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INFORMATION NOTE

Ex post evaluation of rural development programmes 2000 - 2006

1. OBJECTIVES OF THIS NOTE

The objectives of this note are: 1/ to clarify the regulatory requirements concerning ex post evaluations of rural development programmes and measures, 2/ to identify the different levels of responsibility, and 3/ to provide information on how to approach the ex post evaluation process both at the Commission and Member States levels.

The main requirements for carrying out ex post evaluations are described below, according to the sources of funding of the different programmes/measures.

2. EAGGF-GUARANTEE FUNDED RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES

2.1. Relevant regulatory framework

- Council Regulation (EC) No 1257/1999 of 17 May 1999 on support for rural development from the European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund (EAGGF) and respective implementing rules (Commission Regulation No. 817/2004).
- Act of Accession of the Czech Republic, Estonia, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Malta, Poland, Slovenia and Slovakia.
- Commission Regulation No 141/2004 of 28 January 2004 laying down rules for applying Council Regulation (EC) No 1257/1999 as regards the transitional rural development measures applicable to the Czech Republic, Estonia, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Malta, Poland, Slovenia and Slovakia, as amended (Commission Regulation No 740/2004 of 21 April 2004).

2.2. Scope:

EU-15, outside objective 1 regions: Rural development measures foreseen by Council Regulation (EC) No 1257/1999 included in rural development programmes.

EU-15, objective 1 regions: Early retirement, Less Favoured Areas, Agri-environmental and Forestry measures included in rural development programmes.

EU-10: Both, rural development measures foreseen by Council Regulation (EC) No 1257/1999, and transitional rural development measures foreseen in the Act of Accession (Chapter IXa) included in transitional rural development programmes. Transitional rural development measures include: support for semi-subsistence farms undergoing restructuring; support for compliance with Community standards; support for the establishment and administrative operation of producer groups; Leader + type measures¹, and technical assistance.

Rural development programmes in the EU-15 cover the period 2000 – 2006. Transitional rural development programmes in the EU-10 cover the period 2004 – 2006.

2.3. Legal requirements

Article 64 (2) of Commission Regulation 817/2004 specifies that *ex post evaluation shall answer the evaluation questions, paying particular attention to the use made of resources and the effectiveness and efficiency of assistance and its impact, and shall draw conclusions concerning rural development policy, including its contribution to the common agricultural policy.*

Following article 64 (3) of Commission Regulation 817/2004, *ex post evaluation shall be performed in consultation with the Commission under the responsibility of the authority in charge of managing rural development programming.*

2.4. Schedule

Following article 65 (2) of Commission Regulation 817/2004, *an ex post evaluation report shall be transmitted to the Commission not later than two years after the end of the programming period. Within three years of the end of the programming period and upon receipt of the individual evaluation reports the Commission shall prepare a Community-level summary.*

2.5. Actions to be taken

2.5.1. Commission

Upon receipt of the ex post evaluation reports, their quality will be assessed by the Commission using recognised methods, as foreseen by article 64 (4) of Commission Regulation 817/2004

¹ LEADER + type measures are co-funded through the Guidance section of the EAGGF, and are included in Operational Programmes and/or Single Programming Documents in Objective 1 regions – see chapter 3.2.

The synthesis of ex post evaluations of rural development programmes 2000 – 2006 forms part of the evaluation plan of DG AGRI for the year 2009. It will be carried out by independent evaluators following an open tender procedure. The contractual technical specifications will be finalised in due time.

2.5.2. *Member States*

Member States have to start the procedures for initiating the ex post evaluation of their respective programmes as quickly as possible in order to match the expected deadline for submission (31/12/2008).

2.6. **Guidance from the Commission**

EU-15: In view of ensuring continuity and consistency in the evaluation of rural development programmes, the ex post evaluation of programmes will follow the same approach as applied for the mid-term evaluations and their respective up-dates. This implies that the set of common evaluation questions with judgement criteria and indicators defined for the mid-term evaluations also have to be applied in the context of the ex post evaluation. In this respect, the Commission Guidelines² established for the mid-term evaluation of rural development programmes are still fully applicable. Therefore, specific guidelines for the ex post evaluation will not be established.

