ENVIEVAL

Development and application of new methodological frameworks for the evaluation of environmental impacts of rural development programmes in the EU

(Project Reference: 312071)

Area 2.1.4: Socioeconomic research and support to policies

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Report D9.3

Report on stakeholder requirements for evaluation tools

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List of Acronyms

AEM	Agri-Environment Measure
AES	Agri-Environment Scheme
AW	Available Water
BD	Biodiversity
CC	Climate Change
CMEF	Common Monitoring and Evaluation Framework
DEFRA	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
DESTATIS	Federal Statistics Office
DiD	Difference-in-Difference
EENRD	European Evaluation Network for Rural Development
FADN	Farm Accountancy Data network
FBI	Farmland Bird Index
FFH	Fauna, Flora and Habitat Directive
FSS	Farm Structural Survey
HNV	High Nature Value
IACS	Integrated Administration and Control System
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
LPIS	Land Parcel Information System
META	Habitat Mapping Database of Hungary
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
RDP	Rural Development Programme
RSPB	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
RUSLE	Revised Universal Soil Loss Equation
SRDP	Scottish Rural Development Programme

Executive Summary

To ensure the policy and end-user relevance of the outputs of the ENVIEVAL project, close collaboration with European, national and regional evaluators, managing authorities and other stakeholders will be maintained throughout the project. The collaboration with the stakeholders will be realised through a set of international workshops, regional technical meetings in the partner countries and two formal stakeholder consultation exercises. The first stakeholder consultation focused on the stakeholder expectations and requirements for evaluation tools and indicators and will inform the development of the methodological evaluation approaches. The second consultation exercise towards the end of the project will focus on the policy and stakeholder relevance of the fact sheets for the methodological handbook for the environmental evaluation of RDPs.

The first stakeholder consultation was carried out in June and July 2013 and conducted in the partner countries. The specific aims of the first stakeholder consultation were to:

- identify key gaps and problems from the stakeholders point of view
- collate information on why certain indicators, data bases and methods have been used
- assess the expectations and requirements for future indicators and methods.

Each partner interviewed evaluators and other stakeholders such as representatives of the managing authorities involved in the evaluation of environmental impacts of the RD programme. The stakeholders represent experiences from Finland, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Lithuania, Poland, the United Kingdom (England and Scotland), as well as the perspective of the European Evaluation Network for Rural Development (EENRD). A total of 31 qualitative interviews were conducted by the end of July 2013, using a guideline-based questionnaire with mainly open questions. The questionnaire was divided into three main sections including a stakeholder description, current evaluation approaches and gaps and the stakeholder expectations and requirements for future indicators and methods.

The main purpose of the stakeholder consultation was to provide an overview of data sets and methods used in current evaluations and to synthesise the main expectations and needs of the stakeholders concerning future monitoring and indicators and evaluation methods. The overview focused on data-related issues which were not available in that level of details from the review of the evaluation reports.

A large variety of data sets is used for the evaluation of RDPs in the EU member countries. The main data source is the IACS database as it is used in all consulted countries. It is, however, not primarily designed to serve evaluation purposes and does thus not always fit its needs. To improve data use and to increase quality of the assessment reports, the design and structure of available database designs should be revised to respond to the specific data needs of environmental evaluations of RDPs and reflect the intervention logic of the most relevant RD measures.

The possibility to collate additional data is rather limited for evaluators, mainly due to resource constraints. As a consequence the need for monitoring data targeted at environmental evaluations is expressed by the interviewed stakeholders.

The stakeholders raised the issue that a better understanding of the linkages between different scales and levels is required to overcome the challenge to evaluate impacts across different scales and levels. The need for new indicators in environmental RDP evaluations was highlighted in particular to improve the ability to establish consistent linkages between the impacts of different measures and the overall programme impact. In addition, evaluation methods such as quantitative models should be fit for purpose and better integrate and link the different scales and levels of assessment. That also implies that the scales of the data captured and used have to be compatible with those required for the levels of reporting.

