



NEWSLETTER

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Welcome to the second edition of our project's newsletter.

After almost two years of work, we are halfway through the ENHANCE project. All partners have had the opportunity to interact with stakeholders, go through an **intense learning process** and work on the identification of best practices implemented by other regions or countries that can be potentially implemented also in their own realities.

The learning process has entailed not only an analysis activity but also a **capacity building** work and **knowledge transfer** not only among the partners but also within the network of stakeholders that each partner has generated in the framework of the project. Some of them were already interacting with the partners and some are new in the network and all of them have provided new inputs and an added value to the activities carried out in the project.

Currently partners are defining those actions that will be part of their “Towards EMAS Action Plans” and that are expected to improve their respective policy instruments.

Each partner has had to take into account its own legal framework, the economic context, the sectoral policies, and regional or country objectives within the analysis of the feasibility of the pre-selected actions.

Now is the time to take action and two years of work are waiting for us to implement the actions and evaluate their impact.

In the following pages, you will find information on the learning process that has allow all partners to define their future action plans.



Key aspects related to the learning process

The learning and exchange process between the different partners has not only served to define new actions, it has also been useful to understand **how common problems and obstacles have been approached in different regional contexts**. The thematic workshop in Tallinn has highlighted the limits that different public administrations have encountered when trying to include EMAS as an environmental criterion within **public procurement** processes, but it has also provided examples of alternative ways to promote EMAS among those organisations that provide services with a relevant environmental impact.

In the thematic workshop in Vienna, partners and stakeholders had the opportunity to share points of view and information regarding the role of environmental inspectors in different Member States and regions. Besides the potential actions to be implemented in other regions, it has been helpful to understand the needs of enforcement authorities in order to design better regulatory reliefs and thus ensure their feasibility.

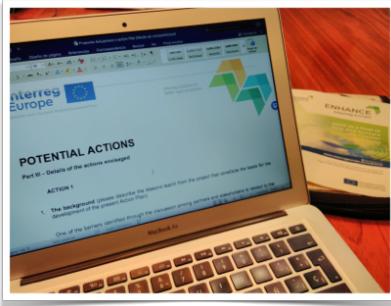
Along the learning process, partners have also been able to identify the **weaknesses of those regulatory reliefs that some of the partners have implemented in the past but have not had the expected impact**. This valuable knowledge will certainly help to define better future actions and strategies and to reinforce all the work that has been already done in the past.

During the workshop in Seville, partners and stakeholders have discussed about communication at different levels (EMAS, the environmental statement, etc.).

Interacting with stakeholders has allowed public administrations to envisage the **relevance of communication** when it comes to the implementation of regulatory reliefs; interested parties are not always aware about them and therefore its deployment can be limited. In addition, if companies are not informed effectively about the existing incentives, public administrations also lose the potential dissemination effect that business-to-business interaction can have.

Having worked with other interested parties, has forged a **joint process of analysis and reflection** that is probably one of the major legacies of the project. It is expected that each partner can maintain the network beyond the project timeframe as a way of working that allows progress in policies and processes.

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ANDALUSIA



"The Thematic Workshops has been crucial since they provided a meeting point between participating Public Administrations and other professionals and experts."



Site visit to the premises of an aquaculture industry (May /2018)

A debate forum thanks to ENHANCE

The capacity building and knowledge transfer processes provided key conclusions to RGA for the future improvement of EMAS implementation in Andalusia and the application of RGA's Regional Policy Instrument (ERDF Operational Program European Regional Development Fund of the Regional Government of Andalusia 2014-2020). Particularly, the Thematic Workshops has been crucial since they provided a meeting point between participating Public Administrations and other professionals and experts, a forum for debate to exchange ideas and opinions. They have been a success thanks to the level of commitment of EMAS-registered organizations and to the excellent progress of Public Administrations to improve the EMAS implementation in its respective regions and to reward EMAS-registered organizations with regulatory relief measures that allow saving costs and simplification of administrative burdens.