Common evaluation questions will be fully addressed by the Member States, in an ex post perspective, in particular by updating, revising and completing the preliminary answers provided in the context of the mid-term evaluations. Relevant evaluation questions will be comprehensively answered, taking into account the requirements of article 64 (2) of Commission Regulation 817/2004. Particular attention shall be paid to the assessment of the extent to which the recommendations issued at the time of the mid-term evaluation have been taken into account and integrated into the programmes.

EU-10: As regards the EU-10 transitional rural development programmes, for which the mid-term evaluation was not carried out, both the common evaluation questions covering rural development measures foreseen by Council Regulation (EC) No 1257/1999, and specific evaluation questions covering the transitional rural development measures shall be addressed to the most possible extent by making use of the monitoring indicators provided within the annual implementation reports. The full list of evaluation questions to be answered and their respective judgement criteria are included in annex I to this note.

Article 65 (3) of Commission Regulation 817/2004, specifies that the structure of ex post evaluation reports *shall follow, as far as possible, a common structure for evaluation reports defined in guidelines drawn up by the Commission.*

² http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/rur/eval/eval2_en.pdf

EU-15: The common structure to be followed for the ex post evaluation reports is included in Annex II of the Commission guidelines for the Evaluation of rural development programmes 2000-2006 supported from the European Agriculture Guidance and Guarantee Fund³.

EU-10: The common structure to be followed for the ex post evaluation reports is included in Annex II to this note.

2.7. Funding

Following article 12 (2) of Commission Regulation (EC) 1320/2006, expenditures related to the ex post evaluation of the 2000 – 2006 programming period are eligible for funding under the technical assistance component of the rural development programmes 2007 – 2013, provided that new programmes include a provision for this purpose and that the total amount for funding technical assistance does not exceed the ceiling of 4% of the total programme amount (2007 – 2013).

3. EAGGF-GUIDANCE FUNDED MEASURES

3.1. Regulatory framework

Council Regulation (EC) No 1260/1999 of 21 June 1999 laying down general provisions on the Structural Funds.

3.2. Scope:

EU-25, objective 1 regions: all measures foreseen in Council Regulation (EC) No 1257/1999, with the exception of Early retirement, Less Favoured Areas, Agri-environmental and Forestry measures, included in Operational Programmes and/or Single Programming Documents.

EU-10: transitional Leader + type measures included in Operational Programmes and/or Single Programming Documents in Objective 1 regions.

EU-15, all regions: measures included in LEADER + programmes.

Operational Programmes and Single Programming Documents cover the period 2000 – 2006 in the EU-15, and the period 2004 – 2006 in the EU-10. LEADER + programmes cover the period 2000 – 2006.

3.3. Legal requirements

Article 43 (1) of Council Regulation (EC) No 1260/1999 specifies the scope and objectives of ex post evaluations as follows: *on the basis of the evaluation results already available, ex-post evaluation shall cover the utilisation of resources and the effectiveness and efficiency of the assistance and its impact and shall draw conclusions regarding policy on economic and social cohesion. It shall cover the factors contributing to the success or failure of implementation and the achievements and results, including their sustainability.*

³ http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/rur/eval/2000_en.pdf

Following article 43 (2) of Council Regulation (EC) No 1260/1999, *ex-post evaluation shall be the responsibility of the Commission, in collaboration with the Member State and the managing authority.*

3.4. Schedule

Article 43 (2) of Council Regulation (EC) No 1260/1999 specifies that ex post evaluation *shall be completed not later than three years after the end of the programming period.*

3.5. Actions to be taken

3.5.1. Commission

The ex post evaluations of rural development measures included in Operational Programmes and Single Programming Documents will be carried out in the context of the Commission synthesis of ex post evaluations of rural development programmes. It will to a large degree build on the analysis of the mid-term evaluations, their possible updates and data provided in the last annual implementation reports. It will be carried out by independent evaluators following an open tender procedure. The contractual technical specifications will be finalised in due time.

The ex post evaluation of LEADER + (programming period 2000 – 2006) forms part of the DG AGRI evaluation plan for the year 2009. It will be carried out by independent evaluators following an open tender procedure. The contractual technical specifications will be finalised in due time.

3.5.2. Member States

Although not legally bound, Member States can carry out any activity they may deem appropriate for preparing the ex post evaluation of their respective programmes. This could take the form of including a first assessment of all rural development measures in objective 1 regions into their ex post evaluations of rural development programmes, or initiating ex post evaluations of their respective LEADER programmes.

