

# 台灣企業建立 ISO14001 環境管理系統之決定要素 與財務績效

Firms Decisions to Certify ISO14001 EMS and their Financial  
Performance – An Empirical Study of Taiwan

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## 摘 要

從國際標準組織(ISO)訂頒 ISO14001 環境管理系統標準以來，全世界的許多公司紛紛建立 ISO14001 環境管理系統。截至 2005 年 4 月份為止，全球已有 88,800 家不同類型和規模的組織通過 ISO14001 驗證。雖然已有許多實證研究檢視在先進國家推行自願性環境管理計畫之決定要素，但是在台灣推行這些自願性計畫的動機卻很少被提及。本研究目的在分析引導台灣上市上櫃公司建立 ISO14001 環境管理系統並尋求驗證之驅動要素。利用 1996-2004 年期間，332 家取得 ISO14001 驗證和 650 家未獲得驗證的公司之長期追蹤調查資料為樣本，迴歸結果證明公司的外銷比率、公司規模、研發強度及科學園區廠商等四要素會影響公司採行 ISO14001 驗證之決策。整體而言，迴歸結果顯示，為了降低公害並改善環境品質，政府雖可透過政策性的工具，如提供補貼增加企業驗證的誘因；或是政府長期累積對環境保護的承諾，增加公司違反環境法規的潛在成本來鼓勵廠商推動 ISO14001 環境管理系統，但政策性工具對廠商是否通過 ISO14001 驗證並無強烈證據支持。同時，隨著全球化趨勢及相關綠色環保規範之要求，外銷導向型的台灣企業不斷面臨來自利害相關團體之持續壓力，比如說來自跨國企業公司所加諸的綠色供應鏈壓力，導致其較內需型產業更可能採行 ISO14001 標準，故企業為了企業形象及潛在市場，往往也會透過取得環保驗證，自發地降低整個生產過程中對環境的潛在破壞。整體而言，從實證結果顯示之主要管理意涵為：外銷導向的台灣企業由於承受來自全球綠色供應鏈(greening supply chain)之壓力，急於把 ISO14001 標準視為一可接受的合法性工具(legitimacy tool)，因為它可用來協助台灣廠商交換合法性，故企業的環境活動與其財務績效之間並無顯著的差異關係存在。

關鍵詞： 驗證、環境績效、ISO14001 環境管理系統、自我治理、綠色供應鏈

# **Firms Decisions to Certify ISO14001 EMS and their Financial Performance – An Empirical Study of Taiwan**

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## **ABSTRACT**

Rare empirical studies have analyzed the responses of Taiwanese manufacturing firms to ISO 14001 despite firm responses to environmental issues being an important aspect of environmental management. This study empirically examines the determinants of firms' environmental self-governance. Export-oriented Taiwanese firms, which face supply chain pressure from multinational firms and environmental concerns from foreign consumers, are found to be more likely than domestic-focused firms to adopt ISO 14001. This study also finds that several firm attributes are decisive for firm adoption of ISO 14001. However, this study does not find a significant impact of local governors' political party affiliation on firms' decisions on ISO 14001 certifications. Since the institutional forces such as greening supply chain pressures have become the major driver of the moves of Taiwanese firms towards more environmentally responsible operations, the estimation results demonstrate that Taiwanese firms regard the ISO14001 standard as an acceptable means of seeking legitimacy, establishing trust and long-term relationships with a wide range of stakeholders, and deflecting the scrutiny and interest of watchdog agencies and other interested parties worldwide; thus, no significant correlation exists between environmental and financial performance.

Key words: Environmental Performance, Environmental self-governance, ISO 14001 EMS

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Research Background

In an era defined by accelerated population growth and dwindling non-renewable resources, balancing the pursuit of economic growth with environmental conservation is becoming increasingly important in firm policy making. Since 1987, the U.N. World Commission on Environment and Development has promoted its Agenda 21, inducing nations to devise specific policies addressing sustainable development. During the past decade, sustainable development has become a common value worldwide, a way of thinking, and a watchword; national sustainable development policies have made environmental management a key issue in the twenty-first century. Additionally, growing environmental pollution and ecological destruction have also become major international concerns. In response to a resolution of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 on the subject of designing an instrument for encouraging sustainable development, the ISO 14001 International Standard was issued and amended by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) in September 1996 and November 2004, respectively. ISO 14001 requires firms to establish an Environment Management System (EMS) for supporting environmental protection, pollution prevention and continual improvement in managing the potential environmental hazards related to firm activities, products or services. However, ISO 14001 is not a performance-oriented standard; and focuses on

management processes rather than specific environmental outcomes (Bansal and Bogner, 2002). ISO 14001 is designed to be applicable to all types and sizes of organizations, and to accommodate diverse geographical, cultural and social conditions, and thus offers a more flexible standard than alternatives such as the Eco-Management and Audit Scheme (EMAS). The purpose of the ISO in designing the ISO 14001 system is to establish a basic international standard (currently, nations frequently follow their own environmental management systems, for example, the BS 7750 in the U.K., the EMAS in the E.U., Z-750 in Canada, and so on), and establishment of an international standard can avoid the formation technical barriers to trade (TBT), which could hurt both trade and business. Additionally, the ISO aims to promote a responsible attitude among individuals in the “global village.”



Although EMS implementation simply provides a framework for managing environmental impacts and provides a starting-point for developing firm-level environmental strategies (Christmann and Taylor, 2001), an EMS can help enhance firm performance by reducing waste and creating other efficiencies (Porter and van der Linde, 1995a; 1995b). The implementation of ISO14000 may provide a means of establishing a national policy of self-governance, especially in countries that lack environmental regulation or enforcement capabilities (Wilson, 1998).

Winsemius and Guntram (1992) pointed out the emerging awareness of consumers and companies regarding environmental issues; this new wave of thinking regarding sustainable development represents a grass-roots force that

governments and enterprises cannot afford to neglect. Governments and enterprises thus have increased their commitment to responsible environmental management, implementing policies to address adverse environmental impacts (Mulder, 1998; Walton et al., 1998; Gifford, 1997). Klassen and McLaughlin (1996) believed that enterprises promote environmental management to reduce the negative environmental impacts of their operations. Numerous scholars note that by promoting environmental management, companies are not only operationally successful, but also enhance their environmental performance (Eckel et al., 1992; Greeno and Robinson, 1992; Dean and Brown, 1995; Porter and van der Linde, 1995; Nehrt, 1996; Tibor and Feldman, 1996; Magretta, 1997; Weizsacker and Lovins, 1998; Stigson, 1998; Miles et al., 1999). Miles (1997) further stated that companies will have the difficulty of gaining international recognition if they are unable to obtain ISO 14001 certification.

During the recent decade, the emphasis on global environmental management has evolved from the conventional approach of command and control to the voluntary participation and avoidance approach. ISO 14001 is a voluntary scheme in the sense that firms can demonstrate their EMS consistency and management level by passing a third party certification and/or to themselves by self-declaration. Compared to the command and control approach, the voluntary scheme approach is a partnership concept based on corporate environmental management, which allows companies and government agencies to work together to identify their impact on the environment and improve their environmental performance. The empirical analyses for the U.S. Acid Rain Program reveal that voluntary participation

behavior for electric utilities can be explained via economic variables, showing cost-effective compliance strategies and low transaction costs (Montero, 1999). Moreover, empirical evidence shows that American firms have enhanced their financial performance by developing rent generating resources and capabilities, reducing resource use and process waste, improving product quality, and increasing international transactions (Delmas, 2001).

Taiwan is the 13th largest trading nation in the world, and international trade has been crucial to Taiwan's economic development. The United States, Hong Kong, Japan, China, and Europe (notably France, Germany, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom) remained the top buyers of Taiwanese exports in 2001, accounting for 60.5 % of total exports. The main export markets for Taiwanese firms are in Europe, Japan and North America. Taiwanese suppliers to multinational enterprises in these developed countries, including IBM, Ford, GM, Xerox, Honda, Toyota, HP, and Squibb, face pressure to pursue environmental certifications if ISO 14001 becomes a de facto requirement for selling in any value chain ending in these markets (Bansal and Bogner, 2002). Christmann and Taylor (2001) propose that globalization may have positive environmental effects since multinational ownership, multinational customers, and exports to developed countries increase self-governance of environmental performance. In reacting to this green trend and recognizing the integration of environmental management into business operations (Jiang and Bansal, 2003), Taiwanese firms have responded positively and proactively to ISO 14001 since its introduction. The Taiwanese government and numerous enterprises consider ISO 14001 to be a

“green passport” granting entry to international markets, and the ISO 14001 standard can also improve a firm’s image via increased environmental legitimacy (Jiang and Bansal, 2003).

With the growing importance of voluntary instruments for improving environmental quality, the determinants of firm decisions to voluntarily comply with environmental standards need to be well understood. Numerous empirical studies have examined the determinants of firm participation in voluntary environmental schemes in developed countries (DeCanio and Watkins, 1998; Arora and Cason, 1995; Henriques and Sardorsky, 1996; Nakamura et al., 2001). For example, DeCanio and Watkins indicate (1998) that firm-specific variables such as firm size, earnings and insider shareholders are significant determinants of voluntary participation of U.S. firms in the Green Lights program. Moreover, empirical studies have investigated the factors driving firms to seek ISO 14001 certification in developing economies such as China and Hong Kong (Cushing et al., 2005; Christmann and Taylor, 2001; Chan and Li, 2001). They generally find that exports to the developed countries are a key factor of firms’ adopting ISO 14001 certification.

Taiwan currently ranks among the top three nations worldwide in 30 products and manufacturing services (IDB, 2002) and globalization has increased the institutional and customer pressures on firms to exceed local regulatory requirements (Christmann and Taylor, 2001) though opponents of the World Trade Organization (WTO) claim that globalization has caused environmental deterioration in developing countries. From a political

perspective, Taiwan has experienced democratization over the past few decades and the central government continues to delegate responsibility for some environmental regulations to local governments. Determining the appropriate role of the various governments in the setting of environmental standards has been a key issue on the political agenda for Taiwan. However, no empirical studies have yet examined the firms' adoption of voluntary ISO certification schemes in Taiwan. Therefore, it is imperative to investigate what factors drive firms to improve environmental protection through their adoption of ISO 14001 certification.


Recently, numerous Taiwanese enterprises have promoted ISO 14001 implementation and certification as an effective means of achieving sustainable development. Companies consider ISO 14001 to be a viable approach for helping them cultivate an ideal image and remain competitive attract sales, rather than as a regulation or limitation that brings unwanted stress. This trend also has positive societal effects. Thus, this study attempts to identify qualitative differences between companies with and without ISO 14001 certification. Additionally, this work also attempts to determine the differences in overall operational effectiveness between ISO 14001-certified and non-certified companies in terms of their efforts to balance environmental conservation and sustainable development.

## 1.2 Research Objectives

The general objectives of this research are to examine the factors driving Taiwanese firms to seek ISO 14001 certification. Specifically, the

objectives are as follows,

1. Investigation of determinants of firm self-governance in Taiwan from economic, social, environmental and political aspects.
2. Development of a model to assess the determinants of Taiwanese manufacturing companies to establish the certified ISO14001 Environmental Management System (EMS).
3. Identification of qualitative differences between companies with and without ISO 14001 certification and determination the differences in overall operational effectiveness between ISO 14001-certified and non-certified companies in terms of their efforts to balance environmental conservation and sustainable development.



To achieve the above objectives, it is based on random effects estimations of panel data over 1996-2004 in the study of determinants of firm self-governance in Taiwan. In order to investigate the factors leading a firm to become certified, firms which have adopted ISO 14001 certification at some previous point in the panel period must be omitted from the regressions. Hence, each firm in the sample has at most one observation of ISO 14001 certification. Following this procedure, this research has a final sample of 6,692 observations from 982 firms over 1996-2004.

In the study of assessing the role of ISO14001 EMS in financial performance, it is based on cross-section data during 1996-2004. This

work performs a business performance analysis of 982 listed companies, 332 of which are certified while 650 are not.

### 1.3 Research Framework

This research first examines the determinants driving Taiwanese firms to seek ISO 14001 certification. Particularly, it analyzes whether export ratio and local governors' party affiliation influence a firm's likelihood of adopting ISO 14001. Next, This study also seeks to understand the current situation of ISO 14001 certification for Taiwanese businesses and to shore up parameters used by academia to assess performance. Additionally, this study uses number of employees, total capital, and operating quota as indicators to measure enterprise size and to assign the firm to a certain industry category and attempts to use static measurements (ROE, ROA, P/E ratio, rate of gross profit) and dynamic measurements (revenue growth rates) to perform statistics analysis. This work performs a business performance analysis of 982 listed companies, 332 of which are certified while 650 are not.

The contents of this dissertation are organized as follows. The principle scheme of research process is shown in Figure 1.



