

EVALUATION ROADMAP			
TITLE OF THE EVALUATION	Evaluation of the forestry measures under Rural Development [Reg. (EU) No 1305/2013]		
LEAD DG RESPONSIBLE UNIT	AGRI.DDG2.E4 (EVALUATION AND STUDIES)	DATE OF THIS ROADMAP	10/11/2016
TYPE OF EVALUATION	Evaluation	PLANNED START DATE	12/2016
	Interim	PLANNED COMPLETION DATE	11/2017
	Mixed	PLANNING CALENDAR	http://ec.europa.eu/info/planned-evaluations_en
This indicative roadmap is provided for information purposes only and is subject to change.			

A. Purpose
(A.1) Purpose
<p>Forestry measures have formed an essential part of the Rural Development Regulations since 2000. Previously, as part of the “Mac Sharry reform” 1992, support of afforestation of agricultural land has been introduced as “accompanying measure” to limit oversupply of agricultural products [Reg. (EC) No 2080/1992]; hence, support was concentrated on the afforestation of agricultural land. The Rural Development regulations since 2000 [Reg.(EC) No 1257/1999 and Reg.(EC) No1698/2005] extended the scope of support and addressed the important multifunctional role forestry can play in rural areas in terms of environment/climate, economy and social fabric; they contained numerous measures that could directly and indirectly enhance this role.</p> <p>This role was confirmed for the current programming period 2014 – 2020 by Reg. (EU) No 1305/2013.</p> <p>The forestry measures are relevant for the implementation of the EU Forest Strategy and the commitments stemming from the EU Biodiversity Strategy, the 2015 Paris Agreement on climate change as well as to the Bioeconomy Strategy. Furthermore, under the aspect of balanced territorial development, coherence with the other European Structural and Investment Funds (ESI Funds) is important, the most relevant ESI Funds in this case being the Cohesion Fund, the European Regional Development Fund and the European Social Fund.</p> <p>The purpose of this evaluation is the assessment of the contribution of forestry measures under Reg. (EU) No 1305/2013 to achieving the strategic objectives of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) and the Europe 2020 Strategy, the objectives of rural development programmes as laid down in Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013 consisting of (1) fostering the competitiveness of agriculture (2) ensuring the sustainable management of natural resources and climate action, and (3) achieving a balanced territorial development of rural economies and communities including the creation and maintenance of employment, and the six Union priorities for rural development as laid down in art.5 of this regulation.</p> <p>The evaluation will also assess the efficiency, relevance, coherence and EU added value of the forestry measures in question.</p> <p>The evaluation should provide timely results for the performance report due in 2018 in accordance with Article 110 of Regulation 1306/2013 on the common monitoring and evaluation framework of the CAP. Moreover, the EU Forest Strategy highlights the importance of the forestry measures under rural development for its implementation. The results of the evaluation will serve as input for the review of the EU Forest Strategy due in 2018.</p> <p>This evaluation forms part of a broader bundle of evaluations covering the various 2007-2013 and 2014-2020 Rural Development measures, which are planned as from 2017, such as the Synthesis of 2007-2013 Rural Development Ex-Post Evaluations planned for 2017 and the Evaluation of the contribution of the European Network for Rural Development for a better implementation of Rural Development programmes planned for 2018.</p>
(A.2) Justification
<p>In accordance with Article 110 of Reg. (EU) No 1306/2013 the performance of the CAP, and in this case the forestry-related rural development measures provided for in Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013, shall be measured and assessed.</p>

B. Content and subject of the evaluation

(B.1) Subject area

The evaluation will focus on the forestry measures as set out in articles 21 – 26 and 34 of Reg. (EU) No 1305/2013 (listed under point B.3 of this roadmap).

As part of the assessment of coherence with other actions, the evaluation will also consider the whole set of Rural Development measures, in particular those measures with target groups going beyond forestry, which have also an impact on the forest sector (e.g. cooperation, innovation etc.). It will also consider other CAP measures complementary to the forestry measures, e.g. cross compliance and the “greening” measures related to ecological focus areas (EFAs) under the Direct Payments Regulation [Regulation (EU) 1307/2013], and other measures, including regulatory, at national or regional level.

The evaluation will concentrate on the actions implemented in the 2014-2020 period but will also include the actions implemented during the 2007-2013 programming period under Reg. (EU) No 1698/2005 in order to be able to better capture the relevant long-term effects of forestry measures.

(B.2) Original objectives of the intervention

The forestry measures should contribute to the achievement of the specific objectives of rural development programmes listed under Section A.1 of this roadmap and ultimately contribute to the general objectives of the CAP (in particular those linked to sustainable management of natural resources and climate action, and balanced territorial development) and the relevant Europe 2020 objectives. They should also contribute to the implementation of the EU Forest Strategy and should take into account the commitments made in the Ministerial Conferences on the Protection of Forests in Europe.