More generally, Member States will support the Commission in carrying out the ex post evaluation by providing monitoring data and any other possible useful information about their respective programmes.

3.6. Guidance from the Commission

Since the ex post evaluation of rural development measures included in Operational Programmes, Single Programming Documents and LEADER+ falls into the responsibility of the Commission, no guidelines will be established. However, if the programme authorities decide to implement their own ex post evaluation of LEADER + programmes, they are invited to make use of existing guidelines for the evaluation of LEADER + programmes⁴.

⁴ http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/rur/eval/index_en.htm

4. SAPARD PROGRAMMES

4.1. Regulatory framework

Council Regulation (EC) No 1268/1999 of 21 June 1999 on Community support for pre-accession measures for agriculture and rural development in the applicant countries of central and Eastern Europe in the pre-accession period and respective implementing rules (Commission Regulation No 2759/1999).

4.2. Scope:

Rural development measures referred to in article 2 of Council Regulation (EC) No 1268/1999 included in SAPARD programmes of the following beneficiary countries: Czech Republic, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Poland, Slovenia, Slovakia, Romania, Bulgaria, and Croatia.

SAPARD programmes cover the period 2000 – 2003 in the case of the Czech Republic, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Poland, Slovenia and Slovakia, the period 2000 – 2006 in the case of Romania and Bulgaria, and the period 2005 – 2006 in the case of Croatia.

4.3. Legal requirements

Following article 5 of Council Regulation (EC) No 1268/1999 programmes have to be subject to ex post evaluations *designed to appraise the success and impact with respect to the defined objectives*. Article 12 of Commission Regulation No 2759/1999 specifies that ex post evaluations have to be carried out taking into account the rules for evaluation as laid down in Council Regulation (EC) No 1260/1999.

4.4. Schedule

Provisions concerning the timing for carrying out ex post evaluations are included in each multi-annual financial agreement established between the Commission and each beneficiary country. Ex post evaluations had to be submitted by the eight former EU-10 candidate countries by the end of the year 2007. Ex post evaluation reports of the SAPARD programmes of Bulgaria, Romania, and Croatia are expected to be submitted by the end of the year 2010 at the latest.

4.5. Actions to be taken

4.5.1. Commission

The synthesis of ex post evaluations of SAPARD programmes forms part of the evaluation plan of DG AGRI for the year 2009. It will cover the ex post evaluations of SAPARD programmes received by that date, and will be carried out by independent evaluators following an open tender procedure. The contractual technical specifications will be finalised in due time.

4.5.2. Member States

SAPARD beneficiary countries have to finalise the ex post evaluations of their respective programmes in accordance with their respective obligations.

4.6. Guidance from the Commission

The Commission guidelines for the evaluation of SAPARD programmes⁵ are applicable for carrying out the ex post evaluations of those programmes.

⁵ http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/external/enlarge/eval/index_en.htm

ANNEX I

COMMON EVALUATION QUESTIONS AND JUDGEMENT CRITERIA FOR THE EX POST EVALUATION OF TRANSITIONAL RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES IN EU-10 MEMBER STATES

1. *Chapter I - Investments in agricultural holdings*

Questions	Judgement criteria
I.1. To what extent have supported investments improved the income of beneficiary farmers?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ The income of beneficiary farmers has improved
I. 2. To what extent have supported investments contributed to a better use of production factors on holdings?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Increase in factor productivity
I.3. To what extent have supported investments contributed to the reorientation of farming activities?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Holdings redeploy production by moving out of surplus product lines or moving into products which have good market outlets○ Holdings take up more alternative activities
I.4. To what extent have supported investments improved the quality of farm products?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ The quality of farm products has improved○ Farm products comply with quality standards, particularly at Community level
I.5. To what extent has the diversification of on-farm activities originating from supported alternative activities helped maintain employment?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ The diversification of on-farm activities originating from supported alternative activities has helped to maintaining employment
I.6. To what extent has the diversification of on-farm activities originating from supported alternative activities helped maintain employment?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Integration of environmental concerns into farm investments○ Improved storage and landspreading of farm manure
I.7. To what extent have supported investments improved production conditions in terms of better working conditions and animal welfare?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Working conditions have improved○ Animal welfare has improved

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2. Chapter II - Setting up of young farmers

