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United Kingdom Emissions Trading Scheme (UK ETS) offshore site visits by verifiers.

In our previous communication in 2020, OPRED provided guidance in respect of the position of offshore site visits by independent verifiers during the Covid-19 pandemic, and a flexible and proportionate approach was adopted.

With the easing of the pandemic restrictions, the requirements of the UK ETS will now revert to the pre-pandemic obligations for permit holders requiring that site visits are undertaken by independent verifiers. Going forward, this means that all offshore UK ETS permitted installations will require a site visit in support of their annual reportable emissions for either 2021 or 2022. OPRED is still adopting a flexible and proportionate approach by allowing a site visit to be done over two reportable calendar years. This approach is due to the previous pandemic restrictions, verifier capacity and is a similar approach to that previous taken when we moved between different phases of the EU ETS.

Where an installation is not planned to have a site visit in 2021 but one will be done in 2022, a waiver for 2021 will still be required and must be submitted through ETSWAP as a notification before 29 October 2021 for each respective installation. The waiver request must be supported by the appropriate verifier’s risk assessment. There is no requirement to advise or confirm if a site visit is planned, or has taken place during 2021 or any other year.

In relation to new installations, a site visit is required to be undertaken within the first calendar year of operation. Installations that are undergoing a permit surrender, or about to submit an application to surrender, will require a site visit as part of the surrender process.