(B.3) How the objectives were to be achieved

Rural development funds support the implementation of sustainable forest management by the Member States. Co-financing of forestry measures under the Rural Development Regulation represents the main means of EU-level funding for forests.

Articles 21 – 26 and 34 of Reg. (EU) No 1305/2013 (the Rural Development Regulation) set out the measures specifically addressing forestry:

Art. 21: Investments in forest area development and improvement of the viability of forests

Art.22: Afforestation and creation of woodland

Art.23: Establishment of agroforestry systems

Art.24: Prevention and restoration of damage to forests from forest fires and natural disasters and catastrophic events

Art.25: Investments improving the resilience and environmental value of forest ecosystems

Art.26: Investments in forestry technologies and in processing, in mobilising and in the marketing of forest products

Art.34: Forest-environmental and climate services and forest conservation

These measures are the main priority for this evaluation.

In addition, several **other Rural Development horizontal measures** can be deployed in the forestry sector (such as innovation, investments, cooperation, etc.).

C. Scope of the evaluation

(C.1) Topics covered

The focus of the evaluation is on forestry measures implemented in the current financial period 2014-2020 as set out in articles 21 – 26 and 34 of Reg. (EU) No 1305/2013, taking due account of the forestry-related measures covering the 2007-2013 period under Reg. (EU) No 1698/2005 to allow capturing relevant long-term effects.

In order to assess the broader effects on environment, climate, economy, and social fabric, and as part of the assessment of coherence, complementary measures, including on national or regional level, will be taken into account with the main point of reference still being the forestry measures.

(C.2) Issues to be examined

Starting from a theory-based analysis of the environmental/climate and economic effects of the forestry measures, an intervention logic will be developed demonstrating the relevant linkages between the forestry measures and the relevant general CAP, specific rural development objectives set out under Sections A.1 and B.2 of this roadmap and the six Union priorities for rural development.

The assumptions underlying the theoretical intervention logic will be tested using a combination of evaluation tools based on evidence collected from different sources (see section D).

The evaluation will make use of quantified evidence, indicating any limitations of the value or soundness of the results obtained and supporting the quantitative evidence collected with a well-reasoned qualitative assessment.

The evaluation will be conducted along the five evaluation criteria:

Effectiveness

To what extent have the forestry measures enhanced the economic viability of forests and the competitiveness of the forest sector?

To what extent have supported forestry measures impacted on the environment and climate?

To what extent have the forestry measures impacted on balanced territorial development and the development of the rural economy and social fabric?

Efficiency

To what extent has the implementation of the forestry measures led to a change in the administrative burden: at the level of the beneficiaries; at the level of the Member States administration; at the level of the Commission services?

To what extent have the forestry measures been efficient in achieving their objectives? To what extent have the related costs/burdens been proportionate to the benefits achieved?

Coherence

To what extent have the forestry measures as part of the entire set of relevant CAP-measures dedicated to the environment/climate delivered a coherent and complementary contribution to achieving the general objective of sustainable management of natural resources and climate action?

To what extent have the forestry measures as part of the entire set of relevant CAP-measures dedicated to the environment/climate delivered a coherent and complementary contribution to achieving the objective of environmental/climate legislation and strategies?

To what extent have the forestry measures been coherent and complementary with the interventions of the other ESI-Funds and other relevant EU-policies as research and innovation?

Relevance

To what extent the examined forestry measures matched the existing needs in the sector, the priorities established at the EU, programme and/or national level?

To what extent is the intervention still relevant taking into account current needs? How well do the objectives of the forestry measures still correspond to the needs within the EU?

EU added value

To what extent have the forestry measures created EU added value? For example, did they achieve EU-wide effects? (e.g. for preserving the environment, building networks for exchange of best practices, etc.)?

What is the difference that the EU financing made in implementing these measures compared to Member States acting on their own?

To what extent do the issues addressed by the examined interventions continue to require action at EU level?

(C.3) Other tasks

N/A

D. Evidence base

(D.1) Evidence from monitoring

The evaluation will use monitoring data obtained according to Articles 67 to 79 of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013. Relevant information is provided through the indicators included in the CAP 2014–2020 common monitoring and evaluation framework (CMEF), (e.g. data on uptake) and statistical information collected by the Commission such as the Farm Structure Survey, the full set of agri-environmental indicators, the existing monitoring information from Environmental Policy (e.g. as regards NATURA 2000, water quality and quantity or forest fire monitoring), the EEA European environment - state and outlook 2015 report, national forest inventories and EU submissions under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

(D.2) Previous evaluations and other reports

The evaluation study will use data provided by Member States (e.g. information in the framework of the approval of Rural Development Programmes), national reports on Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry (LULUCF) actions (submitted under art. 10 of the LULUCF Decision 529/2013/EU), Forest Statistics, Farm Accounting Data Network (FADN) data, market data and environmental indicators and any relevant completed or on-going studies on forestry measures in the CAP reform such as the report on implementation of Forestry Measures under the Rural Development Regulation 1698/2005 for the period 2007-2013, the Good practice guidance on the sustainable mobilisation of wood in Europe or the Study on Prospects for the market supply of wood and other forest products from areas with fragmented forest-ownership structures¹.

