

Good Practice Factsheet

Case study presented by Finland

Core Theme and topic	How to make better use of European financing sources (SCF, EIB) in combination with national schemes for energy efficiency
Name of work programme/project	EcoStart – Specialist Product Service for SMEs
Project scope and description	
Short description of the programme & what it hopes to achieve	EcoStart is an advisory service programme for SMEs, providing them an easy access to environmental consultancy, which will assist them to establish an environmental management system. The environmental consultants have been preselected by the ELY Centres and the service is subsidised in order to make it affordable.
What is the scope of the programme? e.g. - National/regional/local - Building type/owner	The scope of the project is Finnish SMEs nationwide.
Who are the key people involved? e.g.: - Installers - Local Authorities	The coordinator is ELY Centre of South Savo Region. Other 14 ELY Centres are responsible for the service in their region. The service providers are 12 environmental consultancy companies.
Who was the target audience?	The target audience are SME companies in general.
How was this work programme financed?	Partly from the EU Social Fund, partly national financing.
What was the cost of one project?	For the participating SME company the cost is €300 per day. The environmental consultants are paid €1,250 per day. The EcoStart consultation package is 3 to 8 days, depending on the size and type of the company.
When did it start and end?	The pilot projects and the development of the EcoStart took place 2004-2005. In 2006 the service was available in five regions and it became available nationwide in 2012. An impact assessment will be carried out in 2013 and based on the results it will be decided whether EcoStart will be continued in 2014.
Project Outcomes & Communication	
What were the key achievements?	Since 2006 some 70 EcoStart projects have been carried out. The feedback from those SMEs that have used the service has been good.
What were the outcomes and expected benefits?	The impact assessment on the outcomes and benefits will be carried out in 2013.
What were the key lessons learned?	One lesson learned is that the geographical availability of the 12 environmental consultants is not adequate. As a new Specialist Product Service, it will take time to raise the awareness among the SMEs on the benefits of the EcoStart.
Is there anything you would do differently in future?	Based on the feedback from the SMEs, the concept as such is good. In the future it is necessary to put more effort to marketing.
What makes this a good practice example?	It takes time to get from “just an idea” to “a broadly known and applied service”. The approach taken with EcoStart is pragmatic and workable.
Web links to further information	ecostart@ely-keskus.fi
Contact details of named person for further information	tarinka.ringvall@ely-keskus.fi
Please indicate if this case study can be made available to the public?	Yes.