The public good case studies in the ENVIEVAL project could provide the scientific basis for informing the selection of observations (e.g. field, survey or map-based), the types of methods best suited to the requirements of the reporting and data capture, and an understanding of the cumulative effects of errors in relation to the final outputs and their interpretation. New or revised evaluation methods need to be tested against the following key questions:

- How suitable are those methods under different circumstances with respect to data availability and the aspirations and capacities of the stakeholders (including end-users) in the different member states?
- How can these methods measure net-impacts and attribute changes in indicators to measures and programmes?
- How can these methods provide a consistent assessment across scales and levels?

Summarising the expectations and needs of the stakeholders new methodological frameworks for the evaluation of environmental impacts of RDPs should contribute to:

- **Developing a concept for (additional) environmental outcome monitoring and suitable indicators at local and regional scales.**
- **Providing additional indicators tested to better link measure and programme impacts.**
- **A better understanding of the linkages between different scales and levels to overcome the challenge to evaluate impacts across different scales and levels.**
- **Developing alternative approaches of control group design for counterfactuals.**
- **Suitable methods for case study applications in evaluations**.
- **Developing standardised methodological guidelines for environmental evaluations of RDPs.**

1 Introduction

To ensure the policy and end-user relevance of the outputs of the ENVIEVAL project, close collaboration with European, national and regional evaluators, managing authorities and other stakeholders will be maintained throughout the project. The collaboration with the stakeholders will be realised through a set of international workshops, regional technical meetings in the partner countries and two formal stakeholder consultation exercises. The first stakeholder consultation focused on the stakeholder expectations and requirements for evaluation tools and indicators and will inform the development of the methodological evaluation approaches. The second consultation exercise towards the end of the project will focus on the policy and stakeholder relevance of the fact sheets for the methodological handbook for the environmental evaluation of RDPs.

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The questionnaire was divided into three sections:

Part 1: Stakeholder description: Includes general information about the interviewed stakeholders (e.g. experience with and roles in RDP evaluations). This part is included in the annex of the report.

Part 2: Current evaluation approaches and gaps: Includes information about the use of existing and additional data sets, data access, use of technical assistance and models. The stakeholders were also asked to indicate the most important gaps and needs, which should be addressed by the ENVIEVAL project.

Part 3: Expectations and requirements for future indicators and methods: This part provided guidelines for an open discussion of the key requirements and needs of stakeholders for indicators, monitoring data, counterfactuals and evaluation methods. Within this part stakeholders were also able to provide a general overview and assessment of the evaluation processes.

The interviews were performed by the ENVIEVAL staff to ensure that the open interview will focus on the main objectives of the consultation exercise and possible outputs of the ENVIEVAL project. The findings of the stakeholder consultation were presented to, and discussed with, the stakeholders at the international workshop on July 4th and 5th in Rome. Results of the workshop discussions have been incorporated into the report.

The following section 2 summarises the responses of the stakeholders concerning the use of existing and additional data sets, methodological applications, and the most important gaps and key issues in current environmental evaluations of RD measures and programmes. Section 3 then synthesizes the stakeholder expectations and needs for future indicators and evaluation methods.

2 Current Approaches and Gaps

2.1 Current Approaches and Experiences

2.1.1 Data Use

2.1.1.1 Existing data sources used (i.e. secondary data)

Most of the stakeholders that are involved with the analysis of data for the evaluation of RDPs mentioned that Integrated Administration and Control System (IACS) data is the main data source and frequently used for different measures and public goods. Further, Farm Accountancy Data Network (FADN) and Agricultural Statistics (e.g. Farm Structural Survey, FSS) were mentioned by several interviewees to be used as well as FFH habitat types and HNV.

While access to data is not mentioned as a big problem, the availability of secondary data and the approaches how existing data are managed and used varies considerably across the different Member States. For example, in England, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) owns most of the data needed for assessing RDP programme, and this, according to the interviewed stakeholders, helps to have harmonised database sets (design) and provides the availability to merge different data bases.

Merging data from different sources was seen as a necessary step in the evaluation, but stakeholders from the majority of the participating countries have identified challenges with the use of different databases such as:

- Legal obstacles are also reported to be an obstacle for the merging of data sets;
- Data are not constructed for evaluation and thus do not consider (at least not in detail) the needs of evaluation for data structures;
- Different databases use different coding systems as well as data structure being different;
- An evaluator has to understand causal relationships between different data to enable the generation of meaningful results;
- Large diversity in data availability;

- The acquisition, merging and analysis of data is very resource intensive, requiring expert knowledge.

