

INTERNATIONAL CERTIFICATION BODY JOINS FORCES WITH ENVIRONMENTAL INSTITUTE SCHEME DURING ACORN'S YEAR OF GROWTH

An independent environmental inspection scheme has experienced such growth during 2008 that an additional inspection body has been recruited to keep up with demand.

The Institute of Environmental Management & Assessment's (IEMA) Acorn scheme now welcomes SGS United Kingdom Limited, one of the world's leading inspection, verification, testing and certification companies, as its **sixth** inspection body. This demonstrates the rapid development of the Acorn scheme and the increasing importance of external 3rd party recognition of company Environmental Management Systems (EMSs).

Acorn has gone from strength to strength during the first half of 2008, with April marking the 400th registrant onto the Acorn scheme via the 5 existing inspection bodies. 100 of those were inspected and recorded between January and April!

Now that SGS, a leading global organisation, is working on their first inspections, the Acorn scheme is sure to grow even further over the latter half of the year and into 2009.

"I welcome SGS on board..." says Russell Foster, Chief Executive of the IEMA, "It is very pleasing to see another renowned inspection body joining our Acorn scheme's growing list of inspectors. The response to the Acorn scheme is better than our Institute had expected, which demonstrates that more and more organisations are wishing to promote their environmental achievements".

Graham Walford, Product Manager for EMS at SGS also welcomes the partnership between his company and the IEMA's Acorn scheme. *"SGS is pleased to be able to announce our accreditation to the Acorn Scheme giving us the opportunity to inspect organisations to BS 8555:2003. This forms an important part of our environmental product portfolio and means we can offer a tailored audit service to a full range of clients."*

For more information on the IEMA, its events, services, products, membership, training and publications, visit www.iema.net or go to www.iema.net/acorn for full details on the Acorn Scheme.

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Notes

1. **The Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA)** is a not-for-profit membership organisation established to promote best practice standards in environmental management, auditing and assessment.

The Institute offers ongoing support to environmental professionals and aims to promote sustainability through improved environmental practice and performance.

With over 13,000 individual and corporate members, the IEMA is now a leading international membership-based organization, dedicated to the promotion of sustainable development and to the professional development of individuals involved in the environmental occupation across many industrial sectors.

For more information on the IEMA, its events, services, products, membership, training and publications, please visit www.iema.net. For all press enquiries contact Katrina Pierce at k.pierce@iema.net.

2. **The Acorn scheme** offers accredited recognition for organisations evaluating and improving their environmental performance through the phased implementation of an environmental management system (EMS). Acorn focuses on environmental improvements that are linked to business competitiveness and is flexible so that all types of organisation, whatever their size, can participate.

The Acorn scheme offers a phased approach to EMS implementation with the steps broken down into a series of logical, convenient, manageable stages using the British Standard BS 8555. It provides a clearly defined route plan to achieving the ISO14001 international standard and/or EMAS registration, with UKAS accredited recognition along the way.

Visit www.iema.net/acorn for further information on the scheme, its associated inspection bodies and the register.

3. **SGS** is recognized as the global benchmark for quality and integrity, employing over 50,000 people and operate a network of more than 1000 offices and laboratories around the world.

SGS help governments and industry integrate environmental management into their operations by providing a comprehensive international network of laboratories and environmental experts who deliver analytical and data interpretation services at both a global and local level.

For further details on SGS please visit www.sgs.com.

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