



Brussels,
Agri.ddg1.c.4(2021)1489049– Ares (2021)

MINUTES

Meeting of the Expert Group for Monitoring and Evaluating the CAP

28 January 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, which is meant to facilitate discussions but should not be considered as original information.

Ms Helaine asks if any modifications to the minutes of the previous Expert Group for Monitoring and Evaluating the CAP meeting should be made.

France comments that the minutes should include a request made during the previous meeting to clarify the timing of the secondary acts and not to pre-empt on the time when the first Annual Performance Report (APR) of the future CAP will be due as this is still under negotiation.

Ms Helaine confirms that these points will be added to the minutes of the previous Expert Group meeting, which on this condition are approved. She furthermore informs that the timing of the secondary acts has not yet been clarified. The Portuguese presidency aims for an agreement on the Basic Act in May, if so, the work on secondary acts should happen in the second half of 2021. The timing and nature of the first APR is indeed still subject to discussion in the trilogue.

Ms Helaine lists the points of the agenda. No modifications are requested, and the agenda is therefore 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>.

The meeting was held via videoconference.

3. List of points discussed

3.1. Data needs for evaluation and monitoring

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

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

3.1.1 On-line questionnaire to Member States

Czechia asks for more time than one week to fill the questionnaire.

Estonia highlights, that as concerns the timing, it does not support option number 3 in the note (i.e. providing the data on 15 February together with the APR), because it would mean a lot of work in a short period of time.

Spain asks if it is up to the Member States to report the information according to their chosen option amongst the three proposed in the note.

The Commission clarifies that the questionnaire may still be adapted, so suggestions for questions are welcome. Member States will have three weeks to answer the questionnaire. For the time being, options on the timing for reporting are still under discussion and will depend on the results of the questionnaire.

3.1.2 Administrative burden and use of additional data

Czechia, Denmark, Germany, Estonia, Spain, France, Italy, Austria, Slovakia and Sweden are concerned about the increased administrative burden related to the new data needs for evaluation.

Estonia demands that the data is asked only once. Germany questions the added value of the new data requirements and reminds that a building block of the new delivery model is also to reduce administrative burden. Therefore, the following should be clarified (1) the specific need for the data, (2) the users and purpose, (3) the legal basis and (4) the feasibility under the data protection rules.

Spain highlights that even if Member States had the information available in their IT systems, it still requires a huge effort to transmit the data to the Commission in the required format and timing, which contradicts section 4 of article 129 of the SPR proposal (i.e. the need to avoid for MS any undue administrative burden). Spain, Italy, Slovakia and Sweden ask that requirements for other data should be minimised and only data already available in Member States is to be provided.

France opposes to add additional data, which cannot be produced automatically; it explains that around 2/3 of the data would need to be processed manually, such as for example the GAEC figures, which are not available in its data management system and are known only after an on-the-spot-check by an inspector on the ground.

France also asks if Annex I data will no longer be used for assessments and questions why the data should be aggregated then in the indicator fiches, if it is not anymore to be used.

Sweden suggests a cost benefit analysis, to better see how the benefits from collecting this data would compensate for the costs it entails.

The Commission explains that most of the requested data correspond to data that Member States need to collect already in order to comply with the obligations for the APR. The data request was built following the principle of collecting data readily available in the Member States' IT systems, with a few exceptions related to GAEC and LEADER notably. The Commission needs to explain better the data request as by no means it can lead to manual processing to the extent described by France.

As regards the required information on GAEC, the Commission stresses that there seems to be a misunderstanding which should be better clarified, as is in fact the requested information is not linked to controls on the ground as explained in previous meetings.

The Commission explains that Annex I data will be essential for monitoring and evaluation, for performance review and clearance, and all the communication to the Parliament and the Council on the performance of the CAP. However, for further analysis to improve the policy and to demonstrate quantitatively its performance, the requested data, for example better geographical disaggregation, is needed.

3.1.3 Timeline for preparing the IT systems

Germany, Austria, Denmark, Italy and Belgium request a proper timeline on what is required and by when, with a view to allow Member States to better plan their IT systems.

Sweden and France highlight that they are already in the process of rebuilding their data systems. The presented list makes it more complicated for administrations, beneficiaries, and Paying Agencies to deliver the newly requested data by 2023. France requests to rationalise, stabilise, and simplify the list.

Czechia asks for updated guidelines concerning the structure of the APR, in order to ensure the correct preparation of the IT systems.

The Commission acknowledges that the Member States' IT systems may need to be rebuilt in order to comply with the obligations of the APR, and the new data requirements should be seen as a continuity of that, without the need to establish another IT system. It will work to make sure that what is asked is a disaggregation of the information already provided in the APR and the data that is needed to calculate the result indicators. There are a few extra fields on beneficiaries, GAEC and LEADER notably, but the focus is the data needed to calculate the output and result indicators for the APR.

Concerning the APR guidelines the Commission is aware of the importance of this and will inform and consult with Member States in due course.

3.1.4 Legal basis of data requirements

Germany and Austria enquired about the legal basis for the requirements of additional data beyond those requested in Annex I. Germany asks to further clarify who is using the data and for what purposes; and how far the new data requirements are possible under data protection rules.