Questions	Judgement criteria
II.1. To what extent has the aid for setting up covered the costs arising from setting up?	○ High incentive effect of the setting-up aid
II.2. To what extent has the setting-up aid contributed to the earlier transfer of farms (to relatives versus non-relatives)?	○ Reduction of average age of transferees and/or transferors in assisted transfers
II.3. A To what extent has the setting-up aid contributed to the earlier transfer of farms (to relatives versus non-relatives) ...in particular, how significant was the synergy with the aid for early retirement in achieving such an earlier transfer?	○ Simultaneous take-up of the two schemes ○ Reduced average age of the transferee in the case of combined aid
II.4. To what extent has the aid influenced the number of young farmers of either sex setting up?	○ More young farmers are installed
II.5. To what extent has the setting up of young farmers contributed to safeguarding employment?	○ Jobs are maintained or created ○ Main-occupational farming is secured

3. Chapter III - Training

Questions	Judgement criteria
III.1. To what extent are the assisted training courses in accordance with needs and coherent with other measures of the programme?	○ The training responds to the needs and potential for adaptation (<i>conversion, reorientation, improvement</i>) at the level of individuals, sectors or regions (<i>including gaps/weaknesses or potential/opportunities identified during programming or ex-ante evaluation</i>)
III.2. To what extent have the acquired skills/competence helped improve the situation of the trainees and of the agricultural/forestry sector?	○ The skills/competence acquired by the trainees help improve their employment conditions ○ The skills/competence acquired by the trainees facilitate the adaptation of agriculture and forestry (<i>conversion/reorientation/improvement</i>)

4. *Chapter IV - Early retirement*

Questions	Judgement criteria
IV.1. To what extent has aid for early retirement contributed to the earlier transfer of farms?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Released land is transferred to younger farmer(s)
IV.2. A. To what extent has aid for early retirement contributed to the earlier transfer of farms ...in particular, to what extent has there been synergy between 'early retirement' and 'setting-up of young farmers' in terms of an earlier change of holders?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ There is a significant amount of simultaneous take-up of the two aid schemes ○ There is an additional reduction of the average age of the beneficiaries of early retirement in the case of combined aid
IV.3. To what extent has the economic viability of the remaining agricultural holdings improved?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Improvement in the factors of production ○ Viable production conditions in relation to production restrictions
IV.4. Was the income offered to the transferors appropriate in terms of encouraging them to abandon farming and subsequently offering them a fair standard of living?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The level of income is satisfactory and provides an incentive to stop farming

5. *Chapter V - Less-favoured areas and areas with environmental restrictions*

Questions	Judgement criteria
<p>V.1. To what extent has the scheme contributed to: (i) offsetting the natural handicaps in LFAs in terms of high production costs and low production potential, and: (ii) compensating for costs incurred and income foregone in areas with environmental restrictions?</p> <p><i>(concerns both LFA⁶ and AER⁷)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The income deficit due to natural handicaps or environmental restrictions is offset by compensatory allowances or payments
<p>V.2. To what extent have compensatory allowances helped in ensuring continued agricultural land use?</p> <p><i>(concerns LFA)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Agricultural land use continued
<p>V.3. To what extent have compensatory allowances contributed to the maintenance of a viable rural community?</p> <p><i>(concerns LFA)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Continued agricultural land use is critical for the maintenance of a viable rural community ○ Fair standard of living for farmers
<p>V.4. A. To what extent has the scheme contributed to the protection of the environment</p> <p>...by maintaining or promoting sustainable farming that takes account of environmental protection requirements in LFAs?</p> <p><i>(concerns LFA)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Maintenance/promotion of sustainable farming
<p>V.4. B. To what extent has the scheme contributed to the protection of the environment</p> <p>...by increasing the implementation and respect of environmental restrictions based on Community environmental protection rules?</p> <p><i>(concerns AER)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Increased implementation and respect of targeted environmental protection restrictions limiting agricultural use

