QUALITY ASSESSMENT FORM[1]

Title of the evaluation

EX POST EVALUATION OF THE EU FORESTRY ACTION PLAN

DG/Unit DG AGRI, Unit L4

Official managing the evaluation: Yves PLEES

Evaluator/contractor European Forest Institute (lead contractor); Centre Tecnològic Forestal de Catalunya, Institute for European Environmental Policy (subcontractors).

Assessment carried out by:
Steering group with participants from units L-4, H4 of DG AGRI and DG SANCO, ENER, ENV, ENTR, DEVCO,SG, JRC, RTD

Date of the Quality Assessment July 2012

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[1] *Refer to the ‘Guide on Scoring the Criteria’ for how to assess each criterion.*

(1) RELEVANCE

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

SCORING	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good	Excellent
				X	

Arguments for scoring:
The evaluation study covers all the requirements expressed in the terms of reference..

(2) APPROPRIATE DESIGN

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

SCORING	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good	Excellent
				x	

Arguments for scoring:
The design is based on a mix of desk research combined with a survey questionnaire among Member States and Commission services, followed up by interviews and complemented with an on-line survey among stakeholders. It also built further on the mid-term evaluation of the EU forest action plan. This is appropriate for this type of evaluation. Moreover, the limitations and difficulties encountered with the chosen approach were clearly identified.

(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:
Data are largely of a qualitative nature, based on desk research and surveys. However, the combination with interviews enabled the contractor to validate and further elaborate on the results. Further validation was possible by having a number of questions identical for the different target groups of the survey. Furthermore, the contractor had access to data provided by Commission services, as well as secondary data such as from Eurostat. The contractor ensured also the use of the most recent information available.

(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 descriptive part gives a good overview of the state of play regarding the EU forests, the different actors and actions undertaken linked to the EU Forest Action Plan. The answers to the evaluation questions were based on the information collected.

(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 of the evaluation are supported by the evidence provided through the analysis. Member States' and stakeholders' opinions were considered, where appropriate, and in an unbiased way.

(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 reflect well the findings and are non-biased. This is also the case for the information presented in the "key lessons learned".

(7) HELPFUL RECOMMENDATIONS
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 recommendations are helpful and in coherence with the conclusions. However, although implicitly indications are given, some of them could be more concrete and provide better guidance.   Also the 'key lessons learned and food for thought' sections point to interesting issues.

(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 report is well structured and balanced. However, the nature of the subject and the high number of actors and actions involved in the EU forest action plan make it a rather dense report. Further efforts could have been made to make it more digestible.

Moreover, the relation between the 'conclusions' and 'key lessons learned and food for thought sections' could be more clear.

OVERALL ASSESSMENT
OF THE FINAL EVALUATION REPORT

Overall, the quality of the report is assessed to be **very good**

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

- Does the evaluation fulfil contractual conditions?

Clearly and fully.

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

The findings and conclusions of the report are reliable, limitations have been clearly indicated.

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

The findings, conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation can be used in the current debates on the follow up of the EU Forest Action Plan and the new Forest Strategy. Therefore, they are useful and relevant.