



Brussels,
AGRI.DDG1.C4(2021)4916352/TH

MINUTES

Meeting of the Expert Group for monitoring and evaluating the CAP

17 June 2021

Chair: Ms Sophie Helaine

Delegations present: All Member States were present.

1. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA AND OF THE MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Ms Sophie Helaine (Head of Unit, DG AGRI Unit C.4, Monitoring and Evaluation) welcomes the participants and explains the technical aspects of the meeting, the rules of the online meeting and the characteristics of the interpretation.

Ms Helaine asks if any modifications to the minutes of the previous Expert Group for Monitoring and Evaluating the CAP meeting should be made. No modifications of the minutes of the previous Expert Group meeting are requested by the Member States' representatives. The minutes are therefore approved.

Ms Helaine lists the points of the agenda. The point 'State of play of preparation of budget codes' has been removed due to unfinished negotiations. This point will be dealt with in the next meeting of the Expert Group for Monitoring and Evaluating the CAP on 17 September 2021.

After informing on these changes, the agenda is adopted.

2. NATURE OF THE MEETING

The Expert Group meeting is open to appointed representatives of the Member States. The meeting documents and presentations are available on <https://circabc.europa.eu/ui/welcome>

3. LIST OF POINTS DISCUSSED

3.1. Discussion of updated indicator fiches

The Commission clarifies that the discussions in the trilogue are ongoing and the latest updates on the description of the interventions are still to be integrated in output indicator fiches and, for this reason, they have not been shared yet with Member States. On the contrary, the result indicators and context/impact indicators fiches were shared with Member States, but these versions might still change slightly until the final agreement in the trilogue is reached.

After these clarifications, Ms Sophie Helaine (Head of Unit, DG AGRI Unit C.4, Monitoring and Evaluation), Mr Ruggero Fornoni (Evaluation Officer, DG AGRI Unit C.4, Monitoring and Evaluation) and Ms Evangelia Mourmoura (Team Leader, DG AGRI Unit D.3, Implementation support and IACS) give the presentations 'Update of indicator fiches'.

After the presentations, delegates from Member States raised the following questions and remarks:

3.1.1. Planning of outputs

Sweden asks whether the planning of outputs should be based on full outputs as opposed to partial outputs, as presented during a recent workshop of the European Network for Rural Development.

Poland asks if, at the planning level, the unit amount multiplied by the number of planned outputs in a particular year should be equal to the total budget of the intervention.

Italy expresses some difficulties in understanding which unit amounts are most appropriate to sub-divide the interventions. It asks for further explanations on this issue in a future meeting of the Expert Group for Monitoring and Evaluating the CAP.

The Commission explains the background on to the planning of outputs: For the performance clearance of non-IACS interventions which are paid in more than one year, Member States would report per financial year a partial output corresponding to the payment for that operation. However, to simplify the planning, Member States would not need to plan partial outputs but are asked to indicate the output in full in the first year of payment. This also corresponds to how result indicators are reported, i.e. in full from the first payment.

In line with the latest developments in the trilogue, Member States will not be required to plan outputs at the level of each unit amount, but per intervention. The financial ceiling will only be at the level of the type of intervention. The planning of outputs is not related to the performance clearance and therefore not checked as such, nor do deviations have any consequence. The aim is to have an indicative overview on how Member States plan the support. Member States may plan per unit amount; however, the financial planning will only be required at the level of intervention, according to the latest changes of Article 88.

The Commission will only check whether the unit amount is respected, with the flexibility for average unit amounts provided for in the Regulation.

If Member States define several unit amounts for an intervention, they are not requested to necessarily indicate financial indicators per unit amounts, nor to indicate the planned outputs per unit amount. This simplifies the planning, as it could be difficult to predict the uptake when there are several types of investments or different types of commitments within one intervention. For the average unit amounts, defining several of them within the same intervention could minimise the risk for large deviations in the clearance.

3.1.2. Indicator R.29a 'Preserving beehives'

Estonia highlights that in the fiches for indicators R.5 'Risk management' and R.9 'Farm modernisation', the number of beekeepers is still present in the denominator and should be removed.

Denmark asks which indicators could cover technical assistance and implementation of research programmes related to apiculture, given that it has been removed from R.1 'Enhancing performance through knowledge and innovation'. France raises concerns regarding the removal of technical assistance and research projects for beekeeping from indicator R.1 and asks if this could be still discussed in the Member States' negotiations with the Commission.

Spain asks for clarification on whether technical assistance to apiculture should fall under R.24 'Environmental/climate performance through knowledge'.

Denmark asks for further clarification in the fiche R.29a on the exact type of interventions relevant to this indicator, as well as for further guidance on how the number of beehives should be counted for different types of interventions concerning apiculture under sectoral programmes. This indicator seems currently difficult to use, as in Denmark a big part of the support is granted to technical assistance, research projects, etc. It is unclear how to reflect this in the indicator and the target value.

Sweden raises concerns regarding the difficulty in counting the hives under the indicator R.29a, especially in avoiding double counting.

Germany asks for clarification on the indicator R.29a: whether it is focused on the bee population, which is considerably varying through the year, or rather the hives, which can be empty for a time in the year, but constitute however a stable number. Germany also enquires for the way in which the fiche for the indicator R.29a relates to Article 50, where a methods for calculating the number of beehives needs to be set up?

The Commission acknowledges the need to remove number of beekeepers also from the indicators R.5 'Risk management' and R.9 'Farm modernisation'.

