appropriate resources.
7. **Training, awareness and competence-** Ensure that your employees are trained and capable of carrying out their environmental responsibilities.
8. **Communication and outreach-** Establish processes for internal and external communications on environmental management issues.

Pursuing certification in the ACSP will help you and your organization to fulfill the intentions of these 17 EMS elements.

9. **EMS documentation-** Maintain information on your EMS and related documents. This would include BMPs for each environmental impact issue.
10. **Document control-** Ensure effective management of procedures and other system documents.
11. **Operational control-** Identify, plan and manage your operations and activities in line with your policy, objectives, and targets.
12. **Emergency preparedness and response-** Identify potential emergencies and develop procedures for preventing and responding to them.
13. **Monitoring and measurement-** Monitor key activities and track performance. Conduct periodic assessments of compliance with legal requirements.
14. **Nonconformance and corrective and preventive action-** Identify and correct problems and prevent their recurrence.
15. **Environmental Records-** Maintain and manage records of EMS performance.
16. **EMS audit-** Periodically verify that your EMS is operating as intended
17. **Management review-** Periodically review your EMS with an eye to continual improvement.

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