The best practices adopted by participating Public Administrations have been exchanged, discussed and analyzed in detail in order to encourage the EMAS implementation: from deduction of taxes to simplification of administrative burdens, streamlining procedures, reduction of inspection frequency, etc.

In this sense, the RGA is analyzing with a strong technical rigor what new incentives might be proposed, what procedures might be streamlined, what new or different channels of communication might be opened in order to improve and promote the EMAS implementation in Andalusia.

It is with precisely this in mind that the RGA is already working on improvement of EMAS implementation to overcome the main barriers faced by organizations to implement EMAS. For this reason, the RGA is working in close collaboration with the main Stakeholders of Andalusia in order to get to know their main needs and expectations and translate them into actions through the EMAS-Towards Action Plan in Andalusia.

A "multidisciplinary" Working Group has been set up, in which a representation of the main key agents of the EMAS organizations in Andalusia, and improvement opportunities from the sectors represented by them.

RGA has also arranged "bilateral" meetings with specific sectors, specifically aquaculture sector, promoting SMEs growth and consolidation by promotion and development of EMAS. Searching for synergies and taking advantage of them with other Interreg projects in which RGA is involved, that is, Symbi and GPP4Growth, has been a goal for us.

AUSTRIA



"EMAS is considered as a driver of the Circular Economy."

Environmental Inspections and the role of the EMAS verifier

EMAS is considered as a driver of the Circular Economy by encouraging organisations to develop techniques which make better use of resources in the production phase and retain physical goods longer and more efficiently in productive use, thus increasing their competitiveness. Starting from these considerations, ENHANCE project overall objective is to improve the implementation of regional policy instruments oriented to increasing the efficiency of resources by the exchange of experiences and practices on supporting EMAS registration.

Several workshops helped exchanging experiences about the chances and obstacles during the implementation of EMAS, and offered the possibility of bringing together different stakeholders.

In June 2018, the 5th ENHANCE thematic workshop and partner meeting took place in Vienna. It consisted of a study visit to the Viennese Municipal Department 48 (waste management, street cleaning and vehicle fleet). It is an EMAS organization affected by environmental inspections but also a good example for circular economy. One department, the "48er-Tandler", is a reuse shop with an additional value for the Viennese citizens.

On the second day of the workshop, partner countries and regions gave presentations about their situation regarding environmental inspections and EMAS. The presentations included the following topics:

- Is EMAS part of the national legislation regarding environmental inspections?
- How does the practical implementation of inspections work?
- What is the difference between EMAS organizations and Non-EMAS organizations regarding environmental inspections? (in theory and in practice)

To identify objectives, perspectives and specific next steps for EMAS and environmental inspections, these and other questions were discussed by the participants.

The workshop helped bringing together the different stakeholders and optimizing the communication around EMAS. The tasks are therefore, on the one hand to convince more companies of the advantages of EMAS and to aim for more recognition on the market, and on the other hand to support the established EMAS organizations with regulatory reliefs and other means.



Facts & Figures

- Environmental inspection sites: appr. 700
- EMAS sites affected by environmental inspection sites: 130
- EMAS organisations affected: 42
- Not all EMAS installations have an inspection frequency of three years

CATALUNIA



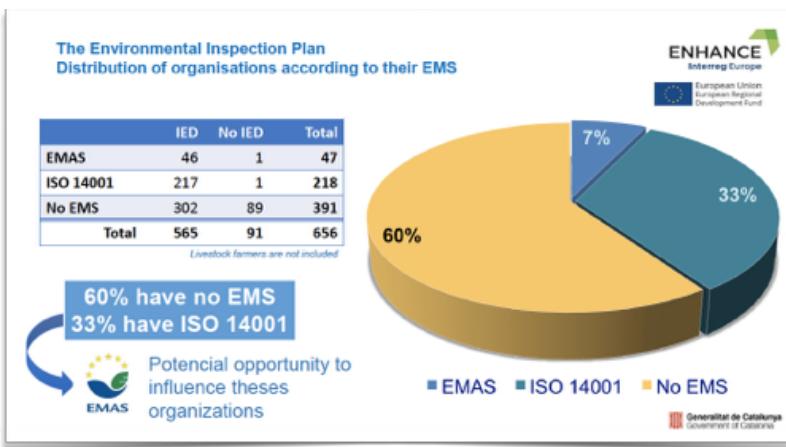
"The exchange process has provided an unexpected positive effect"