The Commission explains that it is difficult to avoid double counting of beekeepers, given that many Member States provide broad support e.g. actions to combat diseases (e.g. varroasis) or technical support, which directly reach a large share of beekeepers. Therefore, only interventions intended directly to beekeepers are accounted for under R.29a.

Technical assistance to beekeepers and beekeepers' organisations was removed from R.1 'Enhancing performance through knowledge and innovation', from R.24 'Environmental/climate performance through knowledge and innovation', as well as from any other result indicators (except from R.29a). This is because in some Member States (e.g. DE) the number of beekeepers is particularly high and, by adding this to the number of beneficiaries, it would prevent from seeing the CAP action for farmers who are not beekeepers. The exclusion of beekeepers (and technical assistance) from R.1 is a calculation method which cannot be overruled by Member States in the CAP Plan, because it would lead to great difficulties to interpret indicator R.1 and follow the progress of Member States in implementing knowledge exchange for farmers.

The Commission will specify the types of interventions that can be taken into account for the indicator R.29a (as so far only the excluded types of interventions are mentioned).

Beehives should be counted based on the beekeeper/beneficiary identification number to avoid double counting. In addition, only targeted interventions, which are directed to beekeepers, should be accounted.

Finally, as regard the method for calculating the number of beehives, the Commission invites Member States to express any difficulty in transforming payments and unit amounts per beehives into hectares for agri-environment-climate commitments.

3.1.3. Indicator R.10 'Better supply chain organisation'

Estonia asks if beneficiaries who are not farmers should also be accounted for in the indicator R.10 'Better supply chain organisation'.

Denmark asks if the numerator of R.10 should be based on all the members of the producer organisations (POs) or only the members which are actively participating in the operational programme. There is a preference for the former.

Belgium explains that in Flanders, POs include members from other Member States, and asks if the indicator R.10 should account for this.

Spain enquires if the indicator R.10 would be the best indicator in terms of promotional activities and info on agri-food products co-financed by EAFRD (European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development).

Slovakia asks if the indicator R.10 also covers EAFRD interventions under Article 68 'Investments' aimed at investments of producer organisations and investments in vertical cooperation of farms and food processing holdings. Or is it necessary to design these types of interventions under Article 71 'Cooperation' despite that only investment expenditure will be eligible.

The Commission explains that, for sectoral programmes support, indicator R.10 accounts all the members of the PO, including non-active members. For Rural Development support, the indicator should count only the persons directly participating in a project. Furthermore, the Commission clarifies that R.10 accounts only for farmers without distinction between members of POs who are nationals from those who are not. For the last two questions the Commission will come back in written.

3.1.4. Indicator R.23 'Investments related to natural resources'

Estonia asks for a more precise definition of what investments are included under the indicator R.23 and whether this should rather be decided by Member States.

The indicator R.23, accounts for productive and non-productive investments related to natural resources (i.e. soil, water and air). R.16a 'Investments related to climate', relates to investments to climate change action (i.e. climate change mitigation and adaptation), while R.27a 'Investments related to biodiversity', relates to investments to biodiversity. Therefore, investments which are linked to the Specific Objective 5 should be reported under R.23. To qualify as green investments and under these result indicators, the whole investment projects should be linked (with direct and significant links) to environment and climate objectives.

3.1.5. Indicators R.30 'Generational renewal', and R.31 'Growth and jobs in rural areas'

Estonia and Czechia have some difficulties to understand that complementary income support for young farmers is included under the indicator R.31. Estonia explains that the goal of this intervention is the renewal, and not job creation. In the current fiches, it is now stated that for young farmers, Member States can use the indicator R.30 'Generational renewal'.

Belgium highlights that the values for R.30 are reported once the first payment has been made, while values for R.31 are reported at the moment of the last payment. This difference in timing could create problems when calculating the number of farmers who start up a new farm (young farmers), and hence more aligned dates would be preferred.

Estonia highlights that the wording has also changed for investments, cooperation, and sectoral types of intervention and indicates that the indicator is based on number of realised jobs. However, if the data collection moment is the last payment, then all the new jobs might not be realised yet.

Belgium asks for further explanation on how to deal with holdings with multiple members in the indicator R.30 Generational renewal.

Belgium, Czechia and Estonia ask if the whole indicator R.30 should be included under R.31. This might be misleading for the new jobs created. Czechia asks if only newly created jobs (i.e. cases where the applicant started in businesses in the year of application) should be reported under R.31 and also suggests to revise the wording of the fiche for R.31 in the section on 'definition and aim' with a view to formally cover also Pillar I interventions.

The Commission suggests as a matter of simplification to account for all young farmers under R.30 'Generational renewal', because when Member States support generational renewal, jobs are created or safeguarded, which is a strong goal of the CAP.

Information for R.30 is collected from the first payment, while for the rest of the jobs created information is collected at the completion of the project. This is because the objective is to collect the information at the point in time in which the data is most robust. For young farmers, once the installation support is received, it can be assumed that the young farmer will stay in business and hence there is no need to wait for the

completion of the support, regardless of whether this is done with rural development support or direct support. On the other hand, for jobs created via investments, LEADER, etc., a better view of the number of jobs created is possible at the end of the project. Even though some jobs may not materialise at the end of the project, the difference between the number of jobs actually created and the number of jobs reported at the time of the last payments is small. The cost to collect the information on jobs actually created after a certain period after the end of the project would be too high in view of the benefit.

Further information on how to account for R.30 'Generational renewal', in holdings with multiple members will be given in the Expert Group meeting in September.