⁶ Less-Favoured Areas

⁷ Areas with Environmental Restrictions

6. *Chapter VI - Agri-environment*

Questions	Judgement criteria
VI.1.A. To what extent have natural resources been protectedin terms of soil quality, as influenced by agri-environmental measures?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Soil erosion has been reduced ○ Chemical contamination of soils has been prevented or reduced ○ The protected soil gives raise to further benefits at farm or societal level
VI.1.B. To what extent have natural resources been protected ...in terms of the quality of ground and surface water, as influenced by agri-environmental measures?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reduction of agricultural inputs potentially contaminating water ○ The transport mechanisms (from field surface or rootzone to aquifers) for chemicals have been impeded (leaching, run-off, erosion) ○ Improved quality of surface water and/or groundwater ○ Water protection gives raise to further benefits at farm or societal level
VI.1.C. To what extent have natural resources been protected (or enhanced) ...in terms of the quantity of water resources, as influenced by agri-environmental measures?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The utilisation (abstraction) of water for irrigation has been reduced or increase avoided ○ Water resources protected in terms of quantity ○ Protected water resources give raise to further benefits (farm or rural level, environment, other economic sectors)
VI.2.A. To what extent has biodiversity (<i>species diversity</i>) been maintained or enhanced thanks to agri-environmental measures ...through the protection of flora and fauna on farmland?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reduction of agricultural inputs (or avoided increase) benefiting flora and fauna has been achieved ○ Crop patterns [types of crops (including associated livestock), crop rotation, cover during critical periods, expanse of fields] benefiting flora and fauna have been maintained or reintroduced ○ Species in need of protection have been successfully targeted by the supported actions

6. Chapter VI - Agri-environment (continued)

Questions	Judgement criteria
<p>VI.2.B. To what extent has biodiversity been maintained or enhanced thanks to agri-environmental measures</p> <p>...through the conservation of high nature-value farmland habitats, protection or enhancement of environmental infrastructure or the protection of wetland or aquatic habitats adjacent to agricultural land (<i>habitat diversity</i>)?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ “High nature-value habitats” on farmed land have been conserved ○ Ecological infrastructure, including field boundaries (hedges...) or non-cultivated patches of farmland with habitat function have been protected or enhanced ○ Valuable wetland (often uncultivated) or aquatic habitats have been protected from leeching, run-off or sediments originating from adjacent farmland
<p>VI.2.C. To what extent has biodiversity (<i>genetic diversity</i>) been maintained or enhanced thanks to agri-environmental measures</p> <p>...through the safeguarding of endangered animal breeds or plant varieties?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Endangered breeds/varieties are conserved
<p>VI.3. To what extent have landscapes been maintained or enhanced by agri-environmental measures?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The perceptive/cognitive (visual, etc) <u>coherence</u> between the farmland and the natural/biophysical characteristics of the zone has been maintained or enhanced ○ The perceptive/cognitive (visual, etc) <u>differentiation</u> (homogeneity/diversity) of farmland has been maintained or enhanced ○ The <u>cultural identity</u> of farmland has been maintained or enhanced ○ The protection/improvement of landscape structures and functions relating to farmland results in societal benefits/values (amenity values)

7. *Chapter VII - Improving processing procedures and marketing of agricultural products*

Questions	Judgement criteria
VII.1. To what extent have the supported investments helped to increase the competitiveness of agricultural products through improved and rationalised processing and marketing of agricultural products?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Rational procedures in assisted processing & marketing lines ○ Better use of production factors in assisted processing & marketing lines ○ Lower costs in assisted processing & marketing lines
VII.2. To what extent have the supported investments helped to increase the added value and competitiveness of agricultural products by improving their quality?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The intrinsic quality of processed/marketed agricultural products is improved ○ Uptake of quality labels has increased ○ Higher added value in financial terms thanks to improved quality
VII.3. To what extent have the supported investments improved the situation of the basic agricultural production sector?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Demand for and price of basic agricultural products assured or improved ○ Co-operation developed between the producers of basic agricultural products and the processing/marketing stages
VII.4. To what extent have the supported investments improved health and welfare?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Health and welfare concerns are appropriately integrated into the programme ○ Animals transported or handled for slaughter do not infect live animals ○ Workplace conditions improved for persons involved in processing and marketing
VII.5. To what extent have the supported investments protected the environment?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Profitable outlets for basic agricultural products that are linked to environmentally benign farming have been provided ○ The assisted operations relating to processing or marketing exceed minimum environmental standards