Across all represented countries the quantity and quality of farm level data is not sufficient. Particular issues highlighted were missing data for non-participants and, again, legal problems because of data protection issues. Gaps in farm level data were highlighted in particular with respect to High Nature Value (HNV) data. Availability of HNV farm level data were only confirmed for England. In addition, limited farm level data to evaluate water quality impacts were highlighted.

Respondents also pointed out that in particular in rural areas in Eastern Europe socio-economic developments, such as depopulation and reduction of labour force, affect the applicability and effectiveness of rural development measures. In this context the importance of including an assessment of socio-economic (data and) developments in rural areas in evaluations of rural development measures was highlighted.

Country specific information on data use

The following paragraphs highlight a few country specific aspects in relation to data use. Stakeholders involved in the evaluation process in the Italian Emilia Romagna Region indicated that they use merged FADN and IACS data. The information from statistical databases also feeds into the design and assessment of farm level surveys. The National Register is another important database which contains data of national agriculture, which are used by the payment agency and sometimes are also used in the evaluations of the RDP impacts on different public goods.

In England data on agri-environmental schemes (AES) are linked to DEFRA's Agricultural Census data to enable and analysis of information on farm types and characteristics within the AES.

In Hungary, LPIS data sets were compared to the data bases of two ongoing monitoring programmes (Monitoring of Common Birds, MÉTA - Spatial Database of Habitats in Hungary).

For Germany stakeholders reported the joint use of IACS data with other data such as data on protected areas, soil inventory data and manure application data (DESTATIS database). However, the different data sets are used for the same evaluation but are

not formally merged into one database. A new system implemented in Lower Saxony in 2010 is the establishment of a digital parcel registration, which is more detailed and allows spatial identification of measures and farms.

Table 1 Summary table of data use

Data source	Using (Country)	Purpose
Agricultural Statistics (e.g. Farm Structural Survey, FSS)	HU; IT; D; GR; PL; ENRD	General evaluation of the RDP
Integrated Administration and Control System (IACS):		
Farm data on land use	HU (not for impact, but for monitoring) D LT EENRD	Nitrate database Counterfactual approach Birds index For various public goods
Land Parcel Information System (LPIS - GIS data)	IT plus cadaster HU PL D	CC, water, BD, landscape Counterfactual approach BD, landscape
Data of the EU system for livestock identification, registration and traceability	IT GR	CC, AW AW
Farm Accountancy Data Network (FADN)	HU EENRD PL D	Strategic Monitoring Report For various public goods CC, BD, water, soil, AW Nutrient calculations
FFH-Habitat types (mapping and status)	D LT PL	BD and HNV Birds index and HNV Birds index
HNV - what scale (regional or at farm level)?	IT D – limited data availability and they are not correlate with measures LT	Mid term evaluation For overall programme
Target areas / designated areas (e.g. nature protection areas, water protection areas, WFD, flood areas)	IT GR D LT	2nd pillar Water, BD BD and water HNV
National Soil Inventory	IT EENRD PL D LT	Soil, CC For various public goods For various public goods Water and CC Soil

Topography (slope)	IT	Soil
Other: Quality of milk Agri-environmental options (size and location of, and spend on uptake). DESTATIS, farm gate balance AEM – environmental impact monitoring	IT (Emilia Romagna Region) UK D	CC BD Nutrient balance; manure application

2.1.2 Generation and use of additional data (i.e. empirical data)

Another query of the stakeholder consultation addressed the use of additional data sets for the evaluation of RD programmes. Additional data was collected when the available data was not sufficient to derive conclusions on environmental impacts. Several interviewees indicated that additional data was collected through qualitative and quantitative farm surveys, based on interviews. Although this is not evidence based, but reflects farmer's views, the additional data was mentioned to be useful when no suitable data sets are available. A lack of resources for additional data monitoring was mentioned.

For example, in England interviews with the applicants of the RDP programmes were conducted to assess social factors of AEM implementation. In addition, interviews with land agents and internal RSPB staff were carried out who have experience of the 'mechanics' of SRDP options, from initial application to implementation.

