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EU Environmental Technology Verification pilot programme Guidance documents

Guidelines for the workflow of documents and information between Verification Bodies, Technical Working Groups and Commission Services

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Abstract

Environmental Technology Verification (ETV) is a new tool enabling the verification of the performance claims put forward by developers of innovative environmental technologies. The EU-ETV programme, launched in 2011 by DG-ENV, is supported by Technical Working Groups (TWGs), one for each technology area active under the Pilot programme. These TWGs are chaired by the JRC and composed by Commission Invited Experts and by Experts representing the Verification Bodies with the overall aim to harmonise and exchange good practices.

This document summarises the outcome of the discussion of the Technical Working Groups concerning the streamline of information and agrees on a workflow for the communication of documents between Verification Bodies, Technical Working Groups and Commission Services.

This document, adopted on the on the 15th October 2013 by the TWGs, is a guidance document, with the meaning given in the General Verification Protocol of the EU ETV pilot programme (version 1.1), Section A.II.4.3. It has been produced by the EU ETV Technical Working Groups, chaired by the JRC, under the auspices of DG Environment.

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History of this document

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This document is a guidance document, with the meaning given in the General Verification Protocol of the EU ETV pilot programme (version 1.1), Section A.II.4.3. It has been produced by the EU ETV Technical Working Groups, chaired by the JRC, under the auspices of DG Environment.

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1 CONTEXT

1.1 The EU ETV Pilot Programme

Environmental Technology Verification (ETV) is a new tool to help innovative environmental technologies reach the market. It consists of the validation of the performance claims put forward by technology manufacturers, on a voluntary basis, by qualified third parties. This should help manufacturers prove the reliability of their claims, and help technology purchasers identify innovations that suit their needs. As a result, technological lock-in is overcome while more effective and cheaper environmental protection measures can emerge.

The EU ETV pilot programme, run by the European Commission on an experimental basis, is implemented by Verification Bodies (VBs) specifically accredited for ETV. The technical reference defining ETV procedures and requirements is the General Verification Protocol. It ensures that all verifications made in Europe follow the same process and have the same value. VBs are coordinated by thematic Technical Working Groups, at European level, providing guidance on the implementation of ETV and ensuring the adequate harmonisation of practices.

1.1 Purpose and scope of a guideline on the workflow of documents shared during the verification procedure

During a verification procedure and in order to satisfy the correct functioning of the ETV scheme, there is a need to share information between three main actors: Verification Bodies, Commission Services and Technical Working Groups. The General Verification Protocol describes the roles and responsibilities of each of these actors: the Verification Bodies operating under the ETV Programme are the entities responsible for conducting the verification procedure and ensuring quality, transparency and consistency of the verified claim (*cf.* GVP A.II.3); the Technical Working Groups provide guidance and expertise on how to ensure the best standard level of practices (*cf.* GVP A.II.4); the Commission services overview the implementation of the Pilot Programme, coordinate the TWG groups and publish the final ETV products – the Statements of Verification and supporting documents (*cf.* GVP A.II.1).

These guidelines intend to set up the practical aspects of the sharing of information and workflow between these three entities so as to allow the correct fulfilment of each role and responsibility. Two main communication channels are identified:

- The one between the Verification Bodies and the Commission Services, intended to provide the Commission Services with enough information for monitoring the advancement of the programme and at a later stage to publish the necessary information on the Registry of Statements of Verification.
- The one between the Verification Bodies and the Technical Working Groups, intended to share the main documents during the verification process, such as the Quick Scan, the verification protocol and drafts of the Statement of Verification or

Verification Reports, enabling the Technical Working Groups to share experience and good practices, and to elaborate the necessary guidance for the harmonisation of the ETV process and documents.

The sharing of information and documents is strictly limited to these entities and protected via detailed *confidentiality* and *no conflict of interest* measures that are based on the GVP and described in the TWG Guidance document 001/2013-05-31.

2 COMMUNICATION AND WORKFLOW BETWEEN VERIFICATION BODIES, TECHNICAL WORKING GROUPS AND COMMISSION SERVICES

2.1 Communication and workflow between Verification Bodies and Technical Working Groups

The Technical Working Groups, composed by experts invited by the Commission and experts representing the accredited Verification Bodies acting under ETV, have the responsibility to "*harmonise the implementation of ETV procedures by Verification Bodies, and to ensure the same level of performance in terms of verification results, in particular Statements of Verification*", as well as "*Exchange of good practices concerning the implementation of ETV*", according to the GVP. Additionally, the GVP section A.II.3.3 (roles and responsibilities of the verification bodies) foresees the sharing of the Quick Scans, specific verification protocols and verification reports with the Technical Working Groups.