- Chapter 1 introduces the research background, objectives and framework involved in this research.
- Chapter 2 first discusses pertinent literature such as ISO14001 Environmental Management System, international trade, local political competition, certification subsidy, firm attributes, financial performance and then presents different hypotheses.
- Chapter 3 describes determinants of a firm's ISO 14001 certification. The econometric specification, data sources, explanatory variables and the estimation results are provided and discussed in this chapter.
- Chapter 4 assesses the role of ISO14001 EMS in financial performance. Measurement indicators and methods, research objective, research hypothesis, empirical findings and evidence-based discussion are provided in Chapter 4.
- Conclusions and recommended research directions are finally drawn in Chapter 5.

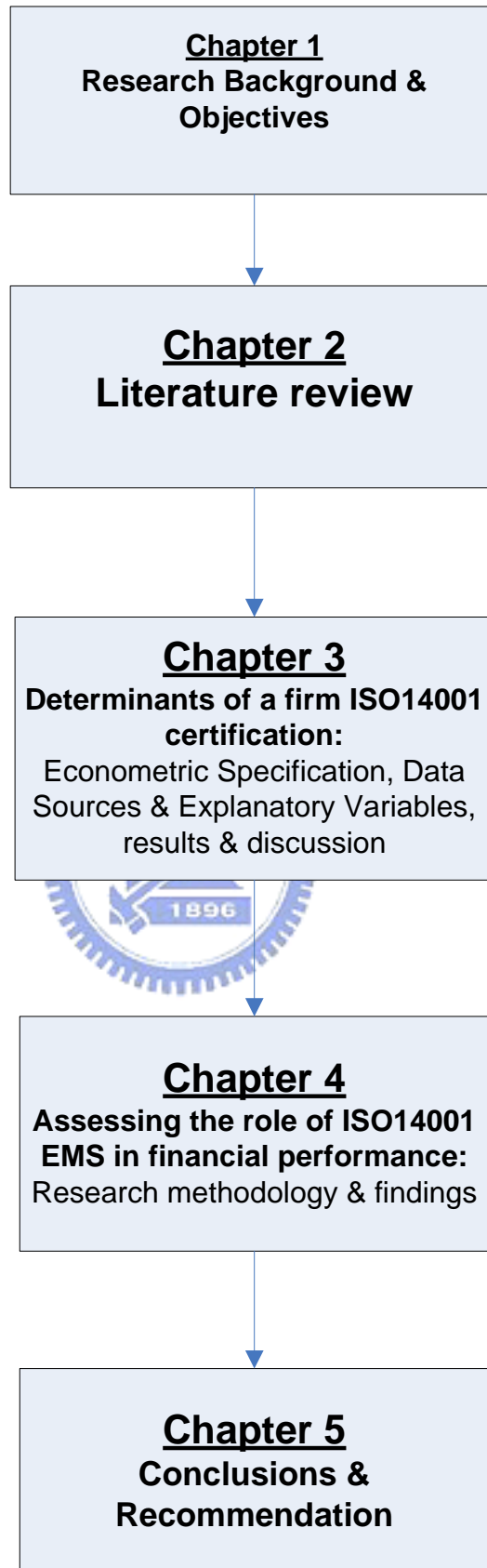


Figure 1: Overview of research process

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 ISO 14001 Environmental Management System

During 1996, the ISO promulgated the ISO 14001 environmental management system (designed specifically for evaluating organizations) and other related standards (ISO 14004, 14010, 14011, and 14012), with the aim of providing industries with internationally recognized environmental management regulations and a certification standard. In response to the two key U.N. objectives of improving the environment and achieving sustainable development, ISO subsequently also posted environmental assessments of the products of numerous enterprises. Besides methodology and certification provided to firms by the ISO 14001 system, Technical Committee 207 (Environmental Management) focuses on producing environmental evaluations of firms and their products, and standardizing the rules and definitions of Environmental Auditing (EA), Environmental Performance Evaluation (EPE), Life Cycle Assessment (LCA), Environmental Labeling (EL), and Environmental Aspects in Product Standards (EAPS).

The Environmental Management System (EMS) comprises the core of the ISO 14000 family and has the serial number ISO 14001. The system mainly aims to enable environmental conservation via a systemized management program — that is, the system stresses all conservation related matters, enabling management, measurement, improvement, and communication via systematic methodology, and does not address pollution prevention, clean-up technology, or emission standards. However, the system requires enterprises to prevent pollution or operate within the

parameters of sustainable development. ISO 14001 operates based on a voluntary scheme, and provides a new approach to conservation that replaces the command and control system, in which enterprises are led and legally forced by governments to adhere to certain standards. The voluntary scheme enables enterprises to assume responsibility themselves with the expectation that they will inevitably become conscious of the trends and needs of the Twenty-first Century and implement economically sound environmental management plans. Thus, the decision to implement ISO 14001 is voluntary and not binding, unlike the contractual obligations of environmental treaties.

Among the certifications of the ISO 14000 family, ISO 14001 system certification was the earliest to provide official requirements and guidelines for an international standard. ISO 14001 stresses management system, rather than technical pollution emission standard control and pollution testing technology. That is, the essence of the system lies in helping enterprises continually improve their pollution prevention abilities and enhance their environmental performance (Zhang et al., 2000). Accordingly, since promoting certification of the ISO 14000 family, ISO 14001 has increasingly caught the attention of the manufacturing industry along with the ISO 9000 quality management system certification. Certified enterprises have grown rapidly (Montabon et al., 2000; Rezaee, 2000; Chin and Pun, 1999), environmental consciousness is a critical factor in enterprise success, and certification is the only means of sustaining effective business performance (Miles et al., 1999; Magretta, 1997; Hehrt, 1996). Greeno and Robinson (1992) felt that the environmental management activities of enterprises will reduce the environmental impact of enterprise business activities, while

simultaneously enhancing their environmental performance and competitiveness.

Since Taiwan is a major exporting nation, domestic industries fear that once ISO environmental management standards become industry requirement, they will become new trade barriers. However, industrial, political, and academic circles have been actively encouraging industries to promote the establishment and certification of the ISO 14001 system. Based on a survey of ISO 14001-certified enterprises performed by the Federal Environmental Agency in June 1996, the total number of certified Taiwanese enterprises was originally second just behind Japan (Steger 2000). However, since then the numbers of certified Chinese and South Korean enterprises have overtaken the number of such enterprises in Taiwan. In April 2005, certified Taiwanese businesses summed 1,463 out of total 88,800 (see Figure 2 ), ranking 14th globally in terms of countries with certified enterprises (ISO world, 2005).

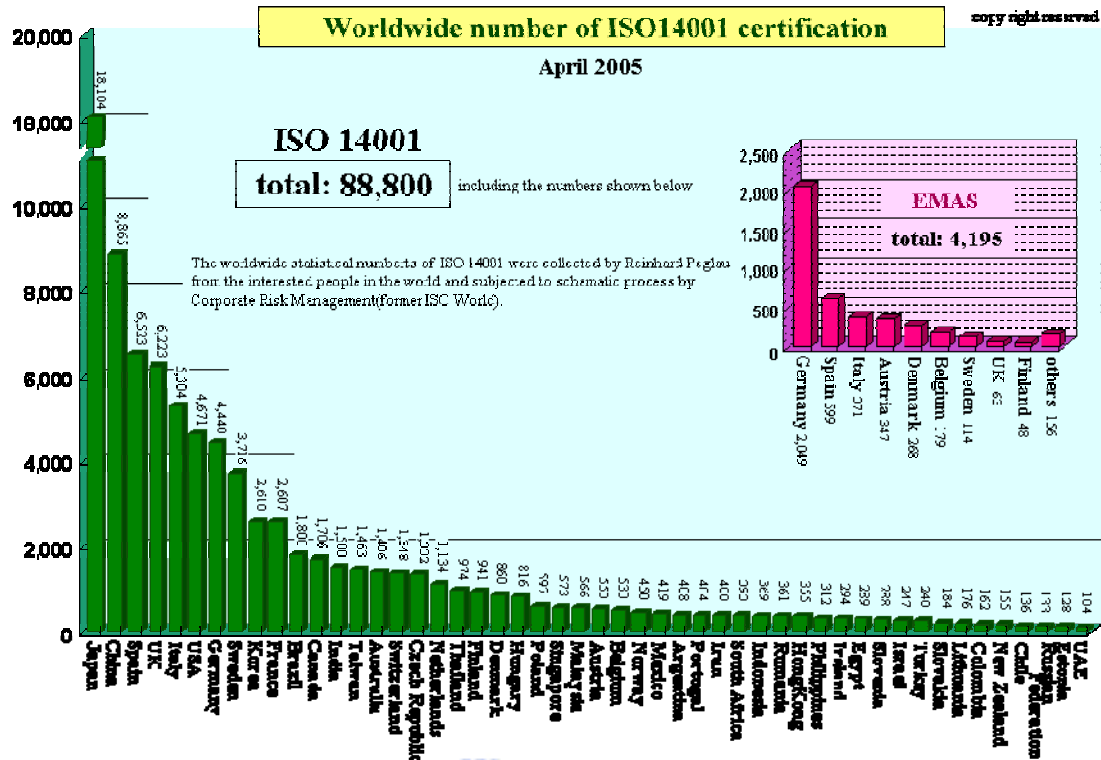


Figure 2: Total no. of ISO 14001-certified enterprises globally

Because ISO 14000 was designed to be compatible with ISO 9000, ISO 9000-certified enterprises can easily adopt ISO 14000. Furthermore, small enterprises can integrate the ISO 9000 and 14000 systems, saving manpower and money, and becoming more efficient. Currently, 10,000 Taiwanese businesses have ISO 9001 certification, while 1,445 have ISO 14001 certification (see Table 1). Table 2 lists the statistics for listed manufacturing enterprises with ISO 14001 certification. Domestic organizations that have received ISO14001 certification are still at the primary stage in the manufacturing industry likewise, other organizations (such as, government organizations, service industries, hospitals, schools, and so on) are still observing developments from the sidelines, or they do have the difficulties to establish the ISO 14001 system in their organizations.

Table 1: No. of Taiwanese ISO 14001-certified enterprises during 1996-2004

Year	Annul No.	Cumulative No.
1996	30	30
1997	80	110
1998	238	348
1999	220	568
2000	181	749
2001	212	961
2002	159	1120
2003	225	1345
2004	100	1445

Source: Taiwan Environmental Management Association/Organized by Industrial Development Bureau, MOEA, May 2005.

Table 2: Annual no. of enterprises that have gained ISO 14001 certification

Year	Annual No.	Cumulative No.
1996	15	15
1997	22	37
1998	35	72
1999	27	99
2000	25	124
2001	35	159
2002	32	191
2003	149	340
2004	29	369

Source: Organized by this investigation

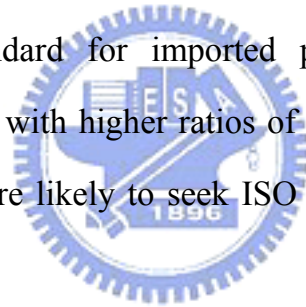
## 2.2 International Trade

Reduced barriers to trade and foreign direct investment have increased globalization. Consequently, some are concerned that countries with lax environmental regulations might become pollution havens for pollution-intensive industries in a global economy with cross-country differences in environmental regulations. For example, opponents of the World Trade Organization contend that multinational firms relocate to low-income countries, whose people are so eager for jobs that their environmental regulations are weak (Dasgupta et al., 2002). Moreover, developing countries may sacrifice their environmental quality to reduce the production costs of their pollution-intensive products and to raise competitiveness of their products in foreign markets.

Taiwanese firms play an important role in the global supply chains of manufacturing, with an extensive customer base in Europe, Japan, and North America. Since these customers place a high priority on environmental protection, Taiwanese firms face direct pressures from their dominant and definitive stakeholders (Jiang and Bansal, 2003), in the form of supply chain pressure from multinational enterprises such as HP, IBM and Ford. For example, firms such as Ford, General Motors, Volvo, Toyota, and Siemens require that all or some of their suppliers be ISO 14001 certificated. Therefore, seeking ISO 14001 certification has become a key priority for Taiwanese firms because such a certification represents a green passport to the Europe and North American markets, and the lack of such certification can lead to the loss of important business opportunities (Bansal and Bogner, 2002).



Moreover, multinational customers may require their suppliers to obtain ISO 14001 certification because it is more practical than monitoring the environmental performance of their suppliers directly (Christmann and Taylor, 2001). Consequently, firms in many export-oriented Asian countries are rushing to implement ISO 14000 certification (Roht-Arriaza, 1997). A study of China-based businesses reveals broad-based empirical support for export-oriented incentives (Christmann and Taylor, 2001). Jiang and Bansal (2003) also indicate that ISO 14001 is conceived and used as a communication tool and thus increases exchange legitimacy (Suchman, 1995). Although environmental requirements vary among countries, the developed countries including the EU, Japan and the US generally demand a higher environmental standard for imported products. Therefore, this research proposes that firms with higher ratios of products exported to the EU, Japan and the US are more likely to seek ISO 14001 certification than those with lower export ratios.



