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ISO 14001:2015 Environmental Management Systems - The Gap Analysis Checklist

This gap analysis checklist is prepared for use in evaluating your Environmental Management System (EMS) against the requirements of ISO 14001:2015. Each requirement is expressed as a question that the user (auditor / assessor) can use to evaluate your EMS capabilities. You will need to have a copy of the ISO 14001:2015 standard to use along with this checklist so that you can refer to the requirements and the guidance sections of Annex A.

After you have prepared an audit schedule, and assigned responsibility to your auditors for different areas or processes to audit, copy each section of the checklist for the auditors working with that section. As you work through the checklist take notes on what is in place, and what needs to be developed. Reference the procedures or other documents that you have reviewed and that will provide information for the new EMS. Take notes on the status of the documents; will they need to be revised for the new system, or can they be used as is? Also note where processes are in place, but documentation is needed. Focus on what is in place, and what needs to be developed.

While you do want to know if procedures and processes are being complied with, compliance is not your main focus for this audit. Remember that the final outcome of this audit should be a list of things that your company needs to do to comply with ISO 14001:2015.

---	ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS	OBSERVATIONS / COMMENTS	STATUS
4	CONTEXT OF THE ORGANIZATION		
	<p style="color: blue;">This clause introduces two sub-clauses relating to the context of the organization, (1) understanding the organization and its context and (2) understanding the needs and expectations of interested parties. Together they require that you determine the issues and requirements that can impact on the planning of the EMS. In addition the scope of the EMS needs to be determined and the Environmental Management System established, implemented, maintained and continually improved.</p>		
4.1	Understanding the organization and its context		
	<p>Has your company determined the external and internal issues that affect your ability to achieve the intended outcomes of the Environmental Management System (EMS)?</p> <p>Have you included such issues as environmental conditions being affected by or capable of affecting your company?</p>		

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4.2	Understanding the needs and expectations of interested parties		
	<p>Has your company determined:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The interested parties that are relevant to the EMS? • The requirements (relevant needs and expectations) of these interested parties? • The requirements that become compliance obligations? 		
4.3	Determining the scope of the environmental management system		
	<p>To establish the scope of the EMS, has your company determined the boundaries and applicability of the EMS?</p> <p>When determining the scope of the EMS, have you considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The external and internal issues (per 4.1)? • The compliance obligations relevant interested parties (per 4.2)? • Your organizational units, functions and physical boundaries? • The activities, products and services of your company? • Your authority and ability to exercise control and influence? <p>Within the defined scope of the EMS, have you included all your activities, products and services in</p>		

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	<p>the EMS?</p> <p>Is the scope of the EMS available and maintained as documented information?</p>		
4.4	Environmental management system		
	<p>Has your company obtained the current version of the ISO 14001:2015 international standard?</p> <p>As required by the standard, have you established, documented implemented, maintained and continually improved the EMS?</p> <p>Have you determined the processes needed for the EMS and their interactions throughout the company?</p> <p>When establishing and maintaining the EMS, have you considered the knowledge gained from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your understanding of the organization and its context (per 4.1)? • Your understanding of the needs and expectations of interested parties (per 4.2)? 		
5	LEADERSHIP		
<p style="color: blue;">This clause requires that your top management demonstrates leadership and commitment with respect to the EMS. This section also asks top management to establish, implement and maintain an environmental policy that is appropriate to your company and to ensure that the responsibilities and authorities for relevant roles are assigned and communicated.</p>			
5.1	Leadership and commitment		
	<p>Has top management demonstrated leadership and commitment with respect to the EMS by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taking accountability of the effectiveness of the 		

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	<p>EMS?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring that the environmental policy and environmental objectives are established for the EMS and are compatible with the strategic direction and the context of the organization? • Ensuring that the environmental policy is communicated, understood and applied within the company? • Ensuring the integration of the EMS requirements into the company's business processes? • Ensuring that the resources needed for the EMS are available? • Communicating the importance of effective environmental management and of conforming to the EMS requirements? • Ensuring that the EMS achieves its intended results? • Directing and supporting persons to contribute to the effectiveness of the EMS? • Promoting continual improvement? • Supporting other relevant management roles to demonstrate their leadership as it applies to their areas of responsibility? 		
5.2	Environmental policy		
	<p>Has your top management established, implemented and maintained an environmental policy?</p>		