





# Developing the co-operation between the established less formal Nordic approaches to eco-management and eco- certification systems

Part 2

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**Nordic co-operation**

*Nordic co-operation* is one of the world's most extensive forms of regional collaboration, involving Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden, and three autonomous areas: the Faroe Islands, Greenland, and Åland.

*Nordic co-operation* has firm traditions in politics, the economy, and culture. It plays an important role in European and international collaboration, and aims at creating a strong Nordic community in a strong Europe.

*Nordic co-operation* seeks to safeguard Nordic and regional interests and principles in the global community. Common Nordic values help the region solidify its position as one of the world's most innovative and competitive.

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# Preface

There are several approaches and certification systems in the Nordic countries, which aim at improving the environmental performance of the SMEs. Common for these approaches in this project is the co-operation between the municipalities and businesses. There has already been some co-operation between these systems and cities, but there still are many differences in the ways how the systems are constructed and what kind of criteria for certification the systems have.

This is phase 2 of the project. Phase 1 started in 2007 by City of Helsinki Environment Centre. This part of the project has been aiming to develop the cooperation further after the formal agreement was made in October 2008. For example by developing more uniform environmental demands, develop a model for new demands, launch a web site and elaborate methods for dissemination. The project also continued the pilot case with the shopping centres.

The goal of the project is to enhance the environmental performance and competitiveness of the SMEs in Nordic countries through developing the co-operation by assessing the established “less formal” EMS’s for the SMEs of the partners and searching ways to harmonize the criteria on the basis of the best practice.

The findings of Phase 2 were discussed during a workshop in Malmö in October 2009.



# Summary

Companies operating in the Nordic countries have for over 10 years been able to join less formal EMS systems. These systems have been of different character and this is insufficient to the needs of mainly companies operating over the borders.

This phase of the project has been aiming to develop the Nordic cooperation in the area of less formal EMS, through a formal agreement between the systems, a common website, more unified environmental demands, a development model for new demands. The project also had a goal to continue the pilot case with the shopping centres.

The project had as a superior task to compare the existing diploma schemes and find a common criteria structure for Nordic use. The work has among other things resulted in a list of mandatory demands such as energy reducing measures, purchases in environmental and ethical direction, environmental action plan and environmental training for personnel.

During our work with the criteria's some problems were highlighted and these have been elaborated in more detail by Eco-Lighthouse. This is relevant for the industry criteria, which must be incorporated into a system, so that criteria crossing sections can be further developed.

A part of the project was also to develop certain mandatory demands for shopping centres and their tenants. The reason for our interest in shopping centres was that they contain many small businesses. In Norway now 17 shopping centres and 151 tenants have been certified and the project has also been successful in Denmark even though the method here differs and not results in a certification.

The mission for the Nordic Environment Network is to make our systems easily available to Nordic business and organizations. In order to do that a common logo and website was created. A study of the different methods and strategies for reaching the target groups has also been done. The result was presented in the workshop in Malmö where 22 participants were representing five different countries and six different EMS providers. Representatives of local authorities, businesses and Nordic Council of Ministers also took part. The meeting was destined not only to be a lecture, it was widely open for input from the attendants.



# Sammandrag

Företag som verkar i de nordiska länderna, har i ca 10 år kunnat ansluta sig för att arbeta med mindre formella miljöledningssystem. Dessa system har haft olika utformning och kravnivåer, och detta är otillräckligt för att tillfredsställa behoven hos företag som i huvudsak verkar över gränserna.

Denna fas av projektet har siktat på att utveckla det nordiska samarbetet inom miljöledningsområdet genom en formell överenskommelse mellan systemen, en gemensam webbsida, mer likartade miljökrav, en utvecklingsmodell för nya miljökrav. Projektet har även haft som ett mål att fortsätta pilotstudien med shopping centra.

Projektet har haft som en huvuduppgift att jämföra de existerande diplomeringsystemen, och att ta fram en gemensam kriteriestruktur för nordiskt bruk. Arbetet har bland annat resulterat i en lista av obligatoriska krav, såsom exv. minskad energiförbrukning, inköp med miljö- och etisk inriktning, miljöhandlingsplan och miljöutbildning för personal.

Under vårt arbete med kriterierna betonades några speciella problem som har bearbetats särskilt av Miljöfyrtornet. Detta gäller särskilt bransch-kriterierna, som måste inkorporeras in i ett system, så att kriterier som överlappar flera kriterielistor kan vidareutvecklas.