Multiple positive impacts from the exchange process

The exchange process of the ENHANCE project has helped the MTS of Catalonia in different ways. The first one has been learning about good practices of other regions. In this sense, it has provided **new perspectives on how regulatory reliefs can be implemented and it has also increased the technical skills of the experts** of the involved public administrations. Inspired by the good practices of the other partners, Catalonia has already selected the best practices that will be part of its "Toward EMAS Action Plan". The candidate measures to be included in the EMAS Action Plan, range from those that include reducing the costs associated with the activity of the organization to the consideration of EMAS in certain administrative procedures or the tax relief and other financial support for organizations EMAS.

The second important output of the exchange process has been the possibility to **work together with other stakeholders in the same region** and understand different points of view, the technical obstacles related to the implementation of specific regulatory reliefs and incentives, and the details of the procedures related to environmental law enforcement of other agencies or administrations. Even if public administrations should work closer to each other, it's is not always easy, the ENHANCE Interreg project has certainly contributed to bridge the gap.

The exchange process has provided an unexpected positive effect, it gave the opportunity to analyse the existing regulatory reliefs and incentives in the region, and has already identified potential improvements. **Thanks to the stakeholders' group, colleagues from other MTS competent administrative units have already proposed improvements to internal procedures and methodologies**, for example in the case of the environmental risk assessment related to the Industrial Emissions Directive (IED).



Potential impact on IED sites located in Catalonia through changes in the risk assessment methodology and the inspections programme.

CZECH REPUBLIC



"The best evaluated were the grant programs, the point-bonification in the green public procurement and the reduction in the frequency of inspections for EMAS organizations."

Enhancing experience

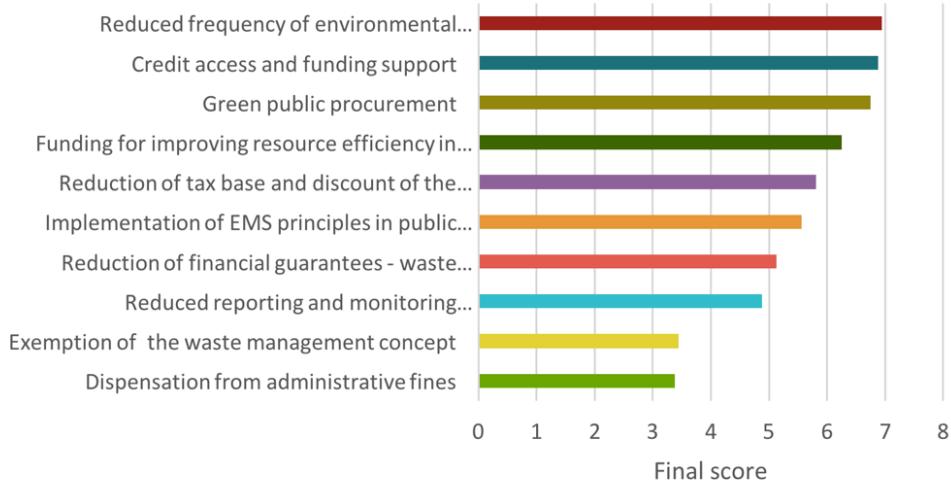
The Czech ENHANCE team has finished the phase of selection and evaluation of the EMAS regulatory reliefs, which figures in the national and regional policies of all the other participating countries.

The selected measures were subsequently evaluated by the stakeholders (the representatives of EMAS organizations, EMAS verifiers, auditors, competent bodies, etc.) through an on-line questionnaire survey, where 17 responses had been collected. The best evaluated were the grant programs, the point - bonification in the green public procurement and the reduction in the frequency of inspections for EMAS organizations.

