

Design of evaluation plans

Guidelines
March 2023



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List of acronyms

AKIS	Agricultural and Knowledge Innovation System
AWU	Annual Work Unit
CAP	Common Agricultural Policy
CCO	Cross-Cutting Objective
DG AGRI	Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development
EC	European Commission
FI	Financial Instrument
GAEC	Good Agricultural and Environmental Condition
LAG	Local Action Group
M&E	Monitoring & Evaluation
MA	Managing Authority
MS	Member State
PMEF	Performance and Monitoring and Evaluation Framework
SO	Specific Objective



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Introduction

The importance of evaluation: Why do we evaluate CAP strategic plans?

Evaluations are carried out because they provide significant benefits for better and more efficient policy planning and delivery. More specifically, the evaluations of CAP strategic plans are useful for:

- › demonstrating the progress and achievements of the CAP strategic plans and justifying the use of the funding;
- › providing information that can improve the focus of interventions and therefore increase the efficiency of the policy;
- › ensuring accountability and transparency of the implementation of the CAP Strategic Plan;
- › serving as a communication channel between the Managing Authority (MA) and key stakeholders involved in the design and implementation of the plan, including the European Commission;
- › providing evidence and a solid analytical base for the design of future plans/policies;
- › constituting a continuous learning and improvement process that contributes to a higher level of quality in the implementation and future design of plans.

Legal requirements set out the conditions that ensure evaluations are carried out. In the 2023-2027 period, Member States are required to evaluate their CAP strategic plans during implementation and after implementation (ex post evaluation). According to the legal requirements set out in Article 140 of Regulation (EU) 2021/2115, the evaluations serve the purpose of improving the quality of the design and implementation of the plans.

What is the rationale for having an evaluation plan?

An evaluation plan is a written document that describes how you will evaluate your CAP Strategic Plan, as well as how you intend to use evaluation results to improve the implementation and decision-making. The evaluation plan clarifies how you will describe the 'What', the 'How' and the 'Why It Matters' for your CAP Strategic Plan.

To meet evaluation requirements, Member States (MS) shall develop an evaluation plan that meets the minimum requirements listed in Annex II of Regulation (EU) 2022/1475¹. The evaluation plan contains, among other things, information on the planned evaluations during the implementation period from 2023 until 2027 and for the ex post evaluation in 2031.

The evaluation plan shall be submitted to the Monitoring Committee no later than one year after the approval of the CAP strategic plans². The European Commission (EC) only takes note of the evaluation plan and does not need to approve it. However, Member States shall share information on evaluation activities and findings with the EC after examination by the Monitoring Committee and no later than one month before the annual review meeting³. What must be shared with the EC includes⁴:

- › information on evaluation activities and findings, more specifically, progress made in carrying out evaluations, syntheses of evaluations and any follow-up of the findings.
- › any amendments to the evaluation plan.

What are the benefits of the evaluation plan?

The evaluation plan ensures that:

- › all appropriate evaluation activities will take place;
- › sufficient and appropriate resources will be available to undertake all the necessary evaluations;
- › the data required for evaluations will be available in a timely manner and in an appropriate format.

Thus, the evaluation plan enables Member States to:

- › improve the planning and structure of evaluations of the CAP Strategic Plan;
- › improve the orientation of monitoring and evaluation activities, establish a clear link between them and align to the priority needs of the different stakeholders involved in the CAP Strategic Plan;
- › improve the use of evaluation results, their usefulness, their effective integration and their communication and dissemination.

¹ Article 4(1) of Regulation (EU) 2022/1475

² Article 140 of Regulation (EU) 2021/2115

³ Article 5 of Regulation (EU) 2022/1475

⁴ Articles 124(3) (d), and 124(4) (c) of Regulation (EU) 2021/2115



Purpose of these guidelines

The 'Design of evaluation plans' guidelines are non-binding in nature. These guidelines aim to provide minimum and recommended content for evaluation plans that can be further adapted to the needs of the Member States.

The purpose of these guidelines is twofold:

- › to provide guidance on the design of the evaluation plan, based on the minimum content that is required by the legal framework;
- › to propose additional content for the evaluation plan to promote better planning, implementation and use of evaluations at Member State level.

Target groups for these non-binding guidelines

The main target group of these guidelines are the CAP Strategic Plan Managing Authorities, who are responsible for drafting the evaluation plan. Other target groups include the Monitoring Committee and the paying agencies, who are involved in the preparation of the evaluation plan.

Structure and content of the guidelines

The guidelines include a description of the key elements of the evaluation plan, taking into account the minimum legal requirements. They also suggest additional content for each section of the evaluation plan, describe the key terms to consider, provide examples of key questions to ask when drafting each section of the evaluation plan and highlight the links between the different sections. The guidelines are complemented by a Toolbox that includes a detailed description of the proposed working steps for developing each section of the evaluation plan.

1. The Legal Framework

For the development of the evaluation plan, Member States need to take into account what is foreseen in the relevant regulations in relation to what needs to be evaluated, when and how.

What to evaluate

Member States shall evaluate each Specific Objective (SO) (10 in total) at least once during the implementation period, if relevant, in accordance with the CAP Strategic Plan's intervention logic⁵. SOs can be assessed individually or grouped (i.e. comprehensive evaluations covering several objectives) in line with the CAP Strategic Plan's intervention logic. If an SO is not evaluated during the implementation period, the Member States should provide a justification for it.

Specific interventions or topics will be evaluated according to the Member State's evaluation needs, the CAP Strategic Plan intervention logic and the state of implementation. Examples of such topics include⁶:

- › identifying the added value of LEADER;
- › the National CAP Network;
- › the Agricultural Knowledge and Information System (AKIS);
- › the environment and climate architecture⁷.