In Lower Saxony (Germany) additional data was collected by a case study approach (one case study per land) for the evaluation of biodiversity impacts. A case study approach was also used for measure 323 (Conservation and upgrading of the rural heritage), 216 (Non-productive investments) and some measures of axis 1 that include biodiversity impact assessments.

In Hungary specific surveys were carried out for the assessment of changes of carbon sequestration caused by the different rural development measures.

2.1.3 Methodologies Applied

In addition to the generation and use of empirical and secondary data stakeholders were also asked to report their experience with existing evaluation methods including any modeling approaches which might be used for the evaluation of environmental impacts. Generally, stakeholders indicated that the experience with using more

advanced quantitative evaluation methods, such as complex modeling approaches, is limited. This is in line with the findings from review of the evaluation reports in WP2 – WP5.

The methodological applications varied between the different public goods. Examples mentioned by the stakeholders included IPCC Methodology (climate), nutrient balance models (water quality), Revised Universal Soil Loss Equation (RUSLE) model and GIS (soil), visualization approaches (landscape) and surveys and interviews (biodiversity and animal welfare).

The choice of counterfactual and evaluation methods used by the stakeholders is strongly driven by the type, quantity and quality of available data. While few stakeholders reported the use of IACS data to construct counterfactuals based on land use data with and without support, data for non-participants were otherwise often not available. Thus, many stakeholders were not able to establish targeted control groups for a counterfactual analysis and no counterfactuals or only naïve applications could be used by the interviewed stakeholders. For example, in some reported cases theoretical assumptions, or assumptions based on expert estimations, were used to define reference situations for counterfactuals.

As mentioned above, complex models to quantify the environmental impacts were rarely used. Stakeholders highlighted that existing models were not used because these are not yet usable for the evaluation or the model assumptions are not traceable and were seen as unfeasible. In other cases stakeholders highlighted that evaluators do not develop or apply complex bio-physical models for the evaluation, but integrate results from other modeling studies carried out by governmental and research organisations into the evaluations. However, several stakeholders emphasized that the application of advanced models for the forthcoming ex-post evaluation is currently explored.

2.2 Key Issues of Current Evaluation

Several interviewees pointed out that the programmes are lacking well-articulated objectives and that the CMEF indicators are not suitable to detect environmental impact of RD programmes. Another hint that concrete environmental objectives are lacking is that the payment-by-result approach is scarcely used in the analysed RD

programmes. The potential benefits of developing more payment-by-results AEMs targeted at biodiversity and other public goods were highlighted by several stakeholders. A general and frequently mentioned criticism of RD programme evaluation procedures is that too much time is spent on fulfilling the formal requirements of the evaluation even if they are considered to be ineffective.

Challenges are multiple drivers and the diversity of landscapes and farm structures that make the evaluation very complex. Often it is not possible to evaluate the net-effects of RDPs and attempts to calculate them are mainly based on assumption of experts. Further, measures with environmental 'side effects' are also difficult to evaluate as there is a lack of monitoring data.

The time lag between interventions and impacts was mentioned as a big problem. A better timing of the evaluation was recommended. For example the mid-term evaluation was mentioned by several interviewees to be too early in the evaluation process to be able to measure impacts. Also, there are path dependencies when monitoring programmes are set up. At a later stage is is difficult to include additional data (as discussed at the Stakeholder Workshop in Rome, July 2013).

Further the lack of common evaluation activities beyond single RD programmes was reported, even between regions of the same EU member state. Obviously, there is scope for synergies between evaluations in neighbouring regions or countries. Another bottleneck is the question of scale and the gap between effects of individual agreements and (potential) impacts at the regional or the national level. There were only few experiences with upscaling reported as it is difficult and increases uncertainty ('extrapolation of assumptions').

For example, in England the effectiveness of individual agreements at the farm level was evaluated, which was then extrapolated to the national level, and finally related to impact indicators. Thus, there is not much analysis and evaluation done at the regional and local level. There is an exception to this, with statistical analysis to correlate data at different spatial scales, although this still very much depends on farm-level data. In other cases large(r) surveys are used to bridge the gap between farm level and regional and national levels. Quantitative farm level and local analyses are used to inform qualitative assessments of impacts on national indicators.

