

DEVELOPMENT AND APPLICATION OF NEW METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORKS FOR THE EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES IN THE EU

INTRODUCTION TO THE ENVIEVAL PROJECT AND OVERVIEW OF EVALUATION CHALLENGES FROM A STAKEHOLDER PERSPECTIVE

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19th of November 2015, ENVIEVAL Workshop, Brussels



- Background and objectives
- Scope of ENVIEVAL
- The ENVIEVAL approach
 - Public good case studies
 - Logic model based handbook
 - Cost-effectiveness assessment
 - Stakeholder involvement



- Results from a stakeholder survey
 - Key evaluation challenges and stakeholder expectations
- Objectives of the workshop

Project team

Participant no.	Participant organisation name	Country
01	Johann Heinrich von Thünen Institut (TI)	Germany
02	James Hutton Institute (JHI)	UK
03	Agricultural University of Athens (AUA)	Greece
04	Natural Resources Institute Finland (Luke)	Finland
05	Council for Agricultural Research and Economics (CREA)	Italy
06	Baltic Environment Forum (BEF)	Lithuania
07	Szent Istvan University (SZIE)	Hungary

➤ **Project duration: January 2013 – December 2015**

Background: Challenges of environmental evaluations

- **Why are evaluations of environmental impacts of RDPs complex and challenging?**
 - **Local environmental and farm structural characteristics drive RDP impacts**
 - **To capture complexity of environmental relationships**
 - **Time gaps between implementation and impacts**
 - **Other intervening factors and establishing robust cause-effects relationships**
 - **Robust counterfactuals required to assess and quantify net-impacts**
- ✎ **Enabling clear attribution of observed environmental changes to implemented policy measures and programmes**

Objectives

Main objective:

- To review potential indicators and methods to address identified challenges
- To test candidate indicators and methods in a set of public good case studies
- To assess the cost-effectiveness of the evaluation approaches including the role of environmental programmes
- To develop a conceptual and methodological framework to guide the selection and application of suitable evaluation approaches

Scope: Some general aspects of the ENVIEVAL project

- Diversity of agriculture and RDP design in the EU
- Initially in the reviews focus on EAFRD 2007 – 2013 and links to current ex-post evaluations in MS – but the handbook will mainly be for the next period
- Focus on ex-post evaluations and methods
- Focus of the project is on environmental impacts of RDPs
- Building on existing indicator efforts and frameworks to identify additional indicators for testing
- Wide range of new methodological developments needs to be considered
- Flexible methodological framework – not one method serves all purposes
- Focus on counterfactual development in environmental evaluations

The ENVIEVAL approach

➤ General approach applied:

➤ Four main components

1. Public good case study based testing of evaluation approaches

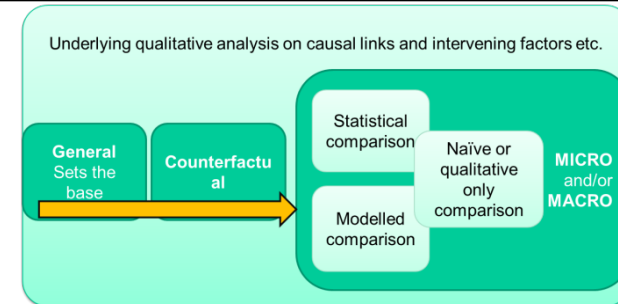
Public good case study	Case study country
Climate stability	Finland and Italy
Biodiversity – wildlife	Hungary and Lithuania
Biodiversity – HNV	Italy and Lithuania
Water quality	Finland, Germany, and Greece
Soil functionality	Hungary and Scotland
Landscapes	Greece and Scotland
Animal welfare	Germany



The ENVIEVAL approach

- General approach applied:

2. Logic models as the conceptual basis for developing a methodological handbook
- Step-by-step guidance on the design of evaluation approaches to enable understanding:
 - POSSIBILITIES: what are available suitable combinations of data/indicators/methods to answers the evaluation questions and/or
 - REQUIREMENTS: what data/indicators/methods are required to answer certain evaluation questions
 - CONSEQUENCES: what implications have the decisions at the different steps for the cost and effectiveness of the evaluation
 - Needs to be supported by concrete examples (case study experiences)



