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ISO 14000 Environmental Management System for Sustainable Development and Environment in Business

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ABSTRACT

Today, environmental pollution is a global problem. Industrialization, rapid urbanization, technological advances, economic developments, and increasing world population have brought environmental pollution with them. Environmental pollution has reached a level that threatens human health and safety. Environmental management systems are useful and important in many ways such as reducing the negative effects of businesses on the environment, creating a safe working environment, preventing pollution, reducing costs, reducing risks, improving environmental performance, and improving corporate image. The aim of this study is to emphasize the importance of ISO 14000 environmental management system standards for sustainable development and environment in business. In this direction, the study explains sustainable development, sustainable environment, the characteristics, importance, development, stages, standards, and benefits of the ISO 14000 environmental management system for businesses.

KEYWORDS

Environmental Changes, Environmental Impact, Environmental Management System (EYS), ISO 14001, Sustainable Development, Sustainable Environment

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

The topics of sustainable development and environmental management systems have gained importance in the last decade (Mas, et, al.2019). The World Environment and Development Commission published the most common definition of sustainable development in its 1987 Brundtland report. In the report referred to as “Our Common Future” and “Brundtland Report”, the product of the commission’s work, one of the most used definitions was made by referring to the concept of sustainable development (Ekşi, 2019). According to this report, sustainable development is taking measures to prevent a decrease in the welfare of future generations while meeting the needs of the current generation (Öner andAğca, 2018; Babacan, 2010). The report also includes the eradication of poverty in general, equality in the distribution of natural resources, population control, and the development of environmentally friendly technologies (Tıraş, 2012).

Sustainable development handles three basic elements which are economic, environmental and social, which interact with each other and need to be addressed simultaneously. In this framework, it is necessary to ensure the continuity of diversity and healthy environments in the economic field

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together with the creation of these. Economic sustainability means that the company has a solid financial structure and profits (Akgül, 2010).

The most important factor in corporate sustainability activities is the environment. Environment is the condition for all living things to survive. The fact that businesses neglect one of the environmental, economic and social areas jeopardizes the ongoing activities and future of all businesses (Öner and Ağca, 2018). The studies of scientists in the field of natural sciences and economics alone are not enough to ensure sustainable development. To achieve sustainable development, political cohesion and integrated scientific information systems that go far beyond combining institutions and science must work together (Polasky, et al. 2019). The environmental dimension of sustainable development is that biological and physical systems are balanced and the ecosystem adapts to changing conditions. Therefore, it is now accepted that development and the environment are inseparable, and that sustainable development is the development model of today and the future (Tıraş, 2012).

In this context, "Environmental Management Systems" have been organized to ensure sustainability (Kaypak, 2011). Environmental Management Systems have emerged with the increase in energy consumption, decrease in natural resources, environmental pollution and deterioration of the eco-system (Hikichi, Salgado and Beijo, 2017; Tepetelen and Özdemir, 2003), degradation of the ozone layer, degradation of forest areas, erosion and all other environmental pollution threatening our world, especially after the industrial revolution. With these developments, although consumption has increased in some segments of the society in the socio-economic field, it is observed that poverty has increased in some segments (Akgül, 2010). Previously, approaches that suggested that natural resources have the characteristics of recurrence and continuous availability have been widely accepted.Even in this direction, the search for a solution to environmental problems has been ignored. This approach, which brings with it greater risks (Kaypak, 2011), has revealed the need to prepare economic development plans that will eliminate inequality in the use of limited resources and save people from poverty.

Environmental sustainability is the operation of the enterprise without harming the environment or with the least damage in order to protect natural resources for future generations (Öner&Ağca, 2018). Environmental management systems are an important managerial capability that includes ethical responsibility as well as social responsibility (Arda et al. 2018).Within the scope of environmental responsibility and environmental safety, organizations have made an important effort to minimize the effects of their activities on the environment in order to protect the environment with environmental management policies (Yontar, 2008). Today, politicians, societies and businesses in many countries of the world have become environmentally sensitive (Mazzi, et, al.2016). In addition, the fact that environmental pollution is a big risk for a livable world and environmental problems do not know any boundaries has increased concerns on this issue (Yontar, 2008).

Due to the increase in international cooperation and solidarity (Yontar, 2008), "2030 Sustainable Development Agenda" has been developed by the United Nations (UN) and "Circular Economy Action Plan" by the European Commission (Patón-2019).The United Nations defines the Environmental Management System as "carrying out systematic planning, implementation and control activities within an institutional framework for the performance of continuous improvement of the environment" (Sitnikov, 2012).The Environmental Management System is a structure that determines the organizational structure, policies, goals and objectives (Ferrón et al., 2016), and consists of planning activities, responsibilities, practices, procedures and processes (Ertuğrul and Şavlı, 2013).

Environmental Management System is the process of developing and implementing various environmental policies among businesses and non-profit organizations, customers and suppliers (Sitnikov, 2012). To create healthy societies and seek new methods to meet local needs, businesses need to take serious consideration not only the environmental aspects associated with the production chain, but also the life cycle of their products (Santos et al., 2016).

Today, many businesses have sought an effective environmental management system that led to the implementation and development of the ISO 14001 standard (D'Souza, 2019). Businesses began