

5. Assessment of laboratories

The Technical Secretariat will have to establish its own rules of procedure for accrediting the laboratories and for the continuous assessment of their operations. It may use as guidelines those kinds of general criteria as published e.g. by the joint European Standards Institution (EN 45002 and EN 45012). The language of these standards are geared to accreditation of test laboratories, but the content can be considered equally applicable to the assessment of research laboratories.

6. Advantages of accreditation

The accreditation program will assure the Technical Secretariat of some essential facts:

- the laboratory functions in conformity with a total Quality Assurance System laid down in the Quality Manual;
- the laboratory has demonstrated the existence and the consistence of such a Quality Assurance System;
- the laboratory performs the analytical chemical and physical procedures using validated and approved methods;
- the laboratory reports exactly the results and methods used;
- and
- the laboratory has qualified personnel.

If the Technical Secretariat will validate and accept Recommended Operating Procedures (ROP's) for sampling and analysis as the first candidate methods for sampling and analysis of verification samples, consistent results should be obtained after collaborative testing of the ROP's by all accredited laboratories. Continuous method development could be encouraged by accepting methods developed by the laboratories as recommended procedures promptly after their international testing.