



## EUROPEAN COMMISSION

DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Directorate G. Economic analysis, perspectives and evaluations  
**G.4. Evaluation of measures applicable to agriculture; studies**

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D44DT\5\Quality assessment cotton lmc

### STUDY ON THE COTTON SECTOR IN THE EUROPEAN UNION

#### Quality judgement of the final report submitted by LMC International Ltd

#### PRELIMINARY REMARKS

This quality judgement provides a global assessment on the above-mentioned study. The Commission steering group in charge prepared it at the end of the work processed.

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

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

The study fully fits the Terms of Reference and meets the information needs of the Commission. All requested themes have been addressed, the contractor have even gone further the initial requests introducing a sensitivity analysis for having some insight on the long term situation of the sector.

The main difficulty was to collect the data needed and realise the analysis in a very tight time. However, the evaluator delivered well what was envisaged in the Terms of Reference.

Global assessment: **good**

**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 study has examined the rationale of the cotton farmers' behaviour and the ginning industry situation. The report covers the period and the geographical coverage required.

Global assessment: **good**

3. **DEFENSIBLE DESIGN: Is the study 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 design is clearly presented and reasoned, including its limitations. The methodology was adapted to foreseen difficulties of the data availability, in particular on the only one year application of the reform, the requirements of complementary information for labour costs and the limits existing in the FADN data. The approach for modelling the reform on farmer behaviour based on gross margin and using the US ginning industry as benchmarking proved to be adequate to bring a critical view on the situation.

Global assessment: **excellent**

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

The contractor had access to data provided by the Commission services which were treated correctly and well presented. These data had to be completed by data from private sources and important behaviour's information collected during face to face interviews that have been judged representative of the sector. All data limitations are sufficiently explained in the report, including the effects on the analysis.

Global assessment: **good**

5. **SOUND ANALYSIS: Is quantitative and qualitative information appropriately and systematically analysed according to the state of the art so that study is done in a valid way?**

The analysis is well developed both in quantitative and qualitative terms. The report gives a faithful picture of the sector, the relationship between farmers and ginners, the diverse behaviour of stakeholders groups faced to moving support. This complete information has been analysed and used in a professional way to present several support' scenarios and their consequence on the future of the whole sector.

Global assessment: **excellent**

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?**

The findings are credible, clearly reported and justified. In those cases when they are based on the analysis founded on assumptions and hypotheses, the contractor presents the limitations of the analysis in a transparent way, and recommends considering the findings with caution – ex. Cereals' prices evolution.

Global assessment: **very good**

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

Conclusions are established in a clearly understandable and detailed manner. They are based on credible results, and focused on the relevant issues for the cotton sector.

Global assessment: **good**

**8. 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 well-structured, balanced, and written in a clear language. The use of tables and graph adds readability to the text. The length of the report, including the annexes, is adequate.

Global assessment: **very good**

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

Taking into account the aspects mentioned above,  
the report can be considered

**VERY GOOD**

## Quality assessment grid for the evaluation of the cotton sector in the European Union

| <b>Concerning these criteria, the evaluation report is:</b>   | <b>Un-acceptable</b> | <b>Formally correct but weak</b> | <b>Satisfactory</b> | <b>Good</b> | <b>Very good</b> | <b>Excellent</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?   |                      |                                  |                     | X           |                  |                  |
| <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?                   |                      |                                  |                     | X           |                  |                  |
| <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?        |                      |                                  |                     |             |                  | X                |
| <b>4. Reliable data:</b> To what extent are the primary and secondary data selected adequate? Are they sufficiently reliable for their intended use?  |                      |                                  |                     | X           |                  |                  |
| <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?                           |                      |                                  |                     |             |                  | X                |
| <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?  |                      |                                  |                     |             | X                |                  |
| <b>7. Validity of the conclusions:</b> Does the report provide clear conclusions? Are conclusions based on credible results? Are they unbiased ?  |                      |                                  |                     | X           |                  |                  |
| <b>8. Clear report:</b> 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? |                      |                                  |                     |             | X                |                  |
| <b>Taking into account the contextual constraints on the evaluation, the overall quality rating of the report is considered</b>   |                      |                                  |                     |             | X                |                  |