En del av projektet omfattade utveckling av obligatoriska krav för shopping centers och deras hyresgäster. Orsaken till vårt intresse för shopping centers har varit att de innehåller ett stort antal mindre företag och butiker. I Norge finns nu 17 shopping center med Miljöfyrtornsdiplom, och hos dessa finns 151 hyresgäster som integrerats i miljöanpassningen. Projektet har också varit lyckat i Danmark, även om metoden här något annorlunda.

Huvuduppgiften för det Nordic Environment Network är att göra våra system lätt tillgängliga för nordiska företag och organisationer. För att uppnå detta har en gemensam logo och webbsida tagits fram. En studie har dessutom gjorts över olika metoder och strategier som används för att nå olika målgrupper. Resultaten redovisades på ett seminarium i Malmö då 22 deltagare från fem olika länder och sex olika EMS-system deltog. Representanter från kommuner, företag och nordiska ministerrådet fanns också på plats. Mötet var inte avsett endast som en föreläsning, det var även öppet för inlägg från deltagarna.



# 1. Introduction

The name Nordic E-Coop has been used for the project during phase 1 and in the beginning of phase 2. The cooperation between the Nordic countries within this area of less formal environment management systems was during phase 2 changed to Nordic Environment Network.

## 1.1 Background of the project

After phase 1 of this project, managed by City of Helsinki, there were still issues to be addressed and explored.

Phase 1 had a focus to compare and evaluate the existing systems and to find a common platform. Making a formal agreement on the co-operation made an important step.

Phase 1 stated following as recommendations and future success factors.

- Common Nordic organisation – national level
- Working plan
- Chairman selected for every second year
- Common financing for the Nordic cooperation, yearly budgeting
- Toolkit
- Common logo and marketing
- Common platform
- A cookbook for routines
- A contact person who advises the businesses – secretary

## 1.2 Objectives of the project

The main objective for both phase 1 and phase 2 has been to enhance the environmental performance and competitiveness of the SMEs in the Nordic countries through developing pan-Nordic co-operation.

The effective objectives and results of the project covers the following themes:

- Basic standard
- Manuals and tools
- Pilot Case study
- Organization and systems logistics
- Marketing and logo
- Methodology

The partners, steering committee and stakeholders in the project are Norway with Eco-Lighthouse, City of Oslo, Department of Environmental Affairs and Transport and Kristiansand Municipality. Denmark with Green Network Vejle, Green Network, Copenhagen and Key2Green. Finland with City of Helsinki Environment Centre, Eco Start. Sweden with City of Göteborg, Järfälla Municipality and Swedish Environment Base. Faroe Islands, Iceland and Åland with EMS Light Nordic.

Steen & Ström AS, Oslo.

## 2. Basic standard – General and Industry Criteria

The project had as a superior task to compare the existing diploma schemes and find a common criteria structure for Nordic use.

The models from Norway, Denmark and Sweden were already in use since nearly 15 years so Finland followed the discussions and the development through the project to adapt to the results.

Even if there are differences between the project partners in working methodology operating the models we reached a common result.

In short the structure of addressing the subject looks like following:

By using a matrix the demands from the systems could be sorted.

The demands were divided into general criteria and industry criteria.

In the process we also run a pilot study for developing criteria's for shopping centres.

The criteria's was then sorted into several categories. A selection from category system is presented below:

Category	Issue	General demand	Shopping Centre demand	Tenant demand	From organization	Original demand	Suggested harmonized demand
System	Legislation	x				Miljödiplomering Vi följer gällande miljö- och annan relevant lagstiftning och har inga anmärkningar på vår verksamhet.	We follow existing environmental and other environmentally relevant legislation and have no remarks on our operation.
System	Information	x				Miljöfyrtårn De ansatte skal være informert om miljøarbeidet i egen virksomhet, og delta i arbeidet med å bedre arbeidsmiljøet og gjøre driften mer miljøvennlig.	All employees are informed about the environmental effects of our products/services, and participate in the internal environmental improvement efforts <i>Removed "regularly", added participation</i>

In total the different national systems contained following original demands

General Criteria: 176 demands, Industry Criteria (Shopping center): 36 demands

Industry Criteria (Shopping Center Tenants): 9 demands

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**LEGAL DEMANDS**

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We follow existing environmental and other environmentally relevant legislation and have no remarks on our operation.  
Mandatory demands for the environment management system  
We have adopted an Environmental Policy that makes out the basis of our environmental targets.  
We have identified and documented our most important influences on the environment in an Environmental Analysis.  
We have developed an environmental action plan with concrete environmental targets for coming years.  
We have appointed a person with responsibility for the internal environmental work.  
Our employees have participated in a basic environmental training.  
All employees are informed about the environmental effects of our products/services, and participate in the internal environmental improvement efforts.  
We have identified and planned our transportation need, to prevent unnecessary transport, and choose the most environmental friendly alternative for transportation of goods and for official journeys.  
We have implemented energy reducing measures and choose the most environmental friendly alternative for electricity and heating.  
We have a written routine that direct our purchases in environmental and ethical direction.  
We have a list of our dangerous chemicals. Special national legislation must be considered.  
We have a written routine on how we sort our refuse. We have implemented waste reducing measures and store hazardous waste in a secure manner and make sure it is taken care of in an authorized way.  
Mandatory demands for recertification  
We have asked our most central suppliers to document their environmental achievements and routines within purchase, energy, waste, transport and/or pollution.  
Once a year, we provide our certifier with an Environmental Report.  
Our employees undergo further environmental education or study visits at least every three years.