Simplification for final beneficiaries and administrations is also a potential topic of the assessment in the context of efficiency⁸.

⁵ Article 2(a) of Regulation (EU) 2022/1475

⁶ Article 2(d) of Regulation (EU) 2022/1475

⁷ According to Article 109 (2)(a) of the Regulation (EU) 2021/21115 (GAEC standards and conditionalities)

⁸ Article 1(3) of Regulation (EU) 2022/1475



When

In the period from 2023 until 2027, the EC and Member States will need to undertake evaluations. According to Article 140 of Regulation (EU) 2021/2115, Member States will have to carry out two types of evaluations:

- › evaluations during the 'implementation period' (2023-2027), although no precise dates are specified;
- › an 'ex post evaluation' by 31 December 2031.

The evaluations during the implementation period should be planned in such a way that the results are available for the discussion of the next CAP, i.e. post 2027, at EU level as well as for the next CAP Strategic Plan at Member State level. Where relevant, Member States shall also use data from the previous programming period (2014-2022) for the assessments⁹.

How

Member States should carry out the actions listed below in relation to evaluation. As these actions are typical in an evaluation framework, it can be inferred that Member States should establish such a framework, including:

- › **The use of relevant evaluation criteria**, taking into account the scope, type and take-up of the CAP Strategic Plan's intervention¹⁰. The evaluation criteria are: effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, coherence and European Union added value (the **Annex** of these guidelines offers the definitions of evaluation criteria according to the Better Regulation Guidelines)¹¹. In addition, Member States will also assess impacts in relation to their contribution to achieving the CAP general objectives and the SOs that are addressed by the CAP Strategic Plan concerned, using impact indicators¹². This means that, if an SO is not addressed, there is no requirement to assess impacts. However, a justification needs to be provided¹³. Overall impact of the CAP Strategic Plan will be assessed only at the time of the ex post evaluation¹⁴.
- › **Taking into account the territorial scope of interventions**, where relevant. This applies particularly to those interventions that are not implemented at national level, but at regional or local level¹⁵.
- › **Identification of key evaluation elements to assess**. For the evaluation criteria of effectiveness, Annex I of Regulation (EU) 2022/1475 includes further specifications, notably for each SO, in which key evaluation elements as well as factors of success¹⁶ are identified. However, for the other evaluation criteria, Annex I does not include any specifications.
- › **The formulation of evaluation questions and factors of success** to assess the evaluation criteria of effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, coherence and European Union added value¹⁷. The factors of success in Annex I of Regulation (EC) 2022/1475 are just recommendations. In the previous programming period, there were 30 EU-wide common evaluation questions accompanied by judgment criteria at focus area and at programme level. In the current period, a Member State can develop their own evaluation questions to assess the above evaluation criteria.
- › **Considering all relevant common indicators** (output, result, impact and context indicators) to analyse the effects of CAP strategic plans on specific objectives¹⁸. Net effects should be calculated for the individual impact indicators listed in Annex III of Regulation (EU) 2022/1475¹⁹.
- › **The use of additional relevant information** (quantitative and qualitative) and **specific indicators** other than the common ones, if needed, to help draw relevant conclusions on the impact of CAP strategic plans²⁰.

The regulatory framework uses the term 'where relevant' in various instances when referring to what and how to evaluate. This means that Member States should address all aspects that are relevant. Some aspects may always be relevant, such as the value added of LEADER, which is included in all CAP strategic plans and should therefore be evaluated by all Member States. Other aspects may be relevant in some Member States. For instance, the territorial scope may be relevant in regionalised Member States and less relevant in non-regionalised Member States.

⁹ Article 2(e) of Regulation (EU) 2022/1475

¹⁰ Article 2(b) of Regulation (EU) 2022/1475

¹¹ Article 1(1) of Regulation (EU) 2022/1475

¹² Article 140(1) of Regulation (EU) 2021/2115

¹³ Article 2(a) of Regulation (EU) 2022/1475

¹⁴ Article 3(2) of Regulation (EU) 2022/1475 and Article 140(1) of Regulation (EC) 2021/2115

¹⁵ Article 2(c) of Regulation (EU) 2022/1475

¹⁶ 'Factors of success' replace the term 'judgment criteria' that was used in the 2014-2020 period

¹⁷ Article 1(1) of Regulation (EU) 2022/1475

¹⁸ Article 6(1) of Regulation (EU) 2022/1475

¹⁹ Article 6(5) of Regulation (EU) 2022/1475

²⁰ Article 6(2) of Regulation (EU) 2022/1475



2. Outline of the evaluation plan

The minimum requirements for the structure and content of the evaluation plan are described in Annex II of Regulation (EU) 2022/1475 and summarised in the table below. According to the Annex, the evaluation plan shall contain seven sections listed in the first column below. The minimum content of the evaluation plan is set out in the second column below. The third column offers additional recommended content under each of the sections.

Member States may choose to change the order of the evaluation plan sections if they consider it more pertinent. For instance, one may argue that stakeholder mapping comes first since stakeholders need to be consulted for their needs, while some stakeholders may also play a role in data provision or contribute to the identification of evaluation topics. These guidelines follow the order of Annex II of the Regulation, but this does not imply that the order should be strictly followed.