The Commission clarifies that it is not necessary to distinguish between new jobs created for a young farmer and a young farmer setting up on an existing farm (i.e. safeguarding a job as a result of the succession in a farm). Hence, support given to all young farmers newly setting up should be accounted for into R.31. Both concepts, complementary income support for young farmers (Article 27) and the rural development support to setting up, relate to young farmers setting up (as a result of a succession or not).

3.1.6. Indicators related to Natura 2000 support to forest area

Estonia considers that the Article 67 on Natural 2000 support for forestry does not have a suitable result indicator under Annex I. In the current version of the fiches, Article 67 is listed under the result indicators R.4 'Linking income support to standards and good practices', and R.7 'Enhancing support to farms in areas with specific needs', which are both indicators for farms, not for forestry. Therefore, Estonia asks to include Natura 2000 support for forestry under the indicator R.28 'Improving Natura 2000 management'.

The Commission considers that support related to Article 67 (Area-specific disadvantage) should not be accounted under R.28 Improving Natura 2000 management. This indicator will quantify the payments for environmental, climate and other management commitments granted on forest areas. On the contrary, income support for areas with specific disadvantages could be accounted under R.7 – areas in needs, although not all beneficiaries are farmers (and it is true that R.4 is not best suited). If Member States consider such support should not be accounted under this indicator, then it would be best not to account for it anywhere. This would be acceptable since the information would be available through output O.12 'Number of hectares receiving support under Natura 2000 or the Water Framework Directive' and can be used for further analysis.

3.1.7. Indicator R.3 Digitalising agriculture

Belgium enquires what is meant by digital farming under the indicator R.3, and whether it includes only precision farming or also others technologies such as automation.

The Commission clarifies that indicator R.3 relates to all digitalisation aspects of the farm management, not only to precision farming. Member States are to judge whether investments are really targeted at digitalisation.

3.1.8. Indicator R.4 Linking income support to standards and good practices

Czechia and Italy enquire how the voluntary coupled support for animals, which is not paid per hectare but per head, should be taken into account for the calculation of R.4

‘Linking income support to standards and good practices’, where the numerator represents the area paid for income support in hectares. An illustrative example of such a calculation would be appreciated. Sweden asks a similar example for R.6 and R.7.

France wonders if, under R.4, the Utilised Agricultural Area (UAA) of outermost regions should be taken out from the denominator, as outermost regions are not concerned by direct support under Pillar I.

The Commission explains that indicator R.4 includes the whole support given to farmers. Most farmers receiving coupled income support to livestock have land, which is subject to conditionality. Conditionality does not only apply to land but also to animals, hence to farmers receiving coupled income support to livestock. This is accounted in the numerator of the indicator. An example will be developed for the next meeting of Expert Group for Monitoring and Evaluating the CAP. It will cover also indicators R.6 and R.7.

The Commission will come back regarding the question of including UAA of outmost regions under indicator R.4.

3.1.9. Indicators R.6 ‘Redistribution to smaller farms’, and R.7 ‘Enhancing support to farms in areas with specific needs’

France asks for another example on using data extracted from the Clearance Audit Trail System (CATS) database for the calculation of these indicators. This would facilitate the calculation when it comes to planning the milestones.

The Commission will present an example of calculations for the two indicators in the Expert Group meeting in September, using the data available so far.

3.1.10. Indicator R.1 ‘Enhancing performance through knowledge and innovation’

Spain wonders if also cooperation projects that are not innovative could be accounted under R.1.

France asks if interventions to support cooperation groups to do training or innovation in agroecology could still be linked to R.1. It suggests that all aspects of Article 71 (Cooperation) are linked to R.1, if the nature of the intervention relates to knowledge exchange and advice.

The Commission clarifies that cooperation actions need to be innovative or related to training and knowledge exchange in order to be accounted under R.1.

3.1.11. Indicator R.17 ‘Afforested land’

Slovakia argues that support for agroforestry and landscape features creation should not be included under the indicator R.17. Agroforestry is a specific type of farming on agricultural land, which is not afforested. Slovakia suggests including agroforestry and landscape features creation under R.16a ‘Investments related to climate’.

R.17 relates to the creation of any kind of woodland, included on agricultural land. The Commission reminds that under R.17 only woody landscape features are included rather than landscape features in general.

3.1.12. Indicator R.32 'Developing the rural economy'

Slovakia asks if the indicator R.32 also covers European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) interventions under Article 68 aimed at the investments in the processing of agricultural products, even if the beneficiary is not a Small and Medium Enterprise (SME), and even if the beneficiary is not active in rural areas. If this would not be the case, Slovakia enquires which common result indicator could be used for these types of interventions.

The Commission clarifies that it is not necessary for the beneficiary to be an SME in order to be covered under the indicator R. 32. The Commission also reiterates that R.32 accounts for rural businesses, excluding farms.

3.1.13. Other remarks concerning result indicators

Belgium asks if milestones need to be planned for the new breakdowns of the indicators R.17 'Afforested land', and R.39 'Development of organic agriculture' and argues that such a breakdown would imply an extra effort compared to providing just the total areas.

Sweden suggests that the split proposed for the indicator R.39 'Development of organic agriculture', between maintenance and conversion should not need to be made in case a Member State does not have two separate interventions, with a view to reduce the administrative burden. Sweden will possibly plan for the same unit amount on conversion and maintenance for organic agriculture.

Spain supports the merging of two indicators under R.26 'Supporting sustainable forest management', and asks for confirmation whether this indicator would include UAA from afforestation, but that would not be included in the denominator because the context indicator C.05 Land cover, only looks at forested areas.