### 2.3 Local Political Competition

The literature on environmental federalism argues that local governments may compete to attract business investment and create new jobs by setting lower local environmental standards (Jaffe et al., 1995). Local governments may race to the bottom if the central government does not impose stricter regulations on environmental standards. In contrast, economists also suggest that local policymakers would tailor policies to the


preferences of their constituents. Evidence also exists of a real and substantial response at the state and local levels comprising various programs for improving environmental quality in response to public concern (Oates, 2001).

In 1996, the then ruling Kuomintang (KMT) county magistrate approved the plan of the German chemical and pharmaceutical giant Bayer to establish a giant TDI (Toluylendiisocyanat) plant in Taichung, located in central Taiwan. This factory was to produce 100,000 metric tons of TDI annually, making it the second biggest TDI producer in the world. This investment plan was controversial, with resistance primarily being led by the opposition Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), which organized demonstrations involving up to 4,000 residents of the area around the proposed plant site. The main concern was the threat of phosgene, a poisonous by-product of TDI production, which was used as a chemical weapon during World War I.

The new Taichung county magistrate from the DPP was elected in late 1997, and announced a delay in issuing establishment permits pending a local referendum scheduled for June 1998. Consequentially, Bayer officially cancelled its investment plan in Taiwan in March 1998, and eventually relocated the facility to Texas, although it had obtained approval from the central government and had been negotiating with the local government for four years to proceed with the project in Taiwan (The New York Times, March 19, 1998).

The Bayer incident demonstrated that local governments may advocate more environmentally friendly policies to compete for votes. Since ISO

ISO 14001 is perceived to be a valuable environmental protection tool, it provides firms a systematic approach to environmental issues and demonstrates the commitment and performance of firm management to interested parties. ISO 14001 certification can further enhance firm identity and image as environmentally responsible and help minimize potential hazards associated with local government environmental policies. In Taiwan, the DPP mayors or local government magistrates are generally believed to enforce more stringent environmental protection than their KMT counterparts. ISO 14001 certification can protect firms from challenges to their environmental reputation by special interest groups, and thus firms located in the jurisdictions of DPP local governors are expected to be more likely to adopt ISO 14001 certification.



Although the investigation on the relationship between local governors' party affiliation and ISO certification does not provide a test of a race to the bottom, it provides evidence on whether firms adjust their environmental strategies in response to the demand from various local policymakers. As noted above, local policymakers may choose different environmental standards to promote the well-being of their residents or to seek re-election. Therefore, if firm decisions on ISO 14001 certification are affected by local governors' party affiliation, it implies that local standards for environmental quality or local policymakers' attitude toward environmental hazards can influence the firms' environmental protection.


## 2.4 Certification Subsidy

The Taiwanese government began to promote various programs for improving the environmental performance of industry during the mid 1980s. Notably, the Environmental Protection Administration (EPA) was established to develop and enforce environmental regulations, and the Industrial Development Bureau (IDB) of the Ministry of Economic Affairs (MOEA) was assigned the task of designing appropriate technologies, and providing technical assistance and financial incentives to industries practicing appropriate environmental management. IDB promoted ISO 14001 EMS using a financial subsidy approach. Firms paired with registered technical assistance providers can apply for subsidies to cover 40% to 60% of the cost of preparing ISO certification, up to a maximum of US\$16,000 per case over 1996-2000 and up to a maximum of US\$6,000 per case since 2001. The government budgets appropriated for subsidizing ISO certification were US\$277K, US\$267K, US\$243K, US\$173K, US\$207K, US\$257K, US\$143K, US\$170K and US\$147K for the years ranging from 1996-2004, respectively (Source: Taiwan Environment Management Association). The exchange rate over this period was around NT\$30 per US dollar.

Preparation and implementation costs range between US\$10,000 and US\$128,000 (Freeman, 1997) and can represent a barrier to ISO certification for firms with little cash flow. With financial incentives provided by the government, firms can not only save on implementation costs, but can also reduce uncertainty regarding the future value of the standard. A subsidy has been proposed to promote firm activities with risks or firm activities

producing public goods. For example, many countries adopt tax-based subsidies to stimulate R&D expenditures (Hall and Van Reenen, 2000). This government sharing of the risk of implementing environmental standards has increased firm motivation to obtain their ISO 14001 EMS. As of the end of 2004, 305 firms receiving subsidies from IDB had already received ISO 14001 certification (IDB, 2004). Firms receiving government subsidies for implementing ISO 14001 EMS are thus believed to have more incentive to seek ISO 14001 certification than those receiving no subsidies.

## 2.5 Firm Attributes



We also account for firm-level determinants in analyzing firm decision to adopt ISO 14001 certification. These variables include firm size, profitability, debt ratio, R&D expenditure, and location, which are discussed below.

Previous studies indicate that firm size positively influences environmental performance (Hartman, Huq and Wheeler, 1997) owing to economies of scale in pollution control equipment. Nakamura et al. (2001) indicate that certification involves significant fixed costs, which are less significant for larger organizations as compared to smaller ones. Hence, the larger a facility, the greater the potential for spreading these fixed costs across the operation (King and Lenox, 2001).

The costs of ISO 14001 implementation depend on facility size and the sophistication of the environmental management system, and range between US\$10,000 and US\$128,000 (Freeman, 1997). Additionally, the certified firm needs to bear annual maintenance costs of US\$5,000 to US\$10,000. Developing, certifying and maintaining ISO 14001 EMS can represent a significant expense for non-profitable firms with high debt ratios and consequently profitable firms are more likely to see it as a useful investment (Aragon-Correa, 1998; Clark, 1999). However, the ISO scheme also represents a way for less competitive firms to seek an advantage over more competitive rivals by playing upon the public image it generates (Chapple et al., 2001). Notably, Chapple et al. (2001) find that less profitable firms were more likely to seek ISO 14001 than profitable firms and contended that they are looking to gaining a competitive advantage through non-price competition focused on environmental quality.



Debt ratio influences capital costs and financial flexibility (Nakamura et al., 2001). Although firms with low debt ratios are expected to have more flexibility to finance new environmental programs, this proposition is less certain since debt ratio may reflect firm financial strategies adopted to reduce tax burden (Nakamura et al., 2001).

Firms are gradually acknowledging eco-efficiency as one of the major challenges in R&D practice in product innovation (Noci and Verganti, 1999). Previous studies on environmental compliance costs have traditionally focused on static cost impacts and ignored the importance of offsetting productivity benefits from innovation. In contrast, innovative solutions and

significant R&D investment can create win-win solutions for environmental problems and productivity improvement (Porter and van der Linde, 1995a). Empirical evidence also indicates that environmental innovation is more likely to occur in internationally competitive industries (Brunnermeier and Cohen, 2003). Konar and Cohen (2001) find that improved environmental performance boosts firm asset value. Firms may voluntarily seek environmental compliance as well as R&D activities to pursue higher profitability. This is particularly appropriate for firms with high R&D investment which are more likely to obtain technological solutions for their environmental problems and thus find it easier to implement the ISO standard (Nakamura et al., 2001). Established in 1980, the Hsinchu Science-based Industrial Park (HSIP) was the first science park of its kind in Taiwan. With the mission of establishing a high quality R&D base for the high-tech industry, HSIP firms enjoy investment privileges and benefits courtesy of government agencies, including preferential tax treatment, lower utility and land costs, and R&D subsidies. However, the environmental activities of HSIP firms, including pollution control plan implementation, air pollutant emissions management, and wastewater inspection are monitored more intensively by interested parties including neighboring communities, government agencies, environmental groups, and the mass media. Bansal and Bogner (2002) state that the ISO 14001 standard provides an acceptable signal, which conforms to the expectations of various stakeholders because it is externally endorsed, and requires extensive documentation. Firms with the ISO 14001 standard can thus help to establish trust and long-term relationships with stakeholders and deflect the scrutiny and interest of watchdog agencies and interest groups.

## 2.6 Financial Performance

The usage scope of the ISO 14001 system is such that the system standard requirements are applicable only to those environmental aspects that can be effectively controlled by the organization; the system does not assert any specific principles regarding effective environmental management. ISO 14001 and 14004 standards are simply used to assist organizations in establishing their own management systems, not to force on them regulations to achieve certain objectives. Increasing numbers of enterprises are attempting to become ISO 14001-certified of their own accord and are even requesting that suppliers become certified within certain time periods. ISO 14001 has become a key tool for assessing supplier environmental performance (Miles et al., 1997, Miles et al., 1999, Mohamed, 2001). Tibor and Feldman (1996) felt that companies, following having pushed for ISO 14001 certification, have increased their awareness of environmental issues; became more actively involved in environmental management activities, improved their environmental performance, and are more knowledgeable about conducting life cycle analyses and procuring environmentally friendly products. The research of Nakamura et al. (2001) demonstrated that enterprise ISO 14001 certification influences their consumption and procurement of products made from natural resources, such as petroleum products, water, and paper products.

Numerous scholars, both in Taiwan and abroad, hold markedly different views regarding the relationship between the environmental and financial



performance of enterprises. Some of them feel that good environmental performance positively influences financial performance. However, others are suspicious of this belief or even posit contradictory theories. Owing to different research themes and the difficulty of balancing environmental and financial performance, the results of different studies differ markedly.

Allen (1992) and Schmidheiny (1992) believed that the environmental performance resulting from promoting environmental activities can actually reduce product costs and waste, and enhance enterprise financial performance. Moreover, enterprise environmental performance can improve profitability (Bragdon and Marlin, 1972; Spicer, 1978) and reduce environmental risk (Spicer, 1978); environmental activities improve enterprise environmental performance (Moskowitz, 1972; Parket and Eilbirt, 1975; Sturdivant and Ginter, 1977; Arolow and Gannon, 1982; Capon et al., 1990). Furthermore, a positive relationship exists between environmental and financial performance (Bragdon and Marlin, 1972). Enterprises that are active in environmental management can significantly improve their environmental performance and upgrade their financial performance (Callan and Thomas, 1996; Ilinitich et al., 1998; Wen and Chen, 1998; An Baoyi, Xu Mulan, Liu Zhongju, 1999; Chin and Pun, 1999; Shi Lixing, Huang Fenghui, Gun Meixiu, 2000; Steger, 2000). The study of Cohen et al. (1995) demonstrated that among large enterprises in the U.S., those with superior environmental performance generally also have good financial performance. However, Nehrt (1996, 1998) observed that large enterprises that lead in terms of environmental innovation are typically the fastest way to achieve financial performance.

On the other hand, some scholars maintain that enterprise social responsibilities and financial performance are antithetical (Carter et al., 2000). Vance (1975) and Ullman (1985) both felt that environmental investments increased enterprise production costs and negatively impacted financial performance. Most of the researchers believed that introducing environmental activities into enterprise business operations negatively influences their financial performance (Freeman, 1994; Judge and Hema, 1994). Moreover, Walley and Whitehead (1994) demonstrated that enterprises generally believe that pushing for environmental-related measures and abiding by related laws and regulations will increase operating costs and negatively impact profitability. Cost increases result from the internalization of costs that were previously external, for example assuming the costs of air pollution (Bragdon and Marlin, 1972; Klassen and McLaughlin, 1996). The research of Jaggi and Freedman (1992) demonstrated that enterprises investing in pollution prevention equipment do not improve their financial performance—that is, no positive relationship exists between environmental and financial performance.

Additionally, some scholars feel that no relationship exists between enterprise social responsibilities and financial performance (Alexander and Buchholz, 1978; Abbot and Monsen, 1979). Additionally, no noticeable differential relationship necessarily exists between enterprise environmental disclosure activities and financial performance (Freedman and Jaggi, 1982; Wiseman, 1982), and nor is there any noticeable difference between enterprise environmental performance and profitability (Fogler and Nutt, 1975; Rockness et al., 1986). Mahapatra (1984) demonstrated that

companies which invest heavily in pollution clean-up are not guaranteed a good environmental performance. Jaggi (1993) felt for businesses that invest in pollution prevention and clean-up equipment, such a move is merely a temporary measure to avoid violating government regulations. Additionally, in the present case, the relationship between environmental and financial performance becomes negative. Conversely, if enterprises make a long-term investment in pollution prevention and clean-up equipment, this equipment will boost their market performance, representing a positive relationship between environmental and financial performance.

