

NEWSLETTER 01/2021

Dear VERA stakeholder,

We hope all is well. We are very happy to present you the first VERA newsletter of the year 2021. This newsletter will contain an update of the work that has been done since the publication of our last newsletter in 2020. The new year has started with many new developments within VERA such as the introduction of new members of the VERA Board but also the termination of Germany's participation in VERA. Furthermore this newsletter will give an update on the current state of affairs of the VERA applications, VERA guidelines, and the status of VERA integration with EU-ETV.

We hope you enjoy reading this issue of the VERA newsletter.

Sincerely,

International VERA Secretariat (IVS)

CHANGES IN THE VERA BOARD

New Dutch representative

In February 2021, the Dutch representative of the Netherlands in the VERA board, Jan van Bergen, has left his post as VERA Board member. The reason for his leave is that he has started a new career at Directorate-General Nitrogen of the Dutch Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality and has ended his position at the Dutch ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management. We thank him for his many years of great contribution and hope he will stay somehow involved with VERA in his new position. Henk Hoving has been introduced to take up the Dutch representation in the VERA Board. Henk Hoving has many years of experience at the Dutch Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management, is an Agricultural Entrepreneur himself and will therefore be a very valuable new member of the VERA Board.

New Danish representative

Karen Magrethe Rude Jensen is joining Trine Anemone Andersen, as the Danish representative in the VERA Board. Karen will be the main representative of Denmark in the Board starting summer 2021, as Trine Anemone Andersen will allocate most of her time to Greenhouse Gases from livestock production. Karen has a background in Animal Science and her tasks in the Ministry of Environment of Denmark will be focused primarily on implementation and use of environmental technologies in the livestock sector.

Germany parts from the VERA board

In the beginning of March 2021 the German representatives in the VERA board announced the termination of Germany's participation in VERA. After having been involved in the VERA project for over 12 years, the German Board members, Jörg Kalisch (Ministry of Food and Agriculture) and Gabriele Wechsung (German Environment Agency), have taken the hard decision to end their membership of the VERA collaboration. DLG (German Agricultural

Society) announced already last year to terminate their activities as Verification Body for VERA. One of the reasons for ending the VERA participation was the lack of German applications for VERA. We regret seeing the German representatives go, but thank them for many years of positive cooperation.

VERA APPLICATIONS AND PUBLICATIONS

Several VERA applications are currently in progress for the VERA test protocol for livestock housing and management systems and the test protocol for measurement of gaseous emissions from land applied manure.

We are happy to announce that in the beginning of May 2021 a new VERA verification statement has been published within the scope of the VERA test protocol for Livestock Housing and Management Systems. The verification statement for 'Proflex betonproducten' was issued for the reduction of ammonia emissions from the Meadow Floor used in cattle floors.

We will keep you updated on new applications and will publish further new VERA verification statements on [this page](#) of the VERA website.

VERA GUIDELINES AND TEST PROTOCOLS

Updated General VERA Guidelines

Last year the VERA Board asked the VERA Secretariat to draft an update of the General VERA Guidelines (GVG) in consultation with the VERA Board and Verification Bodies. Main changes in the document are:

- Clarification of the tasks and responsibilities of the different entities within VERA
- Update of the verification steps according to the existing practice (updated flow diagram)
- Timelines added to all verification steps

The newly drafted guidelines will shortly be approved by the VERA Board. We will inform you as soon as the updated version of the GVG document is available on the VERA website.

Revision of VERA test protocols

Currently VERA is working with experts on the minor revision of the 'Air cleaners protocol' which is expected to be published this year.

INTEGRATION WITH EU-ETV (ENVIRONMENTAL TECHNOLOGY VERIFICATION)

In June 2020, the International VERA Secretariat had a meeting with Pierre Henry from EU-Environmental Technology Verification (EU-ETV). EU-ETV is an initiative provided by the European Commission to help technology providers with new innovative environmental technologies to reach the market through verification of their technologies. This meeting was the first initiative to discuss the possibilities of cooperation/integration of VERA and EU-

ETV, as ETV expressed the aspiration to expand their technology scope with environmental technologies in agriculture.

In April 2021, a web meeting has taken place to further discuss the cooperation/integration of VERA and EU-ETV with the VERA Board. Topics that were discussed in this meeting were:

- The possibility of cooperation or complete integration of VERA within EU-ETV
- The possible membership of VERA countries in the EU-ETV Steering Group
- The possibilities for integration of VERA experts in the EU-ETV Technical Working Group
- The possible use of VERA protocols and transfer of verification statements to EU-ETV
- The role of the VERA board as possible basis and link to national approval processes and legislation

In June 2021, a VERA Board meeting was held to come to formal decisions about the integration of VERA and EU-ETV. The outcome of the meeting was a final decision for integration, thereby stressing the need within the agricultural scope to align with the national policies of the member states of interest. A transition period will take place of at least a year in which the work and experience of VERA will be carefully transferred to the EU-ETV, guided by the VERA secretariat during which the VERA Board and secretariat will continue the good collaboration with EU-ETV representative Pierre Henry. The transition will have a specific focus on transferring VERA protocols and VERA verification statements. Denmark is already a member of EU-ETV and ETA-Denmark already functions as an accredited ETV Verification Body. Flanders and the Netherlands are investigating the possibilities and benefits to join the EU-ETV collaboration before the full integration. The national policy alignment focus of VERA verification is an important point that will be highlighted and included in the VERA - EU-ETV integration. Furthermore, a second call for experts will be sent out at the end of summer, making it possible for VERA experts to apply to join the EU-ETV Technical Working Group. More information about EU-ETV [can be found on the ETV website.](#)

For questions about any content of this newsletter please contact the VERA secretariat via vera-secretariat@nen.nl