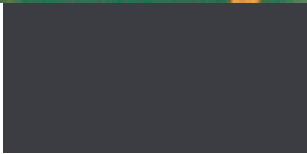


**REDUCING CARBON FOOTPRINT  
FOR EUROPEAN ABRASIVES  
MANUFACTURERS**



## HOW THE EUROPEAN ABRASIVES PRODUCERS SECTOR EQUIPS ITSELF WITH A CARBON FOOTPRINT TOOL, PROJECT SUPPORTED BY EFESO MANAGEMENT CONSULTANTS

Founded in 1955, FEPA (Federation of European Producers of Abrasives) today represents 90% of European manufacturers. After years of commitment to quality and safety in the use and production processes of abrasives, FEPA member companies created the SEAM (Sustainable European Abrasive Manufacturers) program in 2020. This program aims to implement sustainability measures industry wide. In January 2024, SEAM selected the specialized industrial strategy

consulting firm EFESO Management Consultants to assist in calculating the carbon footprint of industry players. This project combines innovation and pragmatism, highlighting the environmental dynamism of the European industry. The goal of this initiative is to have a reference framework usable by all industry members under the umbrella of the environmental quality label SEAM.

### About SEAM program

The SEAM program ensures that SEAM members, all from the abrasive supply chain, manufacture, process, supply, and distribute abrasives in compliance with sustainability standards regarding environmental efficiency (waste, energy, resources), quality in health and safety, and innovative production processes. Large, medium, and small-sized manufacturers, suppliers, and distributors of abrasives who have joined SEAM aim to establish a European sustainability standard that elevates the industry by balancing environmental efficiency, production performance, and worker safety. FEPA has received the European mark to certify that its SEAM members are using sustainable production methods.

“ Understanding, calculating, and controlling one’s carbon footprint is a complex dynamic that cannot be achieved without a fine understanding of the associated industrial challenges. The project initiated by SEAM, which our firm has co-developed with industry players, is exemplary. It shows how a professional sector takes the lead in preparing for its future and strengthening its competitiveness ”

*Jean-Marc Giraudeau, Vice-President EFESO Management Consultants*

### Key Points:

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  - Mobilization of a professional sector on the issue of company carbon footprint.
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  - A journey with concrete deliverables: trained champions, a carbon footprint calculation tool adapted to the industrial sector, roadmaps, and reduction targets.
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  - A topic promoting cooperation for mutual benefit. Competitors and suppliers collaborate on the elaboration of a tool to calculate a company’s carbon footprint.
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  - Gaining autonomy on a crucial issue for the European industry.
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  - A learning journey emphasizing pedagogy and human support. A mix of educational workshops and «assisted homework» combining theory and practical exercises.

## EFESO'S MISSION: CREATING AN OPERATIONAL SYSTEM COMBINING SUPPORT AND TRAINING TO DECARBONIZE THE SECTOR

In early 2024, SEAM tasked EFESO Management Consultants with assisting its members in calculating their company's carbon footprint. Of the 18 SEAM member companies, a dozen decided to participate in this mission. EFESO conducted an initial audit phase to accurately understand the production challenges of industry players and the environmental maturity of the various SEAM members. After this phase, the objective was to equip these players with an analytical tool to autonomously assess their carbon impact.

«This initiative originated from a FEPA project to have a life cycle analysis of the products manufactured by its members. This was to identify their environmental impact through about fifteen criteria. The project was quickly complemented by a second one, SEAM members focused on their carbon footprint, to trigger the dynamic faster. Among the FEPA members are large groups with strong maturity on these environmental issues. Many SMEs within the federation were requesting information on the carbon


footprint topic. Some are suppliers to others. Therefore, it was necessary to find a solution and equip them with appropriate tools that allow the customers of industry players to have an environmental label based on an objective and applicable reference framework,» explains Jean-Marc Giraudeau.

EFESO's approach is collaborative. Initially, a carbon impact reference is identified in each company. Several successive workshops are conducted to train participants and create a tool adapted to the industry players' activities. During the first half of 2024, SEAM members are trained to be autonomous in calculating their carbon footprint. During the second half of the year, companies will calculate their footprint. A benchmark will be conducted to better assess the SEAM members' environmental maturity. In early 2025, companies will be supported in defining the objectives and actions to be implemented to act and reduce their carbon footprint.



## Interview of FEPA

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The sector as a whole must engage in decarbonisation

**Stefan Haag**  
President of FEPA

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European industrial players must take concrete actions. This will soon be imposed by Europe but above all, it is a societal responsibility. We must reinvent our production processes and act for a sustainable industry by taking into account our environmental impact. We have initiated several sustainability projects within FEPA fully engaging the European of abrasives in the green transition; the project around SEAM is crucial for our sector. Our industrial players now understand that it is essential to move towards carbon offsetting. However, the path is long because they first must learn how to calculate to improve. While this dynamic is already in motion for large groups, the situation is less clear for smaller players. Therefore, it is necessary to provide support to offer tailored tools and dedicated training.

