

# Environmental performance documentation – roles of verification and certification

## Reflections on methods of documentation

Credible documentation of the performance of technologies<sup>1</sup> is essential for the producer, the user and the regulators, although for different purposes (supporting sales, enabling informed purchase decisions and protecting public interests, respectively). Different approaches to documentation have accordingly been developed for different phases of the technologies, examples shown in Figure 1.

**Figure 1** Examples of approaches to technology performance documentation, their use in different technology phases and their characteristics

	<b>Pilot and demonstration</b>	<b>Environmental technology verification</b>	<b>Product certification</b>
Technology phase	Late development of product	Product ready for sale	Technology established on market
Documentation reference	Industry practice	EU ETV <sup>2</sup> US EPA ETV	EN 45011 ISO/IEC Guide 65:1996 ISO/IEC Guide 67:2004
Purpose	Proof of concept and suggestions of improvement	Documentation of performance	Documentation of performance compliant with accepted requirements
Provided by	Vendor	Verification and test body	Certifying body
Status	Not independent	Independent	Independent
Performance parameters and requirements	Parameters set by the vendor of one product	Parameters set by the vendors of a technology/product group and relevant to the users	Parameters and quantitative requirements set in performance standard or similar normative document for the technology/industry
Required additional features	None	None	Surveillance of product compliance after certification
Optional additional features	None	None	Inspection of production facilities

In other words, the favored documentation approach depends upon the maturity of the technology and the time that it has been on the market (or the time to market introduction). Environmental technology verification (ETV) is intended for innovative technologies ready for the market, whereas (product) certification is intended for products that have been available for so long that product performance standards have been developed.

<sup>1</sup> A technology is generally represented by a number of products, a product group, and the terms technology and products are often used at random.

<sup>2</sup> EU ETV principles are described in a consultation document, Commission proposal is expected January-February 2009

In order to combine efforts, it would be suggested to use the different approaches in one coordinated effort to establish a complete scheme for documentation of agro technologies, see Figure 2.

**Figure 2 Suggestion for coordination of documentation approaches**