Instead of weak GIS-based extrapolation, more monitoring efforts on the ground are required. Environmental monitoring data is often lacking or not suitable for quantification of environmental impacts. In particular data for non-participating farms are missing. Further the linkage to impact indicators is mentioned as being too weak. The EU monitoring data is mainly related to output and result indicators which are difficult to link with environmental performance (or changes in public goods) and not considered suitable to measure environmental impact. As a consequence, EU monitoring data and tables were not used in many cases.

3 Stakeholders Expectations

3.1 Indicators and Monitoring

The stakeholders identified a lack of suitable data to assess the environmental impacts of RDPs as one of the main constraints for past and current evaluations. It was highlighted that more environmental outcome monitoring is needed, specifically targeted to the needs of RDP evaluations, which would also help to strengthen the linkages to the assessment of CMEF impact indicators (e.g. Farmland Bird Index). Such additional environmental outcome monitoring needs to be carried out at regional and local scales to allow a more detailed quantitative assessment of environmental impacts at those scales. The stakeholders outlined that this could be done as part of case study-based evaluations of specific measures (or combinations of measures) in addition to broader evaluations at national and programme level. Focusing the monitoring of environmental outcomes on specific case-study regions might also improve the cost-effectiveness of monitoring and evaluation. In addition, the need for long-term monitoring programmes was emphasised.

Data problems are particularly evident with respect to creating baselines and data on non-participants for the development of control groups. The stakeholders suggested exploring the potential of expanding the FADN database with environmental and bio-physical data. Also, more farms would need to join environmental monitoring initiatives. The integration of reporting duties of farms which take up certain RD measures was suggested as a mechanism to achieve higher farm numbers in environmental monitoring programmes.

In this context the stakeholders expressed the expectation that the ENVIEVAL project could identify the main data gaps for the different public goods and to define and suggest a concept for (additional) environmental outcome monitoring and suitable indicators at local and regional scales as a database for the different CMEF and other impact indicators. This is also relates to the expectation that such a concept could help public authorities to plan, develop and manage relevant databases for impact indicators.

The need for new indicators was in particular highlighted to improve the ability to establish consistent linkages between the impacts of different measures and the overall programme impact. It was also highlighted that current evaluations often focus on one specific aspect or indicator (e.g. phosphate or nitrogen for water quality), but a more comprehensive assessment would require to consider cumulative impacts in evaluations.

Stakeholders saw a potential role of the ENVIEVAL project in identifying and testing additional indicators which better link measure and programme impacts on public goods. For example, in the context of biodiversity impacts, stakeholders suggested to test butterfly indicators as an additional impact indicator and highlighted that there is already good data availability. **More generally, stakeholders expressed the expectation that the ENVIEVAL project would contribute to a better understanding of the linkages between different scales and levels to overcome a challenge to evaluate impacts across different scales and levels.**

3.2 Counterfactuals

One of the main challenges with respect to the application of counterfactuals in RDP evaluations is to find matching samples at programme level. It was suggested to use before and after counterfactuals if matched control groups could not be developed at programme level. Alternatively, the suggestion was raised to develop counterfactuals for specific groups or combinations of measures. In this context, stakeholders emphasised the need for alternative and more innovative approaches to construct control groups **and suggested that the ENVIEVAL project could explore and test alternative approaches of control group design in the case studies.**

As an example for an alternative approach to design control groups, stakeholders outlined the option to construct a set of matched groups at regional level which could be compared within and across regions. For example, four matched groups differentiated according to uptake of different measures (and combinations) could be established in each region, which you can then compare within and across regions (matrix comparison). Basically, same groups of policy uptake are constructed in each region and the regions would need to be homogenous. The results of the comparative analysis / evaluation could then also be put in context to the whole programme region / country. This approach could also be combined with a DiD assessment. Possible key challenges which might constrain the idea is the identification of matched groups in and across regions and to define homogenous regions to reduce as much as possible external effects.

3.3 Evaluation Methods

Stakeholders highlighted the importance of being able to relate change in environmental indicators at the farm level to the (potential) impacts of the RDPs, which is where existing methodologies are not sufficient. They expressed the need for specific methods for different environmental indicators and issues. The key needs for the future programme-level evaluation are detailed, with more specific methodological guidelines to assess the impacts related to each public good.