The demands were divided into following categories and issues for action:

Categories	Issues
Chemicals	Action
Energy	Competence
Products	Environment Analysis
Purchase	In-Depth Environment Analysis
Safety	Information
System	Legislation
Transport	Reporting
Waste	Responsibility
Water	Routines
Working environment	

## 2.1 Results for the General and Industry Criteria

The organizations taking part in the Nordic cooperation have from earlier experience found out that it is necessary to make some of the criteria's mandatory for the companies to fulfil.

In the project we have agreed on following mandatory demands in the General criteria's. In this presentation they are expressed in a way to fit a declaration form the companies will fill in.

### *Mandatory demands for Shopping Centres*

A part of the project was to develop certain mandatory demands for shopping centres and their tenants.

The main principles for recognizing a shopping centre for an Environment Diploma is:

The company operating the shopping center must have a valid environment diploma.

At least 15 % of our tenants are environmentally certified.

For recertification, at least one more tenant should be certified, compared with previous certification.

Our waste handling areas are properly marked and all tenants are informed about the sorting routines.

#### *Other issues*

From the analysis of all sorts of other demands was in total 76 different issues, which can be used by the company as a catalogue of actions to work with. It is also possible for a system provider, as City of Gothenburg, to use the catalogue as a checklist with a mandatory performance level.

## 2.2 Development Strategy for the Industry Criteria

Our work with the criteria's highlighted some problems that have been elaborated by Eco-Lighthouse. See the knowledge memo in Appendix 1. Below is a short version of the findings:

The Eco-Lighthouse Foundation is facing the following question: How do we further develop the industry criteria so that we both attend to customer's needs and professional quality, while also minimizing administrative expenses?

This part of the knowledge memo has attempted to say something about the quality and breadth of the industry criteria, by saying something about *what* an industry criterion addresses, *how* it can formulate the individual criteria, and what characterizes a *strict and clear* industry criterion. The findings can be summarized according to the following principles:

- 1) A high-quality industrial criterion covers both the business' main activity and its secondary activities.
- 2) A high-quality industry criterion combines performance criteria, limit values and procedural criteria, so that a certified business' performance is enhanced in the short-term, and it improves even further in the long-term.
- 3) A high-quality industry criterion must contain unconditional requirements that build on defined terms, and which can simply be compared with the actual conditions at a business.

### *Recommended elements of a development strategy*

It has been a long time since the Eco-Lighthouse Foundation took “the lead” regarding developing industry criteria. The time is now ripe to draw up a clear development strategy. The principles Eco-Lighthouse applies for developing and revising the industry criteria must be clearly communicated. The following table illustrates the findings in this knowledge memo.

The findings can be summarized and linked as follows:

No	Theoretical principle	Present situation
1	A high-quality industrial criterion covers both the business' main activity and its secondary activities.	Many of the industry criteria address a level of detail with potentially 613 criteria. This result in a constant need for new criteria, and administrative expenses associated with assisting companies “in the grey zone”.
2	A high-quality industry criterion combines performance criteria, limit values and procedural criteria, so that a certified business' performance is enhanced in the short-term, and it improves even further in the long-term.	Great variation between criteria (cf. the Industry criteria example). The development and revision work has not always resulted in a good balance. The revision work entails a financial loss due to few certifications within many criteria.
3	A high-quality industry criterion must contain unconditional requirements that build on defined terms, and which can simply be compared with the actual conditions at a business.	Little overview, many unclear criteria means that much time is spent on clarification and guidance

### *Classification*

It appears appropriate to organize the criteria according to the Standard Industrial Classification (2007). Both from a theoretical perspective, and in relation to actual demand, it appears that the businesses need industry criteria that cover their main activity pursuant to SIC 2007's definition of “class”.

There is great probability that the portfolio of industry criteria already covers 80–90 % of the 613 classes. This is because many of the classes have the same environmental aspects attached. The best example is the office business criterion.