Reduction of environmental inspection seems to be one of the most feasible steps in order to support those EMAS registered organizations, which are controlled within the industrial emission directive. EMAS can be a relevant point in the risk assessment process related to the inspection frequency. This topic was discussed very deeply on the last stakeholder meeting, where the IPPC expert participated.

The actual task is to discuss these results with the experts from the Ministry of Environment, and to choose five of these ten measures, that are the most suitable to implement, concerning national legal framework, the economic context, the sectoral policies, and strategical objectives of the Czech Republic.

Regulatory relief assessment



Output from the survey for the assessment of the Regulatory reliefs, Czech Republic.

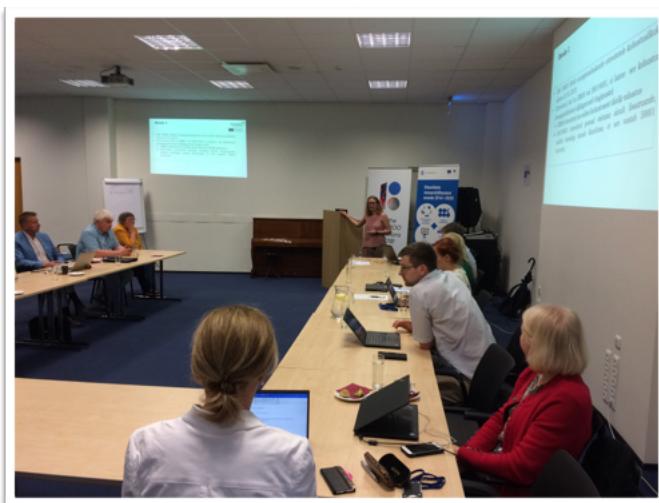
ESTONIA



"The businesses feel that what would most incentivize them to implement EMAS is a mix of different measures and not just a single one."

Stakeholder engagement and action plan development in Estonia

In Estonia, the second year of the ENHANCE project has involved active engagement of stakeholders to analyse the best practices highlighted by the project partners as potentially good measures to be transferred to other countries. Firstly, the first list of potential measures that seemed the most replicable in Estonia was created by SEI Tallinn experts. These measures were then discussed and analysed together with the representatives of the Ministry of the Environment in order to choose the suitable measures that can potentially be part of the action plan. The improved list of measures was further discussed with the stakeholders (mainly businesses) at the stakeholder meeting on 23 May, 2018 to select measures that are the most attractive and motivational for businesses to implement EMAS. Thereafter, there have been further discussions with the Ministry of the Environment as well as the representatives of the businesses during face-to face meetings to clarify the details of the measures that will be used in the action plan. The businesses feel that what would most incentivize them to implement EMAS is a mix of different measures and not just a single one. Usually, just one measure is not motivating enough. **The most favourable measures, however, include reduction of financial guarantees and reduction of the reporting needs.** The finalised action plan will be presented at the final stakeholder seminar on 20 November, 2018.



A discussion on the measures that would most incentivize businesses to adapt EMAS during the stakeholder meeting in Tallinn on 23rd of May 2018. Photos: SEI Tallinn.

In addition, SEI Tallinn has further contributed to the wider promotion of circular economy in Estonia. Harri Moora attended a panel discussion at the circular economy conference "Turn Expenses into Benefits" organised by the Estonian Ministry of the Environment. **The panel discussed the new business models under the circular economy and how environmental management systems can promote and contribute to the circular economy.**

