



## EVALUATION OF THE COMMON MARKET ORGANISATION IN THE SHEEP AND GOAT MEAT SECTOR

### Quality judgement of the final report submitted by SAC in September 2000

#### 0. PRELIMINARY REMARK

This text provides a global assessment of the above mentioned rapport in general terms. It has however to be taken into account that the quality of the responses to the individual evaluation questions is varying. This final report is the result of an intensive discussion process with the steering group responsible for this evaluation and based on previous versions of this report.

The report submitted is judged here as an evaluation study as regards the methodological approach followed to answer the evaluation questions. As concerns conclusions and recommendations made in the report it has to be pointed out that it is not their substance with is judged here but only the methods used for obtaining them.

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

Generally speaking the evaluation questions have been understood correctly and the main scope of this evaluation, namely the different impacts of the system of premia paid to the producers, is well addressed.

This does however not mean that the responses to all evaluation questions are satisfactory. Specific points of criticism are mentioned below.

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 impacts the CMO for sheep and goat meat are well addressed and examined. Also unexpected impacts of the CMO (keeping of animals solely for obtaining premia) have been addressed and for most of the questions the situation in the most important Member States was considered in detail, as it was demanded in the terms of reference.

The context of the sheep and goat meat CMO with other relevant parts of the CAP (Common Market Organisations for beef and milk, structural policy for less favoured areas) is also pointed out in the relevant parts of the report.

Global assessment: *good*

3. **DEFENSIBLE DESIGN:** *Is the evaluation design appropriate and sufficiently adequate to ensure that the full set of findings, along with their methodological limitations, can be accessed to answer the main evaluation questions?*

It has to be recognised that considerable efforts were made to follow an evaluation approach in the answers to the individual questions. This means essentially:

- Structuring: The key terms contained in the evaluation question have been defined and for most of the questions the judgement criteria chosen and the indicators used are well determined and explained.
- Data collection: The data used and the limits of their use are in general well explained (see point 4).
- Analysis: in general terms satisfactory (see point 5).
- Judgement: The judgement made is based on the analysis undertaken and tries to take up the judgement criteria defined (see point 7).

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 data used are coming from reliable sources. As concerns data on producers' income, efforts have been made to cross-check data coming from FADN with other national data sources. This effort is recognised even if it only provided limited results.

The main technical terms applied concerning the FADN database have been described correctly in a technical glossary.

It has to be recognised that other than statistical information obtained through interviews with representatives of the sector concerned and the national administration involved is reflected 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 evaluation questions are answered in a valid way?*

The analysis undertaken is developed and formulated in a clear way. However, in order to explain developments, other factors than the premia system of the CMO and the quota could have been taken into account to a bigger extent. This concerns in particular the evolution of producers' incomes and the evolution of sheep and goat meat production (e.g. the impacts of developments in other agricultural sectors).

It was appreciated by the steering group that the limits of the analysis undertaken were laid down clearly.

Global assessment: *acceptable*

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 report contains many interesting findings as concerns the principal issues of the study (income effects, calculation method of premia, differential of premia by light/heavy lamb producers, differential of premia between LFA and not LFA producers).

It is also a positive aspect for the credibility of the findings that the results obtained are presented with the necessary reserves and that is indicated clearly when no results could be obtained (e.g. question 1.4).

Furthermore it was appreciated by the steering group that the evaluators indicate where they consider further research necessary because their analysis could not go far enough.

Global assessment: *good*

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

It has to be recognised that the evaluation team did dare to make clear conclusions and to provide a clear answer to the questions. Furthermore it was tried to link the conclusions to the evaluation criteria developed at the beginning of each answer.

However this link could in some cases be made more consequently (see e.g. questions 1.1 and 1.2). This would have permitted a more differentiated answer to the questions.

In some cases the conclusions are formulated in a too direct way (e.g. question 1.1 and 2.1) and could take other external factors outside the CMO more into account (e.g. considering the impact of the quota on production). In other cases they could have been formulated more clearly (see e.g. 1.2 and 3.1).

Global assessment: *good*

**8. USEFULNESS OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS:** *Are recommendations fair, unbiased by personnel or stakeholders' views, and sufficiently detailed to be operationally applicable?*

The recommendations made in the report concern essentially the way of calculation of the premia. The possible options are laid down in a clear way. The recommendations are based on precedent analysis and conclusions. Therefore it is very useful that the consultants do not go too far but point out where at the moment there is a lack of data and further research may be needed. This concerns mainly the question of differentiation of premia.

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 drafted in a relatively clear and understandable way which permits in general to follow the reasoning developed easily. However the presentation of the text could be improved: The paragraphs are sometimes too long and the text could be better structured, for example through subtitles.

Nevertheless the conclusions relating to the individual questions are easily to be identified and also a specific chapter which provides an overall view on conclusions and recommendations has been included in the report.

A general introduction explaining the evaluation task and the principal methods applied could have been useful.

The executive summary points out the main issues, but could be shorter and better structured.

Furthermore it has to be recalled that it was demanded for the final report that all relevant basic tables used for the presentation of the graphs and other relevant information should be documented in the annex.

The general description of the regime in the annex is considered as useful; it is however regrettable that it is not better linked to the core of the text because relevant information is contained therein (e.g. meat production per ewe).

Global assessment: *good*

## 10. CONCLUSION

The overall quality assessment of this report is "**good**" despite of some points of criticism laid down above. This global assessment reflects the average of the assessment on the individual criteria as laid down above.

The report is very useful for the services concerned because it was tried to follow an evaluation approach systematically which permitted relatively clear conclusions. Furthermore the analysis undertaken is relevant also when it concerns items where need for further investigation was pointed out (e.g. environment).

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