

CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS

In the context of the work that DG ENV is performing in collaboration with the Commission's JRC IES ("Development of a harmonised methodology for the calculation of the Environmental Footprint of products"), DG ENV is now launching a call for volunteers.

This call aims at identify organisations (companies or consortia of companies, trade unions, professional bodies, etc.) of all sizes and from every sector that would like to support the European Commission in the testing of the draft methodology.

The objective of the testing phase is to provide lessons and feedback about the implementability of the draft methodology prepared by the JRC IES (added value, bottlenecks, implementation barriers, costs, accessibility to SMEs, data confidentiality issues, etc). The methodology will cover aspects like the collection of data and the assessment of the different environmental impacts, without dealing with the communication aspects on how the information is delivered to the final user. This aspect will not be covered by the testing phase as it will be subject of a separate preparatory study carried out by DG Environment.

Participation is on a voluntary (free) basis. No funding will be available to support the participation of organisations for the testing phase.

The testing phase shall start in July 2011 and will have to be completed by 20th December 2011. Prior to commencement of the test phase, JRC IES will provide one face-to-face training session for all participants (in Brussels and tentatively on 11-12 July 2011, date tbc), in order to explain how to implement the draft methodology. Some back-office support will also be provided during the testing phase.

Timetable :

- Until 13 May 2011: call for applications
- May-June 2011: selection of a sample group for testing (up to 10)
- July 2011: face-to-face training on the methodology
- July-December 2011: road testing performed
- November 2011: draft results submitted
- First quarter of 2012: in-depth analysis of 3 selected pilot case results

Target group for the call for volunteers:

This call for volunteers is addressed to both **producers** and **retailers in the European Union**. Single companies, group of companies, or federations/unions, operating in any sector may apply to participate.

Applications must be made using the downloadable [online application form](#), which requires providing some background information on the applicant and describing the product for which the test will be carried out.

Selection of a limited number of volunteers

Applications received by 13th May 2011 will be examined by European Commission services. Due to the limited resources available and the tight timeline, a maximum of 10 participants will be chosen as the basis for the case studies. Selection criteria will be applied in order to ensure an appropriately varied sample group (i.e. type of company, type of product, expected main environmental impact contributions, complexity of the value chain, etc).

Applications by organisations who also apply for the [Corporate Environmental Footprinting testing](#) will be preferred in the selection process.

The applications and the identity of applicants will remain confidential. Only the name of the companies selected for the pilots and the respective product groups will be announced through the dedicated web site. The results of the pilot studies may be published by the participating organisations, subject to a bilateral agreement with DG ENV.

The analysis of pilot tests

Each organisation performing a pilot test study will have to submit a report drafted according to a template prepared by JRC IES. The report will go through a preliminary assessment process carried out by DG ENV and JRC IES. On the basis of this preliminary assessment, 3 of the reports will subsequently be selected for in-depth analysis by JRC IES. In turn, these analyses will inform the revision of the draft methodology for the calculation and assessment of the Environmental Footprint of products. The revision process will also be supported by the results of the other studies.

Elements subject to full analysis will include issues such as data availability and accessibility, pilot costs, communication with stakeholders, uncertainty management, potential benefits and added value of the pilot, etc.

Specification of requirements for organisations taking part in testing phase

- The methodology for the calculation of the Environmental Footprint of products, as drafted by JRC IES, shall be the only methodology used during the testing phase. No deviation from the methodology recommendations shall be taken without prior consent from JRC IES and DG ENV;
- The methodology for the calculation of the Environmental Footprint of products is foreseen to be a stand-alone methodology. It will be possible to refine its application through the use of specific Product Footprint Category Rules (PFCR) for each product group, whenever available. However, even if such PFCRs will not be available at the time of testing, the organisations volunteering to participate in the testing phase will have access to a draft guideline describing how to prepare a PFCR (i.e. describing the process but not the content). Therefore the testing organisation will have the possibility either of applying the methodology as it is, or to draft their own PFCR (following the requirements and recommendations in the “How to develop PFCRs” guide developed by the JRC IES), or to use existing similar documents (e.g. Product Category Rules developed according to

ISO 14025), but cross checking their provisions in order ensure alignment with the draft JRC IES guide.

- Organisations participating in the pilot tests shall agree to provide JRC IES with all necessary inventory data in a timely and coherent manner. Data will be used by JRC IES, if necessary under confidentiality agreement, and only for the analysis of the testing results.
- The tests shall be carried out in English and the documentation shall also be provided in English.