In synthesizing the above sources, owing to disparities in research subjects and methods, there is obviously still no overarching theory regarding the relationship between environmental and financial performance. This study analyzes the basic characteristics and financial performances of ISO 14001-certified and uncertified Taiwanese listed enterprises based on the research of scholars regarding ISO 14001 environmental management. Regarding an evaluation standard for measuring performance, the Taiwanese stock market breaks down enterprise finances into five categories: profitability, cash flow, ability to pay debt, capital debt management and growth capabilities. These indicators comprise the evaluation system applied to the finances of listed companies. In assessing enterprise financial performance, the business performance, cash flow, and financial circumstances reflect the profitability of that enterprise, and the enterprise goals and demands must be kept in mind when performing financial ratio analysis. Enterprise performance is defined as the degree to which the enterprise has satisfied its objective(s), and the resource use situation facing

the enterprise, which respectively indicate enterprise effectiveness and efficiency. Katzell (1975) proposed that the scope of efficiency is rather large, and includes performance, productivity, and profitability. Numerous scholars believe that financial performance is influenced by manufacturing performance, product effectiveness, and market conditions (Myers & Marquis,1969; Cooper,1979; Cooper & Kleinschmidt,1987; Zirger & Maidique, 1990).

Although Chakravarthy (1986) found evidence that methodology using profitability as a measure of performance does not accurately determine whether the operations of an enterprise are superior or not, numerous scholars still use financial indicators such as the 14 commonly used measurement parameters identified by Cooper et al. (1986): investment return rates, sales quota return rates, sales income growth rates, cash flow, and investment/market share rates, comparative product quality of competitors, comparative promotions of new products by competitors, comparative direct production costs of competitors, product R&D, manufacturing R&D, differences in return on investment (ROI), changes in ratio of ROI, and cash flow/investment ratio changes. Cooper et al. felt that although measures of profitability are limited, they are still important indicators of performance. Bettis and Mahajan (1985) use the ratio of profitability ( namely, the average of capital return rate for the past five years) to risk (namely, shortages in capital return rate for the past five years) to measure organization performance. Ranftl (1979) defined productivity as the ratio of investment to output, that is, using organization resources to effectively produce. Research indicates that financial ratio information is

clearly related to assessments of financial performance; however, past measurement indicators are based on financial indicators such as the definitions of Cohen, Fenn, and Naimon (1995) regarding accounting return rates, the view of Jaggi and Freedman (1992) and Cohen, Fenn, and Naimon (1995) regarding stock market performance, the suggestions of Jaggi and Freedman (1992) to use P/E ratio to measure stock market performance, and the four indicators used by Fullerton and McWitters (2001) in their research on the influences of enterprise financial performance (namely, EBIT, ROA, ROS, and cash flow). Bragdon and Marlin (1972) used EPS, ROE, and ROI as financial indicators to research the relationship between firm environmental and financial performance.



# 3. DETERMINANTS OF A FIRM'S ISO 14001 CERTIFICATION

## 3.1 Specification

This study follows previous empirical studies on transition decisions, such as the transition from being employed to self-employment (Bruce, 2000), in developing an empirical strategy to estimate the determinants of firm decision to adopt ISO 14001 certification. Specifically, the econometric specification is defined as follows:

$$P(y_{it} = 1 | \mathbf{X}_{it}) = \Phi(\eta_i + \mathbf{X}_{it}\tilde{\beta}),$$

where the dependent variable,  $y_{it}$ , equals 1 if firm  $i$  obtains ISO 14001 certification at time  $t$ , and 0 if firm  $i$  remains uncertified. The  $\mathbf{X}_{it}$  denotes a vector of variables including export ratio, political party affiliation of local governors, government subsidies to certification, firm size, profitability, debt ratio, R&D expenditure, location and other control variables. Meanwhile,  $\Phi$  represents the cumulative probability of a normal distribution and an empirical specification for the above equation is a random-effects probit. The maximum likelihood estimates for the firm-specific effects  $\eta_i$  and  $\tilde{\beta}$  are inconsistent.

As noted above, we can analyze a firm's transition from being non-certified to certified by utilizing panel data. Moreover, estimations based

on panel data can ameliorate the endogeneity problem because firm-specific effects can be controlled for and observations from different years can increase variable variations.

### 3.2 Data Sources

The estimations used in this study are based on the Taiwan Stock Exchange and Over-the-Counter sample drawn from the Taiwan Economic Journal (TEJ) Data Bank. The data bank includes firms from the cement, food, plastics, textiles, machinery, electrical appliances, chemical, glass and ceramics, paper and pulp, metals, rubber, automobile and electronics industries. The final sample is comprised of a total of 332 ISO 14001-certified firms and 650 non-certified firms from 13 industries over the period of 1996-2004, after some firms were excluded due to missing or outlier values. When the panel period is short (Chamberlain, 1980), on the other hand, the conditional fixed-effects estimations will exclude the firms without transition during the panel period and limit the regressions to the 332 certified firms. Therefore, we do not estimate the fixed-effects model in this study. The observations with sales less than NT\$100,000 are omitted from regressions. Nevertheless, we also utilize the whole sample to estimate the coefficients and find no significant changes in estimates.

This study is based on random effects estimations of panel data over 1996-2004. In order to investigate the factors leading a firm to become certified, firms which have adopted ISO 14001 certification at some

previous point in the panel period must be omitted from the regressions. For example, if a firm adopted ISO 14001 certification in 2000, this firm's observations over 2001-2004 would be omitted from the regressions, leaving only the firm's observations over the 1996-2000 period for regressions. Hence, each firm in the sample has at most one observation of ISO 14001 certification. Following this procedure, we have a final sample of 6,692 observations from 982 firms over 1996-2004.

In particular, we obtain the list of ISO 14001-certified firms from the Taiwan Environmental Management Association. Since this study empirically examines various factors leading Taiwanese manufacturers to obtain ISO 14001 certification, several sources of published data have been used to measure these economic and political variables. Firm-specific financial and economic information was primarily gathered from the TEJ Data Bank and also from the Taiwan Stock Outlook published by Wealth Magazine. Information on subsidies for ISO 14001 EMS has been obtained from the websites of the Chinese National Accreditation Board (The Chinese National Accreditation Board has been transformed into the Taiwan Accreditation Foundation since 2004.), Taiwan Environmental Management Association, Bureau of Standards, Metrology and Inspection of Ministry of Economic Affairs (MOEA) and the Foundation of Taiwanese Industry Service. Meanwhile, the information of firms located in HSIP is obtained from the Administration of the Hsinchu Scientific Industrial Park. Moreover, the Central Election Committee provided the names and political affiliations of elected magistrates/mayors; while the Ministry of Interior web



site was the source for information on the regional administrative jurisdictions of elected magistrates/mayors.

### 3.3 Variable Measurement

The dependent variable in this study is the binary variable, ISO certification, which represents whether a firm becomes ISO certified or not. ISO certification is based on the unit of plants or sites instead of a firm. Given that only firm-level instead of plant-level information is available, ISO certification is coded 1 for firms adopting ISO 14001 certification for at least one plant or site, and 0 otherwise. Among the 332 certified firms in the sample, only 20 firms have adopted ISO 14001 certification for more than one plant or site. Therefore, we do not distinguish the firms with more than one plant or site from those with only one plant or site in the regressions.

For each of the sample firms, firm-specific variables are defined below. Export ratio represents the percentage contribution of exports to total sales revenue. However, the pressure from multinational customers may vary with destination markets. To account for this variation, this study classifies the destination markets into two groups, one with a higher environmental standard for imports while the other has a lower standard. Although no unique criterion was used for the categorization, developed countries are generally believed to require a higher environmental standard for production activities. The EU, Japan and the U.S thus comprise the higher standard group. This study then weights each firm's export ratio by using the ratio of exports in the

firm's industry accounted for by the higher standard group. This study calculates these ratios for each industry utilizing the trade statistics from the governments.

The dummy variable DPP governor indicates the party affiliation of local governors, and is coded as 1 if the county magistrate or city mayor for the jurisdiction where the firm's certified sites or main sites are located is a member of the DPP, and 0 if they are a member of some other political party. Furthermore, Subsidy, a binary dummy variable, is coded 1 for certified firms that received government subsidies to offset the costs of implementing ISO 14001, and 0 otherwise. The government reduced the maximum amount of subsidy to ISO 14001 certification from a previous amount of US\$16,000 to \$6,000 since 2001. This exogenous policy change provides a natural experiment for investigating whether the government's smaller subsidy would reduce a firm's decision to become ISO certified. Therefore, we include in the regressions the variable of Subsidy since 2001, which equals 1 if a firm received any subsidies over 2001-2004.

Asset denotes the logarithm of a firm's assets and is used as a proxy for firm size. Firm profitability, Profitability, is calculated as the ratio of firm before-tax profits to total sales revenue for the current year. Previous studies have used an averaged measure to account for the volatility in profitability from year to year (Chu et al., 2005). Hence, this study also presents the estimation results based on a 4-year average profitability. To assess whether the estimates are affected by different measures of profitability, this study also utilizes return on asset and return on equity to estimate the effect of profit on

ISO 14001 adoption. Returns on assets are based only on current year data. Meanwhile, firm financial structure, Debt ratio, represents the ratio of current debts to total assets. Additionally, R&D, a proxy for relative size of firm knowledge capital, is calculated as firm R&D expenditure divided by total sales revenue. HSIP is a dummy variable used to indicate whether a firm is located in the Hsinchu Science-based Industrial Park (HSIP). HSIP is coded 1 if the firm is located in the HSIP, and 0 otherwise.

The regressions also include various control variables. This study investigates whether firms with different durations may have different likelihoods of implementing ISO 14001 EMS. Firm age is defined as the number of years between its establishment and 2004. Urban-rural disparity and income inequality exist among geographical regions and thus residents' demand for environmental standards may vary. Therefore, it is necessary to control for possible effects owing to firms' location in urban or county areas. Urban represents a binary dummy and is coded 1 if the firm's main sites are located in any one of the seven urban areas in Taiwan (Taipei-Keelung, Kaohsiung, Taichung-Changhua, Jhongli-Taoyuan, Tainan, Hsinchu and Chiayi), and 0 otherwise.

Industrial pollution characteristics influence the propensity of companies to seek ISO 14001 certification. Firms in highly polluting industries or those with older technologies frequently are involved in a constant battle to reduce emissions incrementally to match increasingly stringent environmental regulations (Bansal, 2002). ISO 14001 certification should provide firms increased latitude to deal with regulators. Because the plastics industry is

generally believed to be one of the most polluted industries, it serves as the baseline industry in this study and dummies for the other 12 industries are included to control for the industry effects in the estimations. Additionally, we also include year dummies in the regressions to control for the year effects.

Table 3 lists the summary statistics for the final sample of 6,692 observations (see Appendix 1) from 982 firms and the subsample of certified firms. As noted above, among the sample of 982 firms, 332 firms have obtained ISO 14001 certification, comprising 5% of the total observations.

Table 3 indicates that the average export ratio is 0.427. This high export ratio supports the observation that the output of Taiwan is heavily export-oriented. To explain varying pressure from customers in different destination countries, this study categorizes export destinations into two groups, among which the EU, Japan and the US represent the countries requiring higher environmental standards for imports. The average weighted ratio of exports to the EU, Japan and the US equals 0.170. The firms located in the jurisdiction of DPP local governors and receiving subsidies for ISO 14001 certification comprise 61.9% and 1% of the total observations.

The average ratio of before-tax profit to sales equals 0.026 while the average ratio of return on asset and the average ratio of return on equity equal 0.1 and 0.096. The four-year average ratio of profit to sales equals 0.014, which is below the profitability for the current year and indicates that firms made smaller profits or incurred losses in the earlier years of the panel period.

The average values of debt ratio and R&D ratio equal 0.407 and 0.046, respectively. The mean value of R&D ratio equals 0.046 and suggests that most Taiwanese firms allocated limited budgets to R&D. The average length of firm establishment is 23 years. Most of the sampled firms' factories are located in urban areas while most of the sampled firms are in the electronics industry.

The certified firms generally have higher mean values of weighted export, asset, and age than other observations. Compared to The whole sample, they also have higher percentages of firms receiving subsidy, and located in HSIP. A high ratio of certified firms became certified in 2003. In contrast, the percentages of certified firms located in jurisdictions of DPP governors and urban areas are lower than the other observations. It is also noteworthy that the four-year average ratio of profit to sale is negative for the certified firms and its variation is quite large.