The industry criteria must be incorporated into a smarter system, so that criteria that cross sections can be revised more easily and further developed. For example, many industries use the secondary activities “office operation”, “catering” (cafeteria) and “transportation”. At present, these requirements are far too comprehensive to be fully used in other classes. Relevant requirements from the road transportation criterion and the office criterion should therefore be labeled as “horizontal requirements”, and they could be used at other businesses with these secondary functions.

Such a system should be built using the ERS model. The system can have general criteria, sector (section) criteria, and industry (class) criteria. It must be possible to “exempt” some industries from sector criteria and some sectors from general criteria. It must also be possible to enter criteria horizontally, as described in the previous paragraph. This system will ensure that if a change is made somewhere, the change will be made everywhere.

#### *Organization of criteria revision*

The organization of the revision work must be changed considerably. The industry criteria should not be individually revised, but must be revised as a whole under an umbrella that consists of one or more of the 21 “sections”, as defined in SIC 2007. The revision process must focus on involving interested parties and should, to a far greater extent, be project organized, rather than marked by routine.

A measure that can help increase the quality of the criteria is to link the revision work more closely to the environmental reporting system (ERS). It could e.g. be concluded that any procedural criteria must be reflected in the reporting work. This would result in this popping up as a report indicator on the form for all shipyards, which at present are under an obligation to register water consumption per repair/maintenance job or per zone at the shipyard. Further, the revision work should build on the business’ reported measures, so that good examples are kept as performance criteria in the revised criteria.

#### *Quality*

Certain principles must be applied for future revision or development projects that ensure that the industry criteria are designed according to the Eco-Lighthouse Foundation’s definition of “high quality”. If external consultants are still given the job of formulating proposals for industry criteria, the job must specify these principles, so that the Foundation’s own consultants are not left with much extra work. In addition to involving consultants, revision or development projects must bring in experienced certifiers, who can help maintain the clarity of the industry criteria.

The revision work must further focus on building on existing measures and tools that have already been developed in the market. If, for example, kindergartens are ordered to have an “educational program for children’s relationship with the environment”, this must build on an actual program, developed by a competent actor (in this case a ministry). The Eco-Lighthouse Foundation should use such a principle to involve new interested parties in the scheme.

### *Conclusion*

This memo was based on the following question: How do we further develop the industry criteria so that we both attend to customers' needs and professional quality, while also minimizing administrative expenses?

There is no doubt that the portfolio of industry criteria entails great challenges for the Eco-Lighthouse Foundation. At the same time, this portfolio represents an invaluable collection of good environmental measures. From an international perspective, there are few other examples in the world of a better service for small and medium-sized enterprises.

It is true that the industry criteria have been developed without any executive strategy. At the same time that this can explain the present challenges, this is also one of the Eco-Lighthouse's absolute strengths. The criteria have been developed without existing environmental dogmas being able to foil what is in principle a very good idea: mixing simple and specific environmental measures with relatively demanding environmental principles.

The demand for new industry criteria reflects that this is something business needs. With enough elbow room to develop better solutions and organize the work, the Eco-Lighthouse Foundation will also represent one of the best environmental policy instruments that exist in the future.

## 3. Pilot Case – Shopping Centres

In the time we prepared for this project phase 2, Steen & Ström, addressed our group with interest of cooperation. This is a large Norwegian business that owns and operates more than 50 shopping centres all over Scandinavia. They do not operate any shopping centre in Finland.

In Norway Steen & Ström already have done Eco-Lighthouse certifications at a couple of shopping centres.

Because this company also influence their tenants – many small businesses in the shopping centres, we agreed on developing criteria's for this industry and to test them in the project.

Of course there could be a problem to test this before every detail in the General and industry criteria was finished. For that reason a special agreement was made. In brief it said that during the project and in the pilot case Steen & Ström should use the existing criteria's in Sweden, Norway and Denmark.

The main structure of the new criteria's for shopping centres is that the operator (S&S) should fulfil and comply with the criteria's for a diploma. In addition 15 % of the tenants should do the same. In this way the whole shopping centre will earn a diploma.

Every third year during recertification 1 more tenant should be certified.