The ENVIEVAL approach

- General approach applied:
 - 3. Cost-effectiveness assessment
 - Understanding of cost and effects of M&E
 - Assessing the effectiveness of tested indicators and evaluation methods:
 - Effectiveness: Performance of evaluation approaches to address main evaluation challenges and thus to increase effectiveness
 - Developing a consistent framework for the assessment of the performance of evaluation approaches
 - Definition of a set of suitable criteria
 - Implications of different monitoring data scenarios for the cost-effectiveness of counterfactual-based environmental evaluations

The ENVIEVAL approach

➤ General approach applied:

4. Stakeholder involvement

- Stakeholder Reference Group with evaluators and representatives from managing authorities and monitoring organisations
- Project Advisory Group with scientists from relevant disciplines
- Communication and consultation at various stages of the project:
 - Review of challenges and expectations
 - Review of practical suitability and relevance of tested evaluation approaches, logic models (framework) and cost-effectiveness assessment
- 👉 Case studies should test practical solutions taking into account different circumstances across the EU

Background: Stakeholder consultation

Consultation:

- 31 interviews carried out with evaluators, managing authorities and evaluation experts in the EU
- Thematic focus of the consultation on:
 - Current approaches and challenges
 - Expectations and requirements for future indicators and methods
- Summary report available on the project website (www.envieval.eu)
- Highlighting some key challenges and expectations as background to the presentations of results from ENVIEVAL

Challenge: Lack of environmental monitoring data

Challenge:

- Existing environmental monitoring data not compatible with RDP uptake
- Lack of data for non-participants
- Lack of strategic sampling

Expectations:

- To identify the main data gaps for the different public goods
- To suggest a concept for (additional) environmental monitoring and suitable indicators at local and regional scales to bridge gaps to impact indicators.
- Such a concept could help to plan, develop and manage relevant databases for impact indicators
- Concrete examples for revised monitoring concepts and programmes required

Challenge: Evaluations across scales and levels

Challenge:

- Bottleneck is the question of scale and the gap between effects of individual agreements and (potential) impacts at the regional or the national level
- Limited experiences with upscaling as it is difficult and increases uncertainty ('extrapolation of assumptions').

Expectations:

- To achieve better understanding of the linkages between different scales and levels to overcome a challenge to evaluate impacts across different scales and levels.

Challenge: Counterfactual development and application

Challenge:

- Area-wide uptake of policy measures – lack of non-participants (control group)
- To find matching samples at macro level
- Consideration of other intervening factors in the design of comparison groups

Expectations:

- Solutions for methods which deal with lacking control groups
- Examples for the application of matching with limited data availability
- Guidance on the design of evaluation approaches

Challenge: Complexity of environmental impacts

Challenge:

- Complexity of environmental public goods and related indicators requires specific evaluation methods to be applied
- Applying more elaborated methods in the time-frame of evaluations
- Applying specific methods in combination with existing databases such as FADN
- Specific expertise required to apply methods

Expectations:

- Show-casing examples for the application of particular methods addressing the complexity of specific public goods
- Guidance on the selection of methods required

From challenges to solutions...

In summary

- Wide range of complex challenges for evaluations of environmental results and impacts of RDPs
- Not one solution to address all challenges – different approaches will provide different methodological contributions
- Importance of stakeholder priorities and cost-effective applications in the context of available data

Key questions for the workshop:

- 👉 What lessons can be learnt and solutions derived from the case study testing?
- 👉 What are key issues which should be highlighted in a methodological handbook?
- 👉 How to further improve the cost-effectiveness of future environmental evaluations?

Workshop objectives

- Session 1: To present and discuss indicators and methodological solutions to main challenges in environmental evaluations
- Session 2: To review existing data gaps and discuss the cost-effectiveness of improved and targeted environmental monitoring programmes for RDP evaluations
- Session 3: To discuss key elements of a methodological handbook for environmental evaluations of RDPs
- Session 4: To explore key priorities for further methodological improvements and improvements of data availabilities for environmental evaluations of RDPs

Thank you for your attention

More information on the project on: www.envieval.eu



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