Specific methodological issues which need to be addressed in the future include the consideration of deadweight effects and the quantification of net-impacts, which is currently (often) only done in a qualitative way. However, it was questioned if future methodological efforts to develop new methods for quantifying net impacts are useful and cost-effective or if other methodological aspects (e.g. ensuring consistent evaluation results across different environmentally relevant scales and levels) should be prioritised.

The stakeholders confirmed the relevance of the envisaged development of a methodological handbook for environmental evaluations (identifying which methods are suitable for which environmental indicator and issue) and highlighted the importance of reviewing and comparing the cost-effectiveness of different evaluations methods.

Furthermore the use of case studies in environmental evaluations was raised in the stakeholder discussions and several stakeholders highlighted the potential benefits of stronger and more frequent integration of case studies in RDP evaluations. For example it was suggested that “evaluations need to move towards case study based approaches, with evaluation methods far better embedded in the design of the programme itself. This would allow the programme to generate its own tailored data that then could be accessed in evaluation processes”. Several stakeholders also emphasised that a stronger focus on case study approaches in evaluations could provide a better understanding of causalities and drivers of RDP impacts and provide useful insights into specific regional impacts of RD measures and programs. In this context, the discussions at the stakeholder workshop concluded that the **ENVIEVAL project could deliver methods for case study applications in evaluations**.

Several other stakeholders suggested that future methodological development should focus on the standardisation of the evaluation of the different public good impacts of the various relevant measures. With the development of a common methodology for the identified public good and measure combinations and with further negotiating this with the competent bodies, **ENVIEVAL project could contribute to the development of standardised methodological guidelines for environmental evaluations of RDPs.**

In this respect, it was suggested that the main results of the ENVIEVAL project could be to define common data sets, a standardised methodology for data collection and a set of evaluation methodologies for the impact assessment. “Researchers can give an overview on, and provide guidelines for new possible evaluation methods.”

4 Conclusions

The main purpose of the stakeholder consultation was to provide an overview of data sets and methods used in current evaluations and to synthesise the main expectations and needs of the stakeholders concerning future monitoring and indicators and evaluation methods. The overview focused on data-related issues which were not available in that level of details from the review of the evaluation reports.

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- **Suitable methods for case study applications in evaluations**.
- **Developing standardised methodological guidelines for environmental evaluations of RDPs.**

5 Annexes:

5.1 List of the Interviewed Persons and Organisations

Ref. No.	Name	Organisation
1.	Wolfgang Roggendorf	Thünen-Institute of Rural Studies
2.	Karin Reiter	Thünen-Institute of Rural Studies
3.	Anja Techen	Thünen-Institute of Rural Studies
4.	Achim Sander	Entera
5.	Jela Tvrdonova	EENRD
6.	Eero Pehkonen	Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry of Finland
7.	Perttu Pyykkönen	Pellervo Economic Research PTT
8.	Irene Kuhmonen	University of Jyväskylä, University of Turku
9.	Tuomas Kuhmonen	University of Jyväskylä, University of Turku
10.	Ioannis Chronis	Aristotelian University of Thessaloniki
11.	Anastasia Kannavou	Greece national Management Authority for RDP 2007-2013
12.	Sofia Chatzipanteli	Greece national Management Authority for RDP 2007-2013
13.	Yannis Fermantzis	Ministry of Rural Development and Food, Directorate of Agricultural Policy, Greece
14.	Annamária Galambos	Ministry for Rural Development, Hungary
15.	Judit Habuda	Hungarian Evaluation Society, Hungary and Expert to the Rural Evaluators Network Helpdesk
16.	Zsuzsanna Kurucz	Ministry for Rural Development, Hungary
17.	Krisztina Magócs	Lechner Lajos Knowledge Center Nonprofit Ltd.,
18.	Gábor Várszegi	National Food Chain Safety Office
19.	Andrea Furlan	**"**Managing Authority"- Emilia Romagna Region
20.	Stefano Lopresti	Agriconsulting
21.	Anna Percoco	**"**Managing Authority"- Puglia Region (Osservatorio fitopatologico Regione Puglia)
22.	Federico Benvenuti	VIC Lattanzio Group Associati
23.	Paolo Zingaro	VIC Lattanzio Group Associati
24.	Algis Klimavičius	Ministry of Environment, Lithuania
25.	Darius Liutikas	Ministry of Agriculture, Lithuania
26.	Petras Kurlavičius	Vilnius Educological University
27.	Michal Marciniak	Agrotec, Poland
28.	Bill Slee	Macaulay Land Use Research Institute
29.	John Grieve	Rural Development Company Ltd.
30.	Stephen Chaplin	DEFRA/Natural England
31.	Vicki Swales	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB)

