QUALITY ASSESSMENT FORM

Title of the evaluation:

Evaluation Of Measures Applied Under The Common Agricultural Policy To The Protein Crop Sector

DG/Unit: DG AGRI, Unit L4
Official(s) managing the evaluation: Elvira Bakker

Evaluator/contractor: LMC International

Assessment carried out by:

- Steering group – participating units: C5, D1, J2, L1, L3, L4, L5

Date of the Quality Assessment: November 2009

(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:

Under the continuous guidance of the Steering Group, the evaluation study covers all the requirements expressed in the terms of reference. Through the work carried out, relevant information that meets the needs of the Commission was collected. The limitations of the data and of the methodology are well explained.

Despite the fact that interactions between the measures and other factors driving the market development were identified, they were not completely developed.

(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 of the evaluation is considered adequate with a balanced use of quantitative versus qualitative tools.

The application of two alternative methods for studying certain aspects is appreciated (e.g. the impact of rotational benefits).

However, the consultant used exclusively simple models based on linear regression, whose appropriateness is sometimes questionable given the results of the significance tests. In these cases, alternatives should have been envisaged.

(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:

In the difficult context in which, due to the small size of the sector, the statistical information available is limited, the efforts put into data collection are appreciated. The study carried out over the situation from Canada, which is the largest exporter of protein crops in the world, is considered very useful.

However, several data-related weaknesses are to be pointed out:

- Often different sources of data are aggregated but the methods used and their limitations are sometimes insufficiently explained. Therefore, the results should be interpreted with caution (e.g. there is limited information about the composition and the calculation methodology used by national data bases from which gross margin and income data are derived);

- For certain questions (e.g. income-related questions for the NMS, etc.) a more in-depth field work could have been carried out in order to provide the information needed.

Contextual constraints:

The protein crop production represents a very small proportion of the total farming sector and, therefore, the statistical data available are limited. Moreover, the information regarding sweet lupins is included in the larger category of "dry pulses" and, therefore, it was difficult to separate it. This data-related problem was a major constraint for the evaluation study.

(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 analysis is carried out in a systematic way, and thus it allows a very good description of the market situation. In the cases in which data was (partially) not available, the evaluator proposed and used, in most cases, adequate tools in order to be able to provide answers to all evaluation questions, and the results were analysed appropriately.

However, for the cases in which regression analysis yielded results which are not statistically significant, proposing alternative models would have been appreciated.

The depth of the analysis did not allow a consideration of the weight of each factor of influence (policy measures and/or other factors) which determined the dynamics of the protein crop sector after the implementation of the 2003 measures.

(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 related to the situation on the market are clearly formulated and well explained and justified. They mostly refer to the case study Member States. However, the findings related to the drivers behind the dynamics are sometimes ambiguous. This reflects the difficulty encountered by the evaluator to isolate the effects of the protein crop measures from other factors of influence.

(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, developed based on the findings, are prudent, thus reflecting the data constraints and the methodology limitations. They concern mainly the case study Member States, and especially those from EU-15.

(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:
Given the decisions taken already in the Health Check, the scope of the recommendations is limited. The recommendations proposed are justified more by the market context, rather than the functioning of the policies.

(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 has a clear structure and it is drafted in a concise, understandable language. There is a good balance between the data itself and the explanations of the analysis done based on the data and its limitations.

OVERALL ASSESSMENT
OF THE FINAL EVALUATION REPORT

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

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

- Does the evaluation fulfil contractual conditions?

Yes, it does.

- 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. The specific weaknesses were indicated for each assessment criteria above.

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

The implementation of the evaluation started after the adoption of the Health Check. However, information and the results of the evaluation are useful for those Member States considering applying Art. 68 of Council Reg. (EC) 73/2009 in the protein crop sector.