Table 1 - Outline of the evaluation plan (minimum and recommended content)

Section of the evaluation plan	Minimum content (Regulation)	Additional content (recommended)
1. Objectives and needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Evaluation objectives and needs > Ensure that sufficient activities are undertaken 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Evaluation activities > Evaluation topics
2. Governance and coordination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) arrangements > Main bodies and responsibilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Structures to effectively manage the planning, implementation and quality of evaluations > Additional structures to promote the use of evaluation findings
3. Stakeholder mapping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Description of relevant stakeholders > Stakeholder needs > Capacity building needs (to be implemented under section 7) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Stakeholder map > Classification of stakeholders > How to use the stakeholder mapping
4. Timeline	<p>Planning of evaluations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > contribution to CAP objectives during the implementation period > evaluation of specific topics (e.g. environmental and climate architecture, CAP Networks, LEADER, AKIS) > Accompanying studies and other research and analysis activities 	<p>Roadmap for evaluations, including all types of evaluation activities: evaluations/ evaluation support studies, capacity building activities, development of monitoring systems</p>
5. Data and information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Arrangements for data availability > Data sources > Institutional arrangements for data provision and data quality > Identification of data gaps and remedial actions to address those gaps. > Data systems operational on time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > A general evaluation framework (including indicative evaluation questions, factors of success, indicators and data sources) for identifying data gaps. > Training of actors on data management systems, if needed.
6. Communication and follow-up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Approach to disseminate evaluation findings to target recipients > Mechanisms for follow-up and use of evaluation results 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Description of the communication plan > Goals for communicating evaluation findings > Role of national CAP networks
7. Resources, technical support and capacity building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Description of resources needed to implement the evaluation plan (administrative capacity, data, financial resources and IT needs) > Description of the implementation of programme support (incl. technical support, capacity building activities and evaluation support for LAGs) 	<p>Structured capacity building plan for LAGs for evaluating the local development strategies</p>

3. Key content of the evaluation plan

This chapter includes a description of the basic content of the evaluation plan, starting from the minimum requirements specified in the Regulation²¹ along seven sections.

Figure 1 - The minimum structure of the evaluation plan



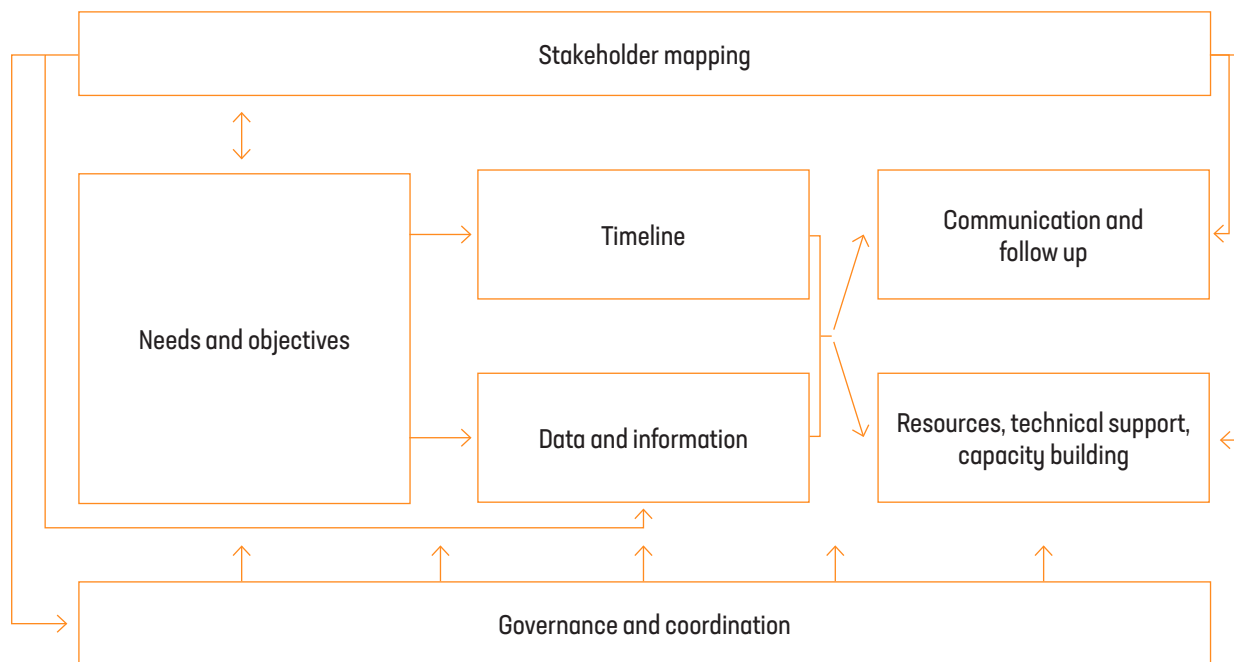
Source: European Evaluation Helpdesk for the CAP (2023)

The seven sections of the evaluation plan are described further in the following chapters. For each section, minimum and additional content is proposed. A paragraph of the minimum requirements, as set out in Annex II of the Regulation (EU) 2022/1475, is shown in an orange box. These guidelines also propose additional content, with justifications provided for it. The links of each section of the evaluation plan with the other sections are also described in detail and summarised in figure 2 below.

The key terms to consider when drafting each section of the evaluation plan are explained with a view to coming to a common understanding about the main issues and concepts. A number of key questions to ask can guide Member States on what should be considered when drafting the respective section of the evaluation plan. Finally, an indicative outline for each section is proposed.

More detailed steps to be followed for developing each section of the evaluation plan are included in the Toolbox related to these guidelines.

Figure 2 - The links between the different sections of the evaluation plan



Source: European Evaluation Helpdesk for the CAP (2023)

²¹ Annex II of Regulation (EU) 2022/1475



3.1 Objectives and evaluation needs

What to include in this section of the evaluation plan

This section of the evaluation plan should state its objectives and evaluation-related needs. The justification for the proposed additional content for this section is set out in the table below.

