#### 7 December 2016

## Workshop «Agrienvironment-climate measures (AECM): **Challenges of** controllability and verifiability»



EUROPEAN COURT OF AUDITORS

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The opinions expressed are personal and do not reflect in any way the official views of the European Court of Auditors



1. Introduction

2. Audit of agri-environmental measures







## 1. Introduction

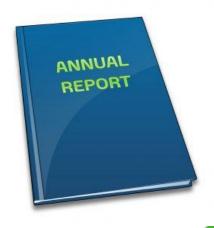
1. ECA's audit of AE and climate measures

- Statement of Assurance
  - Transactions
  - Systems
- 2. My role and current activities
  - Head of Module for area transactions co-financed by EAFRD



## 2. Audit of AE measures

- 1. ECA's special reports:
- No 23/2014 "Errors in rural development spending: what are the causes and how are they being addressed?"
- 2. ECA's Statement of Assurance:
  - Annual reports 2014, 2015
  - SoA 2016





### ECA'S special report No 23/2014

- 1. Payments from 2011, 2012, 2013
- 2. Main cause for area related errors is non compliance with agri-environmental commitments

- 3. Main reasons for errors:
  - Low incentives for farmers to apply
  - Low control rate for commitments
  - Low sanction rate for non compliances



#### **ECA's Statement of Assurance**

#### Annual report 2014

- Frequency of AE errors:
  - 6 cases out of 36 (16,7%)
- Issues found: farmers had not met all the conditions for payments
- Example:
  - A beneficiary undertook for environmental reasons to close off a hay meadow from grazing before 15 May each year and keep it closed for at least the 10 following weeks. We found that neither commitments had been respected.



#### **ECA's Statement of Assurance**

#### Annual report 2015

- Frequency of AE errors:
  - 3 cases out of 45 (6,7%)
- Issues found: farmers had not met all the conditions for payments
- 1 case concerned not compliance with maximum stocking density requirements on grassland management; 1 case concerned use of fertilizers above the limits established by the national regulations.



#### **ECA's Statement of Assurance**

#### Statement of assurance 2016 (work in progress)

- Issues found: farmer did not meet all the conditions for payment
- Example concerns a beneficiary who did not comply with the eligibility condition of having an orchard with one or more species which should be at least 80% of the total number of trees. He also did not respect his commitment of keeping the parcels clear of unwanted vegetation.



# Thank you for your attention.

## Any questions?

