

Information on the EMAS certification of COP 23 for all UNFCCC staff assigned to the COP Presented by the COP 23 Sustainability Taskforce

Following the successful certification of the sustainability management systems of [COP 21](#) and [COP 22](#) under the [ISO 20121 standard](#), the Government of Germany decided to have the environmental performance of COP 23 verified and then registered under EMAS ([Eco-Management and Audit Scheme](#)), an environmental management system based on an EU regulation. As EMAS builds on and covers the requirements of the [ISO 14001](#) standard for environmental management systems, the COP will also be certified under that standard. There are currently more than 9,000 registered EMAS sites in the EU that all report publicly on their performance. Several EU institutions and German ministries are [EMAS-registered](#).

EMAS helps companies, public administrations and event organizers to evaluate, report and improve their environmental performance in terms of [key performance indicators](#) such as energy, water, waste and GHG emissions – with the overall aim to minimize the environmental impact of operations and communicate the results in a transparent manner. It provides the overall framework for the sustainable organization of COP 23, covering aspects such as energy and resource efficiency (as key indicators), but also including legal compliance, catering, transportation, behaviour of suppliers, use of materials and stakeholder engagement. It will be used to promote the sustainability credentials of the COP and enhances the credibility of all related efforts.

To achieve the overall goal of a climate-neutral conference – which has by now become standard practice for COPs – the secretariat is working closely with the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety and other stakeholders to reduce, to the extent possible, the amount of GHG emissions generated in connection with the sessions (both for the Buda Zone and the Bonn Zone). However, certain emissions (such as those associated with long-distance travel, which is responsible for the lion's share of the overall footprint) remain unavoidable and will be reported and offset.

EMAS requires that all staff involved in the conference be broadly familiar with the scheme's objectives and measures. Along with conference participants, secretariat staff and volunteers (as well as staff from the Government of Germany and other stakeholders involved) therefore play a crucial role by informing themselves and taking action accordingly, for example by avoiding and separating waste, reducing paper copies and saving energy and water. As part of the certification process, the environmental verifier may interview staff, volunteers and participants to ascertain whether these measures are in place and have been communicated effectively. It is important that the sustainable organization of the COP is not seen as something additional ("what") but as the way things should be done ("how").

The "Environmental Statement", a report on the environmental performance of COP 23 that documents the objectives, targets and results, will be shared with all staff after the COP.

Additional information on COP 23 sustainability and EMAS verification is available on the [Information for Participants website](#). General information on EMAS is available on this [website of the European Commission](#). [Dennis Winkler](#), lead of the COP 23 Sustainability Taskforce and FP for the sustainability of sessions, may be contacted in case of questions.