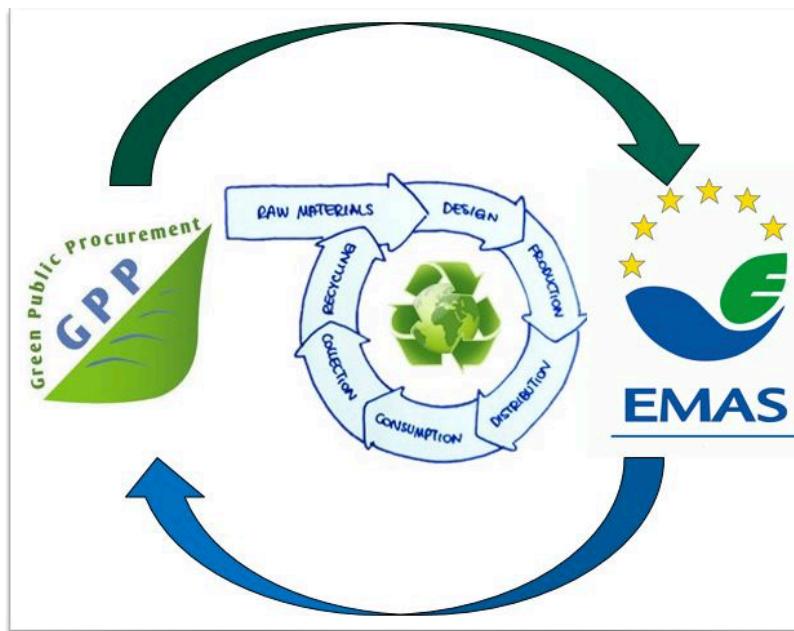
ITALY



"Exchange of good practices and stakeholder meetings have increased the knowledge and awareness on sustainability policy tools and their implementation within the public sector."

Exchanging is improving

Scuola Superiore Sant'Anna (SSSA) has focused his activity within ENHANCE project on the Initial Policy Instrument (Liguria Regional Law n. 31/2007) and the role of GPP in spreading EMAS adoption. N.10 Best Practices were selected by the exchange with other partners and they will be integrated with stakeholders' suggestions in the Action Plan. Stakeholders meetings have been carried out since the beginning and they are intensified during spring/summer 2018. Besides Liguria Region, various stakeholders have been involved: Regional Office for tender procedures; Province of Genova; several municipalities of various dimensions. Regarding the Best Practices, the main actions chosen by the exchange cover the following topics: Extension of validity of permits/authorizations (practice taken from Catalonia); Reduction of the inspection frequency for EMAS-registered organisations in the industrial Emissions Directive (IED) framework (practice taken from Andalusia); Tax breaks (practice taken from Andalusia); EMAS or ISO14001 as criteria or validation in GPP (practice taken from Estonia); Reduction of administrative fees (practice taken from Austria); Exemption of periodic monitoring of activities for EMAS registered organizations (practice taken from Catalonia). The opportunity to combine the exchange of good practices with stakeholder meetings have increased the knowledge and awareness of both SSSA and stakeholders involved on sustainability policy tools to improve EMAS adoption and their implementation within the public sector.



Project indicators

6

Action
Plans

18

Stakeholders'
meetings

30

Actions to be
implemented

Project events carried out in 2018



Thematic workshop and site visit in Seville –May/18

3 Stakeholders' meetings and 1 dissemination event in Catalonia

3 Stakeholders' meetings and 1 thematic workshop in Andalusia

3 Stakeholders' meetings in Czech Republic



3 Stakeholders' meetings and 1 thematic workshop in Estonia

3 Stakeholders' meetings in Italy

3 Stakeholders' meetings and 1 thematic workshop in Austria



Thematic workshop and site visit in Tallinn –Feb./18



Stakeholders' meeting in Prague –October/18



Thematic workshop and site visit in Vienna –June/18

Project Partners

 Generalitat de Catalunya
Departament de Territori
i Sostenibilitat

 SEI
Stockholm
Environment
Institute

 cenia
CZECH
ENVIRONMENTAL
INFORMATION
AGENCY

 umweltbundesamt
ENVIRONMENT AGENCY AUSTRIA

 INSTITUTE
OF MANAGEMENT
Scuola Superiore
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CONSEJERÍA DE MEDIO AMBIENTE Y ORDENACIÓN DEL TERRITORIO