

## QUALITY ASSESSMENT FORM

**Title of the evaluation**

*Evaluation of measures carried out for the outermost regions (POSEI) and the smaller islands of the Aegean Sea within the context of the Common Agricultural Policy*

**DG/Unit:** DG AGRI, Unit L4

Evaluation manager: Elvira Bakker

**Evaluator/contractor:** Oréade Brèche

**Assessment carried out by:**

- Steering group – participating units:  
DG AGRI – A3, C2, C4, D1, D3, F1, I1, L1, L3, L4

**Date of the Quality Assessment:** December 2009

## **(1) RELEVANCE**

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

<b>SCORING</b>	<b>Poor</b>	<b>Satisfactory</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Very Good</b>	<b>Excellent</b>
					<b>X</b>

### **Arguments for scoring:**

The scope formulated in the Terms of Reference was fully covered. The rationale of the measures introduced by the 2006 reform (Council Reg. (EC) 247/2006 and Council Reg. (EC) 1405/2006) and their outputs, results and impacts were examined satisfactorily. All evaluation questions are answered in a comprehensive manner. The interactions and linkages with other policies (e.g. rural development measures, regional development policy) were adequately addressed. The side effects are also analysed (e.g. effects on environment).

### **Contextual and contractual constraints:**

Given the fact that the reform was implemented in late 2006/ beginning of 2007, the evaluator had only 2 years of observations available. Moreover, Farm Accountancy Data Network (FADN) data was only available until 2006 including, thus not covering any year after the implementation of the reform.

## **(2) APPROPRIATE DESIGN**

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

<b>SCORING</b>	<b>Poor</b>	<b>Satisfactory</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Very Good</b>	<b>Excellent</b>
				<b>X</b>	

### **Arguments for scoring:**

In the structuring phase, Oréade Brèche undertook a comprehensive analysis of the situation in the outermost regions and the smaller islands of the Aegean Sea, and of the diverse and complex CAP measures applied to these territories.

For each evaluation question, the key terms were defined and analysed, and adequate evaluation criteria and indicators were proposed based on both quantitative and qualitative data.

Throughout the evaluation, the consultant constantly adapted the list of criteria and indicators proposed, based on the constraints encountered during the field work.

Thus, the evaluation is based on a, generally, adequate mix of quantitative (statistical analysis) and qualitative tools (survey, case studies).

The methodology, the sources and the reliability of the data and the limitations are properly described and well taken into account in the answers to *each* evaluation question.

### **Contextual and contractual constraints:**

One of the major difficulties of this evaluation stems from the very nature of the support provided to the outermost regions and the smaller islands of the Aegean Sea: the CAP measures applied are very diverse and cover a wide range of agricultural sectors. Thus, the consultant not only had to propose priority sectors for each region, but also had to identify and use adequate tools to be able to deal with this diversity.

### **(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 collection proved to be a major challenge during this evaluation. The consultant had to invest major efforts and resources in order to complement the data provided by the Commission with primary and secondary data collected mainly from national, regional and local sources (through surveys and case studies). Despite the fact that the evaluation covered the period since the implementation of the 2006 reform, data from 2001 onwards was used in order to capture the impact of the reform. The surveys and the interviews of a wide range of authorities and stakeholders were based on questionnaires and guides which had been agreed upon at the beginning of the evaluation.

The difficulties encountered and the data limitations are well explained. The consultant found certain solutions for dealing with the difficulties encountered and highlighted the particular results, findings and conclusions that need to be interpreted cautiously due to data limitations.

