

Expert Round Table „Biodiversity in standards and (environmental)management systems“

Brussels, 9th of December 2015

Programme

Marion Hammerl	Round of introductions Brief introduction
Biodiversity in (Environmental) Management Systems and Standards	11:30 – 13:00
Sébastien Paquot, European Commission, DG Environment	Biodiversity and EMAS
Marco Dri, Joint Research Centre (via Skype)	Biodiversity and EMAS Reference Documents (Best Environmental Management Practises)
Dr. Joachim Nibbe, KNU/Naturfreunde Deutschlands e.V.	Biodiversity in the revised ISO 14001 and in the ISO 37101 (Sustainability Management for Communities)
Stefan Hörmann	Biodiversity in Standards and Labels for the Food Sector Biodiversity in Standards and Labels for the Tourism Sector
Discussion	
Lunch	13:00 – 13:45
Guidelines and other instruments	13:45 – 14:15
John Devaney, British Standards Institution	BSI - Biodiversity Guidelines
Marion Hammerl	Overview KNU Guidelines „The ISO-Management System and the Protection of Biological Diversity“
Discussion / Synergies /next steps	14:15 – 15:45
Marion Hammerl	Wrap up
End of round table	16:00

Summary of the discussion

Integration of biodiversity in the companies (environmental) management – which support is needed?

There is an increasing number of studies, instruments and guidelines available for companies and organizations. But practical instruments and advice are still rare. Parallel to the elaboration of the guideline “ISO management systems and the protection of biological diversity” in Germany, the British Standards Institution published the Guidance “Biodiversity Guidance for businesses on managing the risks and opportunities”.

- What could /should be the next steps? How can we better use synergies?
- Would it make sense to have a cross sectoral Biodiversity guideline for EMAS certified companies?
- A Biodiversity CEN Guidelines or European standard?
- Other instruments to support companies, standard organizations, assessors, auditors such as a biodiversity knowledge pool?

Companies – and especially SMEs - need very practical support. The KNU-Guideline “ISO management systems and the protection of biological diversity” is a positive Example for such a practical approach.

A reference to the ISO 14004 should be included: ISO 14004 provides guidance on the establishment, implementation, maintenance and improvement of an environmental management system and its coordination with other management systems.

EMAS companies reported difficulties with Biodiversity and the performance indicator “land use”. Land use was a compromise of the member states, knowing that it covers only one aspect of biodiversity and often only small changes can be noticed. The direct impact of the company on land use is only significant in the case of certain sectors such as extractive industry, forestry, agriculture or tourism. If companies would consider also the indirect impacts on land use such as growing of natural resources (food, timber, cotton) or the extraction of raw material, a wide range of impacts on biodiversity would be covered.

It would be useful to publish a cross-sectoral guidelines on EMAS and Biodiversity in order to motivate organizations to diversify the indicator “land use” (e.g. sealed or unsealed land used, nature oriented premises) and to go beyond and consider also other aspects (e.g. indirect impacts within the supply chain). The KNU Guideline would be a useful basis for an EMAS guidelines.

To go for a Biodiversity CEN Guidelines or standard is not recommendable, because CEN is behind discussion.

It would be important to include the topic biodiversity and meaningful indicators in the Code of Conduct of the Global Consumer Goods Forum. The Global Social Compliance Programme (GSCP) is not a new standard or monitoring initiative. GSCP sets the international reference on best practices for sustainable supply chain management for all actors to use. It is an open-source platform that helps the members of the forum to work towards and promote the harmonization of efforts for the improvement of working and environmental conditions in global supply chains, and membership to our collaborative platform provides many community benefits.

In 2006, British Standard Institute published the PAS “Planning to halt the loss of biodiversity”. In 2013, BSI published the BS 42020 “Biodiversity. Code of practice for planning and development”. Up to now, the first PAS was more successful than the BS. Maybe, because the target group was clearly identified. BSI is considering the elaboration of an

international standard. It would make sense then to involve KNU and Lake Constance Foundation.

