

Rights and obligations of VERA member countries

(Dated: June 2017)

1. General terms

1.1. Primary target of the VERA cooperation:

Verification of technology performance with regards to the reduction of emissions from agricultural production and making measurement results comparable by means of harmonized and recognized test protocols within Europe.

1.2. VERA contributes to an increased migration of technologies with a documented emission reduction efficiency across borders with benefits for the environment, 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 new agricultural technologies.

2. Rights

2.1. Each VERA member country has the opportunity to participate actively in the process of developing test requirements according to country-specific conditions.

2.2. Being an official VERA member country allows the representation of national interests and opinions in the steering committee of VERA, the International VERA Board (IVB) and VERA expert groups. Expert groups for the following application areas currently exist: livestock housing and management systems, air cleaning technologies, land application of manure, manure covers, slurry separation and biogas.

2.3. VERA member countries can approve each revision as well as each introduction of new VERA test protocols. Moreover, they can initiate the development of VERA test protocols for new application areas, in cases where common agreement is found within the VERA Board and the relevant VERA expert group.

2.4. VERA member countries have voting rights in the IVB and international VERA expert groups. In VERA expert groups, guests from non-member countries can be invited to participate in meetings, but are excluded from voting decisions.

2.5. VERA member countries are informed regularly about ongoing activities, new developments and revisions of test protocols, and issued with VERA verification statements etc. within the framework of the biannual IVB meetings. Furthermore, each member country receives a copy of the annual report issued by the International VERA Secretariat at the beginning of the subsequent year. This report serves as approval of the executed work of the International VERA Secretariat and the IVB.

3. Obligations

3.1. VERA member countries shall accept and sign the General VERA Guidelines in their current version. These are publicly available on the VERA website: www.vera-verification.eu.

3.2. VERA member countries shall accept the VERA verification and thereby the documented environmental efficiency of a technology in accordance with the test protocols as one of the options to obtain a national approval of a technology, in cases where such an approval system is in place.

3.3. Each VERA member country shall adhere to the strictest level of confidentiality with regards to all (technical) documentation and information it receives as part of its VERA activities.

3.4. VERA member countries shall appoint at least one member to the IVB; a representative of the relevant national ministry of environment and/or agriculture. In general, the IVB meets twice a year.

- 3.5. VERA member countries should appoint technical experts for the relevant international VERA expert groups. Usually, each country nominates one to two experts for each group. However, it is not mandatory to assign experts for all of the relevant test areas/protocols.
- 3.6. Financing and travel expenses of national experts/national contact persons are a national matter.
- 3.7. The International VERA Secretariat, as the coordinating and organisational body of the VERA system, rotates every four years to another member country to share the financial loads equally. A constant International VERA Secretariat might be established in future, which would lead to a fixed annual fee for every member country to distribute the costs equally among the members.
- 3.8. According to the General VERA Guidelines, every member country nominates a national contact person for communication purposes to force local marketing of the VERA initiative in individual countries. This contact person represents the National VERA Secretariat. In cases where it fulfils the requirements for a verification body, it might be authorized as such by the IVB. The National VERA Secretariat provides information about VERA and disseminates possibilities and results to all relevant stakeholders. Furthermore, it provides guidance about VERA test protocols to applicants, test institutes, authorities and farmers. A continuous exchange about ongoing activities with the International VERA Secretariat is obligatory.

I, as representative of [**new country**], read, understand and accept the rights and obligations of VERA member countries.

Date

Signature

Name and position

I, as representative of [**new country**], herewith agree to the General VERA Guidelines (GVGs), including appendices, in the version [...], dated [**Date**].

Date

Signature

Name and position