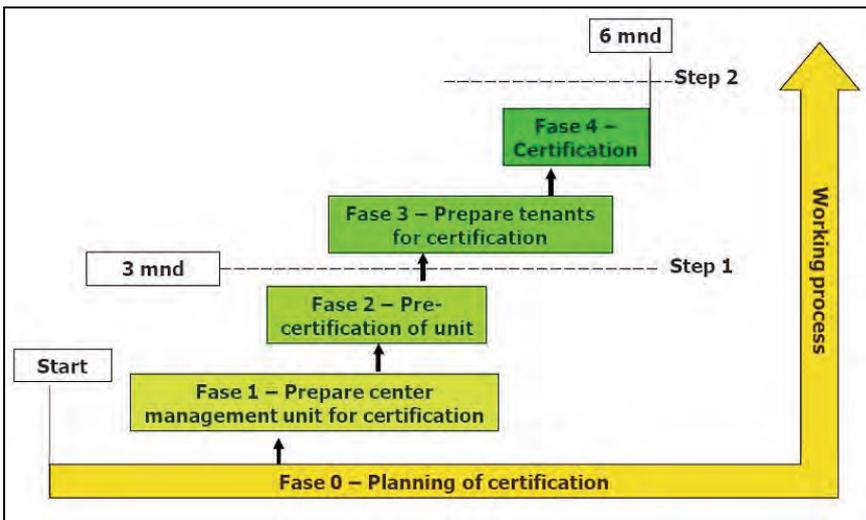
### 3.1 Experiences

#### *Norway*

In September 2009 Steen & Ström operated 30 shopping centres in total. Of these 17 centres have been certified.

The method has resulted in a multiple effect so that from these shopping centres 151 other companies have fulfilled the criteria's.

Below is a principle description of the work process for the shopping centres at Steen & Ström.



The single shopping centre needs guidance from consultant and there are special adapted tools to assist the management in the centre.

## Working tools

- Working perm
  - > Used for all relevant documentation
- CD with documents

The image shows a folder labeled 'Miljøsertifisering' and a CD-ROM with the GODTVALG logo. The folder contains documents related to the certification process, and the CD-ROM contains digital copies of these documents.

### *Experiences and recommendations*

Steen & Ström concluded following regarding their cooperation with Eco Lighthouse

- Our certification process is the largest in private sector in Norway, and has been a stress test on the capacity and limitations of the Lighthouse system
- The Lighthouse foundation has been a service centre for us in the process, with continuous contact regarding:
  - a) Identification of certifiers and consultants

- b) Contact with certifiers and counties
- c) Interpretation and revision of criteria's
- d) Effectivisation of administrative routines and development of helping tools (i.e. MRS)
- Secure enough certification capacity and quality, and predictable costs (decide on the role of the county)
- Develop criteria's further
  - a) Chain versus store criteria's
  - b) Explicit criteria formulation to avoid different interpretations of the criteria from consultants and certifiers
  - c) The companies need something to reach for after a certification – is continuous improvement possible for SME with today criteria's?
- Secure access to experienced consultants
- Evaluate price model with discounts for chains, complex organisations and shopping centres

### *Denmark*

In Denmark there is no environmental certification for shopping centres as the Norwegian Eco Lighthouse, which includes the shopping center and at least 15 of the shops.

Key2Green provides a joint platform for corporate and public authority working on sustainable development. Key2Green is a nationwide partnership which gives networks, companies and public authorities access to knowledge, competencies and tools for market-driven environmental management.

- Various tools are available at [www.Key2Green.dk](http://www.Key2Green.dk), and these tools are regularly tested and further developed as additional experience is acquired. The homepage includes an environmental impact statement manual with attached annexes, other help tools and Key2Greens chemical Guide.
- The homepage also includes many updated facts sheets which give a quick overview of key environmental topics.

### The content of the manual

- 1) Initial informations
- 2) Management report
- 3) Description of the company
- 4) Explanation of employee participation
- 5) Environmental policy
- 6) Environmental review
  - Energy
  - Water

- Transport
  - Air pollution
  - Waste Water
  - Waste and recycling
- 7) Noise and vibrations
  - 8) Assessment and prioritization
  - 9) Objectives and action plan

Steen & Ström operates 17 shopping centers in Denmark. Not all the shopping centers have the opportunity to participate in a network, but the main part of them are.

Although there are difficulties with the network participation Steen & Ström have almost finished the elaboration of environmental impact statement manual of the all the shopping centers.

Steen & Ström would like all the shops in the shopping centers to be green shops. In this process they cooperate with Energy Service Denmark nationwide, Kolding and Copenhagen municipalities.

The difference between them is that the municipalities of Copenhagen and Kolding work with checklist for green shops whereas Energy Service Denmark, which is nationwide operates with a more comprehensive model.

Steen & Ström is planning to install a prototype of a windmill at the roof of Fields shopping center outside Copenhagen.



Steen and Strøm Denmark also cooperates with a theater group, Mr Green, which makes events primarily on youtube and facebook and in reality. During the autumn of 2009 Mr Green has established installations of waste in Steen & Ström shopping centers.

### *Sweden*

In the spring of 2008 Steen & Ström selected two centres to start with. These were Allum near Gothenburg and Mitt i City in Karlstad.

A project leader from head office in Stockholm assisted their management teams with environment advice.