5.2 Guidelines and Key Questions for the Interviews

Introduction to the project and consultation

The **main aim of ENVIEVAL** is to develop and test improved tools for the evaluation of environmental impacts of rural development measures and programmes in EU Member States. In order to achieve this main aim, the project has five objectives:

- To review implemented rural development programmes, existing monitoring and indicator systems, and new methodological developments in environmental policy evaluation
- To develop new methodological frameworks for the evaluation of net environmental effects of rural development programmes against their counterfactual
- To test and validate the selected evaluation methods through public good case study applications in the partner countries and close collaboration with the European Evaluation Network, national and regional evaluators and managing authorities
- To assess the cost-effectiveness of the tested indicators and evaluation methods
- To provide a methodological handbook for the evaluation of environmental impacts of rural development programmes.

Main aim of the first stakeholder consultation:

– To identify key gaps and problems from the stakeholders point of view
– To collate information on why certain indicators, data bases and methods have been used
– To assess the expectations and requirements for future indicators and methods

Part 1 Stakeholder description

Name:

Organisation:

Evaluations overseen or involved (e.g. ex-post 2000 – 2006 or mid-term 2007 – 2013):

Evaluation-related tasks or responsibilities *(e.g. evaluators: responsible for which measures or programme level evaluations; e.g. managing authority: Responsible for which measures or thematic aspects of the programmes and their evaluations):*

Part 2 Current approaches and gaps

1. Use of existing Data Sets for the Evaluation of RDPs

Existing data is used	For which analysis was the existing data used? Was it used more generally for certain types of measures *(e.g. AEMs) or for specific public goods (e.g. biodiversity, water, climate)?*	Obstacles for accessibility to data			Comments
		Legal *(right to personal data, other legal restrictions)*	Technical *(structure of data, format, etc.)* cannot be taken	Financial *(if possible, please indicate a cost)*	
Agricultural Statistics (e.g. Farm Structural Survey, FSS)					
Integrated Administration and Control System (IACS):					
farm data on land use					

Land Parcel Information System (LPIS - GIS data)					
Data of the EU system for livestock identification, registration and traceability					
Farm Accountancy Data Network (FADN) FFH-Habitat types (mapping and status)					
HNV - what scale (regional or at farm level)?					
Target areas / designated areas (e.g. nature protection areas, water protection areas, WFD, flood areas)					
National Soil Inventory					
Topography (slope)					
Other					

1.1. Have different farm data sources been merged for analysis (FSS, IACS, FADN)? Are there restrictions for merging data sets?

1.2. Were there any useful linkages between monitoring data and impact indicators?

1.3. Were there any useful linkages between impact indicators and other types of indicators?

2. Technical support for the implementation of RDPs

2.1 Was the technical assistance according to Regulation (EC) No 1698/2005, article 66 used[1]?

2.2 To what extend and what was the technical assistance used for (e.g. for the collection of additional data)? If possible, please recommend documents on the use of the EAFRD budget for technical assistance.

3. Use of additional data sets for the Evaluation of RDPs

3.1 Was it necessary to collect additional data?

- Why?
- Was the explicit purpose to serve impact indicators?
- For what public goods and (specific) measures? Please give examples.

3.2 What type of statistical data collection and analysis was used?

- Was this data combined with existing surveys and data sets (IACS, FADN)?

[1] (66) The effectiveness and the impact of actions under the EAFRD also depend on improved evaluation on the basis of the common monitoring and evaluation framework. In particular, the programmes should be evaluated for their preparation, implementation and completion.

- At which level: public good/measure or program level?
- At which regional level: local, one or more RDP programme regions, national level?