The Commission clarifies that the legal basis for the provision of the necessary data for monitoring and evaluation is article 129 of the SPR proposal. The aggregation of the data at Member State level in Annex I, designed for performance clearance and performance review, is not sufficient to assess the CAP with the required level of detail. In particular, to contribute to Green Deal assessments, measures need to be geographically localised, so as to know if measures are implemented in the places where there is a more urgent need.

The Commission will use this data for impact assessments and for evaluations. This means that the data will be shared with contractors. External evaluations are however never done at individual level. For example, the CATS data is provided to the Commission at individual level, but analysts and contractors never access this data: the IT services run queries on the data, and any information is provided at maximum NUTS-3 level. Data is stored in a database which is protected. When needed, data will be aggregated in order to respect personal data protection rules.

The Commission will keep Member States informed as soon as more information on the timeline for the secondary legislation is available.

3.1.5 Reporting the financial contribution to specific objectives

France expresses its concerns about the requirement to report the expenditures linked to specific objectives, which does not appear in the regulation proposal. With the new delivery model, the Commission requires the consolidation of interventions which cover different objectives, which means that expenditure on certain objectives will have to be indicated on a pro rata basis, opening the possibility that people will be declaring greater expenditure than the amount actually dispersed.

Italy asks for confirmation of its understanding that the financial contribution to the specific objectives, as currently in the AIR for rural development, are now extended to the whole Pillar I of the CAP and the CMO. Italy would like clarification on the principle of financial unity.

The Commission clarifies that in the CAP Strategic Plans, the budget allocation will not be attributed per specific objectives, but at the level of intervention, as each intervention may be linked to several specific objectives, and also to several result indicators, depending on the design of the intervention. There will be no attribution of primary and secondary effects as it is now in the AIR for rural development.

3.1.6 Reconciliation, validation and certification of datasets

France is surprised that the Commission is asking for declared data for the Pillar I, as well as for non-IACS data when it comes to interventions from the Pillar II.

France and Denmark highlight that the two datasets might be difficult to reconcile with the APR. Differences and errors in the data are likely because of the time shift. In the funds committee there is already currently often the issue that datasets are different from the reporting, and the quality assessment is a problem for the Commission. France is also concerned about the role of the certification body in certifying the data system, and of

possible inconsistencies between committed data for Pillar I, paid data for Pillar II, and data for the APR, if these are reported in different moments. Slovenia points out that the certification body will have to certify and give opinion that the reporting system is established and works well, which is a quite demanding work.

Spain asks who would be responsible for providing the additional information to the Commission.

The Commission clarifies that the data request refers to paid hectares (a similar concept to determined area for IACS interventions) by claim year. The Commission is not aiming at a reconciliation of the data with the APR as the data is needed for monitoring only. It is important to recall that data by claim year will be provided earlier (compared to data by financial year), which might be useful for evaluation purposes. The Commission also clarifies that data in Annex I will be in an aggregated form, while those to be provided for monitoring and evaluation will be disaggregated. If Member States prefer providing data by financial year, the Commission is open to discuss this point.

The Commission does not expect the Certification Body to certify other data than those requested in the APR. By certifying the APR, the Certification Body already certifies the data system, and no certification of additional data is therefore needed.

The responsible body to provide the information would be the coordinating Managing Authority.

3.1.7 Reporting on GAEC

Slovakia has reservations regarding the requirement that environmental indicators and GAEC should be provided in the form of individual data with geographic location on the farm and asks for further clarification. Slovakia would like to clarify if the required data is to be used by the Commission for the purposes of reporting on the European Green Deal targets and requests a clear list of the indicators that will feed the data requirements for the European Green Deal.

Czechia disagrees with the reporting of individual GAEC measures because the requirement will increase the administrative burden, especially for farmers, in particular the mandatory definition of individual procedures in the declaration, while at the time of the declaration a number of procedures such as anti-erosion measures cannot be envisaged.

The Commission clarifies that the reporting to the Parliament and the Council is based on a core set of indicators which is a subset of Annex I. This will be used to communicate on the performance of the CAP, but it is not enough to evaluate robustly the CAP effectiveness in reaching its objectives. What is requested now is not a different set of indicators but information at a more disaggregated geographical level for the purpose of evaluation as well as for communication purposes (e.g. with maps) to allow matching the CAP to the actual needs. It is not intended to report on the progress of Member States towards agreed targets in the context of the Green Deal, nor green architecture as covered already with Annex I.

On GAEC, the reporting concept was already presented once with the example given on indicator O.32 'Number of ha subject to conditionality (broken down by GAEC practice)' where data is provided by obligation. The foreseen system for this individual database is the same as for O.32; the detailed indicators on areas are also the same. In

the individual database, however, it will also be possible to localise a specific GAEC on the territory, via the localisation of the beneficiary. With the indicator O.32 alone, it is not possible to localise at a sufficient geographical level within specific areas (such as Nitrate Vulnerable Zones).

3.1.8 Quality control of data

Spain is concerned that this very detailed information could become a second layer of checks and controls for Member States. Article 129 should not be a means of requiring additional information and increase the administrative burden on Member States. Spain would like to know what the consequences for Member States are if the Commission does not consider the information to be sufficient for monitoring and evaluation of the CAP.