#### **Contextual and contractual constraints:**

The major constraints related to data availability and reliability can be summarised as follows:

- The FADN survey does not cover the French outermost regions. Thus, alternative sources had to be identified for all profitability and income analyses. Sometimes, the independence and the statistical representativity of these sources may be questionable (e.g. profitability calculations based on data provided by producer associations or by the reference network which covers a rather low number of producers and does not use the same indicators as in the FADN). However, these are considered to be the best data sources available.
- The FADN data reported for the Spanish and Portuguese outermost regions seem to be incomplete / wrong (e.g. certain aids paid for banana, tomato, etc. producers are not reported or are reported at much lower values than the actual aid paid).
- The Portuguese authorities do not collect data on all EU-origin products entering Madeira and the Azores and, therefore, the rate of coverage of local needs through the special supply arrangements (SSA) could not be calculated.
- For the smaller Aegean islands, it was difficult to get centralised data because these islands do not form together a separate administrative unit. Data about individual islands could only be obtained from the relevant prefectures.
- In certain cases, there were differences between the data reported by the MS in the annual execution reports and in periodical communications, the budgetary execution data and the data provided by the paying authorities (e.g. ODEADOM in the case of France).
- Data covering the period 2001-2005 were very difficult to obtain because of reorganisations of both the authorities involved and the system itself (especially in the DOM, the Canary Islands and the PIME).

Due to these difficulties, the data collection process was more time consuming than expected, and exerted a lot of pressure on the planned schedule of the evaluation.

#### **(4) SOUND ANALYSIS**

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

<b>SCORING</b>	<b>Poor</b>	<b>Satisfactory</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Very Good</b>	<b>Excellent</b>
				<b>X</b>	

##### **Arguments for scoring:**

The analysis is carried out in a systematic manner. The outcomes of the quantitative analysis are also cross-checked, as much as possible, with the information obtained from the interviews and the surveys carried out with various authorities and stakeholders.

The weaknesses of the analysis linked to lack of data or to limitations of data are well explained.

##### **Contextual and contractual constraints:**

The evaluation covered only 2 years of implementation of the 2006 reform (2007 and 2008).

During the period in which the evaluation was carried out, the last year for which FADN data was available was 2006. Therefore, the consultant had to make quantified simulations for 2007 (and sometimes 2008) in order to be able to estimate the effects of the 2006 reform. Therefore, in cases where the analysis is based on FADN data, the impacts are analysed based on simulated rather than observed data.

#### **(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?*

<b>SCORING</b>	<b>Poor</b>	<b>Satisfactory</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Very Good</b>	<b>Excellent</b>
				<b>X</b>	

##### **Arguments for scoring:**

The findings are formulated in relation to every evaluation question, and they refer to each territory and, where applicable, to each of the sectors studied. The explanations and justifications provided are formulated clearly, and they reflect the results of the quantitative and qualitative analysis carried out. In most cases, the limitations of the validity are well indicated.

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 are clearly formulated and reflect in a systematic way the judgements elaborated for each evaluation theme.

In a few cases, however, the evaluator does not convey own conclusions; instead the opinions of the authorities and the beneficiaries are presented.

If relevant: **Contextual and contractual constraints**

The conclusions should be interpreted in the light of the objective limitations of the evaluation which are clearly explained by the consultant.

## **(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 report has concrete and clearly formulated recommendations which may be used by the European Commission to improve the legislative framework and by the Member States to formulate and implement more effectively and efficiently the support programs drafted in 2006.

If relevant: **Contextual and contractual constraints**

Any possible follow-up actions should be established in the light of the objective limitations of the evaluation, which are clearly explained by the consultant.

## **(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:**

Generally, the report has a clear structure and is drafted in an understandable language.

The numerous acronyms used constitute an obstacle to the user-friendliness of the report.

**Contextual and contractual constraints**

The length is justifiable, given the complexity of the measures and the number of territories studied.

## 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?

**Yes.**

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

**The findings and conclusions are reliable in the light of the objective limitations indicated by the consultant.**

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

**The information in the report may be used by the Commission services in drafting the impact reports to be submitted to the European Parliament and the Council, in line with the provisions of Council Reg. (EC) 247/2006 and Council Reg. (EC) 1405/2006.**

**The report contains also valuable recommendations which may be implemented by the Member States in order to increase the effectiveness and the efficiency of the support programmes drafted in 2006.**