8. *Chapter VIII - Forestry*

Questions	Judgement criteria
VIII.1.A. To what extent are forest resources being maintained and enhanced through the programme ...particularly by influencing land-use and the structure and quality of growing stock?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Increase of wooded area on previous agricultural and non-agricultural land ○ Anticipated increase of volume of growing stock thanks to planting of new woodland and improvement of existing woodlands ○ Anticipated improvement in quality (assortment, diameter...) and structure of growing stock thanks to forest improvement
VIII.1. B. To what extent are forest resources being maintained and enhanced through the programme ...particularly by influencing the total carbon storage in forest stands?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ There is additional build up of carbon in the growing stock of new and existing woodlands
VIII.2.A. To what extent have the assisted actions enabled forestry to contribute to the economic and social aspects of rural development ...by maintenance and encouragement of the productive functions on forests holdings?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ More rational production of forest products (or services) ○ Enhancement of outlets for forest products
VIII.2.B. To what extent have the assisted actions enabled forestry to contribute to the economic and social aspects of rural development ...by maintenance and development of employment and other socio-economic functions and conditions?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ More activities/employment on holdings ○ More activities in rural community, due to primary or secondary production on holdings or due to initial processing and marketing stages ○ Greater attractiveness of area for local population or rural tourists ○ Maintaining or increasing income in rural areas

8. *Chapter VIII - Forestry (continued)*

Questions	Judgement criteria
<p>VIII.2.C. To what extent have the assisted actions enabled forestry to contribute to the economic and social aspects of rural development</p> <p>...by maintenance and appropriate enhancement of protective functions of forest management?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Appropriate protection actions undertaken ○ Non-woodland and socio-economic interests are protected
<p>VIII.3.A. To what extent have the assisted actions contributed to the ecological functions of forests</p> <p>...by maintenance, conservation and appropriate enhancement of biological diversity?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Genetic and/or species diversity protected/improved by using indigenous tree species or mixtures in assisted actions ○ Protection/improvement of habitat diversity through the upkeep of representative, rare or vulnerable forest ecosystems/habitats that depend on specific assisted forest structures or silvicultural practices ○ Protection/improvement of habitat diversity through beneficial interaction between assisted areas and the surrounding landscape/countryside
<p>VIII.3.B. To what extent have the assisted actions contributed to the ecological functions of forests</p> <p>...by maintenance of their health and vitality?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Less damage to soil and growing stock from silvicultural or harvesting operations ○ Prevention of calamities (particularly pests and diseases) through appropriate forest structure and silvicultural practice ○ Production potential protected or restored from damage arising from natural hazards

9. *Chapter IX - Promoting the adaptation and development of rural areas*

Questions	Judgement criteria
IX.1. To what extent has the income of the rural population been maintained or improved?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Farm income maintained/improved ○ Off-farm income maintained/improved
IX.2. To what extent have the living conditions and welfare of the rural population been maintained as a result of social and cultural activities, better amenities or by the alleviation of remoteness?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Remoteness has been alleviated ○ Social and cultural facilities have been maintained/enhanced, particularly for young people and young families ○ Neighbourhood amenities and housing conditions maintained/improved
IX.3. To what extent has employment in rural areas been maintained?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Employment of the farming population maintained/increased ○ Seasonal variation of activities is more effectively balanced ○ Diversification of activities contributes to employment of the non-farming population
IX.4. To what extent have the structural characteristics of the rural economy been maintained or improved?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Productive structures linked to agriculture have been maintained or improved ○ Agricultural production potential has been protected/restored regarding natural hazards ○ Dynamism of rural actors promoted and potential for endogenous development mobilised in rural areas
IX.5. To what extent has the rural environment been protected or improved?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Agricultural improvements generate environmental benefits ○ Pollution/emissions prevented and better use of natural/non-renewable resources ○ Non-agricultural land has been maintained/improved in terms of biodiversity, landscapes or natural resources ○ Increased knowledge/awareness about rural environmental problems and solutions

Transitional Measure 1 - Support for semi-subsistence farms undergoing restructuring

Questions	Judgement criteria
TM.1.1. To what extent has the support promoted enduring structural adjustment of semi-subsistence farms in the country?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Beneficiary farms have improved their production capacities and increased their productivity.
TM.1 2. To what extent has the support facilitated the move into the market for semi-subsistence farms in the country?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The support has increased the marketed output of beneficiary farms; ○ New market outlets are available for beneficiary farmers as a result of the support.
TM1.3. To what extent has the support reduced the structural disparity between the agricultural sector of the country and the agricultural sector in the EU-15 Member States?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The support has improved the economic viability of beneficiary farms; ○ Beneficiary farms cope better with the competitive pressure of the single market.