Table 3: Descriptive statistics

Variables	The whole sample				The certified firms			
	Mean	S.D.	Min.	Max.	Mean	S.D.	Min.	Max.
<b>Binary dependent</b>								
ISO certification	0.050	0.217	0	1	1	0	1	1
<b>Explanatory variables</b>								
Export ratio	0.427	0.334	0	1	0.526	0.316	0	1
Weighted export ratio	0.170	0.147	0	0.68	0.198	0.136	0	0.51
DPP governor	0.619	0.486	0	1	0.572	0.495	0	1
Subsidy	0.010	0.100	0	1	0.184	0.338	0	1
Subsidy since 2001	0.006	0.078	0	1	0.111	0.315	0	1
Asset (in logarithm)	14.412	1.306	9.14	19.99	15.441	1.343	12.55	19.61
<b>Profitability</b>								
Current year ratio of profit to sales	0.026	0.463	-9.66	4.12	0.044	0.366	-5.87	0.48
4-year averaged ratio of profit to sales	0.014	0.376	-4.97	2.55	0.048	0.191	-1.68	0.48
Current year return on asset	0.100	0.120	-1.16	1.15	0.098	0.103	-0.53	0.45
Current year return on equity	0.096	0.302	-8.88	1.64	0.090	0.181	-1.12	0.61
Debt ratio	0.407	0.170	0	1.08	0.407	0.141	0.04	0.88
R&D	0.046	0.232	0	9.90	0.047	0.328	0	5.97
HSIP (Science Park)	0.091	0.287	0	1	0.123	0.330	0	1
<b>Control variables</b>								
Age (years)	22.854	12.177	1	65	28.849	13.903	2	65
Urban	0.816	0.387	0	1	0.792	0.406	0	1
<b>Industry dummies</b>								
Cement	0.008	0.091	0	1	0.006	0.077	0	1
Food	0.024	0.154	0	1	0.009	0.095	0	1
Plastics	0.033	0.179	0	1	0.039	0.194	0	1
Textiles	0.071	0.259	0	1	0.060	0.238	0	1
Machinery	0.063	0.243	0	1	0.081	0.274	0	1
Electrical appliance	0.015	0.121	0	1	0.024	0.153	0	1
Chemical	0.079	0.269	0	1	0.045	0.208	0	1
Glass & Ceramics	0.007	0.084	0	1	0.009	0.095	0	1
Paper & Pulp	0.006	0.077	0	1	0.012	0.109	0	1
Metals	0.037	0.188	0	1	0.051	0.221	0	1

Rubber	0.010	0.101	0	1	0.024	0.154	0	1
Automobile	0.003	0.052	0	1	0.015	0.485	0	1
Electronics	0.644	0.479	0	1	0.623	0.485	0	1
<i>Year effect</i>								
1996	0.085	0.279	0	1	0.042	0.201	0	1
1997	0.098	0.298	0	1	0.054	0.227	0	1
1998	0.112	0.315	0	1	0.102	0.304	0	1
1999	0.118	0.322	0	1	0.087	0.283	0	1
2000	0.122	0.327	0	1	0.060	0.238	0	1
2001	0.124	0.329	0	1	0.105	0.308	0	1
2002	0.123	0.328	0	1	0.102	0.304	0	1
2003	0.119	0.324	0	1	0.398	0.490	0	1
2004	0.099	0.299	0	1	0.048	0.214	0	1
Observations	6,692				332			

Notes:

1. A firm's weighted export ratio is obtained by weighting the firm's export ratio by the share of its industry products exported to the EU, Japan and the US.
2. The statistics for a 4-year averaged ratio of profit to sales are based on a subsample of 6,627 observations after observations with larger losses are excluded.



We also provide the summary statistics for each of the six industries with observations more than 200 in Table 4. Table 4 shows that the percentages of certified firms are similar among the six reported industries. The machinery industry and the electronics industry have higher ratios of export while the chemical industry exports a smaller proportion of its products. A higher percentage of firms in the machinery industry receive government subsidy. The firms in the chemical industry and the metals industry adopted ISO 14001 certification in the earlier years of the panel period while the firms in the plastics industry adopted it in the later years of the panel period. Since the HSIP was established to encourage high-tech firms' investment, only firms in the chemical industry and the electronics industry are located in the HSIP. Moreover, the firms in the industry have a shorter period of establishment than those in other industries.





Table 4: Descriptive statistics by industry

Variables	The plastics industry				The textile industry			
	Mean	S.D.	Min.	Max.	Mean	S.D.	Min.	Max.
Binary dependent								
ISO certification	0.058	0.235	0	1	0.042	0.201	0	1
Explanatory variables								
Export ratio	0.324	0.242	0	0.94	0.412	0.287	0	1
Weighted export ratio	0.091	0.067	0	0.28	0.105	0.074	0	0.27
DPP governor	0.700	0.459	0	1	0.557	0.497	0	1
Subsidy	0.009	0.094	0	1	0.008	0.092	0	1
Subsidy since 2001	0.009	0.094	0	1	0.004	0.065	0	1
Asset (in logarithm)	14.91	1.504	12.58	19.61	14.92	1.060	12.44	18.16
Profitability								
Current year ratio of	0.037	0.215	-2.47	0.47	-0.012	0.194	-1.68	-/41
4-year averaged ratio	0.043	0.148	-0.99	0.46	0.004	0.136	-0.93	0.35
Current year return	0.077	0.064	-0.17	0.26	0.056	0.075	-0.24	0.31
Current year return	0.053	0.144	-1.48	0.32	0.014	0.146	-0.67	0.42
Debt ratio	0.367	0.149	0.09	0.90	0.411	0.169	0.08	0.88
R&D	0.007	0.011	0	0.06	0.004	0.006	0	0.03
HSIP (Science Park)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Control variables								
Age (years)	30.38	9.896	12	61	31.25	9.842	13	61
Urban	0.663	0.474	0	1	0.667	0.472	0	1
Observations	223				474			
Variables	The machinery industry				The chemical industry			
	Mean	S.D.	Min.	Max.	Mean	S.D.	Min.	Max.
Binary dependent								
ISO certification	0.064	0.245	0	1	0.029	0.167	0	1
Explanatory variables								
Export ratio	0.510	0.345	0	1	0.274	0.303	0	1
Weighted export ratio	0.280	0.192	0	0.68	0.048	0.053	0	0.20
DPP governor	0.569	0.496	0	1	0.612	0.488	0	1
Subsidy	0.026	0.159	0	1	0.006	0.075	0	1
Subsidy since 2001	0.024	0.152	0	1	0	0	0	0
Asset (in logarithm)	14.36	0.842	12.29	17.26	14.12	0.012	0.11	0.18
Profitability								
Current year ratio of	0.073	0.130	-1.10	0.47	0.010	0.661	-8.73	2.15
4-year averaged ratio	0.074	0.096	-0.38	0.37	0.012	0.443	-4.20	1.15

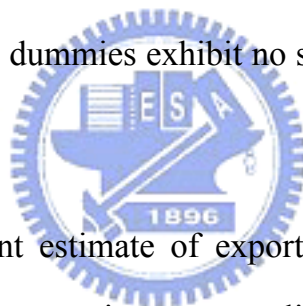
Current year return	0.106	0.087	-0.30	0.58	0.097	0.101	-0.58	0.61
Current year return	0.106	0.124	-0.53	0.68	0.052	0.702	-8.88	1.18
Debt ratio	0.451	0.143	0.09	0.84	0.379	0.178	0.02	1.08
R&D	0.022	0.017	0	0.12	0.064	0.393	0	7.80
HSIP (Science Park)	0	0	0	0	0.036	0.187	0	1
Control variables								
Age (years)	27.31	10.17	7	60	29.94	14.00	4	61
Urban	0.718	0.451	0	1	0.643	0.480	0	1
Observations	422				526			
	The metals industry				The electronics industry			
Binary dependent								
ISO certification	0.069	0.254	0	1	0.048	0.214	0	1
Explanatory variables								
Export ratio	0.293	0.295	0	0.99	0.483	0.334	0	1
Weighted export ratio	0.131	0.134	0	0.49	0.199	0.143	0	0.50
DPP governor	0.772	0.420	0	1	0.626	0.484	0	1
Subsidy	0.008	0.090	0	1	0.008	0.091	0	1
Subsidy since 2001	0	0	0	0	0.006	0.077	0	1
Asset (in logarithm)	15.22	1.117	12.4	19.12	14.19	1.301	9.14	19.99
Profitability								
Current year ratio of	0.008	0.137	-1.20	0.36	0.031	0.501	-9.66	4.12
4-year averaged ratio	0.003	0.085	-0.57	0.20	0.008	0.431	-4.97	2.55
Current year return	0.064	0.068	-0.27	0.32	0.114	0.134	-1.16	1.15
Current year return	0.039	0.127	-0.49	0.48	0.124	0.264	-8.88	1.64
Debt ratio	0.513	0.134	0.12	0.79	0.402	0.174	0.02	1.04
R&D	0.002	0.005	0	0.03	0.060	0.253	0	9.90
HSIP (Science Park)	0	0	0	0	0.135	0.342	0	1
Control variables								
Age (years)	29.00	9.422	8	45	17.99	9.337	1	65
Urban	0.622	0.486	0	1	0.910	0.286	0	1
Observations	246				4,308			

Notes:

1. To save space, we report the summary statistics for only the industries with more than 200 observations.
2. A firm's weighted export ratios is obtained by weighting the firm's export ratio by the share of its industry products exported to the EU, Japan and the US.

### 3.4 Results and Discussion

Table 5 lists the estimates from the random effects probit model. The estimates in columns (1)-(4) are from regressions utilizing different measures of profitability, namely ratio of profit to sales, four-year averaged ratio of profit to sales, return on asset and return on equity. The estimates in column (5) are from a regression based on the observations for the electronics industry. Table 5 indicates that ISO 14001 certification is significantly correlated to export ratio, subsidy, firm size, R&D, and location in HSIP. Moreover, age and location in urban areas are found to influence a firm's decision to adopt ISO 14001 certification. In contrast, profitability, debt and most of the industry dummies exhibit no statistically significant correlation in the probit equation.



The coefficient estimate of export ratio supports the hypothesis that firms with higher export ratios are more likely to seek ISO 14001 certification than those with lower ones. Firms do not spend less in environmental protection to reduce production costs when facing competition in foreign markets. This result implies that ISO 14001 is consistent with corporate internationalization strategies, supporting the objective of facilitating international trade (Bansal and Hunter, 2003). Furthermore, this finding also coincides with the evidence suggesting that export-oriented firms bear a heavy load in relation to supply chain greening from multinational customers (Christmann and Taylor, 2001). Previous studies also reveal that trade facilitation is a key factor for firms' adoption of ISO 14001 in China and Hong Kong (Cushing et al., 2005; Chan and Li, 2001). Firms need to fulfill

environmental concern from foreign consumers if they want to raise their shares of sales in foreign markets. Consequently, exporting to countries with higher environmental standards can improve domestic environmental quality through firms' environmental self-governance.

Firms' environmental management decisions could be influenced by institutional pressures on firm environmental responsiveness. The coefficient estimates of local governors' party affiliation are insignificant and thus do not support the statement that local DPP governors exert larger pressure on firms regarding the adoption of ISO 14001 certification. Previous studies on environmental federalism suggest that local governments may improve environmental quality in response to public concerns and local governments may thus set different environmental standards for business investment. However, the evidence from Taiwan reveals that local political competition does not affect firm decision on ISO 14001 certification. ISO 14001 is not a performance-oriented standard and focuses on management processes rather than specific environmental outcomes. Therefore, it is possible that local governments use environmental policies of standards and regulations instead of firm self-governance to fulfill different environmental requirements.

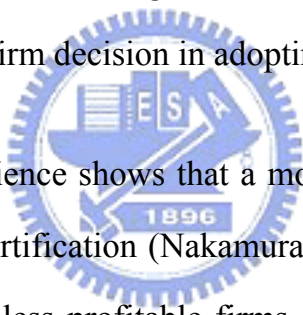
The coefficient estimates of government subsidy are positive, thus indicating that a firm's ISO 14001 certification and government subsidies are highly correlated. A firm receives government subsidy to its preparation for ISO certification usually because the firm has decided to acquire ISO 14001 certification. Therefore, the estimates are biased upward by the endogeneity of government subsidy and may exaggerate the actual impact of government

subsidies. The maximum amount of subsidy was reduced from US\$16,000 to US\$6,000 since 2001. We utilize this exogenous policy change to investigate whether a decline in subsidy will reduce a firm's incentive to obtain ISO 14001 certification. We include the interactive term of subsidy and the period over 2001-2004 to estimate this incentive effect on firm decision to adopt ISO 14001 certification. Although the estimates are negative, they are not statistically significant. Overall, our study does not provide strong evidence to support the argument that government subsidies can increase the firms' incentive to become ISO 14001 certified owing to the endogeneity problem.

As noted above, firms can apply for subsidies to cover the cost of preparing ISO certification, up to a maximum of US\$16,000 per case over 1996-2000 and up to a maximum of US\$6,000 per case since 2001. Therefore, government subsidies can provide a significant positive incentive for Taiwanese firms to seek ISO 14001 certification, possibly by reducing the costs for the certification and the uncertainty of benefits from with the certification. If firms registering with ISO 14001 reduce environmental hazards from their production or products, it could be beneficial to society for governments to subsidize firm ISO 14001 preparation although it costs tax revenues.