Denmark is concerned that if the Commission deems the data quality is insufficient, it may decrease its trust on the Certification Body, thus increasing the risk of audit, suspensions, and corrections.

The Commission will report to relevant services on the mentioned concerns about the risk of audits, suspensions, and corrections, as indeed this is not the intention of the data requirements discussed. The information will not in any case be requested in the framework of controls. The intention here is to have the capacity to properly analyse the data and the delivery of the CAP. Only if there is an obvious mistake in the data provided (e.g., the data is provided in different units to the units required), Member States would be asked to correct it.

3.1.9 Intervention codes

Czechia recalls that, in the current programming period, there is a common approach concerning intervention codes and asks if in future it would be up to the Member States. France, Belgium and Czechia urge to receive more details on this topic as soon as possible.

Denmark and Sweden ask for an indication of the data codes from X-Table and control statistics to allow Member States to better identify existing data.

The Commission takes note of the wish to get information on intervention codes, which would follow the intervention for all the different steps of management. The Commission will check if a presentation on this topic can be envisaged for the next Expert Group meeting.

3.1.10 Other questions and remarks

Czechia asks for more details concerning LEADER monitoring, as well as on WTO and Pillar I measures monitoring.

Estonia asks what data is required regarding the net effects of the CAP, according to the presentation by Ms Helaine, and if it means further obligatory evaluation task for Member States.

Denmark would like to clarify the reference to the apiculture programmes in Annex II, as they are not required under the CAP Strategic Plan. Czechia asks if, according to the new guidelines, the frequency for reporting on apiculture would be annually.

France asks if the new set of data is to replace the current X-Table or if it is to be provided in addition.

France also asks if sectoral interventions are only covered by Annex II or if they are also covered under Annexes I.a) and I.b).

The Commission will come back with further details on LEADER monitoring data.

The net effect of the CAP relates to what Member States will be doing under their evaluation obligations, in this case this involves impact indicators and complementary result indicators.

Not all notifications of apiculture programmes are requested in Annex I, hence the Commission is adding the other notifications on apiculture in Annex II, as a follow-up of what needs to be notified within the sectoral programmes.

Sectoral programmes are to be covered only by Annex II to the note on Data needs for monitoring and evaluation and not the Annex I. It means that data on sectoral programmes is to be provided at aggregated level.

This data request is not redundant, as it replaces the X-Tables and CATS control data. In addition these data will be used for monitoring only and not for control.

3.2. European Union Recovery Instrument and Transitional Regulation – implications for RDP programming, monitoring and evaluation

Timo Weinbrenner (Economic and Policy Analyst, DG AGRI Unit F.1 Conception and Consistency of Rural Development) and Eduardo Serrano Padial Unit C.4 (Project Manager, DG AGRI Unit C.4 Monitoring and Evaluation) present ‘RDP extensions and integration of 2021/2022 financial resources - Implications for programming monitoring and evaluation’.

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

3.2.1. Modifications in the RDPs due to EURI

Lithuania and Italy ask for clarification regarding their understanding that Chapter 4 (SWOT and identification of needs) and the chapter on the description of the strategy of the current RDPs would have to be amended. Italy asks if any changes or consideration in the description of the needs are expected in Chapter 4, since the context indicator could not represent the changes due to the Covid-19 crisis. Regarding the explanation of financial allocation in the existing measures, Italy asks what would happen if Member States would allocate money on an environmental measure, and which kind of description should be given in these measures.

Slovenia asks which rural development measures are Amber Box measures, and whether a list of those measures can be provided.

The Commission explains that Member States are usually not required to change Chapter 4, but Chapter 5 as it is operationally linked to measure programming in chapter 8. The strategy should be updated based on the Member States’ assessment of the changes in the socio-economic context, and show how the RDPs. However, the necessity to update Chapter 5 is decided on a case-by-case basis.

With respect to the changes in chapter 4, it is not expected that there would be changes in the needs assessments and context indicator values. However, there is the possibility to update context indicators when new data becomes available, and also of the needs assessment, if considered useful for the remaining of the implementation period.

Regarding the separate measure descriptions, for example, in the case of environmental measures or organic, there is flexibility in order to keep the administrative burden for the Member States low. If the whole measure description that is already in force applies also to the EURI and is in line with the general EURI objectives, then it would be sufficient to specify in the existing measure that the measure description also applies to the EURI financed activities.

The Amber Box measures are the risk management schemes under articles 37 and 39a of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013. Schemes under articles 38 and 39 are Amber Box if the relevant minimum loss threshold is set below 30%.

3.2.2. Reporting on EURI funds

Estonia asks whether the EURI funds have to be reported separately only in the monitoring tables A and B, but for the rest of the report, monitoring tables have aggregated values of MFF and EURI funds. In relation to the AIR to be submitted 2021: which data should be provided about Measure 21 ‘*Exceptional temporary relief to farmers and small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) activities in processing, marketing and/or development of agricultural products*’ in the monitoring tables? Guidance documents and updated monitoring tables are requested to be sent as soon as possible.

Italy asks if it is necessary to modify the tables D and C of the AIR.