Spain enquires how to collect data on the people covered by awareness raising campaigns in R.24 'Environmental/climate performance through knowledge', and if Member States need to set up conversion criteria in an anticipated fashion.

France raises concerns about the difficulty to calculate the actual number of farmers who benefit from a particular collective investment made in a cooperative or other agricultural grouping in the case of the indicator R.9 'Farm modernisation', and suggests counting as one in the numerator, instead of counting the farmers concerned by the investments. France would otherwise account for these interventions under R.32 'Developing the rural economy', for simplicity.

Czechia, Denmark and Italy claim that they will send specific remarks in writing.

The Commission confirms that no milestones/targets per breakdown of result indicators are requested except for R.11 'Concentration of supply'.

Afforested UAA is accounted in R.26 as this UAA will be converted after a number of years in forest area.

For collective investments, the Commission will come back in written. However, by no means collective investments made by farmers should be accounted under R.32 focusing on non farming businesses.

Member States are invited to send the specific technical questions not addressed during the discussion in writing.

3.1.14. Direct and significant link between interventions and result indicators

Italy highlights that it is difficult to understand when a link between interventions and indicators is direct and significant. For example, in the case of R.9 'Farm modernisation', there are many different elements that could potentially fall under this indicator when it comes to programming and planning the intervention. It would be useful to understand how many unit amounts should be taken into account when it comes to the result indicators, especially in regionalised Member States with varying requirements. Italy asks if it would be possible to simplify things internally and come up with a subdivision within the project, or if a very detailed programming when it comes to the results is necessary.

Greece explains that, in its case, operations will be linked to result indicators, not on an operation per operation basis, but between expenditures and result indicators. According to each expenditure that is selected under a specific operation, the contribution of this operation towards the result indicators will be calculated in an automated way, meaning that all contributions towards result indicators will be accounted for. However, since minor contributions of an operation to a result indicator should not be taken into account, Greece asks whether a threshold should be set above which contributions should be considered. If a contribution fell below this threshold, the operation as a whole would therefore not count towards the result indicator.

Spain asks if the Commission still plans to have secondary contributions included in the CAP Strategic Plan.

A direct and significant link would in most cases mean a correspondence with a direct need, meaning that interventions are possibly targeted for the specific purpose of addressing a specific need. Applying the new delivery model, Member States are to draft interventions based on the available experience and knowledge of the context, making a proposal of what is a direct and significant link between interventions and indicators. In the informal dialogue between the Commission and Member States on the draft CAP Strategic Plans, some feedback on interventions will be given. It is important to keep this flexibility in establishing what is a direct and significant link between interventions and indicators, as this is part of the new delivery model.

The concept of secondary contributions does not exist any longer. However, in order to acknowledge the multiple effects of the different types of support that the CAP provides, one intervention may contribute to several result indicators at the same time. To establish the link between the interventions and result indicators, however, only direct and significant contributions should be taken into account. This is to avoid an overestimation of the effects of the policy.

The Commission does not recommend to use thresholds to decide which intervention contributes directly and significantly towards an indicator. The Commission also stresses the principle that the whole operation counts towards the identified result indicator. The best approach is therefore to reach a common understanding during the informal and formal discussions while assessing the CAP Strategic Plan.

3.1.15. Further comments and suggestions

Italy suggests to clearly indicate in the indicator fiches when an indicator is cumulative or annual. This is important for a better understanding of the situation among people who see the fiches for the first time.

Italy suggests specifying in the cover note for output and result indicator fiches that, when an indicator is assessed on the basis of the first payment, the advance payments are excluded, while it is not the case for area measures.

Italy also suggests having a working document within the Expert Group for Monitoring and Evaluating the CAP showing the link with interventions that already have taken place in the past. This would facilitate the assessment of targets. Italy asks for a consolidated Q&A document with comments and questions raised by the different Member States regarding the indicators.

Finland asks if the lists of interventions described under the result indicators are mandatory, meaning that Member States can choose only interventions that are present in the corresponding lists, or whether interventions from outside the list can be chosen.

Germany asks for confirmation of that national top-ups are not to be taken into account when looking at the result indicators.

The Commission confirms, that in the indicator fiches it will specify both when an indicator is annual or cumulative.

Information on how to take into account the advance payments is available in the cover note for output and result indicator fiches.

The list of interventions that contribute towards a result indicator is not compulsory. What is indicated under the indicator fiches is indicative and it depends on the design of the intervention. Member States might include an intervention, which is not listed in the fiche. The inclusion will be part of the discussions on the CAP Strategic Plans.

Top-ups should be accounted in the numerators of result indicators. This will be clarified in the cover note. The Commission plans to provide an update of the cover note by September.

The Commission will compile a consolidated Q&A document with the written answers to Member States' questions.

3.1.16. Updating context indicators

France and Latvia ask which reference year (2019 or 2020) is to be used for context indicators in the denominators for the calculation on result indicators for the purposes of planning for 2023-2027. France asks if it is necessary to update the diagnosis based on updated context indicators data, or if data from 2020 can be used.

Concerning the need to update the CAP Strategic Plans, if for example the issue of crop diversification has already been taken into account in the needs analysis, the CAP

Strategic Plan would not need to be updated regarding the context indicator on diversity of crops.

For the denominators, Member States should take into account the latest available data, but not a forecast. In System for Fund Management in the European Union (SFC), the last available value of the context indicators will be indicated by default. As regard UAA, which is updated annually, the data will be recent. However, as regard the total number of farms, the last data available to the Commission remounts to 2016. Member States would possibly have more updated data from the census carried out in 2020. Member States will be able to change the values indicating the source, which will justify the change in SFC.

