Quality Assessment for Evaluation Study of the forestry measures under Rural Development - Final Report

DG/Unit	DG AGRI C4
Official(s) managing the evaluation:	Andreas LILLIG
Evaluator:	Alliance Environnement
Assessment carried out by(*):	
Steering group	
Evaluation Function	X
Other (please specify)	

(*) Multiple crosses possible

Date of assessment	31/1/2018

Objective of the assessment	Aspects to be assessed	Fulfilled? Y, N, N/A	Comments
1. Scope of evaluation	Confirm with the Terms of Reference and the work plan that the contractor :		
	a. Has addressed the evaluation issues and specific questions	Y	
	b. Has undertaken the tasks described in the work plan	Y	The assessment of the entire set of RDPs came at a late stage in the evaluation process. It would have been more valuable if carried out earlier.
	c. Has covered the requested scope for time period, geographical areas, target groups, aspects of the intervention, etc.	Y	
2. Overall contents of report	Check that the report includes:		
	a. Executive Summary according to an agreed format, in the three required languages (minimum EN and FR)	Y	EN and FR provided, DE was not requested from the contractor
	b. Main report with required components	Y	
	▪ Title and Content Page ▪ A description of the policy being evaluated, its context, the purpose of the evaluation, contextual limitations, methodology, etc. ▪ Findings, conclusions, and judgments for all evaluation issues and specific questions ▪ The required outputs and deliverables ▪ Recommendations as appropriate		
	c. All required annexes	Y	
3. Data collection	Check that data is accurate and complete		
	a. Data is accurate		

Objective of the assessment	Aspects to be assessed	Fulfilled? Y, N, N/A	Comments
	▪ Data is free from factual and logical errors ▪ The report is consistent, i.e. no contradictions ▪ Calculations are correct		
	b. Data is complete	Y	Given the timing of the evaluation, not much hard data are available on the current programming period. The assessments in the evaluation are to a large extent based on information from the case studies. The literature review is more focussed on environment compared to the other aspects of forestry. The review of the RDPs took place relatively late in the evaluation process.
	▪ Relevant literature and previous studies have been sufficiently reviewed ▪ Existing monitoring data has been appropriately used ▪ Limitations to the data retrieved are pointed out and explained. ▪ Correcting measures have been taken to address any problems encountered in the process of data gathering		
4. Analysis and judgments	Check that analysis is sound and relevant		
	a. Analytical framework is sound	Y	The methodology is satisfactory, it could have been more clearly explained in the final deliverable, in particular regarding the use of the counterfactual. Judgment criteria are clear, yet findings could have been drafted more clearly. Limitations are properly spelled out. Administrative burden for farmers was analysed by a comparison with the previous programming period. More quantitative information could have been obtained.
	▪ The methodology used for each area of analysis is clearly explained, and has been applied consistently and as planned ▪ Judgements are based on transparent criteria ▪ The analysis relies on two or more independent lines of evidence ▪ Inputs from different stakeholders are used in a balanced way ▪ Findings are reliable enough to be replicable		
	b. Conclusions are sound	Y	Conclusions, while largely acceptable, could have been more clearly substantiated. However, the limitations of the analysis were properly spelled out.
	▪ Conclusions are properly addressing the evaluation questions and are coherently and logically substantiated ▪ There are no relevant conclusions missing according to the evidence presented ▪ Findings corroborate existing knowledge; differences or contradictions with existing knowledge are explained ▪ Critical issues are presented in a fair and balanced		

Objective of the assessment	Aspects to be assessed	Fulfilled? Y, N, N/A	Comments
	manner ▪ Limitations on validity of the conclusions are pointed out		
5.Usefulness of recommendations	a. Recommendations are useful	Y	The recommendations can feed in to the reflections on the future CAP. However, they could be more focussed and better substantiated.
	▪ Recommendations flow logically from the conclusions, are practical, realistic, and addressed to the relevant Commission Service(s) or other stakeholders		
	b. Recommendations are complete	Y	
	▪ Recommendations cover all relevant main conclusions		
6. Clarity of the report	a. Report is easy to read	N	The report is very dense; with a complicated structure and hence sometimes difficult to read.
	▪ Written style and presentation is adapted for the various relevant target readers ▪ The quality of language is sufficient for publishing ▪ Specific terminology is clearly defined ▪ Tables, graphs, and similar presentation tools are used to facilitate understanding; they are well commented with narrative text		
	b. Report is logical and focused	Y	

Objective of the assessment	Aspects to be assessed	Fulfilled? Y, N, N/A	Comments
	▪ The structure of the report is logical and consistent, information is not unjustifiably duplicated, and it is easy to get an overview of the report and its key results. ▪ The report provides a proper focus on main issues and key messages are summarised and highlighted ▪ The length of the report (excluded appendices) is proportionate (good balance of descriptive and analytical information) ▪ Detailed information and technical analysis are left for the appendix; thus information overload is avoided in the main report		

Overall conclusion		
The report could be approved in its current state, as it overall complies with the contractual conditions and relevant professional evaluation standards	Y	The evaluation had to cope with the fact that only a short time period elapsed since the start of the new programming period. This is in particular an issue given the long lifecycle of forests. Nevertheless the work of the contractor brought useful information.