

Guidance: Writing an Environmental Policy

An environmental policy's main purpose is to serve as the basis for implementing an Environmental Management System. An environmental policy establishes the company's commitment to the environment and provides a framework for environmental performance, while stating the company's overall objectives. Companies should keep its policy simple and clear, and ensure all employees are aware of it.

A meaningful environmental policy must be endorsed by senior management, preferable the chief executive, since commitment and support from the highest level is essential for the program's success. However, all employees can contribute to the process of determining the policy. Encourage everyone to share their suggestions.

Considerations for Writing an Environmental Policy

- The company's mission and core values
- Support for continual improvement
- Pollution prevention
- Compliance with relevant laws and regulations
- Relevance to the organisation's activities, products and services
- Reflection of objectives and targets

Points to Address in an Environmental Policy

- Minimisation of negative environmental impacts in production, use and disposal
- Legal compliance
- Education and training of the workforce
- Reduction of waste and consumption of resources (materials, fuel and energy)
- Commitment to recovery and recycling
- A commitment to continual improvement
- Encouragement of support of the EMS by suppliers and contractors
- Involvement of all employees and local community

Companies who sign up to Business investors can download a generic Environment Policy. This needs to be signed by top management and should be displayed in a prominent place where it can be seen by staff, customers and the public.

As companies become more aware of the Environmental impacts of their operation the environmental policy can be further refined. If you would like further assistance on developing your organisations policy please contact a member of the Business investor team.