

April 9, 2021

**Re: Innovasea response to letter regarding Request to include open protocols OPi and OPs on Innovasea receivers dated 11 March 2021.**

Dear Signatories to above referenced letter to Innovasea,

Thank you for your letter dated 11 March 2021. This letter provides Innovasea's response at the present time and based on the information currently available to us.

Thank you also for your recognition of Innovasea's level of commitment to development/production of hardware, field support and study advice that we have provided and will continue to provide to our customers. Innovasea has always been driven - and will continue to be driven - by the foundational cornerstones of providing our customers with a high degree of certainty of success in their studies (through a philosophy of product reliability, ease of use, data integrity and support) while at the same time providing innovative new capabilities that will allow our customers to answer new questions in science. These cornerstones of certainty of success and innovation are central to Innovasea's philosophy and to a significant degree inform our response to your requests in this letter.

Innovasea shares your view that ETN is an important and exciting new advancement in fish research for Europe. Innovasea welcomes the ETN initiative and will continue to support ETN through numerous ways, including our on-going work to make it easy for customers to share their data.

Innovasea also recognizes ETN's stated desire to have a multi-vendor, compatible system to provide flexibility to acquire and operate tags and equipment from multiple vendors. Innovasea welcomes the development of new solutions including OPi/OPs and recognizes its potential.

Your letter raises numerous points, some of which Innovasea questions or disputes, however, this letter will focus on the 2 fundamental questions posed that relate to the request for Innovasea to incorporate OPi/OPs into the Vemco system:

1. Will Innovasea support OPi/OPs protocols by incorporating them on new and already purchased receivers?
2. If so, what is the timeline for adoption?

To Innovasea's knowledge, OPi/OPs is an industry consortium protocol which was established and promoted by ETN and certain manufacturers. Innovasea understands that the protocol is not publicly accessible. In November 2020, Innovasea asked to get access to the protocol. That request was denied. Innovasea was informed that it would have to sign a Memorandum of Understanding before it

could access the OPi/OPs. The Memorandum of Understanding was forwarded to Innovasea on 1 March 2021. Yet, this Memorandum of Understanding foresees terms which Innovasea cannot reasonably accept. In particular, Innovasea would be obliged to join the consortium under restrictive terms that include payment of fees to VLIZ without being able to assess the technology in advance. This cannot reasonably be expected from Innovasea since it would force Innovasea to take a far-reaching decision without being able to assess the consequences for the company, its products and – most importantly – its customers.

Therefore, Innovasea is currently not in a position to assess the viability of the OPi/OPs. In particular, Innovasea cannot appraise what would be the practical consequences of implementing the new protocol for the quality and reliability of its products, and therefore for Innovasea's customers.

Further, Innovasea believes that numerous considerations have not yet been answered by representatives of OPi/OPs. These uncertainties, too, prevent Innovasea from providing the confirmation you desire. Most importantly:

- Innovasea understands that OPi/OPs is specifically developed to use products from multiple vendors without setting any standards for performance, quality, data integrity, etc. It is therefore currently uncertain what level of system reliability will be achieved and the extent to which customer service, field support and study advice can and will exist from the participating vendors under these uncertainties.
- Innovasea understands that OPi/OPs does not have provision for the evolution of the protocol and associated hardware to meet future needs.

Against this background, too many questions remain currently unanswered. Meanwhile, Innovasea stresses that it is interested in discussing how to further improve the customer experience and – at the same time – foster innovation and provide new capabilities to the research community.

As always, I am open to discussion and welcome any questions or comments.

Best regards,



Mark Jollymore  
President, Innovasea