Greece asks for clarification regarding changes in the indicator plan, specifically if it is necessary to programme EURI-related indicators separately.

Belgium asks if it is necessary to update the values of table C in the current AIR as well for EURI funds, and if these updates should be provided as separate data or incorporated in the whole indicator, since they are also output values.

Slovenia asks for clarification regarding the amendment of new target and output values in Chapter 11, specifically if the two types of additional money (MFF and EURI) should be considered in addition and separately to EURI.

Italy asks if the farm beneficiary of EURI should be considered in the target of focus area.

Lithuania asks how Member States could plan area-based indicators, such as hectares (‘out of which supported by EURI’) in RDP Chapter 11, when the same area could be supported by EAFRD and by EURI funds.

The Commission confirms that there is a separate programming and monitoring for EURI funds and explains that Commission implementing Regulation (EU) No 808/2014 has been amended to that effect: the separate planning and the monitoring will be done at the level of the output indicators. For reporting this means that commitments have to be reported separately in Table A, and the realised output indicators in Table B.

The Commission clarifies that target indicators in the indicator plan should be reviewed and adjusted, since there are more financial resources available now, and the implementation period has been extended. However, the value for the targets should reflect all RDP activities financed by any public expenditure of the RDP, including from the EURI. At the level of target indicators, it is not foreseen to specify an “out of which EURI”. In table D of the AIR, progress towards achieving target indicator values planned in view of 2025 needs to be reported.

Measure 21 will be treated as any other measure, with output indicators which would be planned and also reported in the AIR. However, it has been decided that this new measure does not contribute to any target indicators.

The Commission gives an example for the output-level planning: in the case that Member States would like to allocate EURI funds for a measure for investments, then the output indicator in the indicator plan for investments should refer to all planned outputs of the whole RDP. In the indicator plan, there would be another column indicating ‘out of which, financed by EURI’. For instance, if the whole objective would be 100, and 20 out of this 100 would be financed by EURI, then in the ‘out of which, financed by EURI’ column, the Member State would enter 20. Therefore, the information that should be provided is that the RDP is planned to finance 100 investment projects, out of which 20 are financed by EURI.

There is no intention to have disaggregated reporting in tables C for EURI.

There is no differentiation between the planning of the new MFF money that comes in for the 2021 and 2022 years and the previous MFF financial planning. It is assumed that the RDPs are being extended, and therefore the output and target indicators are adapted for the objective of 2025. The only separate planning is for EURI.

The planned outputs for area-based measures, where the indicator plan refers to the ‘highest annual coverage across the implementing period’. In these cases, it may occur that EURI funds will contribute to financing extended contracts, where the physical outputs of the highest annual coverage do not change. In this situation, the financial output indicator could still be planned and reported in strict separation, while the physical output would need to be assessed case by case. In any case the physical indicator changes should be explained by the Member State when submitting the RDP amendment proposal. In the AIR, realised outputs of area-based measures are reported annually, which enables Member States to report on the source of funding used in a particular year and single out the EURI financing separately.

3.2.3. SFC modification due to EURI

Poland asks when an update of the SFC with the EURI-specific parts can be expected. Slovenia asks when the new monitoring tables will be known.

The Commission explains that the update of the SFC with EURI-specific parts depended on the adoption of the amendment of the Implementing Regulation, on 27 January 2021. The Commission’s IT systems are ready to go into production and the new SFC will be made accessible very shortly after adoption of the legal base.

The structure and reporting requirements for the AIR2020 will be discussed during the next Rural Development Committee meeting.

3.2.4. *Ex post evaluation at Member State or RDP level*

France questions the usefulness of the ex post evaluation to be transmitted in 2026, which would already be halfway through the new CAP. It therefore asks if the ex post evaluation can be done at Member State level, in order to effectively communicate and monitor all the effects.

The Commission argues that it is always useful to have a complete evaluation at the end of the implementation period, which feeds into the next CAP. Concerning the proposal to have one ex post evaluation at Member State level it will explore if the legal basis allows for that.

3.3.CAP post 2020 Reporting on financial instruments

Ms Szilvia Bencze (Policy Officer, DG AGRI Unit F3 Financial instruments) presents 'Financial instruments - Output and Result Indicators'.

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

Estonia asks if for financial instruments the annual outputs and units as well as the performance clearance process are the same as for the other grants; and finally, what aggregated values should be provided about financial instrument budget in the APR of the new period (aggregated values only for interventions and financial products, or something in addition).

France is concerned about the planning of the financial instruments. It questions why LEADER is on the list and wonders how this works as financial instrument. And O.27 'Number of local development strategies (LEADER)', is just for performance and the planning of the strategy envelope, but not a LEADER operation.

France also has a concern on the capacity to calculate the output indicators to get an accurate number of the final recipients and supported projects of a financial instrument, because the data provided by the banks come as lists often several months after the loans or guarantees have been paid out to the final recipients. Secondly, the only data that is available is the list of names of those farmers who benefited from loans granted by the financial intermediaries. But it could be difficult to follow that with a single identifier managed by the Paying Agency. There would be a problem with calculating these indicators if it is not done twice. The question is if this really is useful, or perhaps there could be an exception made on taking into account of the few beneficiaries who get grants and loans from the financial intermediaries and accept that there will be double counting for those individuals.