3.1.17. Output indicator O.3 ‘Number of CAP support beneficiaries’

France asks if the split per gender concerns only the indicator O.3, or if it should also be done for other indicators.

The Commission confirms that the gender split is only required for the output indicator O.3¹.

3.1.18. Timeline for update of indicator fiches and cover note.

Germany and France ask to clarify when the cover note and the updated fiches of the output indicators will be available.

France and Austria highlight the tight timing regarding the updated version of the output indicator fiches. Member States are already working on the CAP Strategic Plans and fiches are needed as soon as possible so that plans are aligned to the fiches. They also express their preference to have those fiches available by early July.

The Commission informs that an update of the cover note will be available in September.

An update of the output indicator fiches will be available possibly still in July. The Commission will wait and consider the feedback from Member States regarding the result and impact indicators and aims to share an update before September.

3.2. Presentation on indicator I.19 ‘Enhancing biodiversity protection’

Ms Andrea Hagyo (European Environmental Agency, European Topic Centre on Biological Biodiversity) and Mr Aurélien Carré (European Environmental Agency, European Topic Centre on Biological Biodiversity) give a presentation called ‘I.19 CAP Indicator. Enhancing biodiversity protection: Percentage of species and habitats of Community interest related to agriculture with stable or increasing trends’.

After the presentation, delegates from Member States raise the following questions and remarks:

Sweden asks if it is planned to include a clear description of the process of establishing this indicator for the consultation with the Member States, so that experts understand

¹ It concerns also Result Indicator R.30.

the limitations on the scope of this exercise. France would like clarification on the next steps, the timing, the process and the communication channel as previously the information was received through two different channels, from the Ministry of Ecology and from the Expert Group for monitoring and evaluating the CAP, which was confusing.

Sweden asks for clarifications on the scope, ambition, and purpose of the footnote no. 12 in the fiche, which states that Member States shall perform the assessment relating to the indicator by using a pollinator indicator. It is not clear how this footnote relates to the indicator definition as it is currently in the fiche. Will the text in the footnote mean that the Member States are expected to perform additional assessments or monitoring tasks to the ones performed for the Habitats Directive?

Germany wonders if the definitions 'strict' and 'broad' are based on a European assessment or by geographic region and points out that different species and habitat types are in some areas more natural or linked to a higher or lower degree to agriculture.

Germany asks if the revision of the indicator on wild pollinator species will aim to list species that are broader and more related to agriculture, or if the species listed will be restricted to the Natura 2000 species. From a Central European point of view the species listed are rather considered as the 'crown jewels' of nature conservancy and hardly related to normal agriculture.

Sweden asks if another indicator for pollinator for the future separate from I.19 is envisaged.

Czechia asks for the expected date of finalisation of the methodology for I.20 'Agricultural land covered with landscape features'. There is interest in joining the methodology discussions to ensure that the structure of agricultural landscapes of individual Member States is taken into account, including landscape features defined at national level.

Mr Carré acknowledges that there were some problems with the initial consultation and assures that the organisation will be improved, and Member States will only be contacted from one channel. Short notes accompanying the final consultation will be provided to remind of the process and how the lists were elaborated.

Mr Carré explains that the experts review about broad and strict species was done by species and by geographical regions. It is taken into consideration that certain species relate more to agriculture in some regions and less in other regions. Therefore, before finalising the list on missing regions and missing countries, the expert review will make sure that the difference between regions and Member States is considered.

Mr Alfonso Gutierrez Teira (Team Leader on Forestry and Bioeconomy, DG AGRI Unit D4 - Environment, climate change, forestry and bio-economy) clarifies that the refinement of the list has not yet been fully finalised. The intention is to contact all Member States once the final proposals will be completed to inform them about the process and the decision-making procedure, and then to contact bilaterally the Member States for which there will be significant changes in the list compared to the replies to the consultation that was opened a few months ago. This consultation process will take place either before or after the summer, after which the list will be finalised and this step in the development of the indicator will be completed.

The breakdown that was added to I.19 may not be ideal for pollinators, but it was important to cover at least the butterfly species under the Habitats Directive. A better definition will be drawn up with DG Environment. The pollinator footnote is an outcome of the negotiations. There is a pilot project for the EU monitoring scheme for pollinators where ongoing methodology has been agreed. However, the pollinator indicator is not yet ready, and this footnote is a reminder that as soon as this indicator will be available, it will be used to complement the assessment the development of the pollinator population.

For, I.20, Mr Gutierrez clarifies that as it was explained in the fiche on I.20, there are two possibilities open. The main and most promising option for developing the indicator on landscape features is the use of very high-resolution layers (Copernicus), identifying that feature based on all features by density.

Ms Hagyo adds that there is work ongoing on the definition of the base layer; the agricultural land where woody features can be mapped. The Corinne land cover data set and Copernicus high resolution layers are being used for this. The first results for those NUTS regions are available and under internal discussion currently. The colleagues from Copernicus received verification reports of the small woody feature layer from 16 Member States, for agricultural area as well as more broadly, and the information is being synthesised. When more reports are received, the synthesis will be updated. This information is used to describe the limitations and certainties of the layer itself and specifically for the indicator.

