

French Committee for Laboratory Accreditation (Cofrac) authorizes the use of kits for water microbiological analysis when certified under the AFNOR VALIDATION Scheme

French Committee for Laboratory Accreditation (Cofrac) was requested to recognize the rapid analytical methods that were **validated under the NF VALIDATION scheme in the field of water microbiological analysis.**

These methods are mainly used in the area of auto-control for the following types of water:

- Process water (production of water for human consumption)
- Bathing water, thermal water
- Cooling towers

Based upon a presentation of the NF VALIDATION Scheme as well as a description of the Technical Board for water microbiology (nomination of members, principles of certification, validation protocols ?) and following exchanges with several technical assessors in this field, the members of the Technical Accreditation Commission ?Chemistry and Environment? decided to approve this accreditation.

Consequently the Technical Accreditation Commission ?Chemistry and Environment? authorizes accreditation of laboratories using NF validated kits on condition that:

- Validation has been conducted by comparing the kit with a standardized reference method
- The laboratory using the kit has been accredited upon the reference method (or required simultaneously an extension of accreditation for the reference method)
- The technical protocol of the kit enters the area of competence of the technical assessor

Assessors in water microbiology could be mandated in order to assess this activity. The laboratory assessment should be done according to the requirements stated in EN ISO/CEI 17025 standard (and its application document LAB REF 02) paying a particular attention to the capacitation of the staff, to the management of the equipment and to the of the quality insurance of the results.

Remark : the case of PCR kits for the detection/enumeration of Legionella is apart as it does not deal with validation in comparison to a reference analytical method. When these PCR kits are certified under the NF VALIDATION scheme, Cofrac takes into account the contents of their validation file (recovery , linearity, specificity,?).