The Commission explains that the planning should be based on the ex ante assessment, which should reflect the budget plan for the financial instrument. The ex ante assessment helps to define the average size of projects. The total expected number of projects is reflected in the annual implementation, or it can be equally distributed. It is required to have an annual plan. The average unit amount is needed for financial instruments and it should reflect the public (EAFRD + national co-finance) part of the support.

The performance clearance will be in principle the same as for grants. However, Member States are strongly encouraged to use the default reporting

clearance approach, which compares the yearly realised unit amounts to the original planned unit amount. Since this is a continuous implementing instrument, there are no yearly differences. There is no reason for comparing with the benchmark option, where it is differentiated when the loan contracts are signed and when they are realised. Since the performance clearance is based on declared expenditure, it is important to declare for financial instruments as late as possible within the financial year in order to incorporate all transactions. It is recommended that the declarations cover the whole agriculture financial year, otherwise latest the annual accounts shall incorporate the transactions not declared in the last quarter of the agricultural financial year.

On the realisation of the data coming from the multi-layered implementation structure of FIs, that is indeed a very important point. It is definitely an issue if data are received in October from payments incurred in March or May. At the same time, the financial instruments are part of the CAP and of the EAFRD financial management system, and it is not possible to detach FIs from the new delivery model. However, taking into account that for the purpose of the declaration only the administrative verification of the information (transaction list) submitted by the Fund manager is required by the Paying Agency, with an automated information system it should be possible to comply with the information needs of the performance clearance exercise. It is also important to note that though there are a few additional information required for FIs by the new delivery model (such as individual beneficiary/project identification), on the other hand the CPR related reporting needs (via Art.121(6) CAP SPR) are down to 5 major data categories (compared to the extensive annotated reporting template of 2014-2020).

Regarding aggregated data, in the future, similarly to reporting on FIs under Chapter 11 in the Annual Implementation Report in this period, there will be no differentiation by product and instrument, but it will be simply called as 'support provided in the form of FIs'. For performance clearance purposes separate average unit amount shall be defined for grants and FIs, but similarly to grants, different average unit amounts may be set under the FIs, if considered necessary or useful by the Member State (no EU rule on this). A Member State, for example, can define different average unit amounts under FIs for a micro scheme and for a larger competitiveness scheme, but there might different average unit amounts set for a loan product and for a guarantee product implemented under the same CAP Strategic Plan (this is all to be decided and defined by the Member State). However, this will not be relevant for monitoring and aggregating: the importance is on the figure for financial instruments. The only differentiation by product type was explained in the presentation: there will be an Annex to the APR on the implementation of financial instruments to report on the information listed in Article 121(6) of CAP SPR (it will be similar to Table 8 of Annex VII of draft CPR). This Annex is a considerably simplified version of the current Chapter 10 on FIs in the Annual Implementation Report, and similarly to the performance clearance exercise, no differentiation is needed anymore between different financial instruments.

Regarding the matching of the data (individual beneficiary and project identification), Member States should have the capacity to identify projects of the farmer to ensure that the aid intensity which is set in the Annex of the EAFRD or in State aid rules, where relevant, is respected by the combination of the grant and the Gross Grant Equivalent of the financial instruments support. For farmers it is probably easier to identify whereas for other rural businesses SMEs it might be more difficult. The Member State and the fund manager should agree on how to identify the final recipients and their different projects. For example, if there is a grant, the grant investment already has a code. The

Member States could inform the bank to use this code when submitting subsequent information on payments for that given project.

On LEADER there are currently two or three Member States who have programmed the financial instrument under LEADER. See below additional information on this point not discussed in the meeting;

a) Two MSs programmed FIs under Measure 4 and 6 and allow such financial instruments to provide complementary finance to projects receiving grant under LEADER, provided those projects comply also with the simplified eligibility criteria of FIs defined under Measure 4 or 6. In the AIR, these projects are reported both as grant projects under M19 (for the grant operation), and also as projects supported by FIs under M4 or M6 (for the FI operation).

b) Furthermore, one MS programmed FIs directly under the LEADER Measure, in which case the Paying Agency pays the allocation to the FI under M19 directly to the Fund manager (beneficiary) of the financial instrument. This way any grant beneficiary with a viable project supported under LEADER may apply for complementary FI support programmed under M19.

For both cases, information exchange shall be put in place between the PA, LAGs and Fund manager in order to ensure that the combination of grant and FI support (Gross Grant Equivalent) respects the applicable aid intensity for the given project.

Both implementation solution should be possible in the future as well (it might require the introduction of an FI-specific output indicator for LEADER, still under discussion).

3.4.CAP post 2020 Indicators

3.4.1. GHG unit

Ms Laura Aguglia (Economic Analyst, DG AGRI Unit C.3 Farm economics), presents ‘Dashboard on GHG emissions context indicators n. 45’.

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

France comments that it is a very positive improvement of the Agridata portal and informs that the SWOT diagnosis will be updated with those data.