Table 2 – Proposed content for Section 1 of the evaluation plan

Minimum content ²²	Additional content	Justification ²³
A statement of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Evaluation needs > Evaluation objectives Ensure that sufficient activities are undertaken	Evaluation activities	Carrying out evaluations, follow-up of findings – Art. 124 (3)(d) Report evaluation activities and findings ²⁴
	Evaluation topics	Evaluate SOs in accordance with the intervention logic – Art. 2(a) Evaluate specific interventions/topics – Art. 2(d) Assess simplification – Art. 1(3)
Links of this section with other sections of the evaluation plan		
<p><u>Section 2 – Governance and coordination</u> is an overarching element of the evaluation plan as there may be different bodies/actors responsible for different parts of the evaluation plan.</p> <p><u>Section 3 – Stakeholder mapping</u>: During the mapping, stakeholders may provide input on the evaluation needs and objectives and propose evaluation topics that serve their needs.</p> <p><u>Section 4 – Timeline</u>: The choice of topics and activities will feed into the timeline for planning evaluations. Furthermore, activities may relate to evaluation capacity building, data and information if evaluation activities concern data/information systems and solving data gaps, and to technical support if they concern the provision of support to LAGs.</p> <p><u>Section 7 – Resources, technical support, capacity building</u>: The final choice of evaluation topics and activities will depend on the available resources, both human (evaluators and evaluation capacities) and financial (budget available for evaluations).</p>		

Key terms to consider

A statement of the **objectives of the evaluation plan** and evaluation-related **needs**, aimed to ensure that sufficient and appropriate **evaluation activities** are undertaken, in particular to provide **information needed for programme steering, to inform the next policy programme period**, and to ensure that **data needed for CAP Strategic Plan evaluation are available**.

The **objectives** of evaluation to be included in the evaluation plan may cover one or more of three levels:

- > a strategic level, where evaluations reflect the situation at national level in terms of assessing the contribution of the CAP Strategic Plan to achieving the CAP general objectives and relevant SOs²⁵;
- > a regional level, where evaluations may assess the interventions of CAP strategic plans implemented at regional or local level²⁶;
- > a thematic level (national or regional), where evaluations may assess a specific topic of interest or priority for a Member State.

²² Annex II (1) of Regulation (EU) 2022/1475 and Article 140 (4) of Regulation (EU) 2021/211

²³ Articles refer to Regulation (EU) 2022/1475

²⁴ Article 5 of Regulation (EU) 2021/2115

²⁵ Throughout the document, Specific Objectives (SOs) refer to the nine SOs and the cross-cutting Objective (CCO), as described in Article 6 (1) and (2) of Regulation (EU) 2021/2115

²⁶ Article 2(c) of Regulation (EU) 2022/1475

Evaluation needs may be identified first. These can stem from a CAP Strategic Plan's intervention logic and the needs of Managing Authorities and other relevant stakeholders. Experience from previous programming periods can also be used in identifying evaluation needs.

A clear description of the evaluation needs and evaluation plan objectives will enable the design and implementation of appropriate **evaluation activities in the context of a CAP Strategic Plan**. Evaluation activities are activities that Managing Authorities and other stakeholders need to carry out and they may fall under three types:

- > activities related to the development of monitoring and evaluation systems (rules, procedures, legal acts, data, information systems etc.). These activities will ensure that **data needed for CAP Strategic Plan evaluations are available**;
- > design and implementation of evaluations (of SOs or of specific topics) and evaluation support studies, including the dissemination and follow-up of evaluation results;
- > activities related to evaluation capacity building.

Evaluation activities can be undertaken at different points in time for different purposes.

a) During the programming period, in order to **provide information needed for programme steering**, specifically to:

- > evaluate the SOs in accordance with each CAP Strategic Plan and their intervention logic. Evaluation activities will also take into account whether the evaluation will be by SO or by comprehensive evaluations covering several SOs²⁷;
- > assess the CAP Strategic Plan using the relevant evaluation criteria and assess the impacts²⁸;
- > feed into the discussions for planning and preparing the next policy period (after 2027);
- > to **ensure that data needed for CAP Strategic Plan evaluation are available**,²⁹ specifically, Member States need to:
 - > ensure that data is available for evaluators to fulfil their monitoring- and evaluation-related obligations;
 - > make the necessary arrangements with national and, where relevant, regional statistical units, research centres, undertakings and data providers to ensure data availability.

b) Ex post to inform the future policy period (after 2034), specifically to:

- > assess the CAP Strategic Plan and its implementation, based on each of the evaluation criteria of effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, coherence and European Union added value and impact³⁰.

Key questions to consider

> What kind of evaluation needs related to the CAP Strategic Plan exist?

This is the starting point for defining the objectives of the evaluation plan. Sub-questions here may include:

- > What are the main needs that drive the CAP Strategic Plan intervention logic?
 - > Are there any further evaluation needs?
 - > What other information needs related to the CAP Strategic Plan exist? Which ones can be fulfilled through evaluation?
 - > How do the evaluation plan activities take into account the needs of the different evaluation stakeholders (identified in the stakeholder mapping exercise, under Section 3 of the evaluation plan)?
 - > Can the evaluation plan accommodate newly emerging evaluation needs?
- ### > What are the objectives of the evaluation plan?

Based on the needs, the objectives of the evaluation plan can be defined. Further sub-questions here may include:

²⁷ Article 2(a) of Regulation (EU) 2022/1475

²⁸ Article 2(b) of Regulation (EU) 2022/1475

²⁹ Article 7 of Regulation (EU) 2022/1475

³⁰ Article 3 of Regulation (EU) 2022/1475



- › How can the evaluation plan address the identified evaluation needs?
- › What types of evaluations will be covered in the evaluation plan, for instance process evaluations, results-oriented evaluations, impact evaluations, etc.
- › Which SOs and topics will be evaluated during the implementation period, including a justification for any SOs that may not be evaluated?
- › Who is the target audience of the evaluation plan? (taking into account the stakeholders and their needs as well as the envisaged evaluation activities)
- › What resources are available, to better specify the ambitions of the evaluation plan's objectives?
- › What is the state of play of information and data collection systems? To what extent should the objectives of the evaluation plan embrace their update/improvement to ensure that data needed for CAP Strategic Plan evaluation are available?