Transitional Measure 2 - Support for compliance with Community standards

Questions	Judgement criteria
<p>TM.2.1. To what extent has the support helped farmers to adapt to standards established by the Community? Detail with respect to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Standards in the field of environment, – Standards in the field of public, animal and plant health, – Standards in the field of animal welfare, – Standards in the field of occupational safety 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The support has increased awareness of public and private actors about Community legislation in the different fields of intervention; ○ The support has increased compliance of beneficiary farms with EU standards in the different fields of intervention.
TM.2.2 To what extent has the support reduced the structural disparity between the agricultural sector of the country and the agricultural sector in the EU-15 Member States?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The support has increased the share of products compliant with Community standards in beneficiary farms; ○ Beneficiary farms cope better with the competitive pressure of the single market.

Transitional Measure 3 - Support for the establishment and administrative operations of producers groups

Questions	Judgement criteria
TM.3.1. To what extent has the measure enhanced market opportunities for beneficiary farmers?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The support has facilitated the adaptation of production to market requirements in the country; ○ The support has improved beneficiaries' skills and knowledge with respect to production techniques and market conditions.
TM.3.2 To what extent has the support reduced the structural disparity between the agricultural sector of the country and the agricultural sector in the EU-15 Member States?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Supported interventions have improved the economic viability of beneficiaries' farms; ○ Beneficiaries' farms are less exposed to the competitive pressure of the single market.

Transitional Measure 4 - Leader + type measures (optional, as co-funded through the Guidance section of EAGGF)

Questions	Judgement criteria
TM.4.1. To what extent has the support enhanced the capacities of rural communities to conceive and implement local rural development strategies?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The support has promoted active participation of rural communities in the local development process; ○ Representative local development partnerships have been built.
TM.4.2. To what extent has the support contributed to fostering the endogenous development of rural areas?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The support has permitted to implement integrated territorial rural development strategies of a pilot nature; ○ Implemented strategies have encouraged new forms of developments and the supply of new products and services by exploiting endogenous resources.

Transitional Measure 5 - Technical assistance

Questions	Judgement criteria
TM.5.1. To what extent has the support improved capacities concerning the management, monitoring and evaluation of rural development programmes?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ The support has promoted exchanges of experience and information among actors;○ The support has increased expertise of public and private actors about Community rural development interventions and related procedures;○ The support has enhanced knowledge and skills in evaluation methods.

Cross-cutting evaluating questions

Questions	Judgement criteria
Transv.1. To what extent has the programme helped stabilising the rural population?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Age profile of population benefiting from assistance contributes towards maintaining/promoting a balanced population structure ○ Gender profile of population benefiting from assistance contributes towards maintaining/promoting a balanced population structure ○ Rural depopulation has been reduced
Transv.2. To what extent has the programme been conducive to securing employment both on and off holdings?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Employment is created or maintained, directly and indirectly by the programme, on farm/forestry holdings. ○ Employment is created or maintained, directly and indirectly by the programme, in enterprises (other than holdings) in rural areas or in branches connected with agriculture.
Transv.3. To what extent has the programme been conducive to maintaining or improving the income level of the rural community?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Income of the farming population maintained or improved, directly or indirectly by the programme ○ Income of non-farming population maintained or improved, directly or indirectly, by the programme
Transv.4. To what extent has the programme improved the market situation for basic agricultural/forestry products?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Productivity has been improved and/or costs reduced in key production chains thanks to the programme ○ Market positioning (quality, etc) has improved for key production chains (filières) thanks to the programme ○ There is a positive development in the turnover and price for key production chains (filières) thanks to the programme

Cross-cutting evaluating questions (continued)