3.4.2. Agroforestry

Ms Katarzyna Dyja (Policy Officer, DG AGRI Unit D.2 Greening, cross-compliance and POSEI) presents ‘Issues relating to the calculation of R.17 (afforestation, including agroforestry)’

After the presentation, no questions or remarks were raised.

3.4.3. MS survey on indicators

Mr Ruggero Fornoni (Evaluation Officer, DG AGRI Unit C.4 Monitoring and Evaluation) presents ‘Set of questions on indicators Summary of the MS answers’.

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

Czechia and France comments that the fiche for the new result indicator on apiculture would be very welcomed.

France asks for a clarification on which interventions are linked to this result indicator and if the denominator is the total number of beehives or the total number of eligible beehives. "Apiculture's commitment" (Article 65) could be linked to this new result indicator for apiculture, not only sectoral intervention. Regarding R.1 'Enhancing performance through knowledge and innovation', only EIP are linked (see the fiche " Article 71: in relation to EIP Operational Group projects in accordance with Article 114 "). This fiche needs to be updated if the title does not change to cover other cooperation groups.

Ireland comments that on R.35 'Promoting social inclusion', the number of participants expected at application stage is not easy to capture and may not be very accurate. Therefore, the number of participants after completion of the projects would be preferable.

The Commission explains that the intention was to limit the result indicator of apiculture to sectoral programmes on apiculture and exclude the other support that might be granted to apiculture under other interventions for simplification. But Member States are right, the link could be made if Member States consider that there are major interventions in the apicultural sector that should be reflected in this indicator, such as commitments and investments. A fiche for the new indicator on apiculture will be prepared. As soon the co-legislators will have an outcome on this and then we would be able to share the fiche with the Member States. It could be possible to extend the coverage of the result indicator on apiculture beyond sectoral programmes.

Regarding R.1 Enhancing performance through knowledge and innovation, the outcome of this comment should be communicated to the Presidency, because at this stage a proposal cannot be made by the Commission. The view of the 'Expert group on monitoring and evaluating the CAP' on this topic was needed because there are Member States questioning why it is there. It will be clarified in the fiche that it relates to cooperation actions which could not be under EIP actions, but have nevertheless an innovative component. During the last 'Expert group on monitoring and evaluating the CAP' meeting, an example on social farming was explained by Belgium. The decision on changing or not the label will be left to the co-legislators.

Regarding R.35, the cost and benefits of different solutions should be weighed, in this case it is a decision between having earlier information on the number of participants (at the moment of first payment) or a more robust one (at the moment of final payment). If the gap between the estimate and the final number is very large, recording at the time of completion of the project could be considered. Collecting information at the moment of first payment seems better because the difference between the estimated number of participants at the beginning and the actual number of participants known at the end of the project is expected to be small. However, if there is a huge gap and robustness is compromised, it could be reconsidered. This issue will be shared with the PME/F working group to consider if the fiche will be adapted.

3.4.4. O.34a

Ms Sophie Helaine (Head of Unit, DG AGRI Unit C.4 Monitoring and Evaluation) presents 'Annual Performance Report reporting on achieved outputs and results for non-

IACS Sectorial interventions' on behalf of Ms Helena Guntinas Rubio (Policy Officer, DG AGRI Unit G.2 Wine, spirits and horticultural products).

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

Hungary asks for a suggestion on result indicators for interventions in the wine sector set in points (f) (g) and (h) of paragraph (1) of Article 52. A clarification is needed about how additional result indicators should be planned in the CAP Strategic Plan in addition to R.10 'Better supply chain organisation', and R.11 'Concentration of supply' for all sectors except wine and apiculture. Option 1: It is not necessary to identify the additional indicators in the CAP Strategic Plan, but only to report them at a later stage. Option 2: It is necessary to identify the additional indicators in the CAP Strategic Plan, but without planned milestones and target (planned "0"). Option 3: It is necessary to identify additional indicators and set milestones and targets. In the case of Option 1 and 2, in order to ensure consistency between planning and reporting, it is asked if it would be necessary to modify the milestones and target values during the annual modification of the CAP Strategic Plan.

France poses a question regarding the summary table; at what level should the unitary amount be determined for performance and planning of actions linked to sectoral interventions in wine. For example, for conversion support, should it be determined per operation, per plan or per hectare? There were three different units to report. In which unit and at what level should this intervention be planned to determine the unitary amount, considering that three different pieces of data are requested. Moreover, it is not well understood why the number of beneficiaries reported in the column is 1400. It is asked if dual counting between beneficiaries was avoided to calculate it.

The Commission explains that the information on this question can be found in the Annex I of the cover note for output and result indicator fiches (at page 15 and 16). It is clearly indicated that for the intervention related to Article 52.1(f), distillation of by-products of wine making, the respective result indicator is R.32 'Developing the rural bioeconomy', while for Article 52.1(g) and (h), which relate to the intervention on information actions and promotion in third countries, the relevant output indicator would be O. 34, 'Number of promotion and information actions, and market monitoring', while the relevant result indicator would be R.10, 'Better supply chain organisation'. There will be a dedicated workshop organised to help Member States on planning R.10 and R.11.