› **What evaluation activities should the evaluation plan include?**

More specific sub-questions may include:

- › What level of detail shall the evaluation plan contain? For instance, it may be:
 - › strategic (overall general plan, with a multi-annual work plan, followed by yearly actions plans).
 - › detailed (with a detailed implementation plan, including all anticipated evaluation activities, topics and support studies).
- › **Are the evaluation needs, the objectives of the evaluation plan and the envisaged evaluation activities consistent with each other?**

More specific sub-questions may include:

- › What level of detail shall the evaluation plan contain? For instance, the evaluation plan may be:
 - › strategic (overall general plan, with a multi-annual work plan, followed by yearly actions plans);
 - › detailed (with a detailed implementation plan, including all anticipated evaluation activities, topics and support studies).
- › **Are the evaluation needs, the objectives of the evaluation plan and the evaluation activities envisaged consistent?**

Backward and forward consistency should be checked:

- › To what extent may the planned activities satisfy the evaluation needs and objectives?
- › To what extent is there a logical flow from the evaluation needs to the objectives and to the planned activities?

Territorial aspects

- › The selection of evaluation topics: This may be a specific challenge in regionalised countries, as interests and needs may differ from one region to another. To this end, it is possible to:
 - › Establish some collective decision-making/prioritisation mechanisms with the participation of all regions.
 - › Establish a typology of issues according to whether:
 - › they are of common interest to all regions
 - › they are of specific interest to one or more regions.
- › Inclusion of the territorial issue in each evaluation: In regionalised member states, each evaluation topic should assess specifically the particular situation in individual regions. In each case, it is also useful to analyse the differences between regions, but also the common aspects and thus to be able to draw mutually beneficial conclusions based on this analysis.



Indicative outline of this section

1. Objectives of the evaluation plan
2. Evaluation needs
3. Planned evaluation activities, by type
4. Planned evaluation topics

3.2 Governance and coordination

What to include in this section of the evaluation plan

This section of the evaluation plan should describe the monitoring and evaluation arrangements and the main bodies and their responsibilities. The justification for the proposed additional content for the governance and coordination section is set out in the table below.

Table 3 - Proposed content for Section 2 of the evaluation plan

Minimum content ³¹	Additional content	Justification ³²
Description of M&E arrangements Main bodies involved and responsibilities	Structures to effectively manage the planning, implementation and quality of evaluations	Structures like Evaluation Steering Groups and Evaluation Advisory Groups can improve planning, implementation and quality of evaluations. There is often confusion in relation to the role and functions of these groups and their role should be clearly described in the evaluation plan.
	Additional structures to promote the use of evaluation findings	They can be considered when relevant for improving the use of evaluation findings in the design and implementation of the policy.
Links of this section with other sections of the evaluation plan		
<u>Section 3 - Stakeholder mapping</u> considers stakeholders in the planning of evaluation activities and stakeholders with a need for evaluation knowledge and competence. Some of these stakeholders are also part of the governance and coordination arrangements.		
<u>Section 6 - Communication and follow-up of evaluation results</u> : The most important target groups for the evaluation results are identified.		
<u>Sections 2, 3 and 6</u> (governance, stakeholder mapping and communication) together describe the main stakeholders in the evaluation system.		
In addition, actors/bodies involved in governance and coordination provide input to the needs and objectives of the evaluation plan (section 1), the timeline of evaluation activities (section 4), the provision of data and information (section 5) as well as the organisation and provision of technical support and capacity building (section 7).		

Key terms to consider

Minimum content: A brief description of the **monitoring and evaluation arrangements** for the GAP Strategic Plan, identifying the main **bodies involved** and their **responsibilities**.

³¹ Annex II(2) of Regulation (EU) 2022/1475

³² The term 'governance' emerged from the inability of traditional forms of government to be open-minded, inclusive, flexible and grounded in reality, because they disregarded the centrality of extra-governmental interactions between public and private actors. It was understood that only by acknowledging these interactions could we expect to achieve competent and knowledge-based decision-making, creative problem solving, and flexible and well-coordinated policy implementation (Ansell and Torfing, 2022)

This section of the evaluation plan is about **governance**, a term referring to the interactive processes through which the main stakeholders of the agri-food sector and rural areas steer the CAP Strategic Plan's evaluations towards collectively negotiated improvements in planning, implementation and broader use of their findings.

Monitoring and evaluation arrangements are understood as the system of actors, activities and mechanisms that is set up to monitor and evaluate the implementation of CAP strategic plans.

Based on the legal provisions, Member States must:

- › Identify the main bodies involved in the monitoring and evaluation arrangements for the CAP Strategic Plan.
- › Define the role and the responsibilities of those bodies in the monitoring and evaluation of the CAP Strategic Plan.

The **bodies involved** include those defined by the relevant regulations, e.g.

- › The Managing Authority, which ensures that the evaluation plan is in place and that evaluations conform to the monitoring and evaluation system³³.
- › The Monitoring Committee, which examines progress in relation to evaluations and the follow-up of their findings³⁴ and will also give its opinion on the evaluation plan and any amendments to it³⁵.
- › The National CAP Network, which will contribute through networking, to monitoring and evaluation capacity and activities³⁶; the National CAP Network will also implement, or collaborate with the Managing Authority in the implementation of training and capacity building activities to improve the skills of those involved in evaluations of the CAP Strategic Plan³⁷.
- › The Paying Agency, as the body responsible for the management and control of expenditure and provision of monitoring data³⁸.
- › Where relevant, the regions can be involved in the design of the evaluation plan and in the monitoring and evaluation of regional interventions of the CAP Strategic Plan³⁹.
- › Other relevant bodies that may exist in the Member States such as evaluation unit, advisory institutes, evaluation steering group, technical working groups, etc.