The results also indicate that firms with larger facilities are more likely to seek ISO 14001 certification than those with smaller facilities. Christmann and Taylor (2001) and Chan and Li (2001) also find that a firm's likelihood of adopting ISO 14001 certification increases with its size in China and Hong Kong. This finding is likely owing to economies of scale in environmental

protection. Although firms with high profitability and low debt ratios are expected to be more likely to seek ISO 14001 certification than those with low profitability and high debt ratios, the effect of profitability on ISO 14001 certification appears insignificant. Owing to factors such as business cycle, firm decision to adopt ISO 14001 certification primarily depends on its long-term profitability rather than its profitability over a single year. Therefore, the profit rate during a single year may be volatile and may not represent a good proxy for long-term firm profits. This study thus also provides the estimates based on the four-year average ratio of profit to sales. The estimate based on the four-year average profitability suggests that the ratios of profits to sales during the current and previous three years do not significantly affect firm decision in adopting ISO 14001 certification.



Japan's experience shows that a more profitable firm is more likely to adopt ISO 14001 certification (Nakamura et al., 2001). However, Chapple et al. (2001) find that less profitable firms are more likely to seek ISO 14001 than profitable firms in the UK, motivated by the desire to gain a competitive advantage via environmental quality non-price competition. In contrast, this study does not find any significant effect of profits on firm decisions on ISO 14001 certification. The coefficient estimates of debt ratio do not show any statistically negative impact of debt ratios on firms' ISO 14001 certification and are consistent with the evidence from Japanese firms (Nakamura et al., 2001).

Table 5 shows a somewhat positive effect of R&D on ISO 14001 certification. Firms with higher levels of intangible assets such as R&D are

thus found to be more likely to seek ISO 14001 certification than those with lower levels of intangible assets. The finding presented here indicates that Taiwanese firms may seek solutions to broader environmental problems if they value the benefits of product innovation.

The results also show that firms located in the Hsinchu scientific industrial parks (HSIP) are more likely to seek ISO 14001 certification than those located elsewhere. In response to an increasing number of HSIP environmental management issues exposed in the past years, Environmental Management Supervision Committee, including members of academic researchers, government agents, business managers, local community leaders and environmental activists, was established to improve HSIP environmental management. Since institutional pressures that drive regulations, environmental activists, and market demand, subsequently influence firm behavior (Christmann and Taylor, 2001; Fineman and Clark, 1996), high-tech firms in the HSIP consider ISO 14001 standards to be an acceptable legitimacy tool for helping build trust and long-term relationships with a wide range of stakeholders and for deflecting the scrutiny of watchdog agencies and other interested parties. It is also possible that firms located within a short distance such as in the HSIP are more likely to adopt ISO 14001 certification because the spillover and learning effects make these firms understand the benefits and costs of ISO 4001 certification. Chan and Li (2001) indicate that the government can collaborate with the certified firms to promote the ISO 14001 standard by disseminating the information about the areas of concern and the advantages of the ISO 14001 standard.

Regarding other control variables, newly established firms are less likely to adopt ISO 14001 than older counterparts, probably owing to the greater risk of failure associated with newly established firms. Firms located in urban areas are less likely to adopt ISO 14001 certification than firms in the rural areas. Regarding attitudes towards ISO 14001 among firms in different industries, firms in the cement sector and the food sector are less likely to adopt ISO 14001 certification than firms in the plastics industry. Additionally, firms in the electronics industry are more likely to adopt ISO 14001 certification. Cushing et al. (2005) indicate that the industry of electronics and communications accounts for the majority of certifications in China. Finally, we also find that a firm's likelihood to adopt ISO 14001 certification varies substantially over years. Especially, many more firms adopted ISO 14001 certification in 2003 than in other years. A possible reason is that two regulations, Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment and Restriction of Hazardous Substances, took effect in the European Union since 2003.



Table 5: Results of the random effects probit regressions

Variables	Current-year ratio of profit to sale		4-year averaged ratio of profit to sale		Current-year return on asset (ROA)		Current-year return on equity (ROE)		Current-year ratio of profit to sale -- the electronics industry (5)	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
	Estimate	t-values	Estimate	t-values	Estimate	t-values	Estimate	t-value	Estimate	t-values
<b>Main variables</b>										
Weighted export	0.007**	2.12	0.008**	2.30	0.007**	2.05	0.008**	2.12	0.012	2.77
DPP governor	-0.012	-0.13	-0.019	-0.22	-0.011	-0.13	-0.014	-0.15	-0.157	-1.33
Subsidy	3.752***	6.49	3.693***	6.69	3.718***	6.44	3.833***	6.28	2.717	4.35
Subsidy since 2001	-0.509	-0.89	-0.508	-0.90	-0.495	-0.87	-0.532	-0.91	0.719	0.98
Asset (in logarithm)	0.315***	4.47	0.305***	4.64	0.311***	4.44	0.328***	4.28	0.292	3.76
Profitability	0.000	0.25	-0.001	-1.27	0.002	0.60	-0.001	-0.45	-0.000	-0.13
Debt ratio	-0.004	-1.21	-0.004	-1.41	-0.003	-1.12	-0.004	-1.38	-0.001	-0.40
R&D	0.261	1.44	0.155	1.14	0.240**	1.97	0.222*	1.77	0.232	1.25
HSIP (Science Park)	0.286*	1.91	0.237*	1.66	0.291**	1.97	0.286*	1.83	0.340	2.16
<b>Control variables</b>										
Age (years)	0.040***	4.57	0.039***	4.80	0.040***	4.60	0.041***	4.39	0.048	4.00
Urban	-0.181	-1.52	-0.152	-1.34	-0.176	-1.49	-0.188	-1.52	-0.430**	-2.37
<b>Industry dummies</b>										
Cement	-0.933*	-1.72	-0.872*	-1.67	-0.922*	-1.72	-0.964*	-1.71		
Food	-0.945**	-2.14	-0.910**	-2.15	-0.932**	-2.13	-0.971**	-2.11		
Textiles	-0.216	-0.77	-0.216	-0.80	-0.210	-0.76	-0.232	-0.80		
Machinery	0.183	0.64	0.177	0.64	0.176	0.62	0.196	0.66		

Electrical appliance	0.103	0.28	0.091	0.26	0.103	0.29	0.111	0.29		
Chemical	-0.292	-1.01	-0.280	-1.01	-0.294	-1.04	-0.288	-0.97		
Glass & Ceramics	-0.683	-1.06	-0.684	-1.10	-0.672	-1.06	-0.726	-1.09		
Paper & Pulp	-0.878	-1.48	-0.854	-1.49	-0.862	-1.46	-0.908	-1.47		
Metals	0.297	0.99	0.286	0.99	0.290	0.97	0.312	1.00		
Rubber	-0.065	-0.16	-0.058	-0.15	-0.059	-0.15	-0.064	-0.16		
Automobile	0.384	0.73	0.389	0.76	0.384	0.73	0.428	0.77		
Electronics	0.434*	1.70	0.414*	1.70	0.422*	1.68	0.454*	1.71		
<i>Year effect</i>										
1997	0.239	0.98	0.218	0.92	0.236	0.98	0.250	1.00	0.005	0.02
1998	0.852***	3.13	0.816***	3.14	0.849***	3.15	0.874***	3.07	0.863***	2.60
1999	0.799***	2.67	0.739***	2.62	0.792***	2.68	0.828***	2.63	0.669*	1.89
2000	0.517*	1.68	0.480*	1.66	0.507*	1.67	0.550*	1.70	0.612*	1.67
2001	1.009***	2.99	0.961***	3.03	1.001***	3.00	1.043***	2.92	1.018**	2.53
2002	0.999***	2.81	0.948***	2.86	0.988***	2.81	1.041***	2.75	1.067***	2.59
2003	2.025***	4.70	1.963***	4.91	2.005***	4.70	2.089***	4.50	2.036***	4.12
2004	0.932**	2.21	0.874**	2.24	0.912**	2.19	0.989**	2.19	1.089**	2.22
Constant	-8.807***	-5.39	-8.545***	-5.65	-8.737***	-5.41	-9.064***	-5.12	-9.089***	-4.74
$\sigma_u$	0.611(0.264)		0.561(0.253)		0.592(0.268)		0.661(0.279)		0.581(0.302)	
$\rho$	0.272(0.171)		0.239(0.164)		0.260(0.174)		0.304(0.178)		0.252(0.196)	
Log-likelihood	-920.50		-916.11		-920.04		-920.11		-584.41	
Observations	6692		6627		6654		6654		4308	

#### Notes

1. The measures of profitability utilized for the estimates in columns (1), (2), (3) and (4) are current year ratio of profit to sale, 4-year averaged ratio of profit to sale, current year returns on asset and current year returns on equity, respectively. The estimates in column (5) are based on

- only the firms in the electronics industry.
2. The symbols \*\*\*, \*\*, and \* represent statistical significance at the level of 1%, 5% and 10%, respectively.



## 4. ASSESSMENT OF ISO14001 EMS IN FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

### 4.1 Research Methodology

#### 4.1.1 Measurement Indicators and Methods

This study seeks to first understand the current situation of ISO 14001 certification for Taiwanese businesses and to shore up parameters used by academia to assess performance. Regarding indicators for measuring financial performance, the formulas and implications listed in Table 6 differ from traditional analyses of financial statements and public manuals that classify financial ratios as financial structure, the ability to pay off debt, operational ability, profitability, and growth, in that traditional analyses and public manuals are not entirely appropriate for this study. Additionally, this study uses number of employees, total capital, and operating quota as indicators to measure enterprise size and to assign the firm to a certain industry category.

In the research methodology section, this study attempts to use static measurements (ROE, ROA, P/E ratio, rate of gross profit) and dynamic measurements (revenue growth rates) to perform t Test (when parameters are normally distributed), or to use the Wilcoxon nonparametric test in order to perform the analyses.

Table 6: Measurement index of financial performance

Index	Formula	Description
Net Income Rate	Net Income Rate = Annual Net Income / Annual Net Sales	To avoid any confusion created by the size of an enterprise in determining its profitability, the annual net income divided by the net sales formula is used
Return on Assets, ROA	$ROA_1 = \{ \text{Normal operating profit} + \text{Interest expenses} \} / \text{Average total assets}$	Reflects the average total ROA
	$ROA_2 = \{ \text{Normal operating profit} + \text{Interest expenses} \} / \text{Average total assets}$	
Return on Equity, ROE	$ROE = \text{Income before extraordinary items} / \text{Average shareholder equity}$	Reflects the average ROE for general shareholder
P/E ratio	$P/E \text{ ratio} = \text{Market prices per share} / \text{Earnings per share, EPS}$	Used to express investors' response to the profitability of the enterprise, also indicates the effects that pollution produced by the enterprise on stock value

Source: Organized by this investigation

#### 4.1.2 Research Object

From 1996 to 2004, Taiwan had 1,445 ISO 14001-certified enterprises (see Appendix 2), including a wide range of enterprise types and sizes. For example, Chinese Petroleum Corp. and Formosa Plastics Corp. have 30 and 9 certified facility levels, respectively. Because this study is focused on the “firm level” rather than the “facility level,” all enterprises with at least one ISO 14001-certified facility level have been included in the analysis. This work performs a business

performance analysis of 982 listed companies, 332 of which are certified while 650 are not. These companies cover 13 industries: cement, food, plastics, textiles, electric machinery, electric appliances and cables, chemical, glass and ceramics, paper, metals, rubber, automobile, and electronics.

This investigation uses relevant open source data to determine financial and economic parameters. The data were obtained from TEJ Data Bank, the Market Observation Post System, informational websites, the Safety, Health and Environment Today (SHE) website of the Industrial Development Bureau of the Ministry of Economic Affairs (see Table 7), and so on.

Table 7: Sources for important parameters in this investigation

Parameter	Data Source
ISO14001 Certificate	Industrial EP Information Website, Industrial Development Bureau, MOEA( <a href="http://she.moeaidb.gov.tw/trend.asp">http://she.moeaidb.gov.tw/trend.asp</a> )
Net Profit	1.Public Information ( <a href="http://newmops.tse.com.tw/">http://newmops.tse.com.tw/</a> ) 2.TEJ Data Bank
ROA	
ROE	
P/E Ratio	
Year of Establishment	
Scope	
Productivity	

### 4.1.3 Research Hypothesis

Jiang and Bansal (2003) believed that ISO 14001 certification is simply a procedural, legal distinction that has no real bearing on enterprise performance. Consequently, this investigation devises the following hypotheses for determining whether ISO 14001 certification has any bearing on business profitability, productivity, R&D capabilities, and overall nature.