With regard to the level of the planning, it depends on how the Member State defines its interventions on the sectorial programme. In case the Member State defines the conversion intervention per hectare with an amount per hectare, the number of hectares and the amount per hectare should be reported in order to have the performance clearance. If the Member State defines the intervention per plan, then a unitary amount per plan should be defined, but both hectares and plans should not be reported for the same intervention. However, the number of operations should be registered. That is the common denominator between each intervention. There are certain number of operations and a number of the total number of operations per type of intervention should be given. That is the only unit that can be added up to give a complete overview. The number of beneficiaries within the Wine Operational Programme is calculated without double counting. When wine sectoral programmes are confronted to the rest of the CAP, it can be very difficult to identify the beneficiaries and therefore double counting can be accepted between sectoral programmes and the rest of rural development

and Pillar I, while within the sectoral programmes the calculation is done without double counting.

3.4.5. Outputs and other questions (R30, R31, APR, R10, R11)

Jensen Stefan Ostergard (Economic and Policy Analyst, Unit F.1 Conception and Consistency of Rural Development) presents ‘OUTPUTS – operation, action, commitment, ha, unit’.

After the presentation, no questions in relation to the presentation were raised. The following additional remarks were made:

Estonia has a remark on the written answer of the European Commission regarding the R.31. ‘Growth and jobs in rural areas’, and expresses that it does not support that this indicator includes complementary income support for young farmers, as this intervention does not aim to create new jobs. The aim of the intervention is generational renewal. If all beneficiaries of complementary income support under the indicator R.31 are counted, the result will be misleading and will not indicate the actual number of new jobs created. If support for young farmers under Pillar I and Pillar II should contribute to the same result indicators, the solution could be to remove both interventions from the indicator R.31 as they have a separate indicator, R.30. ‘Generational renewal’.

Germany comments that on the financial plans for the new CAP Strategic Plans there will be a two-year extension period in the transition regulation and therefore, new programmes start on the 1st of January 2023. This means that the first reporting year will only cover a period of 1st of January 2023 to the 15th of October. It would be appreciated if the point could be made in a footnote in the template of the annual report. Regarding the templates for the financial plans where the outputs are reported, they need to be updated and made available to Member States. Both regarding direct payments and, at least in Germany, to the area related measures, when the first applications are made in 2023 as part of the new CAP Strategic Plan, the payment will only take place in the budget year 2024. Therefore, no objectives can be indicated for 2023. This point is unclear. Another point is that due to the extension, the last year would be 2028, therefore the templates for the financial plans need to be updated and made available.

Hungary asks if Member States have to report the contribution of sectorial interventions to relevant result indicators other than R.10 ‘Better supply chain organisation’, and R.11 ‘Concentration of supply’, and if it is necessary to identify these indicators in the CAP Strategic Plan with a contribution at 0 level. Moreover, should the contribution of sectorial interventions to other relevant result indicators, be added up to the target values set in the CAP Strategic Plan?

France asks if indicator O. 22 ‘Number of farmers receiving installation grants’, could also account for an intervention dedicated to farmers older than 40; and if O25. ‘Number of farmers receiving support to participate in EU quality schemes’ could additionally account for funding certification and for new producer contributions to quality systems; and if indicator R32. ‘Developing the rural bioeconomy’ is based on a broad understanding of the areas, including all beneficiaries of EAFRD support, and excluding farms.

The Commission considers that the complementary income support for young farmers and the investment for young farmers’ start-up should be treated in the same way, since both

interventions have the same objective, namely generational renewal. A young farmer can receive an installation grant for taking over an existing farm, but it could also be argued that without this support the generational renewal would not take place, leading to job losses. It is also important to consider them together because ring fencing of support to young farmers covers both pillars. Member States are free to set their intervention logic, which means that they could decide to grant only complementary income support under Pillar I or both complementary income support under Pillar I and the investment for young farmers start-up under Pillar II. In both cases there is no certainty of new jobs being created, but it is considered that without this support jobs could either disappear or not appear. Therefore, it contributes to job creation.

The update of the financial plan is currently being developed and the point about the year 2023 is well noted. There are ongoing discussions regarding this first year in the trilogue.

Member States should assess which sectoral interventions contribute to the result interventions other than R.10 'Better supply chain organisation', and R.11 'Concentration of supply', and plan these contributions in their CAP Strategic Plans.

O. 22 'Number of farmers receiving installation grants', refers to young farmers following the intervention definition in the Commission proposal. In case the change proposed by co-legislators would be to support all new farmers, it would be necessary to analyse if it would be better to add a new indicator or to enlarge the scope of the existing one. This decision can only be taken after the discussions on the interventions and the final outcome of the trilogue. Anyhow, when the trilogue will end, it will be necessary to review and clean all the indicator fiches, especially for what concerns the output indicators.

According to the Commission proposal, indicator O.25 'Number of farmers receiving support to participate in EU quality schemes', accounts for cooperation actions for farmers, e.g., getting together to create a new quality system such as a new Geographical Indication. In addition, the indicator accounts for promotion actions under rural development which can be financed. The Presidency proposed instead a specific indicator for promotion actions which is O.29 (a) 'Number of plans, studies or awareness actions supported by EAFRD'.