Questions	Judgement criteria
Transv.5. To what extent has the programme been conducive to the protection and improvement of the environment?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The combination of supported actions (from within and between different chapters) focusing on production/development and/or on the environment generates positive environmental effects ○ Land-use patterns (incl. the location/concentration of livestock) have been maintained or have developed in a way which is environmentally beneficial ○ Unsustainable use or pollution of natural resources has been avoided or minimised ○ Rural landscapes have been maintained or enhanced
Transv.6. To what extent have the implementing arrangements contributed to maximising the intended effects of the programme?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The assisted actions are concerted and complementary so as to produce synergy through their interaction on different aspects of rural development problems/opportunities ○ The <u>uptake</u> within the programme (by holdings, enterprises, associations...) involves those having the biggest <u>need</u> and/or <u>potential</u> for rural development in the area concerned by the programme (needy, capable, initiating good projects ...), thanks to a combination of implementing arrangements such as (i) publicity about the support opportunities, (ii) eligibility criteria, (iii) premium differentiation and/or (iv) procedures/criteria for selection of projects as well as (v) the absence of unnecessary delays and bureaucratic costs for these beneficiaries ○ <u>Leverage</u> effects have been maximised through a combination of eligibility criteria, premium differentiation or procedures/criteria for selection of projects ○ <u>Dead-weight</u> effects have been avoided through a combination of eligibility criteria, premium differentiation and/or procedures/criteria for selection of projects ○ <u>Beneficial indirect effects</u> (especially supplier effects) have been maximised

ANNEX II

THE RECOMMENDED COMMON STRUCTURE FOR THE EX POST EVALUATION REPORTS

(a) Executive summary

The executive summary should contain at least the main findings and conclusions of the evaluation. It should not exceed 5 pages.

(b) Introduction

The introduction should provide general and contextual information about the programme: specific national policies, social and economic needs justifying the assistance, definition of beneficiaries or other target groups. The introduction should provide information on previously implemented actions. It should also include the key (updated) characteristics of the implementation: actors involved, institutional context, time frame, general budgetary information, brief description of priorities and measures.

The introduction must also elucidate the evaluation process itself: recapitulation of the terms of reference, purpose and scope of the evaluation, possible programme specific evaluation questions etc. It should also briefly outline any previous evaluations of relevance to the programme.

(c) Methodological approach

The evaluation design and its consequences should be made understandable in this section. It should describe the general design of the evaluation and the methods used in the evaluation process:

- Sources of data, techniques for data collection (questionnaires, interviews; size and selection criteria for samples...), information about how the indicators are calculated in order to assess the quality and reliability of the data and identify possible biases;
- Techniques for replying to the evaluation questions and arriving at conclusions.

Any problems or limitations connected to the methodological approach should be clearly stated.

(d) Presentation and analysis of the information collected

1. The secondary and primary data used for answering the evaluation questions should be thoroughly presented and explained. Detailed data may go into an annex. The evaluation must go beyond descriptive information; hence analysis and interpretation of the data must be a major part of the report.

1.1 The information and analysis concerning the financial and administrative inputs should at least comprise:

- The forecast expenditure for the programming period as a whole as well as for the individual measures. Account should be taken of updated forecasts where they exist.

- The actual expenditure so far, for the entire implementation and the individual measures and their uptake.
- The financial effectiveness (actual spending in relation to forecast expenditure for the whole programming period).

By no means, the evaluation should limit itself to simply stating whether or not the financial planning or forecasts are being met.

1.2 The information related to measures and their output should at least involve the following:

The uptake of the measures by the beneficiaries should be explained in relation to the population of potential beneficiaries.

The actions and the concrete outputs deriving from the individual measures should be presented accompanied by relevant output indicators.

The efficiency should be calculated where relevant by relating the financial information above to the nature and amount of direct physical output.

2. The text presenting the answers to the evaluation questions must not be limited to descriptive information but must include elements of analysis:

- Answers must be provided for (a) the questions for the individual programme and (b) for each common question (including its sub-questions) which is relevant to the programme.
 - The answers must at least include an analysis and discussion of the suitable indicator(s) in relation to the criteria and possible target level for the question. The indicators must be presented, both those for the common evaluation questions and those for the question relating to individual programmes, for the entire geographical area covered by the programme and, if relevant, for any further suitable geographical split.
 - The answer should also include an analysis and discussion of any other relevant quantitative and qualitative information from the surveys or enquiries or from other sources, for example statistics, research or other evaluations.
- For practical reasons, the answers and the indicators should be easily identifiable, preferably by using the numbered references of the evaluation questions and sub-questions.
- It is expected that a comprehensive answer to all relevant questions will be provided, according to the provisions of Article 64 (2) of Commission Regulation 817/2004. If relevant, a validation of modifications to the programme should also be included.

(f) Annexes (Detailed information, complete data sets...)

Detailed information such as the full terms of reference, complete data sets, analytic details, detailed monographs or the structure of questionnaires may be in an annex.