Verification Bodies are hence expected to share the necessary information and documents enabling the Technical Working Groups to learn from each other and to advise on best common practices and environmental key aspects resulting in a solid and credible functioning of the European ETV Programme. The work flow is detailed in Figure 1 and shall be done using a common virtual work platform. The comments received from TWGs experts on technology-specific documents are considered indicative, but provide valuable insights to Verification Bodies and allow to improve the verification process. Furthermore, the result of the work of the TWGs will be transposed into guidance documents that complement, complete or clarify the GVP and therefore are binding. These documents will be published on the ETV website.

Specific elements that are not relevant for the work of the TWGs such as the costs for the verification in the Quick Scan, may be omitted if appropriately indicated by an equivalent to the phrase [ex: *budget information not disclosed*].

1.2 Communication and workflow between Verification Bodies and Commission Services

Commission services are responsible for the implementation of the EU-ETV Pilot Programme, including the publication of the Statements of verification on a public registry. Commission Services also chair the Steering Group, the Technical Working Groups and the Stakeholder Forum and in this way act as the link between the different actors involved in the ETV scheme.

In view of this coordination role, it is important to define an efficient communication channel between Commission services and the Verification Bodies to share the status of verification activities. The layout for the communication pathways between the Verification Bodies and the Commission Services is presented in Figure 1 and should be done using the virtual work platform, or in alternative, using the ETV functional mailbox. In the information exchange, only simple elements are needed to be provided by the Verification Bodies. At the end of each verification process, the files to be included in the Central Registry of Statements of Verification need to be provided. Some elements about the proposer are also useful, such as contacts, logo, and supporting images or diagrams since they can be used to promote the technology within the communication activities foreseen in ETV.

1.3 Language of document sharing and document publication

The pilot programme works in the languages of participating organisations and therefore documents may be produced in different languages. The main information relating to each verification, included in the Contact Form and in the Publication Form (see Annexes) should be transmitted in English and will feed into the Registry of Statements of Verification in English. The Statements of Verification and the Verification Report will initially be published in their original language and the option to translate them into other languages is being studied.