The aim of R32. 'Developing the rural bioeconomy', is to have a comprehensive image of the beneficiaries of the CAP, therefore a generic name was chosen that could encompass all the beneficiaries of the CAP which are not farmers, mainly SMEs.

3.5. Evaluation Helpdesk activities

Hannes Wimmer presents 'TWG-8: Ex post evaluation of RDPs 2014-2020: Learning from practice'.

After the presentation, the Commission stresses the importance to improve the measurement of the net impact, and the ability to link the interventions with the net impact, as it is the case in the concept of the current complementary results indicators. On biodiversity, the NIVA project does show some interesting solutions, as for example France which provided within this project the measurement of the CAP impact on biodiversity, based on the data collected for the management of payments and with different tiers. As for GHG emissions it is very important to progress with a view to

ensure that the changes in practices of farmers are also reflected in the numbers communicated to the UN.

3.6.AOB

The Commission informs on the state of relevant research projects. The NIVA project, which is close to its end, and the start of FADN project that aims at transforming FADN into a farm sustainability data network. A new research project called MEF4CAP has been recently launched: it will make an inventory of future data needs for M&E, describe the current developments in ICT and data capturing techniques and work how to connect these different data sources rather than creating and multiplying the data collection. Sens4CAP explores how to use satellites to collect information, how to connect IT systems or the potential use the data from private sources, e.g. harvesting data from digital devices for precision farming. The Commission stresses that it is essential to follow these projects, as they can provide tips on how to reduce administrative burden.

In the coming months, some evaluation support studies will be published on soil, knowledge exchange, territorial development, information policy and Geographical Information Systems. It is a long list for evaluation support studies, which are finalising now or were finalised at the end of last year. In order to share the outcome of these support studies, it is suggested to have an online meeting exclusively dedicated to the topic.

The Staff Working Document for the evaluation on viable food and generational renewal will be published soon. Member States are invited to provide remarks on this document.

Member States are also reminded that volunteers are needed to test the questionnaire on data for evaluation and monitoring. Member States are invited to write to the evaluation functional mailbox.

4. Conclusions/recommendations/opinions

The Commission announces that the discussion of the chat will be reflected in the minutes and welcomes additional questions on indicators from Member States in written.

5. Next steps

A meeting will be held between the Commission and the Managing Authorities dedicated to data needs for monitoring and evaluation. The aim will be to develop solutions to the transition from a CAP focusing on compliance to a CAP focusing on performance and results.

6. Next meeting

The next meeting of the Expert Group for Monitoring and Evaluating the CAP is planned for the 10th March 2021 and will take place online.

7. List of participants

In Annex.

Tassos HANIOTIS
(e-signed)

List of participants– Minutes
Expert group for Monitoring and Evaluating the CAP

28 January 2021

MEMBER STATE	Ministry Or Organisation	NUMBER OF PERSONS
BE	Departement Landbouw & Visserij	2
	Service public de Wallonie SPWARNE	2
BG	Bulgarian Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Forestry	3
	State Fund "Agriculture"	1
CZ	Ministry of Agriculture	2
DK	The Danish Agricultural Agency	2
DE	Federal Ministry for Food and Agriculture	3
	MEND	1
	Monitoring- und Evaluierungsnetzwerk Deutschland (MEN-D).	1
	Thuenen-Institute	1
EE	Agricultural Registers and Information Board	1
	Ministry of Rural Affairs	2
IE	Department of Agriculture, Food and Marine	4
EL	Greek Ministry of Rural Development & Food	1
	MANAGING AUTHORITY OF GREEK RDP, Evaluation Unit	1
	Permanent Representation of Greece to the EU	1
	RDP Managing Authority	2
ES	Fondo Español de Garantía Agraria (FEGA)	1
	Ministry of Agriculture	6
FR	ASP	1
	FranceAgriMer	1
	MCFA	1
	Ministère de l'Agriculture et de l'Alimentation	1
HR	Ministry of Agriculture	2
	Paying Agency	1
IT	Ministry of Agriculture	7
CY	Evaluator	1
LV	Institute of Agricultural Resources And Economics	3
	Ministry of Agriculture	4
	Rural Support Service	3
LT	Ministry of agriculture	9
	National Paying Agency	2
LU	Ministry of Agriculture; Service d'Economie rurale	1
HU	Ministry of Agriculture	3
	Hungarian State Treasury (Paying Agency)	1
MT	Funds and Programmes Division, Managing Authority	3
	Strategy and Implementation Division	2

NL	Ministerie van LNV	1
	Regiebureau POP	1
	Rijksdienst voor Ondernemend Nederland RVO	1
AT	Federal Ministry for Agriculture, Regions and Tourism	1
PL	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development	8
PT	Gabinete de Planeamento, Políticas e Administração Geral - Ministério da Agricultura	2
RO	Managing Authority for the National Rural Development Programme	1
	Paying and Intervention Agency for Agriculture	2
SI	Agency for Agricultural Markets and Rural Development	11
	Budget Supervision Office of the Republic of Slovenia	3
	Ministry of agriculture, forestry and food	12
SK	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development	4
	MPRV SR	1
FI	Finnish Food Authority	1
	Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry	2
SE	Statens Jordbruksverk	6
	Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation	1