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International Fertilizer Association (IFA) and agri benchmark launch major global fertilizer consumption project

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The International Fertilizer Association (IFA) andÂ *agri benchmark*Â Cash Crop have announced the start of a joint project aimed at collecting data on the quantity of fertilizer used in key crops within all major fertilizer-consuming countries. The project represents a significant move to further monitor fertilizer usage in crop production around the world.

Following the completion of a successful pilot project to test and refine a methodology across seven countries in six continents, the global project roll-out will now begin. Its aim is to make the use of fertilizers in global crop production transparent to the public and to all stakeholders, using agri benchmarkâ??s bottom-up approach to data collection to understand at a sub-regional level how a countryâ??s key crops contribute to the national quantity of fertilizer consumed.]

Fertilizer use in crop production is a topical and important issue: on the one hand, fertilizers are the cornerstone of improved crop growth and an important means to ensure global food security. On the other hand, inefficient use of fertilizers can be harmful to the environment. Furthermore, nitrogen is a major source of greenhouse gas emissions from agriculture.

The new project will deliver the following key outputs:

1. Regional and national averages in nutrient application per hectare of the key field crops and perennial crops that make up >70% of arable land use.
2. Regional and national averages in nutrient application per hectare of grassland.

3. Estimates for national fertilizer use in crop production and grassland in total.
4. Specific fertilizer use per ton of crop output.

The global roll-out of the project will be phased over three years with a focus on different global regions in each year.

Dr Yelto Zimmer, head ofÂ *agri benchmark*, said, "We are very excited to be expanding our collaboration with IFA to work on the global roll-out in monitoring fertilizer use in crop production. Our aim is to become a hub for knowledge in global crop production, and this project will certainly strengthen the breadth and depth of data that we collect in that regard.â❧

Achim Dobermann, Chief Scientist at IFA, commented, "This project will systematically collect information on fertilizer use and other important agronomic practices, which we urgently need for improving global and national databases on nutrient use, balance and efficiency".