



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Directorate G. Economic analyses and evaluation

G.4. Evaluation of measures applicable to agriculture; studies

Brussels,

GCA D(07)**34768**

G/A_31_3/DT5/quality grid CC

**EVALUATION OF THE APPLICATION OF CROSS COMPLIANCE AS
FORESEEN UNDER REGULATION 1782/2003**

**Subject: Quality grid based on the Final Report submitted by *Alliance
Environnement***

PRELIMINARY REMARK

The following text and grid provides a global assessment of the above-mentioned evaluation study. The Commission steering group in charge prepared it at the end of the evaluation process.

The judgement is made on the methodological approach followed to answer the evaluation questions, not on the results, conclusions or recommendations reached by the contractor. It has to be pointed out that it is neither the opinion of the evaluators nor the content of their conclusions that are judged here, but only the methods used for obtaining them.

1. Meeting the needs: Does the evaluation adequately address the information needs of the commissioning body and fit the terms of reference?

The evaluation addresses adequately the information needs of the commissioning body and fits fully the terms of reference.

The descriptive report provides a comprehensive and well structured description of the application of cross compliance in the Member States (EU-25), making use of the available information to the most possible extent.

The analysis of the effectiveness and efficiency of cross compliance with respect to achieving the objectives laid down in regulation 1782/2003 has been limited by the short implementation period of the policy, and therefore by the restricted quantitative data available. However, the consultant has treated properly the available information; in the absence of quantitative data, the expected outcome of the policy has been well assessed.

On the whole, the evaluator delivered fully what was envisaged in the tender dossier, and the evaluation questions listed in the Terms of Reference have been addressed comprehensively.

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 rationale of the policy is examined in detail and clearly developed. The expected outputs, results and outcomes/impacts of cross compliance have been meaningfully identified. The intervention logic has been carefully elaborated and duly reflects the rationale of the policy.

The legal framework of the policy has been adequately interpreted. The different nature of SMRs and GAEC has been clearly explained and duly taken into account when answering the evaluation questions. The temporal and geographical scope has also been completely taken into account.

Where relevant, unexpected effects of the policy referred to in the context of the national reports and case studies are presented with the necessary carefulness.

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 methodological approach has been carefully designed and has ensured that an adequate set of findings underpins the answers to the main evaluation questions, despite the above-referred limits in terms of availability of data.

The identified indicators and judgement criteria have been meaningfully applied when answering the evaluation questions.

The identified typology in the application of cross compliance by the Member States proved to be unhelpful in organising responses to the evaluation questions, but this is

considered due to the inherent difficulty of the policy and to the wide variation in implementation approaches by the Member States. This problem has been overcome by an effective design of the description of the implementation of cross compliance by the Member States.

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 evaluation project was carried out in a period where Member States were still in the process of setting up their monitoring systems concerning the implementation of cross compliance. This has weakened the concrete possibilities for the collection of primary data, whereas (aggregate) secondary data was only available during the very last stages of the evaluation project. As a consequence, for some key aspects of the evaluation (e.g. outcomes of the controls carried out and applied payment reductions) only insufficient reliable data was available.

However, the consultant carried out the necessary efforts to collect available data to the extent possible, and was flexible enough to make use of the secondary data which was made available in a late phase of the evaluation project. The limits of the data sources are clearly stated in the report, where relevant.

Global assessment: **good**

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?

Within the limits of restricted data sources, the analysis of available quantitative and qualitative information has been good and carried out according to the state of the art, thus providing good basis for answering the evaluation questions.

In those cases where the available quantitative information has not permitted a comprehensive consideration of the *actual* outcomes of cross compliance, the analysis has been well complemented by a reflection on the *expected* outcomes of the policy, based on a meaningful interpretation of the inputs provided to date and of the intervention logic of the policy.

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?

Findings do follow logically from the analysis, and logical assumptions are justified and linked with the overall rationale of the analysis.

When necessary, findings have been carefully expressed, in order to take into account the data constraints and the consequent methodological limits. Findings deriving from the information collected within the national reports have been accurately referred to the overall policy context and therefore correctly interpreted and presented.

Global assessment: **good**

7. Validity of the conclusions: Does the report provide clear conclusions? Are conclusions based on credible results?

Conclusions have been drawn on the basis of sound analysis and credible findings. They are not biased by partisan considerations. Given the data constraints, they are balanced and, in some cases, prudent. The reasoning between the findings and the conclusions is well explained.

Possible ways of improving the implementation of the policy have been identified and clearly presented within the conclusions, thus providing useful hints for the Member States.

Global assessment: **good**

8. Usefulness of the recommendations: Are recommendations fair, unbiased by personal or stakeholders' views, and sufficiently detailed to be operationally applicable?

The conclusions and recommendations are fair and unbiased.

Recommendations are justified on the basis of the findings resulting from the analysis; they are well elaborated and clearly presented.

Global assessment: **good**

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 written in a very clear language and therefore easily understandable. The policy evaluated, the procedures and findings of the evaluation are clearly and comprehensively developed.

The clarity of the report and its user-friendly structure are very much appreciated, in particular given the inherent complexity of synthesising the considerable amount of information concerning the implementation of cross compliance in the Member States.

Global assessment: **excellent**

The overall quality rating of the report is considered: good

Concerning these criteria, the evaluation report is:	Unacceptable	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Excellent
1. Meeting the needs: Does the evaluation adequately address the information needs of the commissioning body and fit the terms of reference?				X	
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?				X	
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?				X	
4. Reliable data: To what extent are the primary and secondary data selected adequate? Are they sufficiently reliable for their intended use?				X	
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?				X	
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?				X	
7. Validity of the conclusions: Does the report provide clear conclusions? Are conclusions based on credible results?				X	
8. Usefulness of the recommendations: Are recommendations fair, unbiased by personal or stakeholders' views, and sufficiently detailed to be operationally applicable?				X	
9. Clearly reported: 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?					X
The overall quality rating of the report is considered				X	