Land Use and Coverage Area frame Survey (LUCAS) 2022 will be implemented next year. Eurostat is continuing to work through a contractor. Collaboration from the Member State is requested since the Joint Research Centre (JRC) is finishing the process of information collection at the EU level. Currently, a report is being analysed and the JRC is continuing to collect information at Member State level based on a questionnaire that was circulated in 2020. There is a possibility for Member States to volunteer to complete this information and link data from the context with data from the implementation. So far there are only 4 volunteers: Romania, Belgium (Wallonia), Czechia and Italy. Member States that wish to volunteer can contact the functional mailbox JRC-WIKI-CAP-SP@ec.europa.eu. A webinar/workshop with the volunteering Member States will be organised to share the results of the data gathering and to continue the update on the methodological task by the JRC.

3.3. GAEC reporting

Ms Charlotte Sode (Policy Officer, DG AGRI Unit D.2, Greening, cross-compliance and POSEI) gives a presentation called ‘Good agricultural and environmental conditions (GAEC) reporting’.

After the presentation, delegates from Member States raise the following questions and remarks:

Germany asks how small areas, which are often used in rotation and fall within the framework of short-term use, should be categorised. Germany also wonders how to report on the requirements fulfilled by the beneficiary when the area is used by different persons. Furthermore, if an area is only used partly and for a certain period of time, how should it exactly be reflected in the report?

Czechia asks if there is any workshop or event planned on GAEC 2. Secondly, regarding GAEC 9, would there be any size limits concerning the landscape features and should they be reported separately from the woody features?

Spain asks for more information on timelines of GAEC 2 and if the Commission is going to send specific guidelines for Member States to design the layer in Land Parcel Identification System (LPIS).

Denmark and Sweden announce that their questions will be sent in written form.

The Commission explains that basic act will provide a framework within which Member States must define agricultural areas/permanent grassland. The key issue is not the reporting but the substance of the definition of permanent grassland, which influences at many levels, not only for the GAEC obligation but also for the eligibility of areas and on which areas farmers would receive support. It is suggested to send a more detailed question in writing so it can be consulted with the competent colleagues, also with regard to the question on common agricultural land. The Commission clarifies that there are two kind of data that should be reported; the data per beneficiary – whether a beneficiary with corresponding identifier is subject to GAEC or not – and data on what the areas corresponding to a farmer are for the different GAECs. These two kinds of data are not mixed. This information is needed, so it should be available anyway. The farmer will have the responsibility to implement certain GAECs for all agricultural land at disposal for the year concerned. There could be some land exchange afterwards, but each year there will be a declaration, to make a distinction on which farmer applied.

The Commission will verify if any event with Member States is planned on GAEC 2.

On GAEC 9, MS will have the responsibility to define size limits per landscape features types. It is not envisaged to split the reporting per sub categories depending on the size within the categories. However, this is subject of further work, and will depend on the secondary legislation.

3.4. Data needs for monitoring and evaluation

3.4.1. Feedback on Member States questions

Ms Helaine gives a presentation called ‘Data needs for monitoring and evaluation’.

After the presentation, delegates from Member States raise the following questions and remarks:

Germany would like to know how Member States should report on areas where additional national funding. It was said that output indicators would be reported without top-ups. This would create difficulties with the aggregated data for output indicators area-based, since it would be necessary to separate the GAEC funding from the national funding and then to attribute it to the area. It is unclear if the top-ups should also be included together with GAEC funding.

Italy argues that it is difficult to understand who exactly will be responsible for collecting and sending this data, especially when there are interventions managed by different Management Authorities.

Germany reminds that the timing is an important aspect when it comes to create the necessary IT systems and expresses some concerns about delays. It would be useful to

know soon when this data is to be provided and how exactly these different elements relate to each other. More comments will be sent in writing.

Denmark expresses concerns about data redundancy regarding the definition of area involved, which is already included in the Annual Performance Review (APR). Regarding C558, 'the quantity determined resulting from the administrative and/or on-the-spot checks defining respectively the basis of calculation in respect of area and animal related payments', this is connected to the definition of the time of the reporting and how long the control year will be. For certain measures it might be longer than the calendar year, thus reporting dates on 15 February would become problematic.

Denmark also asks on the definition of young farmers: does it refer to all beneficiaries below 40 years, or to recipients of subsidies under the measure young farmers?

Germany and Denmark asks when the guidelines will be available.

Sweden can agree to send disaggregated data in the APR but remains sceptical on the reporting beyond the APR and the GAECs. Further comments will be sent in writing. There still seems to be a demand for information on nitrate vulnerable zones, and it is still unclear if data on river basins beyond the APR is required. Even for data that would be possible to extract, significant resources are needed to report this on a regular basis and it is therefore important consider the administrative burden.

The Commission clarifies that top-up should not be counted in output indicators because it does not count for the performance clearance, but it should be added into the result indicators because it is contributing to results. It is acknowledged that there is a lack of clarity on the top-ups in the data needs for monitoring and evaluation, which will be addressed.

The responsibility to send the data would typically lies with the authority in charge of the APR. However, the Commission will further discuss this internally.

In the guidelines not all the concepts are yet defined e.g. about reporting by financial year or about the area. These issues were coming from the workshop and the work done by the JRC. The aim is to simplify and ensure that the indicators are as robust as possible. The definitions that are not yet completed for monitoring and evaluation are the ones not completed for the APR as it is important to link the two exercises to limit the burden on Member States. Clearer definitions will be provided as soon as possible.

The area involved is indeed the same as in the APR. It is however not redundant because what is requested for the data needs for monitoring and evaluation is the disaggregation of the APR data.

It is not necessary to finalise the ultimate controls before the data can be reported for monitoring and evaluation. That would impose an unnecessary delay and this level of precision is not needed for this type of data. The Commission expresses its preference for declared area for GAEC and the area under commitment for eco-schemes and AECMC rather than the paid area and will consider the outcomes of the latest JRC workshop in this respect.

