Managing environmental impact from organisations in the service sector

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What is the problem?

- No clear definition in ISO 14001 or EMAS, therefore difficult to find support for managing indirect environmental impact.

- Suggested definition in Emilsson and Hjelm (2007):

  "Indirect environmental impact constitutes any change to the environment, whether adverse or beneficial, wholly or partially resulting from an element of an organization's activities or products or services, influencing other actors' prerequisites to perform their activities."

- Indirect environmental impact and climate change.

Selected organisations for this study

Organisation	Number of employees	Year of ISO 14001 certification	ISO 14001 certificate includes all activities	ISO 9001 certified
Consultancy firm 1	2000	1997	Yes	Yes
Consultancy firm 2	4000	1997	Yes	Yes
Insurance company 1	290	2003	Yes	No
Insurance company 2	3300	2001	No	No
Swedish Forest Agency	1200	2002	Yes	No
Swedish Land and real estate registration Agency	2200	2003	Yes	No
Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency	800	2001	Yes	No
Swedish Chemicals Agency	200	2004	Yes	Yes

One possible approach to the problem

- Integrated approach to environmental/sustainability management
- Process based management
  - Identify significant processes
  - The organisation is regarded as a social system
  - Employees'competency is highly valued
  - Progress is measured in both quantitative and qualitative terms

- Risk: indirect environmental impact is neglected and only managed rhetorically

Potential benefits from having a process based management approach

- A more systematic way of managing issues that could contribute to integrated management of sustainability issues.

- Elucidates the impact from the organisations' processes.

- Creates legitimacy for setting qualitative targets and objectives.

- A better understanding and knowledge of the organisation and what needs to be done – a matter of maturity.

- Improved and extended communication with stakeholders that could have a positive impact on their work towards a more sustainable society.