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QUALITY ASSESSMENT FORM

Title of the evaluation:

Evaluation of the instruments applicable to State aid in the agricultural and forestry sectors and in rural areas

DG/Unit: DG AGRI, Unit E4

- Official(s) managing the evaluation: Caroline Raes, later replaced by Yves Plees

Evaluator/contractor: ADE

Assessment carried out by:

- Steering group

Date of the Quality Assessment: November 2018

(1) RELEVANCE

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

	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good	Excellent
SCORING				x	

Arguments for scoring:

The evaluation adequately responds to the information needs of the commissioning body and meets the requirements of the terms of reference. The geographical scope and time scope for the evaluation have been covered. However, the level of detail of the analysis is uneven, and more attention could have been paid to the beneficiaries

(2) APPROPRIATE DESIGN

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

	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good	Excellent
SCORING		x	x		

Arguments for scoring:

The methodology design is appropriate for addressing the study objectives. It included both desk and field work. The methodology for answering evaluation questions combined literature research, case studies and expert knowledge.

The combination of these approaches allowed addressing the evaluation questions in a credible way. However, more attention to the beneficiaries, both in terms of sample size and in terms of analysis of the competitors of beneficiaries of state aid would have improved the study

(3) RELIABLE DATA

Are data collected adequate for their intended use and have their reliability been ascertained?

	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good	Excellent
SCORING		x			

The evaluation uses a wide range of data originating from EC databases, ad-hoc data collection in MS, surveys, interviews. The data collected are fit for the purpose of this evaluation. However, there is less evidence available at the level of the beneficiaries.

(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		

The **analytical framework** was sound. The methodological approach combines theoretical and empirical approaches and includes quantitative and qualitative approaches to address the different types of analysis that are required to respond to the ESQs.

(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 are based on clearly defined evaluation criteria and supported by the evidence provided through the analysis.

(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 substantiated by evaluation findings, which in turn were drawn from the sound analysis. Given the data constraints, they are balanced and prudent.

(7) HELPFUL RECOMMENDATIONS

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 recommendations are based on the evaluation conclusions. They include some valuable suggestions that can feed into the reflections for the update of the state aid rules. They could however have gone more in detail about how to implement them and could have better taken into account the policy context

(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 document is logically structured and clearly indicates the key issues. Details and further technical analysis are provided in annexes Taking into account that the subject is very technical and the use of legal terminology necessary for precision, it is relatively easy to read. The use of more visual aids could have improved the document

OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF THE FINAL EVALUATION REPORT

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

- Does the evaluation study 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 of the report are reliable and clear. Limitations are indicated

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

Yes