The information requested for young farmers refers to all beneficiaries (not only the beneficiaries of the young-farmer payment).

It is not necessary to ask those beneficiaries benefitting from the young farmer complement because this information is available given the way the data request is

built. The aim is to determine the whole CAP support to the young farmers rather than the identification of those receiving the young farmers supplement. Also, the threshold of 40 years is not fixed in order to allow Member States to choose another threshold as foreseen in the legal basis.

The requirement for the data on nitrate vulnerable zones and river basin has not yet been dropped but the Commission will further investigate how far it constitutes a problem for the Member States or if it is possible for the Commission to directly retrieve the data.

3.4.2. CAP networks' innovation strand strengthening linkages with research

Ms Inge Van Oost (Policy Officer, DG AGRI Unit B.2, Research and Innovation) gives a presentation called 'CAP Strategic Plans post 2020: Data for monitoring and evaluation - CAP networks' innovation strand strengthening linkages with research.'

After the presentation, no questions or remarks were raised.

3.4.3. Sectoral data for monitoring and evaluation, fruit and vegetables annual reports

Mr Tauno Lukas (Policy Coordinator, DG AGRI Unit G.1, Governance of the agri-food markets) gives a presentation called 'Sectoral data for monitoring and evaluation' and Mr Luc Berlottier (Policy Coordinator, DG AGRI Unit G.2, Wine, spirits and horticultural products) gives a presentation 'Example of Fruit and Vegetables sector'.

The Commission comments that specific questions on apiculture have been received and although not addressed today, they are well noted.

Italy wonders if from the data at beneficiary level some aggregation could be done by the system.

Italy and France highlight that in order to avoid double counting of beneficiaries, Member States must collect detailed data from sectoral interventions for many result indicators and it would be important to avoid replication of information in different databases.

France asks why it is necessary to link sectorial interventions to result indicators if the APR and data for monitoring and evaluation exercises gather different data.

Belgium asks confirmation that double counting for sectoral interventions is allowed. For instance, when reporting on result indicator R9 it is possible that there is a contributing sectoral intervention, and the beneficiaries could be double counted from a regular investment. Is each milestone planned for the contribution of the sectoral interventions for each result indicator? For instance, the contribution to result indicator, R9? Or is it exclusively the case for operational programmes?

Germany and Denmark ask the Commission to share the presentations ahead of the meetings.

Denmark asks for the timing of data for monitoring and evaluation.

The Commission clarifies that data at individual beneficiary level does not concern sectoral programmes. It is only related to direct payments and to EAFRD, not to the Pillar I support to sectoral programmes where only data at aggregated level is requested. The contribution of the sectoral programmes to the whole CAP effort by objective will be highlighted in the result indicators, but the information on sectoral programmes would be lost. It would not be possible to distinguish the contributions of sectoral programmes from the contributions of EAFRD or direct payments. In the case of EAFRD and direct payments the output indicators allow to have some information. The simplification of the clearance of sectoral programmes has been agreed with the co-legislators on the condition that the information on interventions for sectoral programmes would be provided outside of the APR.

In the fruit and vegetable sector individual data is not requested. In 2018 the legislation was modified, and Member States are requested to only submit aggregated data. The contribution of sectoral interventions to result indicator should be counted only if the contribution is direct and significant (except to R.10 and R.11, which are mandatory), therefore all result indicators do not capture the effects of all the sectoral interventions. Information about interventions which do not contribute significantly and directly to result indicators is also needed.

The APR covers all the expenditure, but not with all the level of details. The data for monitoring and evaluation is data at individual level, on the European Innovation Partnership (EIP) and on direct payments and EAFRD. The same level of detail is not requested for sectoral programmes. There are plenty of investments and sectoral programmes that contribute to result indicators.

Double counting is allowed in case of sectoral programmes not only of areas but also of farmers. Only one value is requested for the planning of result indicators (no detail by underlying types of interventions). The only exception is R.11 where a distinction by sectors is made because the share of marketed production is more meaningful sector by sector. Even more so because some Member States might cover one sector only with sectoral programmes, while others would cover more sectors.

The Commission does not plan to change the reporting system for sectoral programmes, but to streamline what is to be notified, so that there is no redundancy with what is reported under the APR.

Concerning the timing about data for monitoring and evaluation, the Commission explains, that once there is clarity on the area to be reported, the Commission will specify some key aspects together with the Member States to build the guidelines. The second half of the year will be focused on improving the definition of the guidelines, which should be part of the secondary legislation that will be voted next year. It will cover as well the evaluation elements (the evaluation questions and the different steps for the evaluation). The main concepts of the proposals for evaluation will be presented (key concepts and principles) in September. It is intended to organise participatory events to define the evaluation elements and developing the guidelines for data monitoring and evaluation. It is probable that the guidelines will be ready next year, but the broad concepts should be defined clearly by the end of the year.

4. AOB

Hannes Wimmer (Team Leader, European Evaluation Helpdesk for Rural Development) invites the delegates to still register for the next online Good Practice Workshop with the title '[A journey through evaluation plans: Learning from past experiences for the future CAP](#)', which takes place on 28 and 29 June 2021.

5. NEXT STEPS

The next meeting of the Expert Group for Monitoring and Evaluating the CAP is scheduled for 17 September. Before that meeting, there will be a focused meeting on the SFC template on 23 June. The meeting will be held under the umbrella of this expert group for the first time until a new dedicated expert group is formally created. Member States are invited to decide which experts should participate. Experts from outside the regular group of experts can also be invited.

