

ENVIRONMENTAL & SOCIAL CERTIFICATIONS

Many companies are choosing to obtain environmental & social certifications which are verified by external bodies. There are a variety of benefits to obtaining certifications like these including:

- Cost savings through enhance resource efficiencies
- Improving customer loyalty & trust
- Attracting clients & employees with similar values
- Enhanced community engagement

There are a number of certifications available to you, but ISO 14001 and B Corp certification are two I get asked about a lot so I've highlighted the key differences between them.

While having ISO 14001 certification can improve your B Corp score, the two certifications are very different. Make sure you understand those differences and what key stakeholders might need from you before dedicating time and resource to any certification.

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Overview

B Corporation	ISO 14001
○ Assesses environmental & social performance	○ Assesses environmental performance
○ Internationally recognised	○ Internationally recognised
○ Achieve a score of at least 80 using the B Impact Assessment template which is free to download	○ Environmental Management System (EMS) audited in line with the ISO 14001:2015 standard which can be purchased online
○ Meet legal requirements (B Corp is built into a company's legal structure)	○ Initial certification audit with certificate valid for 3 years
○ Virtual meeting with B Lab staff to verify B Impact Assessment	○ Ongoing surveillance audits (annually at least) with recertification audit every 3 years
○ B Impact Assessment to be verified & updated every 3 years but an Impact Report must be prepared annually	○ Frequency & duration of audits dependent on size of business & risk factors to be considered
○ Annual certification fee starts from £1,000 and increases based on annual sales figures	○ Costs vary depending on size of business & certification body selected (e.g. BSI, Alcumus, LRQA)
○ Adaptable to any business size or industry	○ Slightly more suited to larger companies

Still unsure which certification is right for you?

[Book a chat](#) to discuss your options or [sign up to Eco Bites](#) for fortnightly sustainability news and tips to make your business better.