



How SMEs can make every day World Environment Day

5 June is World Environment Day, an annual event that encourages people across the globe to reflect on their environmental impact, and spark action.

Climate change has emerged as one of the biggest challenges of our time. Yet with it comes vast opportunity. Today, business owners are in a unique position not only to make significant change, but also to benefit greatly from integrating sustainability principles into their operations.

Corporations worldwide are already stepping up to help meet global climate goals. For smaller firms this might seem a daunting or complex process, but it doesn't have to be. By taking a standards-based approach, SMEs can proactively pursue green strategies and embed sustainable practices into their culture.

For those who are unsure where to start, we've listed the key standards and actions that can help your small business become a champion of sustainability – making every day World Environment Day.

Define your sustainability goals and motivate staff

Begin the transition by setting achievable goals and targets. ISO 14001 provides a systematic approach that enables your SME to identify and address its environmental concerns. With your "how" and your "why" defined, it'll be far easier for staff to engage with day-to-day sustainability actions.

Cut costs and improve your reputation

Eco-friendly business measures will naturally lead to savings – from lower utility costs to tax incentives. In addition to ISO 14001, you could look to ISO 50001 to manage your energy

efficiently, and PAS 2050 to reduce your carbon emissions.

However, the value of sustainability goes far beyond cost efficiency. By using your environmental initiatives to create meaning and purpose at work, you'll attract, inspire and retain top talent.

A socially conscious mission also appeals to consumers and investors alike: customers are more likely to buy from eco-conscious brands, while compliance gives your SME a strong advantage over other competitors when

tendering for business – on both a national and international scale.

Increase the transparency and credibility of your sustainability message, using ISO 26000 to implement social responsibility policies that address social, environmental and governance issues.

Create lasting value and drive innovation

Lastly, in a world of finite resources, today's SMEs must transition to a way of working that will future-proof their operations. This requires a fundamental shift from the traditional economic model of "take, make, waste", to a "reduce, reuse and recycle" approach.

BS 8001 enables SMEs to implement circular economy principles, creating the conditions under which sustainable innovations can flourish. Think outside the box, disrupt the market with breakthrough solutions and help to secure a better future for everyone.

Summary:

- Businesses, including SMEs, must adapt to successfully navigate climate-related risks and opportunities.

- This might seem daunting, but with the right guidance smaller businesses can take action to become champions of sustainability – and reap the benefits.
- Eco-friendly business measures have myriad benefits: from cutting costs and reducing waste, to attracting and retaining top quality staff, to enhancing your brand credibility amongst consumers and investors, to boosting innovation.
- Begin by using ISO 14001 to clearly define your sustainability goals. This'll make it far easier for staff to engage with day-to-day sustainability actions at your SME.
- Use ISO 50001 to manage your energy efficiently and refer to PAS 2050 to reduce your carbon emissions. Then increase the transparency and credibility of your sustainability message with ISO 26000.
- Finally, future-proof your business using BS 8001 to implement circular economy principles to drive sustainable innovation.

For more information on our standards, visit:

www.bsigroup.com/standards

