

To whom it may concern

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## **Invitation to join the VERA cooperation**

Dear Madam/Sir,

Reducing emissions from agriculture is a major target for many European countries. Promoting environmental technologies can be an effective tool for national governments as long as the technology claims are reliable.

Based on harmonized and recognized test protocols the VERA scheme delivers third party verification of environmental technologies for the reduction of emissions from agricultural production. Thus, real measurement data with comparable results are gained. The migration of technologies with a documented emission reduction efficiency can increase across borders with benefits for the environment, as well as technology manufacturers and authorities. The VERA setup forces the harmonization of European market competition and market entry by developing a transparent and well-founded system for the evaluation of environmental technologies.

After a promising starting phase with Denmark, Germany and the Netherlands, this beneficial collaboration of ministries of agriculture and environment as well as of scientists is now open for extension.

We would like to invite you to consider joining the VERA cooperation!

In the following we have summarized some key aspects about VERA for you:

### **What is VERA?**

Since 2008 representatives from the Dutch and Danish Ministries of Environment as well as from the German Ministry of Food and Agriculture have initiated this collaboration. Core content are the elaborated test protocols for environmental technologies in agricultural production developed by scientists. VERA tested products will be awarded a VERA Verification Statement which includes a summary of all test results upon approval of a multinational expert group. This statement will be published on our website [www.vera-verification.eu](http://www.vera-verification.eu).

Currently test protocols are available for manure treatment such as land applied manure applications, slurry separation and manure storage, for livestock housing and management systems as well as for air cleaners.

### **How does VERA work?**

Fundamentals, strategic decisions and the scope of the cooperation are determined by a steering committee, the 'International VERA Board'. It consists of representatives of the agricultural or environmental authorities of the participating countries. The development of the test protocols and the evaluation of the test results is conducted by an expert committee for the relevant technology type. The experts are appointed by the participating countries. Contact and coordinator for all VERA activities is the International VERA Secretariat, which is hosted by the participating countries for a period of four years in an alternating system. In October 2018, The Netherlands have taken over this responsibility from Germany. The test laboratory is responsible for testing according to the specified test protocols. It is not part of the VERA cooperation and can be chosen individually by the applicant, if the laboratory fulfils the necessary requirements.

The VERA cooperation is independent of any national environmental regulation schemes and it is an individual national decision in which manner it is implemented. Nevertheless, to enter the VERA cooperation it is required that the individual country accepts the General VERA Guidelines, the rights and obligations of VERA member countries as well as the VERA test protocols. Participating countries get the opportunity to participate actively in the process of developing test requirements according to the country-specific conditions.

### **Outlook**

If the EU-ETV pilot program launched by the EU Commission proves successful, VERA might eventually merge into this program, including its elaborated VERA test protocols. However, extending the cooperation is a current target with or without the EU-ETV system.

Are you now curious to become part of the VERA cooperation and further strengthen the joint harmonization efforts for Europe?

We look forward to receiving your response!

Kind regards,



Caroline van Hoek  
Head of the International VERA Secretariat  
*On behalf of the International VERA Board*