In the start phase the management of the SC was informed in detail of the criteria's and the process. This was done from the current Swedish criteria structure. At the same time we elaborated the main structure of certifying shopping centres so it could be possible for S&S to adapt to the upcoming Nordic Industry Criteria for Shopping Centres.

The centre management was assisted by the head office, which produced environmental steering documents. Their main task was to find tenants who could be the first to be certified, and to arrange environment training among the staff.

Due to organisational issues at these shopping centres the time went on and the process stopped.

In June 2009 the process started over. Allum shopping centre had got resources for training and a project coordinator who recruited tenants.

Then the process made another halt as the S&S management needed to consider the costs for the tenants' certification and re-certification.



## 4. Communication

The municipalities and organizations working with eco-management and eco-certification systems for SMEs (less formal EMS) in the Nordic countries have used different methods and strategies for reaching their target groups. Common for these approaches are the overall objective to stimulate and improve the environmental performance of the companies.

Ever since the introduction of ISO 14001, there has been a demand for a less formal EMS by small companies. Therefore municipalities, who have an interest in improved environmental performance by their local enterprises, initially had SMEs as their primary target group when designing their various approaches.

### 4.1 Spreading strategies of the Nordic less formal EMS approaches

During the work, the necessity to make the less formal EMS well known is increasing since the companies put higher demand on the economic benefit of their certificate. Therefore the methods and strategies used differ, depending on time since start and current target group for a specific action.

In some of the Nordic counties there has been an ambition to have a uniform national less formal EMS approach. The path to get there differs though. All approaches have ISO 14001 as model and many companies have continued to an ISO certification. Also, it has been a deliberately choice to keep it simple enough and not get too close to the ISO 14001.

In Norway the Eco Lighthouse concept was formed locally. Their EMS was later adopted on national level – “top down”. This path may enhance the marketing and communication to the companies. It also can reduce the total efforts of administration and also enhance for other municipalities to start a local certification program for their companies.

In Sweden and in Denmark local initiatives have been run in parallel for several years before synchronizing the programmes – “bottom up”. The result is that all municipalities must put a lot of effort in starting a program of their own. Gothenburg however, has acted as an umbrella municipality enhancing for other municipalities in the region – “top down”. In Denmark the bottom up perspective is an active strategy since the companies are the owner of the network.

In Finland, the City of Helsinki recently started their less formal EMS approach and Eco Start is also an alternative. The City of Helsinki sur-

veyed the other Nordic approaches and they use the benefits of experiences from the forerunners.

The early starters of the less formal EMS approaches has used “trial and error” when they shaped a way of working. The followers can more easily pick and choose a more flexible way of working and not take in or organise their work with these parts of the EMS. The good parts can be copied and less successful parts can be avoided. This review is aimed to make it even easier to compose an optimal path.

In this part of the project, used strategies will be surveyed and focus will be on the two main target groups companies and other organisations using less formal EMS but also the network that offers a specific approach, municipalities and consultants. Some effort also will be on other target groups as business and funding organization etc. First the organizations will be shortly described.

Some activities are performed just once and others are repeated, some have a specific receiver or a defined group and yet some has everybody as the target group.

Common for all less formal EMS approaches is that they have some connection to a municipality, they have ceremonies for delivery of the certificates/diplomas, and they all use websites, logos, advertising and printed folders. They also educate consultants and have some kind of handbook and they use checklists.

The effect of a specific activity is not easy to measure and therefore the outcome of specific strategy is hard to assess. This may relate to that time must be given for most of the activities before an effect occur, witch complicates the evaluation.

Some successful spreading strategies are to engage the political system and also at least initially have a strong connection to a municipality. This guarantees the supply of economic resources, facilitates funding and enhances the credibility to the certificate/diploma.

Companies are mostly joining the less formal EMS work from economic causes since they want to fulfil the demand from their customer. Other benefits are often discovered later in the process and to communicate these benefits therefore are of not so important initially.

This survey does not reflect how well the companies have succeeded with their environmental improvements by using the different EMS approaches.

The process on developing a common platform has passed many milestones. The steering group has convened many times, enhancing trust between the different parties and serving as a venue for very important discussions and the making of crucial decisions. The workshop was arranged in order to introduce the issue also to Nordic actors that are not involved in the project. In addition to this, a cooperation agreement will be signed in Odense in September. A process initiated in the Helsinki metropolitan area also forms a part of the coordination effort. A three-year project to establish

a less formal EMS according to the common Nordic agreement will commence in June 2008. Even though many promising steps have been taken towards coordination and common platform of the Nordic systems, there's still a lot of work to be done. Appendix 2.