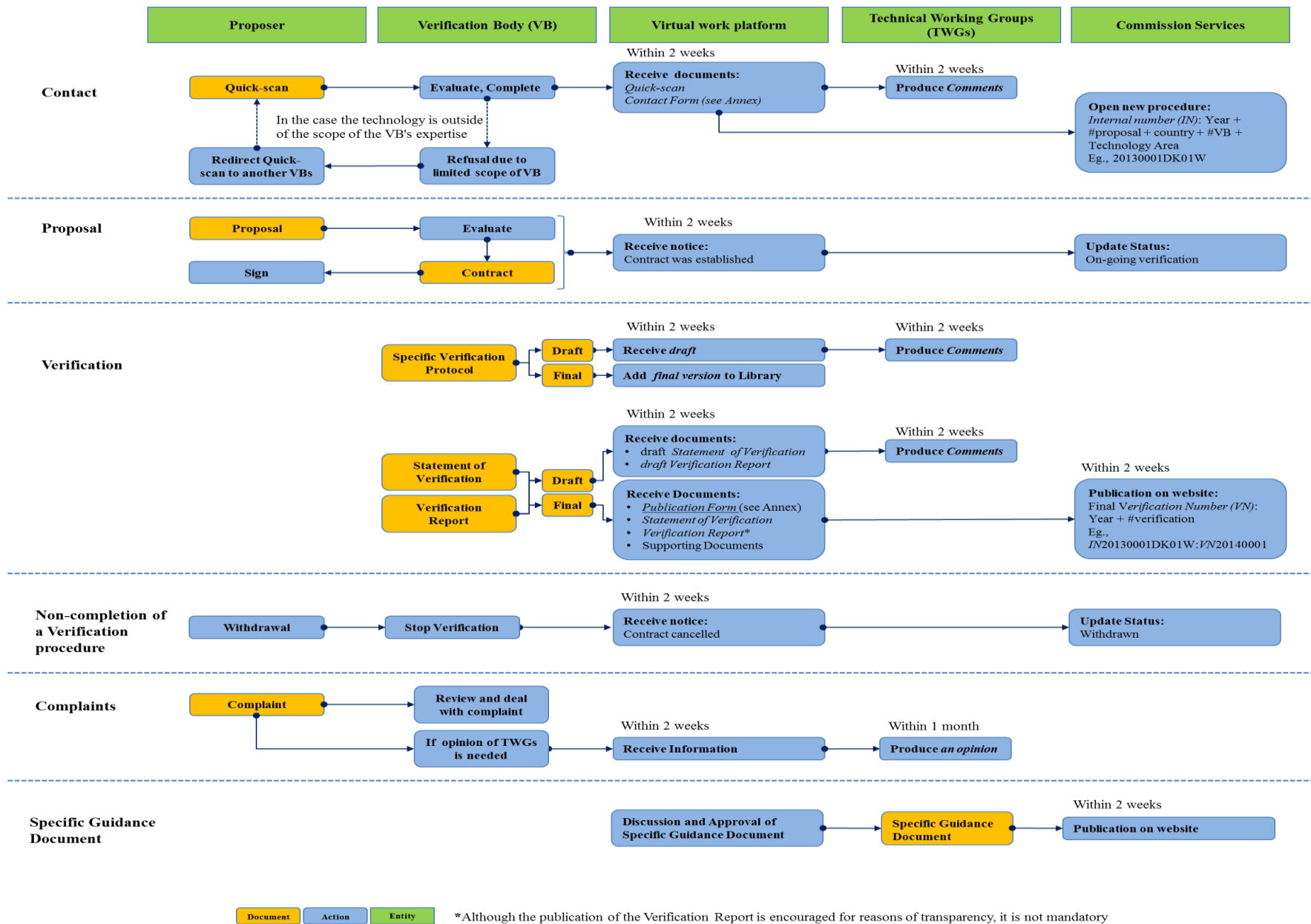


Figure 1: Communication pathways between Verification Bodies, Technical Working Groups and Commission Services

ANNEXES

Templates

The templates and forms provided in annex contain the elements that should be included in the communication between Verification Bodies and the Commission Services or with the Technical Working Groups. The formatting is not relevant and can be modified as convenient.

1 Contact Form

Proposer: -----

Country (optional): -----

Technology name: -----

Technology area: -----

Short description: -----

Keywords: -----

Conclusion of Quick Scan:

- Proposal phase Rejected as not eligible Withdrawn by proposer

*This contact form should be used whenever a new Quick Scan is finalised by the Verification Body. It serves as an accompanying document for the Quick Scan, particularly useful when the information in the Quick Scan is not in English.
The information provided should be in English.
The details provided will not be disclosed to the public and serve only for the coordination and monitoring of the EU ETV Pilot Programme.
The contact form should be sent to the ETV Technical Support Group via the virtual work platform (or in alternative, via the functional ETV mailbox) within **2 weeks** of the contact.*

2 Publication Form

Technology name: -----

Short Title (if the technology name is too long): -----

Date of Statement of Verification: -----

Proposer: -----

Country: -----

Technology area: -----

Short description: -----

Keywords: -----

Documents provided:

Statement of Verification

Verification Report in full (recommended to the proposer but not mandatory)

Verification Report without appendixes (in case the proposer considers that the publication of the appendixes would harm the protection of intellectual property, as provided in GVP B.VII.3)

No Verification Report

This last possibility should be considered as exceptional; it should only be accepted in case the publication of the Verification Report (possibly without appendixes) would risk causing disproportionately great harm to the legitimate interests of the proposer in relation to the verified technology.

Others (specify): -----

Media files provided:Manufacturer Logo Promotional picture or diagram of technologyOthers (specify): -----

Participation in communication activities:

The proposer is interested to have its technology participate in communication activities promoted by the Commission

This publication form should be used whenever a verification is concluded.

The information provided should be in English.

The details provided will be used to publish the Statement of Verification and Supporting documents on the Central Registry of Statements of Verification and therefore will be public.

Should there be any undisclosed information in the Verification Reports, the sections should be clearly signaled with the terms "Undisclosed information".

*The publication form should be sent to the ETV Technical Support Group via the virtual work platform (or in alternative, via the functional ETV mailbox) within **2 weeks** of the verification being concluded.*

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