

QUALITY ASSESSMENT FORM

Title of the study

STUDY OF THE EFFECTS OF GLOBALIZATION ON THE ECONOMIC VIABILITY OF EU FORESTRY

DG/Unit: DG Agriculture and rural development, Unit F.6

- Official managing the study:
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Contractor International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis (IIASA)

Assessment carried out by:

- Steering group, which involved active participation from DG AGRI (F-6 and G-4), DG ENTR and DG ENV.

Date of the Quality Assessment: 4 December 2007

(1) RELEVANCE

Does the evaluation respond to information needs, in particular as expressed in the terms of references?

	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good	Excellent
SCORING				X	

Arguments for scoring: The study responds well to the information needs on the subject expressed in the Terms of References. All requested issues have been addressed. The contractor has even gone further in collecting and analysing the relevant information than it was originally requested in technical specifications. The scope covers the requested periods of time and geographical area. This study will add value to existing policy knowledge on the subject.

If relevant: **Contextual** (such as deficient terms of references) and **contractual constraints** (such as lack of time, insufficient resources)

(2) APPROPRIATE DESIGN

Is the design of the evaluation adequate for obtaining the results needed to answer the evaluation questions?

	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good	Excellent
SCORING					X

Arguments for scoring: The methodology proposed by the contractor and followed-through proved to be suited for the purposes of obtaining the results and fulfilling the tasks of the study. The rationale to addressing the issue, policy context and stakeholder interests have been addressed well in design of the study. The study method chosen is coherent with study needs and requests. The method is clearly and adequately described, in enough detail for the quality to be judged. Information sources and analysis tools are adequate for addressing objectives of the study. Study design and findings have been checked with experts and relevant stakeholders.

If relevant: **Contextual** (unexpected issues) and **contractual constraints** (such as lack of time and resources)

Data availability was an issue. However, this problem was successfully overcome by the contractor by using additional resources for data acquisition as well as slightly modifying the originally foreseen methodological approach.

(3) RELIABLE DATA

Are data collected adequate for their intended use and have their reliability been ascertained?

SCORING	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good	Excellent
				X	

Arguments for scoring: Available information and sources are well identified. The data used in the report of the study seems to be reliable. Of course this can be said only considering the nature of the analysis and the overall scope. Since the study addresses the issue of globalisation, many data analyses concern the global scale. At the best, the most detailed data analyses completed in this study concern the regional level, a single region being on the scale of several EU Member States. This must be borne in mind when speaking about the reliability of the data. Relevant literature and previous studies have been sufficiently reviewed.

If relevant: **Contextual** (such as lack of data or access to data base) and **contractual constraints** (such as lack of time and resources)

Above mentioned data availability was a constraint, however successfully addressed by the contractor.

(4) SOUND ANALYSIS

Are data systematically analysed to answer evaluation questions and cover other information needs in a valid manner?

SCORING	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good	Excellent
				X	

Arguments for scoring: The data are systematically analysed to respond to the study objectives and to cover, to a reasonable extent, information needs. The analysis is well developed both in quantitative and qualitative terms. Modelling was used for data analysis and the modelling work seems to be done in a professional way with good presentations of results of analyses. The limitations of the analysis and exceptions to general explanations or evidences were identified, discussed and transparently presented.

If relevant: **Contextual** and **contractual constraints** (such as lack of resources and time)

(5) CREDIBLE FINDINGS

Do findings follow logically from and are justified by, the data/information analysis and interpretations based on pre-established criteria and rational?

SCORING	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good	Excellent
				X	

Arguments for scoring: The findings do follow logically from the data and information analyses and are well justified. When necessary, findings have been well elaborated in order to take account of the data constraints and limits of analysis. Judgements are based on transparent criteria. Limitations of validity of findings and conditionality are pointed out.

If relevant: **Contextual and contractual constraints**

(6) VALID CONCLUSIONS

Are conclusions non-biased and fully based on findings?

SCORING	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good	Excellent
					X

Arguments for scoring: The conclusions of the study are non-biased and seem to be well derived from the analyses completed in implementation of individual tasks. Overall, conclusions have been drawn on the basis of sound analysis and credible findings. The conclusions provided properly addressed the main objectives of the study and are interpreted in relation to the policy context.

If relevant: **Contextual and contractual constraints**

(7) HELPFUL RECOMENDATIONS

Are areas needing improvements identified in coherence with the conclusions? Are the suggested options realistic and impartial?

SCORING	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good	Excellent
					X

Arguments for scoring: The conclusions and recommendations of the study will be useful in the context of implementation of the EU Forest Action Plan. Conclusions and recommendations will be discussed at the Standing Forestry Committee and decision on possible follow-up will be taken. These recommendations are viewed as useful not only for the Commission, but also for the Member States and sector stakeholders as well. Suggested options seem to be realistic and impartial. Recommendations stem logically from conclusions.

If relevant: **Contextual and contractual constraints**

(8) CLARITY

Is the report well structured, balanced and written in an understandable manner?

SCORING	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good	Excellent
				X	

Arguments for scoring: The content of the study report describes the subject under investigation, its context, the study purposes, contextual limitations, methodology and findings. The report is well structured, balanced and written in an understandable manner. Key messages are summarised and highlighted. The use of tables and graphs adds readability to the text. The length of the report, including the annexes, is adequate. The report includes a relevant and concise executive summary, which includes main conclusions and recommendations in a balanced and impartial manner. Detailed information and technical analysis are left for the appendix; information overload is avoided in the report.

If relevant: **Contextual and contractual constraints**

OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF THE FINAL EVALUATION REPORT

Is the overall quality of the report adequate, in particular:

- Does the evaluation fulfil contractual conditions?

The study fulfils the contractual conditions.

- Are the findings and conclusions of the report reliable, and are there any specific limitations to their validity and completeness?

Findings and conclusions of the report are reliable. The nature of the issue addressed in the study – complexity of globalisation effects – though, unavoidably imposes limitations to the validity and completeness of any attempt to address it. However, to our opinion, the contractor managed to approach this issue in an effective way.

- Is the information in the report potentially useful for designing intervention, setting priorities, allocating resources or improving interventions?

The information provided in the report may potentially be useful for designing interventions (or in deciding not to intervene), in particular in the case of individual Member States.

OVERALL SCORING

Very Good