



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,

EVALUATION OF AGRI-ENVIRONMENTAL MEASURES

**Subject: Quality grid based on the Final Report submitted by Oréade-Brèche
on 15 November 2005**

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.

If the report is to be published on the Internet, the present grid, with the comments of the steering group, will complement the final report.

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 fully fits the Terms of Reference and sufficiently meets the information needs of the Commission. The question of effectiveness of agri-environmental measures has been well addressed by looking in detail at environmental impacts of the different types of measures. However, the questions of efficiency and relevance were addressed satisfactorily but the evaluation did not provide detailed information on the functioning of the agri-environmental policy. On the whole, the evaluator delivered what was envisaged in the tender dossier and the evaluation questions listed in the Terms of Reference have been addressed.

Global assessment: satisfactory

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 evaluation has fully examined the rationale and results of agri-environmental measures. The time frame and the measures to be addressed were completely taken into account as well as the geographical scope. The questions of outcomes and impacts were addressed being based on a well elaborated intervention logic. The evaluation attempted to identify interactions and interdependencies of agri-environmental policy but did not make the effort to look for alternative approaches in order to discover possible unexpected side-effects.

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 design is carefully reasoned and clearly presented. The presentation of the findings along the well developed typology of measures was very appropriate and adequate even though this approach had some limitations for the parts on financial and institutional questions. The organisation of the team was satisfactory.

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?

Multiple ways of data collection were effectively targeted. The size and the sampling techniques for the data collection ensure a good reliability of primary data while also secondary data was well exploited. The data sources are clearly identifiable in the report.

The national studies referred to were established by the consultant during this evaluation and may therefore not have the same degree of reliability as the programme evaluation reports commissioned by Member States/ regions. The findings of the expert panel present an interesting added value to the results from other data sources but in cases of ‘stand-alone findings of the expert panel’ the reliability of these findings might be weak.

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?

The analysis of the information presented was satisfactory. However, for answering the evaluation questions the findings were mostly presented in a way that summarised the results without establishing a connection or an overall assessment which would have been necessary especially in the case of contradictory findings. More emphasis on this task should have been added in order to achieve clear answers and judgements on the evaluation questions.

Global assessment: satisfactory

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 data sources form a robust basis supporting the findings which are generally well justified. The evaluator was very conscientious of those instances where the information basis for answering some of the evaluation questions was not robust enough, and tried to avoid any judgements which were not sufficiently founded by the sources exploited.

Global assessment: good

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

Conclusions are laid out in a clearly understandable and detailed manner. The conclusions are based on credible results, with the slight reservation that in certain parts different and maybe contradictory findings should have been taken into account to draw more reliable conclusions.

Global assessment: satisfactory

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

Recommendations point towards directions to follow, but are rather general in character. Detailed advice which could immediately be put in practice, especially in the Member States, is not given. The conclusions are fair and unbiased.

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 well-structured, written in a very clear language and therefore easily understandable.

Overall judgement: good

The overall quality rating of the report is considered

good

Concerning these criteria, the evaluation report is:	Unaccep- table	Poor	Satisfac- tory	Good	Excel- lent
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	