

GUIDELINES EMAS AND BIODIVERSITY – POSITIVE EXAMPLE ON MANAGEMENT OF BIODIVERSITY

The company: Kneissler Brünieretechnik, Germany

Kneissler Brünieretechnik is specialised in the application of several variants of 'bluing', which is used to treat parts in mechanical engineering. The company employs 15 members of staff and has an annual turnover of roughly €1 million. Kneissler works with the EMAS management system since 1997.

Aspects of biodiversity of special importance for the company

Bluing involves the usage of potentially harmful substances, like hydrochloric acid, which could contaminate the environment, for example in the event of accidental leakage or if contaminated water leaks during a fire. Some of the waste substances are also potentially harmful.

Waste reduction and the reduction of risks during hazardous events have thus been priorities for Kneissler within the environmental management system and during the modernisation of the facility. In the event of a fire, for example, contaminated extinguishing water will remain within the facility. Kneissler also implemented a waste reduction concept, for which the company was awarded the national EMAS award in 2007.

Concrete (measurable) aims regarding biodiversity

Waste management and hazard protection measures were implemented before biodiversity became a performance indicator. When the company started to address biodiversity in 2011/2012, the first step was to conduct a 'biodiversity check' (<http://www.business-biodiversity.eu/biodiversity-check>), which is designed to identify impacts and dependencies of the company on biodiversity. The results of the check confirmed that Kneissler already addresses all significant aspects related to biodiversity. But potential for improvement was also detected: the company's premises as well as raising awareness of biodiversity. Kneissler cooperated with the Lake Constance Foundation, an environmental NGO, to identify the potential for biodiversity on site as well as on internal and external communication activities.

The identified measures are being implemented step by step – quantified targets were deemed unnecessary due to the relatively small site (2,000 square metres) and the measures already in place.

Realised and planned measures

Implemented measures:

- Before 2011: (Award-winning) waste management, structural solutions regarding environmental protection in the event of hazards
- 2012: Blooming meadow, removal of forsythia saplings, pruning of old apple trees (as a rejuvenation measure)
- Since 2013:
 - » In-house workshop on biodiversity issues
 - » Improvement of the green roof
 - » Removal of an unused structure, reseeding the area, development and implementation of biodiversity-oriented maintenance scheme
 - » Dead-wood structure for small mammals and insects

Ongoing and future measures:

- Planting of an ecologically valuable hedge
- Clearance cairn
- Community engagement (e.g. persuading a local sports club to seed an insect-friendly blooming meadow)

Results and experiences

The blooming meadow increased awareness of biodiversity issues among employees: although most of the work was already done when Kneissler started to address biodiversity as a separate topic, awareness of biodiversity was low among employees. The blooming meadow served as a good example to demonstrate the value of biodiversity and raised awareness of – and interest in – biodiversity.

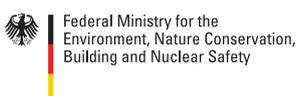
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