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INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP ADVANCES IN CLEANER PRODUCTION

“INTEGRATING CLEANER PRODUCTION INTO SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGIES”

Characteristics of Environmental Management Systems in the Construction Industry

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Abstract

The managers seek to implement policies, procedures and techniques for managing the environmental impacts of business activities, which requires a systemic view. Environmental issues can no longer be treated in isolation; they integrate a system that requires planning, implementation and continuous improvement, demonstrating the importance of adopting Environmental Management Systems. The study of the construction sector is crucial as it allows the operation and expansion of other industries, but the environmental impacts that construction generates should be considered. This article aims to present the theoretical basis for preparation of items to be answered by the project participants of International Cooperation: Brazil, Slovenia. This project was signed between Santa Catarina Federal University and Santa Maria Federal University (Brazilian institutions), and by University of Ljubljana (Slovenian institution), which aims to conduct a comparative study of the construction industry in Santa Catarina and Rio Grande do Sul (Brazilian states) and Slovenia, from the standpoint of environmental management and ways to implement Environmental Management Systems. Regarding research methods, we proceeded to review the literature focusing on environmental management in construction. The first group of items aims to identify the profile of the respondent company, the second group of items is relative to the Quality Management System (although the aim of the paper is the Environmental Management System, it appears that there is the tendency of companies having ISO 9001 certification seek ISO 14001), the third group of items deals with issues related to the Environmental Management System. The preparation of the questionnaire came from a survey of literature, identifying the motivators and barriers to implementation of Environmental Management Systems, among the barriers listed for the respondent are: Lack of pressure from the government, lack of customer support, High costs for deployment, outsourcing creates problems in implementation, lack of technology, complex documentation, lack of support from employees, Weak environmental culture among competitors, lack of initiative among firms in the segment. Among the barriers are: Standardization of procedures for environmental management, social recognition (improvement of company image), increase the environmental awareness of contractors and construction sites cleaner. The concern with the implementation of Environmental Management Systems is notorious, surpassing market issues and become an important competitive advantage. Finally, the standards of ISO 14001 do not require of the organization an optimal level of environmental performance, but help it to achieve their own environmental goals.

Keywords: Construction Industry, Environmental Management System, ISO 14001, Quality Management System, ISO 9001

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