Also for the auditors, biodiversity is a relatively new topic. They need to be trained and should have background information in order to be able to evaluate the aims and measures of the company. Assessors should be able to recommend companies useful aims, measures and indicators.

Cross sectoral biodiversity criteria and indicators:

Biodiversity – including ecosystems and ecosystem services – is a complex issue and not possible to measure with one indicator such as CO₂ for climate change. Furthermore, the effects that companies and other organizations have on biodiversity are different from each economic sector to the other and often the most important impacts are related to raw material and the supply chain.

In the Guidelines “ISO management systems and the protection of biological diversity”, cross sectoral criteria and key data /indicators have been identified.

- Are they meaningful? Verifiable? Practicable?
- Are they applicable for most of the economic sectors?
- Would some of them be complementary to the EMAS core indicator “land use”?

It will not be possible/useful to identify one indicator for biodiversity like CO² for climate change. As the impact on biodiversity will differ from region to region and the use of natural resources, indicators need to reflect this. Performance indicators should be sector specific – see Biodiversity in standards for the food sector and for the tourism sector. In the case of agriculture and other land using sectors, the creation of potential for biodiversity is considered (e.g. ha of ecological structures or meters of biotope corridors created).

The International Organization for Standardization (ISO) has published in 2014 almost 60 standards in the ISO 17225 series, for solid biomass fuels including wood pellets, graded wood chips, graded wood briquettes, graded non-woody pellets, thermally treated and densified biomass fuels. The aim of the standards is to provide explicit criteria and methods for the characterization of solid biofuels. It is envisaged that the standards will act as a tool to enable efficient trading of solid biofuels and develop a better understanding between buyers and sellers as well as communicating with equipment manufacturers. This standard series includes indicators for biodiversity.

Most of the companies do not have biodiversity experts and they will not measure their impact on the IUCN red list species. But they could /should involve biodiversity expertise from NGOs, scientific institutes, nature protection administrations in order to identify appropriate indicators for the impacts on biodiversity.

Collection of indicators should be relatively easy and not produce elevated costs. Only then, also SMEs can measure their impact on biodiversity.

The KNU Guidelines “ISO management systems and the protection of biological diversity” includes process and performance indicators for the direct and indirect impacts of the company. Process indicators such as “Number of biodiversity risk analysis for main raw materials” or “Number of suppliers informed about biodiversity strategy of the company” will help the company to understand better their impacts and increase transparency regarding the supply chain.

More and more companies declare their “Zero Deforestation” policy. This is a good point to connect with other biodiversity aspects.

Biodiversity criteria in standards and labels

LCF and Global Nature Fund have been involved in initiatives to elaborate recommendations for biodiversity criteria for standards and labels in the food sector and in the tourism sector. The European extractive industry agreed on a basic set of biodiversity criteria and indicators. Fraunhofer Institut realized a first approach to include biodiversity into the Life Cycle Assessment.

- Are there transferable results and lessons learned regarding the integration of biodiversity criteria into the EU Ecolabel for different product groups, into national labels such as Blauer Engel in Germany, into Green Public Procurement criteria ...?

Including biodiversity criteria into Green Public Procurement criteria would really make a difference. GNF and Lake Constance Foundation will start an initiative in January 2016. But in order to proof the compliance with biodiversity criteria, standards /labels will be needed. Up to now, there are only very few standards with biodiversity criteria (MSC for fish, partly FSC for wood, partly food standards such as Rainforest Alliance of organic labels). Therefore also other forms of “proofs” will be considered.

It is possible to identify “Sets of minimum criteria” from the initiatives on biodiversity in standards for the food sector and for the tourism sector. Benchmarking standards was not the aim of the initiatives, but these “Sets of minimum criteria” could be the basis for an evaluation and ranking of standards. This would be a motivation for standard organizations to consider biodiversity more and in a more effective way.

It is necessary to harmonize sector specific biodiversity criteria as much as possible in order to avoid additional costs /resources for audits and in order to compare better standards and labels.

Radolfzell, 21.12.2015

Marion Hammerl