## 4.2 Branding and Communication

These issues have during this project been depending on a basic process regarding branding and communication.

An initiative was taken to discuss the branding part with professional marketing consultants. They also stressed the branding process in connection with merging different companies or organisations. Like in the Nordic E-Coop case. The issue did not lead to any mission for the marketing company because of lack of funding in the project budget.

In addition to branding, logo and website is a need for a communication platform. We decided upon following communication platform:

### *Communication Platform*

#### *Idea:*

Nordic Coop is to coordinate the development off our systems. We are strengthening our systems by making them more alike.

#### *Mission:*

Make our systems easily available to Nordic business and organizations. In order make them more competitive through better environmental performance. *We work for all kind of companies, big and the small and medium size companies.*

#### *Target Group:*

Private and public companies on operational level.

#### *Partners:*

Municipalities, regions consulting firm and so on.

#### *Visions:*

Our systems should be the leading systems in the Nordic countries and we will have 25.000 certified businesses by 2015. Our systems have made a substantial difference on the climate challenge.

#### *Position:*

We are facilitating the environmental management systems which are recognized through out the Nordic Countries

### *Logotype*

The project collected suggestions from 3 different marketing consultants.

The final choice fell on this logotype:



The work with the logotype will continue after the project. It is necessary to set up rules for using the logo.

### *Website*

Together with the tender for logotype we asked for ideas on layout of a website for the Nordic E-Coop.

The basic function of this website is to address organisations and businesses operating over the borders in the Nordic region.

The similarities and the remaining differences between the models should be clear for them. For example could a Swedish company with branches in Denmark or Finland see how the certification processes are in these countries compared to the Swedish process?

A future possibility for the web site is to host a common Environment Reporting System.

This will give still more strength to the Nordic cooperation as the environment performance data in the businesses can be presented on a Nordic level.

		
Nordic Environment Network Denmark Sweden Norway Finland		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• About us</li> <li>• Common criteria</li> <li>• Logotype</li> <li>• Agenda</li> </ul>	<p><b>Coordinating environmental management throughout the Nordic countries</b></p> <p>Environmental management is an increasingly important part of business management and marketing. More and more businesses and public authorities set environmental management requirements on their suppliers and partners.</p> <p>There are already a number of environment management schemes being used in the Nordic Countries. The Nordic Environment Network is now in the process of developing systems to coordinate these schemes, to make them readily available to businesses operating in the Nordic countries.</p> <p>The Nordic Environment Network aims to provide concrete, relevant, practical and economically beneficial methods for working with and documenting environmental management. Both small and large public and private companies can become more competitive through better environmental performance and gain international recognition for their environmental management in the Nordic countries.</p> <p>Choose your own country from the menu above to find out more about environment management in your country and how your company's environment management can be acknowledged in other Nordic countries.</p> <p>The Nordic Environment Network is part of a project financed by the Nordic council of ministers.</p>	 <p>Contact information Nordic Environment Network</p>
		
		

### Vocabulary list

There has been a great interest among the project partners to learn and understand what we explains and argues for. Thus this collegial thinking there occurred several misunderstandings of different environmental expressions.

For example we had different interpretations on the expression Environment Investigation. This expression did not contain exactly the same thing in our different systems. As this is a mandatory demand it is crucial to the companies that we mean the same thing.

Because of this we made a vocabulary list. Appendix 3.

### 4.3 Workshop

The workshop was held in Malmö on 21–22 October 2009. 22 participants were representing five different countries and six different EMS providers. Representatives of local authorities, businesses and Nordic Council of Ministers also took part.

The target group was environmentalists in municipalities and private sector concerned with less formal environmental management systems.

The summit was destined not only to be a lecture. It was widely open for input from the attendants.

This goal with the summit was to:

Give an overview of the Nordic Cooperation in this area

Present the Nordic E-Coop project and especially the working processes.

Present ways to overcome differences between different scopes and demands.

Present experiences from Pilot project – Steen & Ström's shopping center.

Discuss ideas for new project areas.

Feedback from the participants was good and there was a wide support to the future Nordic cooperation for SMEs. Conclusions from this meeting are presented in the following chapter.

## 5 Organization

The Nordic Network is based on an Agreement between several municipalities and other organisations in the Nordic countries. The Agreement was undersigned and launched at the Nordic Agenda meeting in Odense September 2008.

This is a short version of it:

This agreement has been signed in order to continue and develop the coordination of the less formal approaches to EMS in the Nordic countries.

The purpose of this coordination is to set a common direction for the future development.