Key questions to consider

- › Which are the main bodies to be involved in monitoring and evaluation and what are their responsibilities? Sub-questions here may include:
 - › Is there a need, besides the Monitoring Committee and the National CAP Network, to establish other structures that can help steer evaluations (e.g. Steering Groups) or that can provide advice on evaluations (e.g. Advisory Groups)? What are their tasks and responsibilities?
 - › How are the tasks and responsibilities in relation to monitoring and evaluation divided between different parts of the Managing Authority and other structures?
- › What lessons can be drawn from the previous programming period and incorporated in the new governance and coordination arrangements? (e.g. examine the implications for governance and coordination from merging Pillar 1 and Pillar 2 under one CAP Strategic Plan).
- › What is the role of governance and coordination bodies in reviewing or validating any modifications of the evaluation plan?
- › How should the governance arrangements be enforced? Options may include, e.g. (a) networking, (b) legally binding arrangements?

³³ Article 123(2)(e) of Regulation (EU) 2021/2115

³⁴ Article 124(3)(d) of Regulation (EU) 2021/2115

³⁵ Article 124(4)(c) of Regulation (EU) 2021/2115

³⁶ Article 126(3)(f) of Regulation (EU) 2021/2115

³⁷ Article 7(4) of Regulation (EU) 2022/1475

³⁸ Annex IV, 2 (a) (i) of Regulation (EU) 2022/1475

³⁹ Paragraph 120 of Regulation (EU) 2021/2115



Territorial aspects

- › What is the expected role of the regions in management and coordination procedures and structures?
- › What mechanisms will be expected to ensure adequate coordination and interrelationship with the regions and among the regions?
- › What is the role of the National CAP Network in this respect?
- › What coordinating actors in the regions are required and what is their role and description?

Indicative outline of this section of the evaluation plan

1. Key stakeholders and bodies for management and coordination of evaluations
2. Structures to improve planning, implementation and quality of evaluations
3. Additional structures for governance and coordination of evaluations

3.3 Stakeholder mapping

What to include in this section of the evaluation plan

This section of the evaluation plan should describe the relevant stakeholders, their evaluation needs as well as their capacity building needs as required by Annex II of Regulation (EU) 2022/1475. Based on these legal provisions, Member States should:

- › Identify all relevant stakeholders, including those not represented in the Monitoring Committee.
- › Diagnose their needs related to evaluation activities.
- › Define their role in the evaluation of the CAP Strategic Plan and, where relevant, assess their needs for capacity building, so they can fulfil this role.

Additional content for the stakeholder mapping section is proposed in these guidelines, as set out in the table below.

Table 4 - Proposed content for Section 3 of the evaluation plan

Minimum content ⁴⁰	Additional content	Justification
Brief description of relevant stakeholders Their evaluation needs Their capacity building needs (where relevant)	Stakeholder map	A stakeholder map will enable a comprehensive list of relevant stakeholders to be compiled. The objective is twofold: to identify and to understand the stakeholders that have a stake in the CAP Strategic Plan and its evaluation.
	Classification of stakeholders	Classification will offer information on the power/representativeness and interests of the different stakeholders. Classification will help to group them together according to their potential to affect or be affected by the CAP Strategic Plan and its evaluation. This potential will provide input on whether and how to engage each stakeholder, at which stage of the evaluation process and how to make this engagement most effective.
	How to use the stakeholder mapping	The mapping will help decide on most relevant stakeholders and/or evaluation governance structures in relation to planning, tendering, implementing, quality control, dissemination and follow up of evaluation findings.

⁴⁰ Annex II (1) of Regulation (EU) 2022/1475 and Article 140 (4) of Regulation (EU) 2021/211



Links of this section with other sections of the evaluation plan

- › **Section 1 - Objectives and needs:** The evaluation needs will, to a certain extent, determine who are relevant stakeholders to approach, while the brainstorming with stakeholders will help identify their needs, which can feed back into the evaluation needs.
- › **Section 2 - Governance and coordination arrangements:** Some stakeholders will form part of the evaluation governance structure of the Member State.
- › **Section 7 - Resources, technical support and capacity building:** The stakeholder mapping will also inform the technical support activities as some capacity building for stakeholders may need to be planned and implemented.

Key terms to consider

A brief description of the **relevant stakeholders** referred to in Article 4(2) of the Implementing Regulation, including an explanation on why they have been taken into account and their needs related to evaluation activities and, where relevant, capacity building.

Mapping of stakeholders: this is a relatively new element of the evaluation plan, whereby, “Member States shall identify in the evaluation plan relevant stakeholders to be taken into account when planning evaluation and capacity building activities. Where relevant, Member States shall identify stakeholders other than the monitoring committee’s members”⁴¹.

Relevant stakeholders: this is a term mentioned in the relevant EU regulations⁴², but it is not specified who they are. It is up to each Member State to identify those relevant for specific activities, therefore, here, for planning evaluation activities and capacity building. In addition, other stakeholders outside the Monitoring Committee members shall be identified, where relevant.

Key questions to consider

- › Who are the main stakeholders of the evaluation plan?
 - › Are any of the stakeholders consulted in the context of the CAP Strategic Plan relevant for the evaluation plan?
 - › Which stakeholders have a role in data provision and in the use of evaluation results?
- › What are their interests and characteristics (e.g. organisation where they come from and role)?
- › Which stakeholders are involved in the governance and coordination arrangements of the evaluation plan and in what role? (links with section 2 of the evaluation plan)
- › What are their needs in relation to evaluation activities? (feeds into section 1 of the evaluation plan)
- › What capacity building needs do they have? (links to section 7 of the evaluation plan)
- › How should the stakeholders be involved in the evaluation activities?