The output indicator fiches will be shared with the Member States as soon as possible. There are a few remaining points that will be shared with the Presidency and the Parliament before. The latest Annex 1 version agreed with the co-legislators will also be shared in the next weeks.

The Commission will collect written comments and questions on the topics discussed until 17 July (mailbox: AGRI-C4-GREXE@ec.europa.eu).

6. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Expert Group for Monitoring and Evaluating the CAP is planned for 17 September.

7. LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

In Annex.

Tassos HANIOTIS
e-signed

List of participants– Minutes
Meeting of the Expert Group for monitoring and evaluating the CAP
17 June 2021

Member State	Organisation	Number of experts
BELGIQUE/BELGIË (Belgium)	Departement Landbouw & Visserij	2
BELGIQUE/BELGIË (Belgium)	Service public de Wallonie - SPW ARNE	2
БЪЛГАРИЯ (Bulgaria)	Bulgarian Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Forestry	5
БЪЛГАРИЯ (Bulgaria)	State Fund "Agriculture"	1
ČESKO (Czechia)	Ministry of Agriculture	2
DANMARK (Denmark)	The Danish Agricultural Agency	3
DEUTSCHLAND (Germany)	Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture	2
DEUTSCHLAND (Germany)	MEND	1
DEUTSCHLAND (Germany)	Monitoring- und Evaluierungsnetzwerk Deutschland (MEN-D).	1
DEUTSCHLAND (Germany)	Thuenen-Institute	2
EESTI (Estonia)	Agricultural Registers and Information Board	1
EESTI (Estonia)	Ministry of Rural Affairs	2
ÉIRE/IRELAND (Ireland)	Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine	6
ΕΛΛΑΔΑ (Greece)	Greek Ministry of Rural Development & Food	1
ΕΛΛΑΔΑ (Greece)	HELLENIC PAYING AGENCY - OPEKEPE	6
ΕΛΛΑΔΑ (Greece)	MANAGING AUTHORITY OF GREEK RDP, Evaluation Unit	1
ΕΛΛΑΔΑ (Greece)	Ministry of Rural Development and Foods, CAP Unit	1
ΕΛΛΑΔΑ (Greece)	Permanent Representation of Greece to the EU	1
ΕΛΛΑΔΑ (Greece)	RDP Managing Authority	3
ESPAÑA (Spain)	Fondo Español de Garantía Agraria (FEGA)	1
ESPAÑA (Spain)	Ministry of Agriculture	8
FRANCE (France)	ASP	3

FRANCE (France)	MCFA	1
HRVATSKA (Croatia)	Ministry of Agriculture	2
HRVATSKA (Croatia)	Paying Agency	2
ITALIA (Italy)	Ministry of Agriculture - National Rural Network	2
ITALIA (Italy)	Ministry of Agriculture - DISR II Rural Development office	3
ITALIA (Italy)	Ministry of Agriculture - PIUE Direct Payment Office	1
ITALIA (Italy)	Paying Agency - National Coordination body	2
ΚΥΠΡΟΣ (Cyprus)	Evaluator	1
ΚΥΠΡΟΣ (Cyprus)	Managing Authority	2
ΚΥΠΡΟΣ (Cyprus)	Paying Agency	1
LATVIJA (Latvia)	AREI (Institute of Agricultural Resources and Economics)	4
LATVIJA (Latvia)	INSTITUTE OF AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES AND ECONOMICS	1
LATVIJA (Latvia)	Ministry of Agriculture of Latvia	4
LATVIJA (Latvia)	Rural Support Service of Latvia	4
LIETUVA (Lithuania)	Ministry of Agriculture	4
LUXEMBOURG (Luxembourg)	Ministère de l'Agriculture, de la Viticulture et du Développement rural	1
LUXEMBOURG (Luxembourg)	Service d'Economie rurale	1
MAGYARORSZÁG (Hungary)	Hungarian State Treasury	2
MAGYARORSZÁG (Hungary)	Ministry of Agriculture	7
MALTA (Malta)	Managing Authority, Funds and Programmes Div.	1
MALTA (Malta)	ARPA	2
NEDERLAND (Netherlands)	RVO - Paying Agency	3
ÖSTERREICH (Austria)	Agrarmarkt Austria	2
ÖSTERREICH (Austria)	Federal Ministry for Agriculture, Regional Affairs and Tourism	4
POLSKA (Poland)	Agency for Restructuring and Modernisation of Agriculture	1
POLSKA	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development	10

(Poland)		
PORTUGAL (Portugal)	Gabinete de Planeamento, Políticas e Administração Geral - Ministério da Agricultura	2
PORTUGAL (Portugal)	IFAP	4
ROMÂNIA (Romania)	Agency for Payments and Intervention in Agriculture	1
ROMÂNIA (Romania)	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Managing Authority for the National Rural Development Programme -NRDP	2
SLOVENIJA (Slovenia)	Agency for Agricultural Markets and Rural Development	4
SLOVENIJA (Slovenia)	Ministry of agriculture, forestry and food	5
SLOVENIJA (Slovenia)	Ministry of foreign affairs (Permanent Representation of the Republic of Slovenia to the European Union)	1
SLOVENSKO (Slovakia)	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development	4
SLOVENSKO (Slovakia)	Permanent representation of the Slovak Republic to the EU	1
SUOMI/FINLAND (Finland)	Finnish Food Authority	2
SUOMI/FINLAND (Finland)	Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry	2
SVERIGE (Sweden)	Statens Jordbruksverk	7
<i>EU PARLIAMENT</i>		0
<i>COUNCIL of the EU</i>		0