The agreement has been established between system owners that run systems where;

- *The local municipalities have a central role in running the systems.*
- *The systems are mainly organised locally and regionally.*
- *The parties have established or will establish a common strategy for spreading the systems nationwide.*
- *The systems are based on SMEs implementation of environmental analysis, yearly reporting and external and independent auditing.*
- *The systems are based on enhancing responsibility and improvement.*
- *The local municipality organizes the auditing and awards the certificate/diploma.*

The parties agree to emphasize these important aspects of their EMS systems.

Other important objectives are:

- To meet future needs from businesses and municipalities
- To meet EU directives regarding futur

At the meeting with steering group and stakeholders in Malmö, October 2009 following statement was presented to further enlighten the mission of the cooperation:

The main objective of the Nordic Environment Network is:

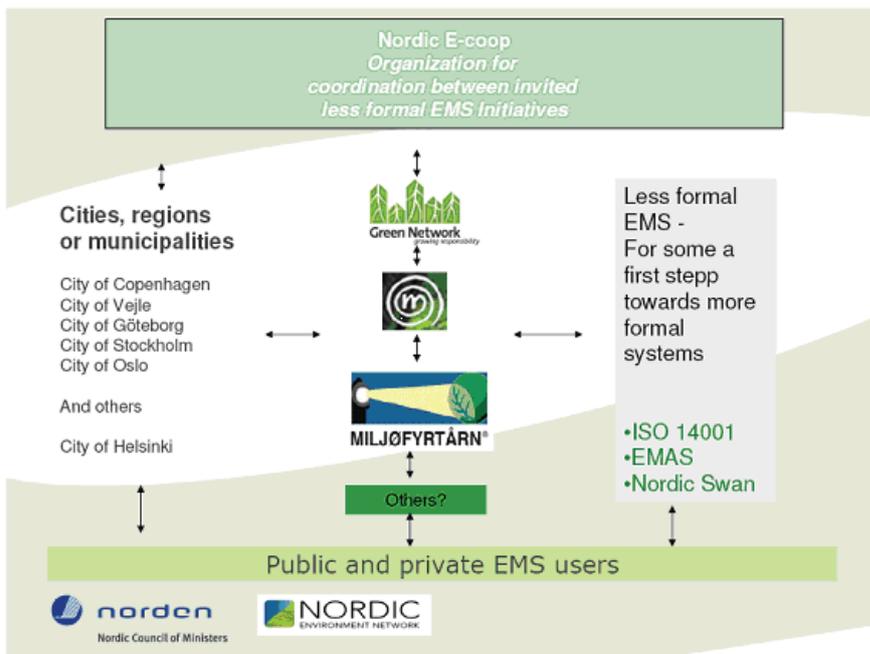
- Enhancing the environmental performance and competitiveness of the SMEs in the Nordic countries through developing pan-Nordic co-operation.

The visions of the Nordic Environment Network are presented in the Communication Platform above.

Out of these principles we have discussed possible organizational solutions for the future cooperation.

For the moment the Network have agreed on a few organizational rules emanating from the picture below.

- The chairmanship should be circulated among the parties every second year.
- Göteborg will start chairing the cooperation from September 2008 – September 2010.
- All decisions will be based on consensus.
- At least one meeting will be held each year.
- This agreement will be evaluated after 2 years and then signed again.



## 5.1 Recommendations – future success factors

To run and develop the Network calls for more formal rules. For instance during the work with General Criteria we realized the need for a working group responsible for criteria setting. Such a group must be given responsibilities and mandate, which must be given of a board. This calls for a more formal organizational structure of the network.

A prioritized task is to develop a common tool for collecting and reporting environment performance among the companies – Environment Reporting System. This will also strengthen the cooperation as there is a mutual interest to find this solution.

## 5.2 Dissemination of results

Workshop in Malmö 21–22 October 2009.

Presentation at the meetings with Greening the local economy during 2009. (A working group of EURO CITIES Environment Forum).

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# Appendices

*1. Development Strategy for the Industry Criteria*

[http://www.norden.org/en/publications/publications/2010-566/appendix-1-development-strategy-ind-criteria/at\\_download/file](http://www.norden.org/en/publications/publications/2010-566/appendix-1-development-strategy-ind-criteria/at_download/file)

*2. Spreading the strategies of the Nordic less formal EMS-approaches*

[http://www.norden.org/en/publications/publications/2010-566/appendix-2-spreading-strategies/at\\_download/file](http://www.norden.org/en/publications/publications/2010-566/appendix-2-spreading-strategies/at_download/file)

*3. Nordic Environment Network Vocabulary list*

[http://www.norden.org/en/publications/publications/2010-566/appendix-3-vocabulary-list-nordic-env-network/at\\_download/file](http://www.norden.org/en/publications/publications/2010-566/appendix-3-vocabulary-list-nordic-env-network/at_download/file)