

## **BACKGROUND PAPER**

### Development of an EMS Policy and Strategy for Jamaica

**NATIONAL POLICY FORUM – FEBRUARY 24**

**Le Meridian Pegasus**

**9:00-1:30AM**

#### **Objectives of the Policy Forum**

The overall objectives of the National Policy Forum are to:

1. Share with the various publics' information on the trends in EMS implementation locally and globally.
2. Engage stakeholders in a discussion on EMS policy and strategy directions of relevance to Jamaica; the output of these discussions will form part of the input into the draft policy and strategy (green paper).
3. Continue consultation on the development of the policy and strategy.

#### **Background on the Policy Development Process**

Environmental Management Systems, based on the ISO 14000 series are being increasingly accepted, adopted and implemented by industry, the services sector, utilities, local government and commercial enterprises. It is generally agreed that an EMS is a powerful tool for achieving environmental protection and improved business operation.

The Natural Resources Conservation Authority (NRCA) is working at the national level to promote EMS and support development of a national agenda that recognizes the role of government, private sector and non-government organizations in environmental management.

On June 15, 1999 the NRCA invited a number of organisations to a meeting to discuss the development of an EMS Policy or Strategy for Jamaica. The objectives of the meeting were to:

1. Identify the stakeholders to be involved in the process;
2. Discuss the steps to be taken in the development of the EMS Policy and Strategy; and
3. Determine the timeframe within which the Policy and Strategy can be developed.

The participants at that meeting fully supported the development of a policy and strategy for the promotion of EMS. During the discussions it was agreed that the NRCA would give leadership to the process, name a Working Group (WG) and develop the Terms of Reference (TORs) for the Working Group. Since that time the NRCA has convened a multi sectorial Working Group (WG) to develop a draft policy. The Terms of Reference of the Working Group are as follows:

## **Terms of Reference**

The EMS Strategy/Policy Working Group will:

1. Guide the work of a Consultant in determining the current status of EMS implementation globally and reviewing methods of implementation in various categories of countries and business sectors. The results of the review should be used to guide EMS implementation in Jamaica.
2. Define clearly the meaning of EMS as it applies to implementation in Jamaica. Inputs should come from the members of the Working Group and relate to the national agenda.
3. Advise on whether a policy or strategy would be the best approach for the effective implementation of EMS in Jamaica and provide oversight for the development process.

Review the draft policy/strategy documents as required.

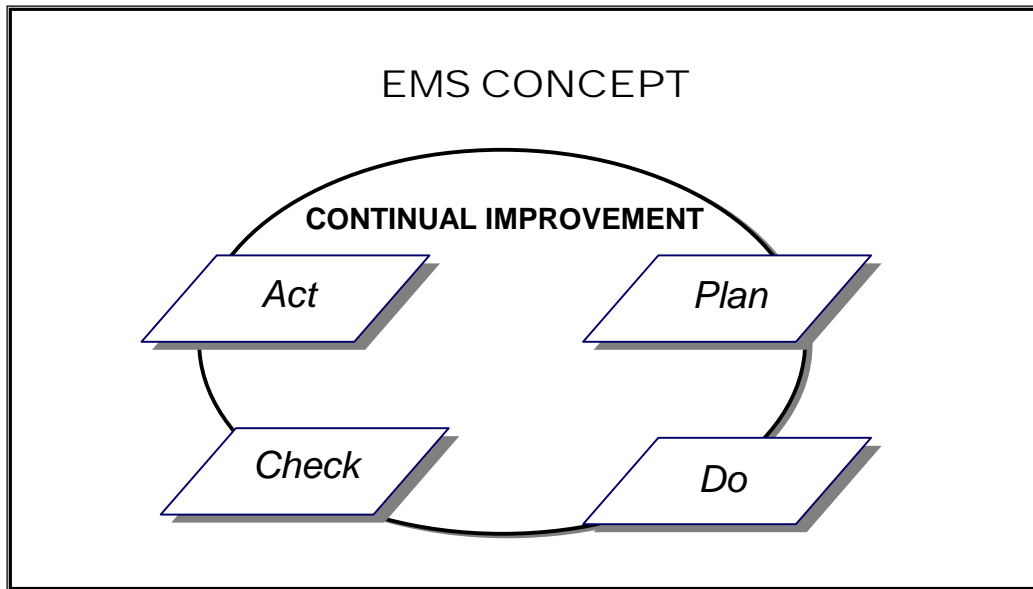
Ensure that extensive consultation with all relevant stakeholders government and non-government takes place during the development of the policy/ strategy.

4. Identify clearly the legislative, institutional, human resource and financial resource barriers that will hinder EMS implementation and address those deficiencies in the policy/strategy documents.
5. Suggest a process for widespread promotion and implementation of EMS in all types of organisations both in the Public and Private Sectors. This should include but not necessarily be limited to the articulation of communication and public education strategies.
6. Ensure that the resulting documents outline clearly the mechanism for implementation including needed incentives and the identification of these incentives.

## Global Trends in EMS

### *What is an EMS?*

An Environmental Management System is a management tool which enables organisations (businesses, government departments or municipalities) to address the long term impacts of its products, services and processes on the environment.

