

STEP 1.2 CASE STUDY

Relevance of the policy statement

At the beginning of a TEST project in an Egyptian company already certified ISO 14001, top management did not deem it necessary to review and update the environmental policy to include a clear commitment to resource efficiency. They claimed “We are committed and we need the TEST project, we want to know our benchmarks and explore resource efficiency potential”. As a result, the importance of resource efficiency and the scope of the intervention was not properly communicated and clearly understood by company staff. Moreover, the person responsible for EMS was appointed as the company’s team leader of the TEST project, which meant that activities initially focused on more procedural aspects, rather than on core resource efficiency improvements.

»The company’s TEST team was strengthened and all company staff was informed.«

When the company’s TEST team realized the level of detail and amount of data required on raw material use at production levels, they were not motivated to provide accurate data. As a result, the consultants were not able to identify the priority areas for intervention and develop the project’s baseline, resulting in the project being delayed.

A meeting with top management seemed necessary to illustrate with concrete examples how resource efficiency links to the core of any business strategy. This triggered a management decision to review the environmental policy and integrate resource efficiency objectives. The company’s TEST team was strengthened and all company staff was informed.

The review of the company’s existing environmental policy gave new impetus and was of paramount importance to ensuring that all staff knew why the company was engaging in the TEST project, and what the economic benefits over the short and the long-term would be compared to the negative consequences of wasted production inputs. This strategic change in policy and the clear support of top management to it put project implementation back on track, and time and effort were focused on achieving concrete results.