H1: Certified and uncertified enterprises do not differ significantly in terms of their overall nature ( namely, age)

H2: Certified and uncertified enterprises do not differ significantly in terms of size ( namely, number of employees, total capital and gross revenue)

H3: Certified and uncertified enterprises do not differ significantly in terms of their profitability ( namely, business growth, profit margin, ROA, ROE and P/E ratio)

H4: Certified and uncertified enterprises do not differ significantly in terms of their productivity ( namely, operating revenue per employee)

## 4.2 Findings

### 4.2.1 Empirical Findings

This investigation analyzed the efficiency of ISO 14001 certified and

uncertified enterprises using a sample of 982 listed enterprises in 2004. Of those, 332 enterprises were certified, representing 33.8% of the total, while 650 enterprises were uncertified. Of the 332 certified enterprises, 62.3% (or 207 enterprises) belonged to the electronics industry, with 12.3% (or 41 enterprises) located in the Hsinchu Science Park. Table 8 below lists basic statistics.

Table 8: Basic analysis of ISO 14001-certified and uncertified enterprises

Item		W/O ISO14001 Certification	W/ ISO14001 Certification	Pearson Square
Year of Establishment	before 1970	90	105	165.445***
	1971-1990	327	190	
	after 1990	233	37	
Industry Type	Eletronics Industries	441	207	56.3***
	Others	209	125	
Scope of Enterprise--no. of Employees	less than 300 employees	415	93	771.005***
	300-1000 employees	180	127	
	1001-3000 employees	43	72	
	more than 3000	12	40	
Scope of Enterprise--gross revenue	less than 1 billion	259	64	92.679***
	1-5 billion	287	138	
	5-10billion	61	39	
	more than 10 billion	43	91	

Source: Organized by this investigation

In the test (t Test) of the differences in averages and analysis of variances, the observed values of different groups should not accord with the normality (normal distribution) hypothesis, and the sample variance should exhibit homogenous



variance. In undergoing the Kolmogorov-Smirnov normal distribution test, none of the parameters studied in investigation accorded with the normality hypothesis. Thus, a nonparametric test has been performed to test relevant differences.

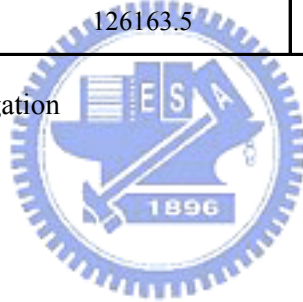
From Table 9, certified and uncertified enterprises differ significantly in terms of how old they are. Moreover, certified and uncertified enterprises also differ markedly in terms of total amount of capital, gross revenue, and number of employees. However certified and uncertified enterprises do not differ significantly in terms of profitability and productivity.



Table 9: Analysis of Nonparametric Test of ISO 14001-certified and uncertified enterprises

Facet	Item	Mann-Whitney U Statistic	Wilcoxon W Statistic	Significance
Company Features	Company Age	80675	148940	0.000***
Company Scope	Total Assets	80649	330220	0.000***
	Net Income	90732	340303	0.000***
	No. of Employees	63550	306803	0.000***
Profitability	Net Income Rate	128305.5	377876.5	0.686
	ROA	121891.5	367241.5	0.130
	ROE	126684.5	194949.5	0.483
	P/E Ratio	123261.5	372832.5	0.145
	Growth Rate	122861	191126	0.135
Productivity	Revenue per Person	126163.5	194428.5	0.462

Source: Organized by this investigation



#### 4.2.2 Evidence-based Discussion

Estimates of enterprise ages do not support the projections of Hypothesis 1; the evidence presented here indicates that older companies are more likely to seek ISO 14001 certification than younger companies. Hypothesis 2 indicates that firm size (in terms of number of employees, total capital, and gross revenue) does not influence whether that company will implement the ISO 14001 environmental management system and seek to become certified; this hypothesis has been overturned by estimate values listed in Table 9. The implications of what has been discovered from applying Hypotheses 1 and 2 in terms of how enterprise age and size influence environmental policymaking are as follows: Because older or larger enterprises always have considerable liabilities, they are more willing to actively adopt certain measures to ensure their power and health. Additionally, such enterprises have more resources (manpower and material and financial resources), technical capability, wherewithal, and motivation than small to medium-sized enterprises and thus are better positioned to achieve sustainable development. Finally, enterprises must devote considerable resources to establishing and maintaining the ISO 14001 environmental management system to upgrade their environmental performance and achieve sustainable development. Additionally, Hartman, Huq, and Wheeler (1997) have observed that enterprise size influences its environmental performance; owing to the benefits of pollution prevention equipment depending on enterprise scope and size, with large enterprises being more likely to seek to become ISO 14001-certified.

Hypothesis 3 predicts that certification will not influence enterprise profitability (in terms of sales growth rates, profit margins, ROA, ROE, and P/E ratio). Moreover, hypothesis 4 illustrates that certification does not influence productivity (in terms of operating revenue per employee). These two hypotheses are supported by the statistics in Table 9. The implications of the results of applying Hypotheses 3 and 4 in terms of how profitability and productivity are influenced when enterprises engage in environmental managing are as follows: First, Taiwanese industry is an important link in the global supply chain. Additionally, the main customers of Taiwanese enterprises are from Japan, Europe, and North America, and are especially focused on environmental issues. Because Taiwanese industry is facing direct pressure from competitive organizations in developed countries (such as, supply chain pressure generated from Dell, SONY, HP, IBM and Ford), seeking ISO14001 certification has become a priority for Taiwanese industries. ISO 14001 certification represents a “green passport” ensuring that Taiwanese firms can continue to export to European and North American markets, and failure to possess such certification can translate into a loss of business opportunities for domestic businesses (Basnal and Bognor, 2002). Once the influence of organizational pressure on legal structures, environmental conservation groups, and market demand grows, export-oriented industries like those of Taiwan will increasingly bear the pressure of the global greening supply chain, and will view the ISO 14001 standard as an acceptable legitimacy tool. ISO 14001 can assist Taiwanese businesses in communicating with various competitive global organizations, and gaining international trust and fostering long-term partnerships (Jiang and Bansal, 2003), thus increasing the legitimacy of exchanges (Suchman, 1995). Finally, ISO 14001 certification of Taiwanese businesses contributes to achieving a long term profit and is unlikely to produce

gains in less than a year. Accordingly, annual profit margins are unlikely to be good indicators of firm long-term profits. Because of the instability of annual profit margins, this is unlikely to discernibly affect policy decisions to achieve ISO 14001 certification.



## 5. CONCLUSIONS

### 5.1 Conclusion and Contribution

#### 5.1.1 Determinants of A Firm's ISO 14001 Certification

International voluntary environmental initiatives such as the ISO 14001 standards have emerged as an important strategy for firm environmental self-governance. Globalization has increased the institutional and customer pressures that force firms to exceed local requirements. Taiwanese firms, which play a vital role in the global supply chain, face constantly increasing pressure from both domestic and global stakeholders to be more environmentally responsible. Moreover, Taiwan has experienced gradual democratization over the past decade and determining the appropriate role of various governments in the setting of environmental standards has been a key issue on the political agenda for Taiwan.

Despite firm responses to environmental issues being an important aspect of environmental management, rare empirical studies have analyzed the responses of Taiwanese manufacturing firms to ISO 14001. This research investigates the determinants of Taiwanese firms' decisions to voluntarily adopt environmental standards, and thus can provide implications regarding future environmental protection. Export-oriented Taiwanese firms, which face supply chain pressure from multinational firms, are found to be more likely than domestic-focused firms to adopt ISO 14001. However, the party affiliation of local governors is not found to affect the firms' decision on the adoption of ISO 14001 certification in Taiwan

though competition among local governments can force local policymakers to respond to the concerns of constituents.

Although this study finds positive coefficient estimates of government subsidies, the estimates may be exaggerated owing to the endogeneity problem. The estimates also indicate that R&D expenditure positively impacts the decisions of Taiwanese firms to obtain ISO 14001 certification. The analysis presented here also shows that firms' profits and debt ratios, despite influencing environmental management for U.S. firms, are not important for Taiwanese firms in environmental management. Finally, firms located in scientific industrial parks are more likely to obtain ISO 14001 certification than firms located elsewhere.




### 5.1.2 Assessment of ISO14001 EMS in Financial Performance

Enterprises must simultaneously consider their economic growth and environmental conservation in improving their financial and environmental performance. In implementing the ISO 14001 environmental management system, enterprises not only work towards fulfilling their environmental duties, but can also reduce production costs and resource consumption as well as eliminating international trade barriers and doing business in a more “green” fashion. Taking the initiative to become certified is necessary in improving international competitiveness in a world dominated by organizational pressures and market demands. Certification is positively recognized in relation to environmental performance; whether or not certification also significantly influences financial

performance remains uncertain.

The results of this study indicate that among listed Taiwanese companies during 2004, ISO 14001 certification did not influence profitability and productivity. However, regarding overall enterprise nature—for instance, its age—a noticeable difference exists. Simultaneously, a noticeable difference also exists between certified and uncertified enterprises in terms of their size, either in terms of their total amount of capital or gross revenue or their number of employees.

## 5.2 Study Limitations and Future Research



This study examines the factors which influence a firm to implement the ISO 14001 standard and thus provides further insights into the determinants of the managerial responses of Taiwanese firms regarding environmental self-governance. Nevertheless, this is an exploratory study based on a sample of publicly traded manufacturing firms and thus further investigation is needed to understand more about other firms' decisions on the implementation of ISO 14001 certification.

Since this study used a sample from the Taiwanese manufacturing industry, its findings are limited. Differences in the conclusions of scholars obtained in similar studies can be attributed to the industry investigated, the time of the investigation, and the use of source materials. This study analyzed a sample of Taiwanese certified and uncertified enterprises during 2004, and the results herein could be made more complete by blending time sequences, grouping of industry or



peer pressure among members,...etc.. Additionally, since certification increases competitiveness over an extended period, post-certification performance can be assessed by tracking. Simultaneously, the samples were not equal in number (namely, the certified and uncertified samples). A comparative assessment of the performance of comparable samples may yield more abundant results. Future related studies should improve upon these areas.



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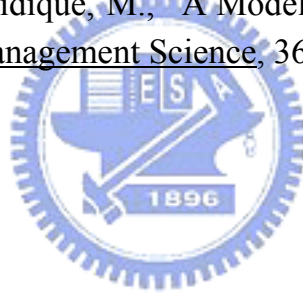
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Appendix 2: ISO14001-certified firms in Taiwan over the period of 1996-2004(partial)