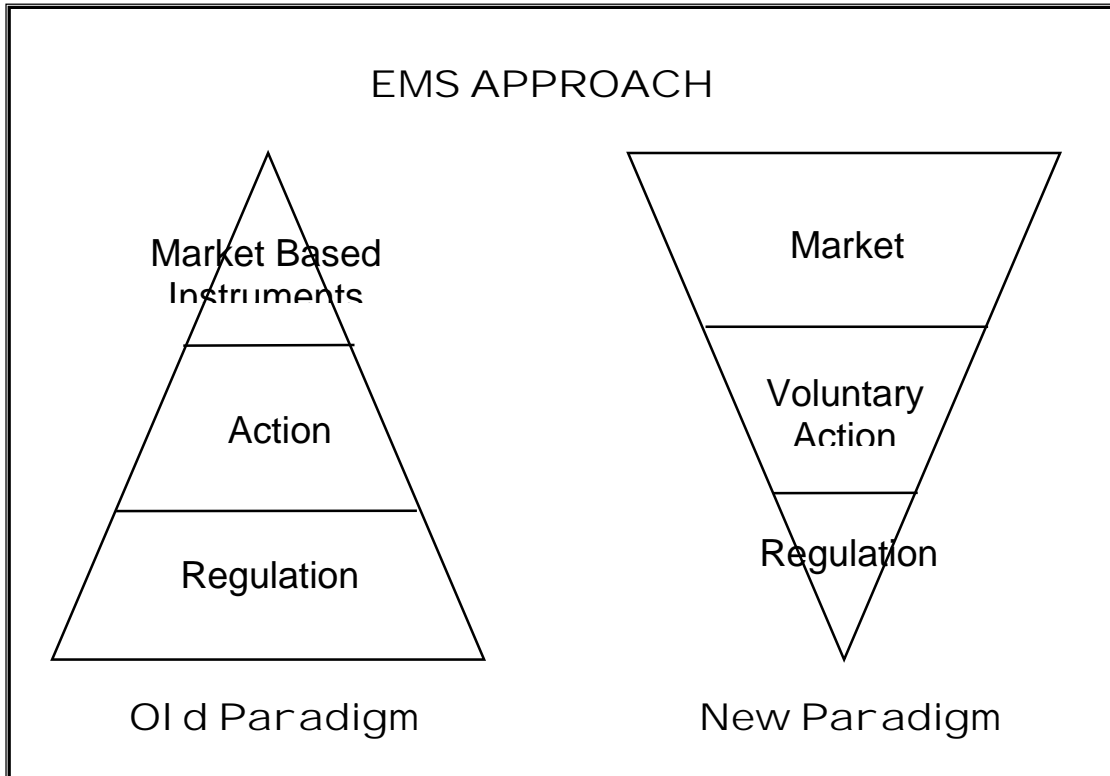


### *Drivers for Implementation*

The drivers for EMS implementation internationally are as follows:

- ☞ Global competition
- ☞ Market pressures
- ☞ Improving efficiencies
- ☞ Public image/Stakeholder demands
- ☞ Enhanced competitive advantage
- ☞ Environmental protection
- ☞ Financial requirements

Globally, the EMS approach is being rapidly adopted as a tool to achieve improvements in internal efficiencies within operations thereby helping to reduce costs and achieve a competitive advantage. Bankers and insurance companies are requiring assessments of environment risks before funding projects. Governments are moving towards green procurement and regulators are using EMS adoption as a mechanism for regulatory flexibility.



**Sustainable Development Pathway/Why a Policy And Strategy for Jamaica?**

An EMS policy and strategy is viewed by the GOJ/NRCA as a step along the sustainable development path. In this regard, sustainability is viewed as the ability to ‘grow capital’ – the natural, social and human capital; the maintenance of high and stable levels of economic growth and employment – but not to achieve economic growth at the expense of natural or social capital; and balancing economic, environment and social justice needs.

In embarking on the development of a national EMS policy and strategy for Jamaica the Government of Jamaica is responding to international trends in a proactive way. Very few developing countries have yet to take this step and in doing so the GOJ/NRCA see the policy initiative not as another policy, but as an opportunity to achieve a ‘quantum leap’ forward for Jamaica.

## **Working Group Progress**

The Working Group developing the policy is drawn from a wide cross section of stakeholders and the Group has been extending its reach by consultations with a number of organizations both locally and internationally. To support their work the Working Group has reviewed the current status of EMS and EMS implementation in major countries (UK, Japan, Europe, USA and Canada), benchmark countries (Cuba, Costa Rica, Columbia, Malaysia, Israel, Barbados, Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana) and economic sectors (bauxite, tourism, coffee, rum and agro-sector). The findings will inform the policy developed for Jamaica.

### ***Incorporating Initiatives Already Being Implemented***

Already underway are a number of programmes; the greening of government pilots, the development of economic instruments for environmental management, the National Environmental Education Plan, Sustainable Tourism Development Action Plan and the strengthening of the Sustainable Development Council of Jamaica (SDC-J). The national policy and strategy recognise these initiatives and will provide the framework to further support the work carried out so far.

Finally, the multi-lateral funding agents for example the IDB and World Bank are supporting the use of the EMS approach to enable competitiveness especially in small and medium size enterprises.

The draft policy should be completed by April 2000 with strategies for implementation clearly defined.

The National Policy Forum is part of the communication strategy and one of the means of soliciting input from a wide cross section of the society and incorporating the feed-back into the policy development process.