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## **EVALUATION OF THE COMMON MARKET ORGANISATION IN THE BANANA SECTOR**

### **Quality judgement of the final report submitted by COGEA**

#### **PRELIMINARY REMARKS**

It has to be pointed out that the judgement is not made on the contents of the results, conclusions or recommendations reached by the contractor, but on the methodology used for obtaining them.

It has to be recognised, that the contractor was confronted with a difficult task since a very complex CMO had to be evaluated in a relatively short time period (8 months for the first version of the final report), and the evaluation had to analyse a wide range of inter-sectoral impacts of the CMO involving different Community policies, like the cohesion policy and the development policy. Additional difficulties were the lack of data and statistical information at regional level and the need to collect specific information from several different sources, sometimes difficult to identify (e.g. the evaluation reports of the regional programmes supported by the structural funds in the Community producing regions).

Nevertheless, the report shows a good quality level in all its chapters and gives to the Commission a significant amount of well presented information on the banana market and its main actors.

It should be mentioned that the evaluator delivered good results also thanks to the intense activity of the inter-service steering group, where ten DGs were represented and actively took part in the evaluation.

#### **1. MEETING THE NEEDS: Does the evaluation adequately address the information needs of the commissioning body and fit the terms of reference?**

All the evaluation questions have been answered in a systematic and well developed way. The report provides the Commission with lots of well organised information and data on the banana market. The evaluator made an excellent work in collecting and analysing the material available to meet the terms of reference, in some cases the contractor even exceeded the requirements of the terms of reference.

The report was delivered in due time.

Global assessment: *excellent*

**2. RELEVANT SCOPE: Is the rationale of the policy examined and its set of outputs, results and outcomes/impacts examined fully, including both intended and unexpected policy interactions and consequences?**

The report includes a good overview of the CMO and of its modifications since its creation, including the interactions between the different instruments and the different policies affecting the banana market. The description of the production and market chain for bananas of different origins is very accurate and the analysis of the synergies with the cohesion and development policy is well developed.

Global assessment: *good*.

**3. DEFENSIBLE DESIGN: Is the evaluation design appropriate and adequate to ensure that the full set of findings, along with methodological limitations, is made accessible for answering the main evaluation questions?**

The methodology was adapted to the different issues covered by the evaluation and the wide range of origins and actors concerned and it took also into account the data constraints (in particular as regards production costs). The Contractor was flexible enough to adapt the methodology according to requests made by the steering group.

Global assessment: *good*

**4. RELIABLE DATA: To what extent are the primary and secondary data selected adequate? Are they sufficiently reliable for their intended use?**

The consultants had access to a vast range of data provided by the Commission services which were treated correctly and well presented. The consultants undertook also remarkable efforts to collect data at national and regional level and to obtain views of stakeholders and experts in interviews.

No data on production costs in the EU producing regions were available. The analysis on the issue was carried out on the basis of two studies commissioned by the producer organisations.

The reliability of Eurostat data on CIF price in some Member States was also questionable, but no alternative sources could be used.

Global assessment: *good*, taking into account the objective constraints mentioned in the preliminary remarks

**5. SOUND ANALYSIS: Is quantitative and qualitative information appropriately and systematically analysed according to the state of the art so that evaluation questions are answered in a valid way?**

The analysis is well developed in quantitative and qualitative terms, in particular taking into account the data constraints.

The quality of the analysis of the internal support to EU banana producers has been affected by the lack of statistical data at regional level, in particular as concerns production costs. The analysis of the issue was carried out on the basis of the information provided by the producers and its results should therefore be considered with caution.

Global assessment: *good*

**6. CREDIBLE FINDINGS: Do findings follow logically from, and are they justified by, the data analysis and interpretations based on carefully described assumptions and rationale?**

In general, the evaluation findings are credible, useful and clearly reported. However, they should be considered with caution in those cases where appropriate statistical data were not available. This concerns the internal support to EU producers, as mentioned in the previous paragraph and, to a lesser extent, the price analysis, where the CIF prices reported by Eurostat for some significant countries (e.g. Germany) do not seem entirely reliable. The limits influencing the findings are clearly presented in the report.

Global assessment: *good*

**7. VALIDITY OF THE CONCLUSIONS: Does the report provide clear conclusions? Are conclusions based on credible results?**

The conclusions are less well developed than the analysis itself. In particular, the pro's and con's of the three options considered for the reform of the compensatory aid are only examined in general terms, without analysing the expected impacts on the different interested parts. However, the conclusions are clear and can be considered as satisfactory.

Global assessment: *satisfactory*

**8. USEFULNESS OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS: Are recommendations fair, unbiased by personal or stakeholders' views, and sufficiently detailed to be operationally applicable?**

The recommendations proposed in the reported concern only the support scheme to EU producers and are quite limited. As concerns the import regime of the CMO, taking into account the Community engagement to introduce the tariff-only regime no other options were considered.

Global assessment: *satisfactory*

**9. CLEAR REPORT: Does the report clearly describe the policy evaluated, including its context and purpose, together with the procedures and findings of the evaluation, so that information provided can easily be understood?**

The report is clearly structured and the quality of the answers to the individual questions is good. In some cases the presentation could have been shortened to facilitate the readers' understanding. A better balance could have been found between the data analysis on the one hand and the conclusions and recommendations on the other hand. The report can be considered as satisfactory under this respect.

Global assessment: *satisfactory*

**10. ASSESSMENT OF THE REPORT AS A WHOLE**

In general the report can be considered *good*.

**QUALITY ASSESSMENT GRID OF THE EVALUATION OF THE CMO IN THE BANANA SECTOR**

<b>Concerning these criteria, the evaluation report is :</b>	<b>Unac-ceptable</b>	<b>Poor</b>	<b>Satisfac-tory</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Excel-lent</b>
<b>1. Meeting the needs:</b> Does the evaluation adequately address the information needs of the commissioning body and fit the terms of reference?					<b>X</b>
<b>2. Relevant scope:</b> Is the rationale of the policy examined and its set of outputs, results and outcomes/impacts examined fully, including both intended and unexpected policy interactions and consequences?				<b>X</b>	
<b>3. Defensible design:</b> Is the evaluation design appropriate and adequate to ensure that the full set of findings, along with methodological limitations, is made accessible for answering the main evaluation questions?				<b>X</b>	
<b>4. Reliable data:</b> To what extent are the primary and secondary data selected adequate. Are they sufficiently reliable for their intended use?				<b>X</b>	
<b>5. Sound analysis:</b> Is quantitative and qualitative information appropriately and systematically analysed according to the state of the art so that evaluation questions are answered in a valid way?				<b>X</b>	
<b>6. Credible findings:</b> Do findings follow logically from, and are they justified by, the data analysis and interpretations based on carefully described assumptions and rationale?				<b>X</b>	
<b>7. Validity of the conclusions:</b> Does the report provide clear conclusions? Are conclusions based on credible results?			<b>X</b>		
<b>8. Usefulness of the recommendations:</b> Are recommendations fair, unbiased by personal or shareholders' views, and sufficiently detailed to be operationally applicable?			<b>X</b>		
<b>9. Clearly reported:</b> Does the report clearly describe the policy being evaluated, including its context and purpose, together with the procedures and findings of the evaluation, so that information provided can easily be understood?			<b>X</b>		
<b>Taking into account the contextual constraints on the evaluation, the overall quality rating of the report is considered</b>				<b>X</b>	