Europe plays a crucial role in this environmental dynamic. Industries are now required to engage in their environmental transition. It is certain that economic actors are generally not in favor of standards and administrative constraints; however, we must acknowledge that we would not be at this level of transition without this European leadership in environmental regulations, triggered by the December 2019 European Green Deal. Thus, while a few years ago many mid-sized players did not see the necessity to find an industrial solution to participate in the GHG emission reduction, they now understand that they will face these topics sooner rather than later, because of the implementation of the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD) and the regulatory need to report on Scope 1, 2 and 3. Therefore, the more prepared the sector is as a whole, the more it will be in line with this challenge.

## Interview of Saint-Gobain Surface Solutions

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Today, the scope 3 perimeter is increasingly crucial for our industrial players.

**Aldric Barbier**  
Director of Sustainability & Product Compliance

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The Surface Solutions entity is part of Saint-Gobain's High Performance Solutions division. Our company committed to climate issues early on. Because Saint-Gobain aims for carbon neutrality by 2050, the company had to advance quickly on these topics to respond to the challenge. We have been measuring our carbon footprint since 2010, and our roadmap for decarbonizing our activity dates back to 2017. In 2021, Saint-Gobain Surface Solutions structured its own dedicated roadmap.

European industrial players' environmental maturity is strong compared to other regions of the world. The abrasives sector is beginning its transformation and organizing itself. Today, our clients are asking us these

questions: What is your roadmap? What actions are you taking? etc. While there is a significant disparity in the environmental maturity of industry players depending on their size, we will not have a choice in the short term. It will be necessary to comply with European production standards, regulations and expectations. Our clients are also increasingly attentive to our carbon commitments. The abrasives sector players are indeed integrated into the scope 3 of their clients. SEAM's action creates a sustainability standard for the abrasive industry empowering manufacturers to take control of the environmental question. It is a hallmark of our carbon commitment.

### Interview of Ahlstrom I BU Abrasive



The project standardizes information collection and promotes data transparency

**Estelle Seibert**  
Marketing Manager



Our group has been concretely committed to quantified carbon footprint objectives since 2018, especially for scopes 1 and 2 measurements. However, reduction and systematic measurement objectives have clearly accelerated since May 2022, when Ahlstrom committed to setting science-based targets for net-zero as part of the Science Based Targets initiative (SBTi). In 2023, we initiated our scope 3 mapping. Our goal is to achieve net-zero emissions by 2050, with a significant first global reduction of 42% in scope 1 and 2 emissions by 2030.

The SEAM program creates a snowball effect by bringing together companies willing to improve the environmental impact of the industry and provide more

transparency in the value chain to enlighten end users. This project offers abrasive manufacturers the opportunity to agree on understanding the issues and speak the same language. In the first phase, it trains players and provides the keys for companies, especially the smaller ones, to calculate Scopes 1 and 2 considering the specific industrial constraints of abrasives. In the long run, this collective initiative will also simplify the collection of scope 3 data across the supply chain. Ahlstrom's footprint is part of the scope 3 emissions for coated abrasives manufacturers; a standardization of the data collection method is of interest to us. For the end user, this will also guarantee greater transparency and accuracy in the calculations.

### Interview of MAB tools France



Eco-compatibility has a cost, it must become a competitive advantage

**Francesco Maiolini**  
General Manager



We initiated our first environmental actions in the mid-80s. Three major projects were launched by our company related to the elimination of sulfuric acids, chlorofluorocarbons, and the reduction of carbon dioxide in our production. Since 2019, we have been ISO 14001 and ISO 45001 certified. ISO 50001 certification for energy performance improvement, while not mandatory in France where our plant is located, is in progress.

European standards have played a revealing role in implementing actions aimed at reducing our carbon

footprint. The development of these environmental regulations is setting a standard, pushing all European industries to innovate and reinvent themselves. However, the debate must also be addressed from an economic and competitiveness perspective. Implementing actions to reduce the carbon footprint clearly impacts the competitiveness of European economic players. The EU must therefore play the balance card and penalize non-eco-friendly products manufactured outside Europe and make climate commitment a vector of competitiveness.

## ABOUT US:



EFESO is a leading international group in industrial operations strategy and performance improvement. The firm works closely with its clients to accelerate their transformation towards sustainable operations. Each year, EFESO carries out over 1,000 projects for its clients in 35 offices worldwide, helping them achieve tangible results and lasting changes. With its clients, EFESO aims to contribute to a better and more sustainable world.



Sustainable European Abrasive Manufacturers (SEAM) commit to continuously improving their environmental work and production processes. The SEAM program ensures that SEAM members, all from the abrasive supply chain, manufacture, process, supply, and distribute abrasives in compliance with sustainability standards regarding environmental efficiency (waste, energy, resources), quality in health and safety, and innovative production processes.



FEPA, the Federation of European Producers of Abrasives, is an association representing over 80% of European producers of abrasive products, including SMEs and international companies, as well as national abrasive associations and their members. FEPA members cover 90% of European abrasive production, with 35% exported worldwide. The primary mission of FEPA is to represent the European abrasive industry by promoting abrasives manufactured in Europe, informing members about global regulatory developments, supporting producers with a range of technical, legal, and scientific services, and anticipating future challenges in the abrasive sector. Abrasives are essential components integrated into many industries such as construction, automotive, aerospace, environment, optical activities, glass, electronics, and the DIY market.





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