

# Environmental Ethics and the VERT-Commitment

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# WHY THIS TOPIC TODAY?

- The so-called VW scandal
- The loss of confidence in the honesty of automobile industry
- The loss of confidence in emission control devices
- The crisis of the diesel engine
- The end of an automobile / mobility era
- The overall environmental and sustainability crisis



**There is a public need for an honest, trustworthy and competent voice from the industry**

# Overview

- Environmental ethics, values and decisions
- Values of the Vert Association
- Temptations of filter producers
- Managing Moral dilemmas

# Environmental ethics, values and decisions

- **Environmental ethics** consider the moral and ethical relationship of human beings to the environment. In other words: what moral obligation does man have to the preservation and care of the non-human world?
- **Values** are used to evaluate actions or events. Individuals, institutions, companies, nations, etc. assign values to certain things and then use these assigned values to make decisions about whether something is right or wrong.
- All **decisions** including business decisions, are driven by values, mostly embedded in a bundle of motives, but not all the time underlying values of decisions are communicated and transparent.

# Mission Statement of VERT

- **What VERT® stands for:**

- An Association dedicated to the promotion of Best Available Technology for emission control
- The Core objective of VERT® is the minimization of health burden caused by combustion engine emissions, esp. the elimination of Ultra Fine Particles (UFP)
- Members of VERT® are international manufacturers of engines, testing devices, DPF and SCR systems, as well as of substrate producers, chassis builders, among others
- VERT® stresses and recommends the application of particle number measurement against a pure particle mass count as very light Ultra Fine Particles (UFP) cause a major threat to health
- We set the highest quality standards for emission control technology by certifying emission control technologies (VERT® Label) and publishing the VERT® filter list
- VERT® supports traffic pollution reduction programs all over the world, esp. in megacities

# Core Values of VERT

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# Excerpt from the Vert Website:

## Health Effects & Benefits - Diesel Particles and Their Consequences

The main particulate fraction of diesel exhaust consists of small particles, size range in nanometers (20 – 300 nm). Because of their small size, inhaled particles may easily penetrate deep into the lungs and from there they penetrate into the blood, even via smelling they may enter the brain directly.

They bind also with other toxins in the environment, thus increasing the hazards of particle inhalation. Exposures have been linked with acute short-term symptoms such as headache, dizziness, light-headedness, nausea, coughing, difficult breathing, tightness of chest, and irritation of the eyes and nose and throat.

Longterm exposures can lead to chronic, more serious health problems such as cardiovascular disease, cardiopulmonary disease, and lung cancer. Exposure to diesel exhaust and DPM is a known occupational hazard to truckers, railroad workers, and miners using diesel-powered equipment in underground mines. Adverse health effects have also been observed in the general population at ambient atmospheric particle concentrations well below the concentrations in occupational settings.

# Vert Values

- Concern and passion for **human health**  
= priority of “human” values against economic profit
- Concern and passion for **natural environment**  
= priority for sustainable and nature-compatible solutions
- Focus and support of **quality**  
= priority of robust technology against short-sighted technical solutions
- Ongoing **improvement** and **betterment** of technology  
= priority of curiosity and innovation against standstill
- Focus on **holistic approaches**  
= priority of cross-sectoral, cross-industry, cross-stakeholder solutions
- **Universal application** of technology of excellence  
= priority of “universal” truth against relativism of values

# Temptations in the filter industry

- The Temptation of the partial filter
- The Temptation of the “under-active” catalyst
- The Temptation of the “un-official” test sheet
- The Temptation of “managing” secondary emissions
- The Temptation of telling the customer only part of the truth
- The Temptation of cheating on the service regime
- Other temptations..

# Managing Moral Dilemmas

- No black and white approach (“tree hugging” against profit making)
- The reality of the “bundle” approach
- Individual and/against corporate values
- Double standards and hypocrisy (The VW-scapegoat effect)
- Each Vert member has two identities: a corporate and an associative
- Speaking and acting as Vert member allows more room for health and environment focused arguments than a corporate identity

Vert (as institution and Vert members as individuals) have a unique chance to competently argue and lobby for a state of the art emission reduction technologies and to consolidate itself as **an honest, trustworthy and competent voice from the industry.**

It takes a lifetime to build  
confidence,  
it takes one second to destroy it