Territorial aspects

In the case of regionalised countries, special attention needs to be paid to this section of the evaluation plan by clarifying the following questions:

- › What is the expected role of the regions in the development of the evaluation process? Follow-up questions on responsibilities and tasks could be:
 - › What role will they have in the design of the evaluation plan and the selection of evaluation topics?
 - › What role will they have in the provision of information linked to the evaluation?
 - › What role will they have in the integration of the evaluation results?
 - › Is there a need for support for the regions to contact certain actors?

⁴¹ Article 4(2) of Regulation (EU) 2022/1475

⁴² Regulation (EU) 2022/1475 and Regulation (EU) 2021/2115



- › Which specific actors (involved in the implementation of the CAP Strategic Plan in each region) are expected to participate in the evaluation process, in what way and what mechanisms are expected to support interlinkages?
- › Which actors, involved in the evaluation process, will need to be contacted by the regions?
- › How are the evaluation capacities of regional level actors going to be strengthened? In which concrete capacity building activities should regional actors participate?

Indicative outline of this section

1. Identification of stakeholders
2. Classification of stakeholders (map of stakeholders)
3. Making use of stakeholder mapping
4. Capacity building needs of stakeholders

3.4 Timeline

What to include in this section of the evaluation plan

This section of the evaluation plan should describe the main milestones for evaluations and an indicative timeframe for evaluations and evaluation support studies, including the reasons for this planning schedule (i.e. why the different timeline choices were made). It can include the following:

- › List of evaluations to assess the contribution of the CAP Strategic Plan to the CAP objectives and indicative timing;
- › List of evaluations to assess specific topics and indicative timing (note that specific topics may be chosen as relevant by each Member State)⁴³;
- › List of support studies and other research and analytical activities for evaluation;
- › List of other evaluation activities and their timing (e.g. capacity building activities, development of monitoring systems, etc.);
- › Roadmap of evaluations (bringing together the above points).

Additional content for the timeline section is proposed in these guidelines, as set out in the table below.

Table 5 - Proposed content for Section 4 of the evaluation plan

Minimum content ⁴⁴	Additional content	Justification
Indicative planning of evaluations and evaluation support studies Reasoning behind the choices made	Roadmap for evaluations	To add value to the timeline, a roadmap with timeframe and deadlines offers a complete picture of which evaluation activities and when. Include all types of evaluation activities: evaluations/evaluation support studies, capacity building activities, development of monitoring systems. The latter is relevant for planning the data required for evaluations. Take into account any timing-related risks. The overall evaluation framework may be considered in order to define key milestones.

⁴³ Annex II (4) (b) of Regulation (EU) 2022/1475

⁴⁴ Annex II (4) of Regulation (EU) 2022/1475



Minimum content ⁴⁴	Additional content	Justification
<p>Links of this section with other sections of the evaluation plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Section 1 - Objectives and needs: The evaluation topics and other activities will be the basis for developing the timeline. These will be identified in section 1 of the evaluation plan and based on the selected approach (a more strategic or a more detailed evaluation plan), their indicative timing will be set out in the timeline. › Section 2 - Governance and coordination is an overarching element as some governance bodies/actors responsible for coordination/ implementation of evaluation activities may need to be involved in the development of the timeline. › Section 5 - Data and information requirements will also inform some of the evaluation activities and therefore any data preparation/ collection activities also need to be considered in the timeline. › Section 7 - Resources, technical support and capacity building: The resources available for evaluations (human, financial, technical) will also determine the ambition of evaluation activities and how they are reflected in the timeline. For instance, if IT or capacity building activities are required, they should be planned with some indicative timing. 		

Key terms to consider

An **indicative planning of evaluations** and evaluation support studies to be carried out during the programming cycle, as well as the **reasoning for the choices made**, including:

- a) evaluations to assess the **contribution of the CAP strategic plans to the CAP objectives**, to be carried out during the implementation of the CAP Strategic Plan;
- b) where relevant, the evaluations to **assess specific topics** referred to in Article 2, point (d), of the Implementing Regulation;
- c) **support studies and other research and analytical activities** for evaluations.

Indicative planning of evaluations: This refers to an indicative timing that should show the anticipated duration, the starting and ending points of each process. The timing is 'indicative' in order to allow flexibility, given the length of the implementation period. This may involve annual revisions/adaptations of the timeline.

The planning process requires retrospective scheduling (starting from the last step in the process) to ensure that results are available on time. For this, Member States may need to set evaluation milestones, during the implementation and ex post. Although the date for the ex post evaluation is specified in the Regulation⁴⁵, for the evaluations during the implementation period, it is up to the Member State to decide what and when such evaluations will be conducted.

Furthermore, the evaluation plan needs to give the **reasoning for the choices made**, meaning that Member States should explain whether the evaluations, including planned support studies, are based on the evaluation plan's needs and objectives, the CAP Strategic Plan intervention logic and the expected implementation. This will ensure that minimum requirements are met, such as assessing all SOs at least once during the implementation period. In addition, it will ensure that all evaluation activities will be carried out at the right time in order to capture the actual effects.

The assessment of the **contribution of the CAP Strategic Plan to the CAP objectives** should follow the CAP Strategic Plan intervention logic and focus on: a) each SO addressed by the plan or b) comprehensive evaluations covering several objectives, while providing a justification of why an objective is not evaluated during the implementation period⁴⁶.

The **assessment of specific topics** should take into account both the evaluation needs and the CAP Strategic Plan intervention logic⁴⁷. The Regulation suggests topics such as the environmental and climate architecture, the added value of LEADER, National CAP networks and the Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation System (AKIS).

