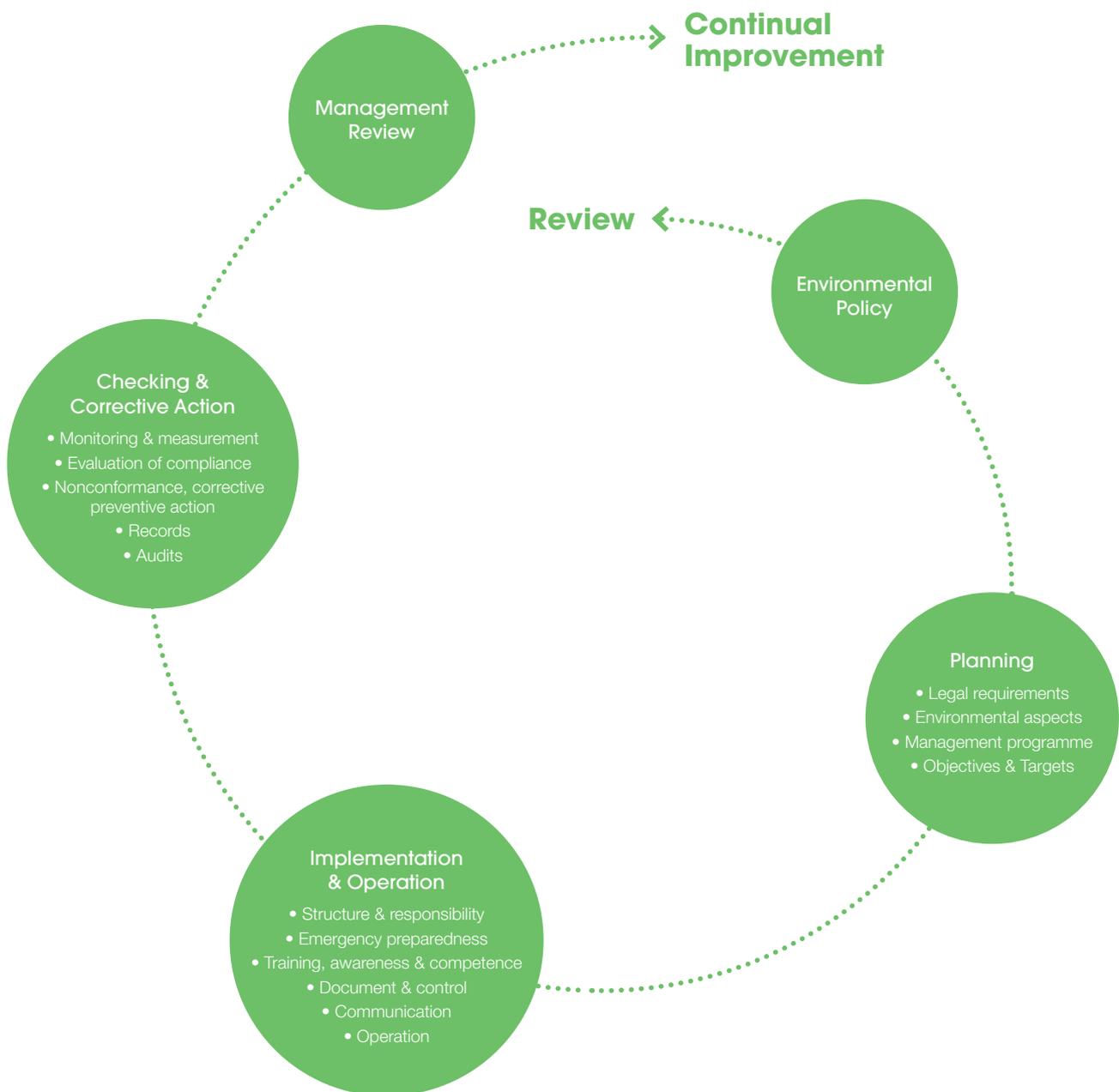




➤ ISO 14001 Environmental Management Systems

The basic model for an Environmental Management System (EMS) is shown below. The model is a continual spiral of activity leading to continual improvement. There are five groups of activities in the spiral and these are based on the total quality management "Plan - Do - Check - Review" cycle. Within these five main groups there are seventeen separate EMS elements and requirements.



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ISO 14001 Environmental Management Systems (continued)

Environmental Policy

The first requirement is for an organisation's top management to define its environmental policy. This must include some specific commitments about complying with the law, continual improvement and pollution prevention.

The policy has to be appropriate to the environmental impacts of the organisation and provide a framework for the organisation to set and review its environmental objectives and targets. The policy must be written down, communicated and implemented throughout the organisation. It must also be communicated to all parties who do work on its behalf and be publicly available.

PLANNING

Environmental aspects

Organisations must have procedures to identify aspects of their activities, products and services that can interact with the environment and assess how significant these impacts are. Information about environmental aspects must be kept up to date and be considered when setting environmental objectives and targets.

Legal and other requirements

Procedures are required to identify legal and other obligations. Other obligations could include industry codes of practice or other requirements an organisation voluntarily subscribes to.

Objectives, targets and programmes

Organisations must set some environmental objectives and targets. These must be written down and kept up to date. When setting objectives and targets, organisations must take account of their legal and other obligations, the significant environmental aspects they have identified, the views of interested parties and some practical business requirements. A formal, documented management programme is required. This must set out how objectives and targets will be achieved and this programme has to be kept up to date.

IMPLEMENTATION AND OPERATION

Structure and responsibility

Organisations must define responsibilities for environmental management, including identifying management representative(s) with overall responsibility for the EMS. Resources needed to implement the EMS must be available.

Training, awareness and competence

Organisations must ensure that people carrying out activities that could affect the environment are competent. Training needs must be identified and a high level of basic environmental awareness training must be provided.

Communication

Procedures are required for communicating internally and externally about the organisation's EMS and the environmental aspects of its activities, products and services.

Environmental management system documentation

The EMS must be described in formal documentation (on paper or electronically). This information must be kept up to date and point to any other related information or documents.

Document control

Organisations must have formal procedures for producing and controlling all the documents in the EMS.

Operational control

Organisations must identify operations and activities that are associated with significant environmental aspects of their activities, products and services. These operations and activities must be controlled so that their environmental impacts are managed.

Emergency preparedness

Potential emergency situations must be identified and formal procedures are required for responding to these and for preventing and mitigating environmental impacts. These procedures must be tested and reviewed.

Checking and corrective action, monitoring and measurement

Organisations must have procedures to monitor operational processes, progress towards targets and objectives, and compliance with the application legislation and or other requirements.

Evaluation of compliance

Organisations must have procedures in place to periodically evaluate compliance with applicable legal and other requirements to which the organisation subscribes. Organisations must record the results and maintain records from the review.

Non-conformance, corrective and preventive action

Organisations must also have procedures for dealing with problems in their environmental management. These must cover how action is taken to investigate problems and to make sure they are solved and do not recur.

Records

Formal procedures are required for record keeping. Records must be appropriate to the EMS, the organisation and demonstrate the requirements of the standard are being met.

Environmental management system audits

Procedures are required for auditing the EMS. All elements of the EMS must be regularly audited to ensure planned arrangements and the requirements of the standard are being met.

Management review

Top management in an organisation must periodically review how suitable and effective the environmental management system is. In doing this review, the organisation has to consider changing circumstances, the results of its own audits and, in particular, its commitment to continual improvement.

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