Member States' evaluations of the Rural Development Programmes 2007-2013 are due by 31.12.2016 and will subsequently be synthesised by the Commission by end 2017.

The ex-ante evaluations for the 2014-2020 rural development programmes have been synthesised in 2015².

The Synthesis of Ex Ante Evaluations of Rural Development Programmes 2007-2013 including forestry measures was published in 2008³.

The Synthesis of Mid-Term Evaluations of Rural Development Programmes 2007-2013 addressed also forestry measures and was published in 2012⁴.

Reg. (EC) No 2080/1992 regarding the afforestation of agricultural land was evaluated in March 2001⁵.

The Special Report No 8/2013 by the European Court of Auditors will be taken into account as well.

Relevant information will be provided from the ongoing study 'Mapping and analysis of the implementation of the CAP' with regard to the overall implementation context and choices of Member States in relation to the whole CAP including forestry measures.

For 2017 a study is planned on the administrative burden of the CAP. If already advanced enough it could provide complementary quantified information on the administrative burden linked with the implementation of forestry measures.

(D.3) Evidence from assessing the implementation and application of legislation (complaints, infringement procedures)

N/A

¹ Available at: http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/forest/publications/index_en.htm

² Available at: http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/evaluation/rural-development-reports/ex-ante-rdp-synthesis-2014-2020_en.htm

³ Available at: http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/evaluation/rural-development-reports/2008-rurdev_en.htm

⁴ Available at: http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/evaluation/rural-development-reports/synthesis-mte-2007-2013_en.htm

⁵ Available at: http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/evaluation/rural-development-reports/2001-forest_en.htm

(D.4) Consultation
<p>Consultation objectives:</p> <p>The aim of the envisaged consultations is to seek information and feedback from the relevant stakeholders and wider public in relation to practical experience with the implementation and the effects of forestry measures.</p> <p>In the context of the external study work, consultation activities will target the following main stakeholders: public authorities responsible for implementation of forestry measures in EU Member States including paying agencies, and bodies delivering advisory services; forest services; farmers, forest owners and forest owners' organisations; relevant operational and focus groups established under EIP Agriculture,; academia and experts as well as NGOs and other civil society organisations active in the field of forestry issues. These consultation activities will take the form of surveys and interviews.</p> <p>Structured and dedicated discussions within the Standing Forestry Committee and the Rural Development Committee are envisaged; these Committees gather experts from national administrations and should provide in particular information on the management of the measures. In addition, the relevant Civil Dialogue Groups gathering civil society representatives (for Forestry and Cork, for Rural Development) will be consulted in particular on implementation and results of forestry measures.</p> <p>The Expert Group on Monitoring and Evaluating the CAP will be requested to provide information on possible relevant activities at Member State level and in particular in case Member States have set up arrangements for collecting baseline data and for monitoring and evaluating forestry measures. The possibility of organising an exchange of views in the context of this Expert Group is under consideration.</p> <p>After completion of the external evaluation study, a presentation and discussion with the members of the Standing Forestry Committee and the representatives from civil society in the context of the Civil Dialogue Group on Forestry and Cork will be scheduled to receive feedback on the findings to be used as input for the preparation of the evaluation Staff Working Document.</p> <p>In parallel during the works on the evaluation an open internet-based public consultation in relation to practical experience with the implementation and the effects of forestry measures will be conducted between February and April 2017 and made available on the Your Voice In Europe website⁶ in all official EU languages for 12 weeks.</p> <p>The consultation of the Committees (see above) will take place at the beginning of the open internet-based public consultation and towards the end of the evaluation works.</p> <p>At the end of the consultation work, an overall synopsis report will be drawn up covering the results of the different consultation activities that took place. It will be made available on the consultation website⁷.</p>
(D.5) Further evidence to be gathered
Further country-specific evidence will be gathered through case studies as part of the present evaluation.

E. Other relevant information/ remarks
N/A

⁶ The consultation planning can be found on: http://ec.europa.eu/yourvoice/consultations/docs/planned-consultations-2016_en.pdf

⁷ Available at: http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/consultations/public/index_en.htm