3.3 Who collected the data? (e.g. Evaluators, public authorities, research project)

- Which resources and funding have been used? *(apart from technical assistance, see Q2)*
- What are the required efforts (time, human, financial resources) or approximate costs for data collection?

4. Data use –general questions

4.1 Are effects at measure (e.g. AEM in general) or sub-measure level (e.g. specific AEM) quantified? For what public goods? Using which methodology

- **Climate and water:** Gross nutrient balance (GNB), N balance surplus (what data is used, e.g. Nitrate Directive, other administrative data? At farm or at regional level?)
- **Biodiversity** (HNV and wildlife): Linkage between habitat and biodiversity monitoring with administrative data (IACS) and other GIS data?
- **Soil**
- **Landscape**
- **Animal Welfare**

4.2 Is a counterfactual approach used? If yes, how are counterfactuals (farms without RDP measures) integrated in the assessment? If not, why was the counterfactual approach not used?

4.3 (For regions with sub-national EAFRD programmes:) Is data collection and statistical analysis realized at each EAFRD programme level, or in co-operation for different programmes?

4.4 Are there AEM or other measures based on a payment-by-result basis (outcome-oriented measures), where beneficiaries are remunerated according to the effects achieved? If yes, please describe briefly:

5. Use of Models: E.g. bio-physical modeling (e.g. on water pollution), farm level models?

For which analysis were models used? Certain types of measures (e.g. AEMs) or for specific public goods (e.g. biodiversity, water, climate)? Use as part of research projects, as part of EAFRD evaluation?

6. How did you deal with the following issues:

6.1 Farm – local – regional – national level data / indicators

Although the measures could be implemented at local – regional…. level, the decisions that affect the public goods are always taken and primarily, but not only, have an impact at the farm level. Furthermore in many cases data were drawn (and hence indicators estimated) at the farm level while the report should be made for impacts at a higher level or vice-versa. How did the respondent's team deal with this problem.

6.2 Sub-measure - Measure – Programme level data/indicators.

A similar with the above issue arises when sub-measures and programmes are concerned.

7. Overall, what are the most important gaps and needs, which should be addressed by the ENVIEVAL project?

Part 3 Expectations and requirements for future indicators and methods

(For this part the interview guidelines only provide a rough structure, as this part should allow an open discussion of the key requirements and needs of stakeholders for indicators, monitoring data, counterfactuals and evaluation methods. The discussion should consider differences between measure-specific and programme evaluations as well as differences between the different public goods.)

1. **What are from your point of view key requirements and key needs for future measure-specific evaluations** (discuss this question for each of "our" public goods – climate change, biodiversity, soils, water, landscape and animal welfare)**?**

1.1. with respect to indicators:

(e.g. what type of additional indicators are required? What is needed to improve the application of existing indicators?)

1.2. with respect to monitoring data:

(e.g. For which measures and public goods is the biggest need for additional monitoring data? What types of monitoring data are needed and at what scales? At what frequency should data be provided? What is needed to allow for upscaling of data?)

1.3. with respect to counterfactual development:

1.4. with respect to evaluation methods:

2. **What are from your point of view key requirements and key needs for future**

programme level evaluations (discuss this question for each of "our" public goods – climate change, biodiversity, soils, water, landscape and animal welfare)**?**

2.1. **with respect to indicators:** (e.g. what type of additional indicators are required? What is needed to improve the application of existing indicators?)

2.2. **b) With respect to monitoring data:** (e.g. For which public goods is the biggest need for additional monitoring data? What types of monitoring data are needed and at what scales? At what frequency should data be provided? What is needed to allow for upscaling of data?)

2.3. **c) With respect to counterfactual development:**

2.4. **With respect to evaluation methods development:**

3. **What are from your point of view key requirements and key needs to be able bridge the gaps between measure-specific and programme level evaluations?** (discuss this question for each of "our" public goods – climate change, biodiversity, soils, water, landscape and animal welfare)**?**

4. If you are familiar with the new (2014-2020) RDP evaluation documents in your region/country/area of competence. Could you identify in them, any issues of interest that should be addressed?

Anything what was missing during the interview, suggestions by respondent.

Please suggest other evaluators to be contacted concerning this issue.