公司名稱	驗證時間	公司名稱	驗證時間	公司名稱	驗證時間	公司名稱	驗證時間	公司名稱	驗證時間	公司名稱	驗證時間	公司名稱	驗證時間
一詮精密工業股份有限公司	90年07月	東友科技股份有限公司觀音廠	88年01月	台灣信越半導體股份有限公司	88年08月	富積電子股份有限公司桃園廠	89年02月	中鋼經業股份有限公司	93年03月	美格科技股份有限公司	88年05月	由鉅建設股份有限公司	88年05月
一詮機工股份有限公司	91年01月	東台機械股份有限公司	92年03月	台灣信越矽利光股份有限公司	92年03月	富耀電子製晶廠	88年08月	中德化學股份有限公司	93年03月	美隆電器廠股份有限公司	93年05月	永仲堂企業股份有限公司	92年05月
九德電子股份有限公司	88年04月	東正光電工業股份有限公司	90年07月	台灣信谷光學股份有限公司	92年03月	富聯企業股份有限公司	87年05月	中聯海福股份有限公司台中廠	90年02月	美隆股份有限公司	88年04月	永昌興業股份有限公司	92年06月
九德電子股份有限公司	92年03月	東貝光電科技股份有限公司	90年12月	台灣保谷鐵線股份有限公司	92年03月	威強科技股份有限公司	90年03月	美隆股份有限公司高雄分公司	87年11月	美隆股份有限公司	90年07月	永昌興業股份有限公司	90年07月
力大螺絲工廠股份有限公司	90年11月	廠	88年12月	台灣保來得股份有限公司	92年03月	復豐股份有限公司	92年03月	廠	91年06月	致美科技股份有限公司	90年05月	致美科技股份有限公司	92年03月
力山工業股份有限公司	92年03月	廠	88年11月	公司	89年04月	惠嘉實業股份有限公司	92年03月	互德科技股份有限公司	91年07月	致泰電子股份有限公司	92年03月	致泰電子股份有限公司	92年11月
力太電子股份有限公司	92年03月	東芝精密股份有限公司	92年04月	台灣威瑞工業(股)香港廠	92年03月	致南科技股份有限公司	92年03月	仁大工業區環保組	89年08月	致勝科技股份有限公司	92年08月	致勝科技股份有限公司	90年08月
力成科技股份有限公司	92年03月	東南水泥股份有限公司	87年12月	廠	92年03月	致隆工業股份有限公司	92年12月	仁大工業區環保組	86年10月	致勝科技股份有限公司	88年11月	致勝科技股份有限公司	92年03月
力信興業股份有限公司	90年04月	東南輪業股份有限公司	92年03月	廠	92年03月	致隆工業股份有限公司	93年01月	仁大工業區環保組	91年07月	致勝科技股份有限公司	91年05月	致勝科技股份有限公司	86年09月
力捷食品有限公司	89年06月	東展興業股份有限公司	87年03月	廠	92年03月	普迪精密工業股份有限公司	87年07月	全國光學工業股份有限公司	92年11月	致勝科技股份有限公司	91年10月	致勝科技股份有限公司	89年12月
力豐半導體股份有限公司	87年05月	東訊股份有限公司	92年01月	台灣省菸酒公賣局南投酒廠	92年03月	普誠科技股份有限公司	91年10月	介明塑膠股份有限公司	92年01月	致勝科技股份有限公司	93年02月	致勝科技股份有限公司	92年03月
力登電腦股份有限公司	92年03月	東瑞工業股份有限公司桃園廠	87年07月	台灣省菸酒公賣局中興啤酒廠	90年12月	鼎達光電股份有限公司	92年01月	元智大學	91年07月	致勝科技股份有限公司	91年06月	致勝科技股份有限公司	88年04月
力聯企業股份有限公司	92年03月	東益志豐電子有限公司	93年11月	台灣省菸酒公賣局內埔菸廠	87年10月	景瑞科技股份有限公司	92年03月	元豐實業股份有限公司	92年05月	致勝科技股份有限公司	92年06月	致勝科技股份有限公司	91年02月
力豐企業化一般	92年01月	東益砂砂半導體有限公司	94年04月	台灣省菸酒公賣局包裝材料工廠	91年07月	智邦科技股份有限公司	91年03月	致勝科技股份有限公司	92年03月	致勝科技股份有限公司	92年03月	致勝科技股份有限公司	92年03月
十泰企業股份有限公司	92年03月	東陽三星工業股份有限公司	92年10月	台灣省菸酒公賣局台中酒廠	92年03月	智基科技開發股份有限公司	93年06月	元豐電子股份有限公司	92年03月	致勝科技股份有限公司(桃園廠)	87年01月	致勝科技股份有限公司	88年12月
文興企業股份有限公司	91年06月	東陽實業股份有限公司	91年08月	台灣省菸酒公賣局台北酒廠	88年06月	智創股份有限公司	90年11月	廠	92年03月	致勝科技股份有限公司台北二廠	88年10月	致勝科技股份有限公司	93年03月
三有有限公司二廠	92年03月	東隆興業股份有限公司-彰化廠	91年07月	台灣省菸酒公賣局竹南製瓶廠	92年03月	朝陽電氣股份有限公司	94年04月	內湖坦坡石化廠	92年03月	致勝科技股份有限公司台北三廠	92年03月	致勝科技股份有限公司	90年10月
三益橡膠股份有限公司	92年03月	東豐股份有限公司	85年11月	東豐股份有限公司	87年09月	植大橡膠實業股份有限公司	92年03月	六和機械股份有限公司	92年01月	致勝科技股份有限公司	92年03月	致勝科技股份有限公司	87年05月
三豐電子股份有限公司	92年03月	東遠企業股份有限公司	86年10月	台灣省菸酒公賣局屏東酒廠	92年03月	鴻力實業股份有限公司	89年10月	北新精密工業股份有限公司	90年12月	致勝科技股份有限公司	92年03月	致勝科技股份有限公司	92年03月
三申機械工業股份有限公司	91年12月	東遠精機股份有限公司	92年11月	台灣省菸酒公賣局埔里酒廠	92年01月	瑞理建設股份有限公司	89年10月	致勝科技股份有限公司	91年01月	致勝科技股份有限公司	89年01月	致勝科技股份有限公司	92年03月
三臣科技股份有限公司	91年02月	東聯化學股份有限公司	92年03月	台灣省菸酒公賣局復興啤酒廠	89年08月	華聯太陽能源工業股份有限公司	92年03月	友旺科技股份有限公司	92年03月	致勝科技股份有限公司	90年11月	致勝科技股份有限公司	89年10月
三林粉末冶金股份有限公司	93年06月	東聯化學股份有限公司	86年04月	台灣省菸酒公賣局鹿田酒廠	92年03月	翔昇電子股份有限公司	90年12月	友信國際股份有限公司	91年03月	致勝科技股份有限公司	91年01月	致勝科技股份有限公司	87年01月
三昇化學工業股份有限公司	91年03月	松川精密股份有限公司	91年09月	台灣省菸酒公賣局嘉義酒廠	92年03月	翔隆實業有限公司	91年01月	致勝科技股份有限公司	85年11月	致勝科技股份有限公司	88年07月	致勝科技股份有限公司	91年04月
三昇五金工業股份有限公司	92年03月	協和工業股份有限公司	89年10月	公司	92年04月	翔昇先進光學股份有限公司	92年12月	致勝科技股份有限公司	90年02月	致勝科技股份有限公司	92年03月	致勝科技股份有限公司	93年03月
三洋全能股份有限公司泰山工廠	90年03月	協榮電腦股份有限公司	87年04月	台灣美加金屬股份有限公司	90年03月	翔隆電腦股份有限公司	86年05月	致勝工業機械	92年08月	致勝科技股份有限公司	92年03月	致勝科技股份有限公司	89年12月
三豐企業股份有限公司	91年01月	南區坦坡石化廠	91年03月	台灣美加金屬股份有限公司	87年07月	菸酒公賣局台北菸廠	92年03月	天下電子股份有限公司	92年03月	致勝科技股份有限公司	88年08月	致勝科技股份有限公司	92年03月
三益制動科技股份有限公司	90年10月	徐銘科技股份有限公司	93年08月	台灣美地電子工業股份有限公司	92年03月	菸酒公賣局成功啤酒廠	92年03月	天助實業股份有限公司	92年03月	致勝科技股份有限公司	90年12月	致勝科技股份有限公司	92年01月
三鼎製鞋股份有限公司	92年03月	欣興電子股份有限公司	92年03月	台灣茂砂電子股份有限公司	87年06月	華上光電股份有限公司	90年03月	廠	88年03月	致勝科技股份有限公司	89年06月	致勝科技股份有限公司	91年07月
三陽工業股份有限公司	87年10月	欣興電子股份有限公司(含江廠)	90年07月	晶圓廠	92年07月	華升電子工業股份有限公司	85年12月	天瑞企業股份有限公司	93年01月	致勝科技股份有限公司	91年08月	致勝科技股份有限公司	90年08月
三陽能源開發股份有限公司	90年11月	遠東企業股份有限公司	92年08月	廠	92年11月	華友材料科技股份有限公司	92年08月	太乙印刷企業有限公司	92年03月	廠	88年06月	致勝科技股份有限公司	92年03月
三華達達工業股份有限公司	90年08月	源分公司	92年03月	廠	86年05月	華宇企業管理顧問股份有限公司	85年11月	太平洋汽門工業股份有限公司	92年07月	廠	91年08月	致勝科技股份有限公司	92年03月
三編化學股份有限公司竹北廠	88年12月	亞亞整飾工業股份有限公司	92年07月	台灣福利通電子工業(中聯廠)	92年03月	華宇金屬有限公司	89年01月	漢工廠	86年12月	致勝實業股份有限公司	87年07月	致勝科技股份有限公司	90年02月
三編化學股份有限公司彰化廠	88年12月	砂成精機電腦股份有限公司	93年01月	司大廠	87年03月	華宇電腦股份有限公司	92年03月	國工廠	86年12月	致勝電腦實業股份有限公司	90年09月	致勝科技股份有限公司	92年03月
三益產業股份有限公司	87年07月	砂品精密工業股份有限公司	92年03月	大園廠	90年08月	華邦電子股份有限公司	93年07月	公司	93年07月	致勝實業股份有限公司	92年08月	致勝科技股份有限公司	92年02月
上欣製晶廠	87年06月	分公司	91年07月	台灣省益補股份有限公司	90年06月	華亞電子股份有限公司	92年04月	太平洋新科技股份有限公司	88年10月	致勝科技股份有限公司	92年03月	致勝科技股份有限公司	89年03月
上河/吳河工業股份有限公司	91年07月	砂統半導體股份有限公司	93年04月	台灣神戶電池股份有限公司	90年03月	華美先進電子股份有限公司	89年10月	天理有限公司	87年11月	致勝科技股份有限公司	91年06月	致勝科技股份有限公司	88年08月
上新企業股份有限公司	年	砂統科技股份有限公司	93年07月	砂統神戶電池股份有限公司	93年04月	華冠通訊股份有限公司	92年03月	致勝電子有限公司	90年03月	致勝實業股份有限公司	92年07月	致勝實業股份有限公司	90年05月
上海印刷廠股份有限公司	90年08月	空軍第三後勤指揮部	92年06月	廠	90年03月	華城電機股份有限公司	87年08月	日友環保科技股份有限公司	89年12月	致勝化學工業股份有限公司	93年03月	致勝實業股份有限公司	94年02月
上海環球保險科技股份有限公司	92年03月	空軍第三後勤指揮部	91年07月	台灣榮興股份有限公司	90年08月	華城電機股份有限公司第二廠	87年08月	日月光半導體股份有限公司	92年11月	公司	91年03月	致勝實業股份有限公司	91年12月
上豐電子股份有限公司	87年12月	維修工廠	91年07月	南科公司	92年11月	華美電子股份有限公司	93年03月	日月欣半導體股份有限公司	91年11月	致勝電子股份有限公司	92年03月	致勝實業股份有限公司	93年02月
上銀科技股份有限公司	86年02月	花王(台灣)股份有限公司	87年09月	台灣理光股份有限公司彰化工廠	89年06月	華夏海灣膠膠股份有限公司	92年01月	日能企業有限公司	89年03月	致勝實業股份有限公司	90年11月	致勝實業股份有限公司	91年04月
久尹股份有限公司	92年03月	廣源科技股份有限公司	92年03月	廠	87年10月	華客股份有限公司	92年03月	日能公司	92年03月	致勝實業股份有限公司	92年03月	致勝實業股份有限公司	90年02月
久津實業股份有限公司	91年06月	金山實業股份有限公司	85年07月	台灣盛力電信科技股份有限公司	85年10月	部	92年01月	日勝工廠股份有限公司	89年10月	致勝電腦股份有限公司	92年03月	致勝實業股份有限公司	92年03月
久安飲食有限公司	92年03月	金利德理股份有限公司	91年01月	台灣通開器材股份有限公司	92年03月	華特電子工業股份有限公司	92年03月	比律工業股份有限公司	87年04月	致勝實業股份有限公司	92年03月	致勝實業股份有限公司	90年02月
久陽精密工業股份有限公司	91年10月	金車股份有限公司	89年07月	廠	87年03月	華洲電機工業股份有限公司	89年12月	永木製造廠有限公司	90年09月	致勝實業股份有限公司	92年03月	致勝實業股份有限公司	91年01月
久陽螺絲股份有限公司	89年10月	金和利股份有限公司	92年03月	台灣電信工業股份有限公司	86年06月	華通電腦股份有限公司	87年05月	萬奇百理保企業股份有限公司	92年02月	致勝實業股份有限公司	92年03月	致勝實業股份有限公司	89年07月
久陽螺絲有限公司	94年02月	金居鋼鐵箔股份有限公司	90年11月	台灣泰科化學工業股份有限公司	87年04月	華通電腦股份有限公司大園廠	89年09月	世大照明有限公司	87年06月	致勝實業股份有限公司	92年02月	致勝實業股份有限公司	86年04月

Source: Taiwan Environmental Management Association

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### 發表著作一覽表

#### A. 期刊論文

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2. Chu, Po-Young, Yu-Ling Lin, Hsing-Hwa Hsiung, and Tzu-Yar Liu (2006), "Intellectual Capital: An Empirical Study of ITRI," Technological Forecasting and Social Change, 73, 7, 886-902. (SSCI)
3. 朱博湧、林裕凌、熊杏華、劉子衡 (2007), 『工研院整體效益評估』, 交大管理學報, 第二十七卷, 第二期。(TSSCI)
4. Chu, Po-Young, Yu-Ling Lin, Chi-Hung Huang, and Tzu-Yar Liu (2007), "Externality Evaluation: An Empirical Study of ITRI," International Journal of Technology Management, (SSCI) (已接受)
5. Wu, Shih-Ying, Po-Young Chu, Tzu-Yar Liu (2007), "Determinants of A Firm's ISO14001 Certification," Pacific Economic Review, (SSCI) (已接受)

#### B. 專書及專書論文

1. 朱博湧、熊杏華、林裕凌、劉子衡 (2006), 「非營利研發機構之智慧資本與績效評估-工研院之實證研究」, 中國科技發展精典文酷, 第一卷-科教興國, 第七章科技研發與應用。

### C. 技術報告及其它

1. 朱博湧、林裕凌、劉子衡、熊杏華(2003),『工研院效益評估模式與實證』, 工研院三十周年計畫, 執行期間 2002 年 11 月~2003 年 6 月。

