



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

Brussels,
CC D(2007)
A31_1/DT5/ Quality grid FWC_Env arable
crops

EVALUATION OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS OF CAP MEASURES RELATED TO ARABLE CROPS

**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 evaluation delivered what was envisaged in the tender dossier and the evaluation questions listed in the Terms of Reference have been adequately addressed.

The evaluator had to face the difficult task of distinguishing environmental effects caused by the Common Agricultural Policy from those caused by the development of the agricultural sector itself. The evaluator tried to make this distinction during the whole process of the evaluation even though this was sometimes difficult to undertake. However, the regional differences of environmental effects throughout the EU were not addressed sufficiently.

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 of the policy measures in question as well as their impact on production techniques, production management and the likely environmental effects of the policy. The time frame and the different legislations to be addressed were completely taken into account as well as the geographical scope.

The question on the CAP causing environmental effects and impacts were adequately addressed being based on a well elaborated theoretical reasoning on which the working hypotheses were developed. The evaluation identified clearly the interactions and interdependencies of the CAP with the development of the agricultural sector itself and market developments. Therefore intended and unintended results and impacts of the policy were identified.

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, based on microeconomic analysis and clearly presented. The methodology has been followed or has been well adapted when data constraints hindered its implementation or when relevant issues needed further investigation.

The design applied is adapted to each evaluation question and data availability. The methodology for answering the evaluation questions is clearly explained and appropriate. However, the evaluators failed to develop a design which integrated sufficiently well regional aspects concerned.

Global assessment: **satisfactory**

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 targeted. The sampling techniques for the data collection of primary data in the case studies were appropriate while also secondary data was well exploited where primary data did not exist. The data sources are clearly identifiable in the report.

However, for some key aspects of the evaluation, only insufficiently reliable data was available. Especially no sufficiently reliable data was available with respect to the impact of the policies on the environment. Environmental data is difficult to gather as environmental effects take a long time to emerge and are site specific. In addition, environmental data with a clear link to a certain policy measure is not existing as environmental effects depend on multiple factors. The evaluators tried to overcome this difficulty by using and comparing secondary data in the form of scientific literature. As these data sources established the basis for the evaluation of the environmental effects, the reliability of the data is only given to a certain extent. However, as no better data sources exist the approach used was appropriate and the limits of the data sources are stated in the report.

Global assessment: **good**

5. Sound analysis: Is quantitative and qualitative information appropriately and systematically analysed according to the state of the art so that the evaluation questions are answered in a valid way?

The analysis of the information presented was adequate. The quantitative and qualitative information was well used for answering the evaluation questions in an appropriate way.

However, in some parts, the analysis could have been further elaborated taking into account more explicitly the differences in different Member States and regions concerning farm production, farms structures and sometimes even legal obligations. This would have led to a more differentiated and therefore realistic view on developments in farm structures and production techniques and their respective environmental consequences.

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 good basis supporting the findings which are justified and defensible. The reasoning is well explained, the assumptions made and the methodological limitations are well described. The findings are carefully expressed,

taking into account the data constraints and the consequent limitations of the methodology and assumptions.

The evaluator could have been more cautious in the presentation of some findings where the information basis was not robust enough for a clear overall assessment, trying to present better also contradictory findings and/ or stating more clearly the weaknesses of the data basis.

Global assessment: **satisfactory**

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

Conclusions are laid out in a clearly understandable manner. The conclusions are based on economic theory, sound analysis and credible results. They are not biased by partisan considerations. Given the data constraints, they are balanced and prudent. The reasoning between the findings and the conclusions is well explained.

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. They are well explained and based on the findings of the report. Not all recommendations are detailed enough to be operationally applicable. But the recommendations provide clear policy proposals identifying issues which have to be reconsidered for the future development of the CAP.

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 well-structured and written in an understandable language. The policy evaluated and possible environmental effects resulting from the policy are well presented. Also the methods used for evaluating the environmental effects are clearly explained.

Global assessment: **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	