Support studies and other research and analytical activities relate to work undertaken to support evaluations (e.g. a study to identify data gaps, a study to analyse or develop evaluation methodologies, a study on environmental impact monitoring) but are not evaluations.

⁴⁵ Article 140 (6) of Regulation [EU] 2021/2115

⁴⁶ Article 2(a) of Regulation [EU] 2022/1475

⁴⁷ Article 2(d) of Regulation [EU] 2022/1475



Key questions to consider

- › How would the evaluation of SOs, specific topics and evaluation support studies be organised over time, taking into account the intervention logic and the expected results of the CAP Strategic Plan?
- › What are the key evaluation milestones, considering also the future programming period?
- › What can be considered for preparing a roadmap of the evaluation plan?
- › The roadmap can provide a useful overview of what should be evaluated and when. Specific sub-questions can include:
 - › What evaluation activities would be organised and when?
 - › What kind of preparatory steps (e.g. development of evaluation questions, data preparation, methodology development, launch of tenders) are needed to enable the planned evaluation activities?
 - › When is the right time to start preparing and launching major tenders and other preparatory work?
- › What are the major challenges or risks related to timing?
- › How will the indicative outline of timing be finetuned (e.g., strategic level evaluation plan, multi-annual work plan, yearly action plan) and followed up during the programming period?
- › What are the lessons from the previous period regarding the timing of evaluations?

Territorial aspects

- › Consider, if relevant, any deadlines for regions to provide information/data or any other input required to carry out the national level evaluations.
- › Coordination between regional and national level actors is key to ensure consistency and complementarity between both levels, e.g. that certain information can be sent from the regional to the national level and compiled and analysed in time, and that the procedure is precisely described and mapped out in advance.
- › Similarly, it is necessary to ensure that certain recommendations or conclusions of evaluation exercises can be appropriately integrated by the regions into interventions that are planned/managed at the regional level.

Indicative outline of this section

1. List of evaluations to assess the contribution of the CAP Strategic Plan to the CAP objectives and indicative timing
2. List of evaluations to assess specific topics and indicative timing
3. List of support studies and other research and analytical activities for evaluation and indicative timing
4. List of other evaluation activities and their timing (e.g. capacity building activities, development of monitoring systems, etc.)
5. Timeline and roadmap of evaluations (bringing together the above points)

3.5 Data and information

What to include in this section of the evaluation plan

This section of the evaluation plan should analyse (analysis to be deepened in the framework of each specific evaluation) what information will be available from the monitoring system and what information needs to be complemented by evaluation activities to adequately respond to evaluation needs. It should show that all the necessary procedures and actions have been analysed and planned to ensure that the systems for obtaining information for adequate monitoring and evaluation are in place on time.

Ideally, all the necessary data and information (including, where relevant, field measurements, qualitative data from surveys, interviews, etc.) should be built into the monitoring system from the early stages of implementation in order to serve all the planned evaluations.

Additional content for the data and information section is proposed in these guidelines, as set out in the table below.



Table 6 - Proposed content for Section 5 of the evaluation plan

Minimum content ⁴⁸	Additional content	Justification
Description of arrangements to ensure data availability for M&E	<p>A general evaluation framework for identifying data gaps, with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Indicative evaluation questions and factors of success > Indicators > Data sources 	<p>The evaluation framework is a tool that can bring together, in a systematic way, all the required and potential indicators and the data sources, to help identify data needs and gaps at least for the PMEF indicators, including the impact indicators that need to be applied, listed in Annex III of Regulation (EU) 2022/1475.</p> <p>Evaluations to be based on output, result, impact and context indicators - Art. 6(1)</p> <p>Other indicators and qualitative and quantitative information can also be used - Art. 6(2)</p>
Main data sources		
Institutional arrangements for data provision		
Data quality control arrangements		
Data gaps and actions to address them		
	<p>Training of actors on data management systems, if needed</p>	<p>Specific training sessions might be necessary to build capacity of actors involved in data management, given the new typology of data (new CAP architecture).</p>
<p>Links of this section with other sections of the evaluation plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Section 1 - Objectives and needs: The evaluation topics and activities, notably the SOs and topics to be evaluated, will inform the data and information arrangements to ensure data availability. > Sections 2 and 3 - Governance and stakeholder mapping: Some stakeholders, identified in the mapping or involved in governance, will have a role to play in data and information arrangements. For instance, some stakeholders may be data providers. > Section 4 - Timeline: Data and information arrangements need to be taken into account in the timeline of the evaluation plan. For instance, if an electronic system for data collection is to be set up, it needs to be planned. > Section 7 - Resources, technical support and capacity building: Data and information needs should also be taken into account when planning the resources required for monitoring and evaluation as well as any capacity building required to improve data collection and management skills. 		

Key terms to consider

A brief description of the arrangements referred to in Article 7(2) of the Implementing Regulation to ensure **data availability** for monitoring and evaluation, including the identification of **main data sources** to be used, **institutional arrangements** for data provision and data quality control arrangements. This section should also include identification of **data gaps** and actions to address them, including having **data systems** operational in time.

Data availability: This refers to the data and information needed for evaluations that should be available on time, at the required level of disaggregation (national, regional, local) and in the required format. For this, it is important to identify the main data sources, which may include national or regional statistical units, research centres, undertakings and other data providers.

Institutional arrangements: They refer to the necessary arrangements that Member States shall make with data providers, including data quality control arrangements. Institutional and quality control arrangements shall consider the territorial scope relevant for the evaluations and include the statistical use of data from administrative registers⁴⁹.

Data gaps: They have been a rather frequent bottleneck in the past. They stem from a lack of relevant data sources, a lack of harmonisation of existing data sources and a lack of data collection methodologies, a lack of sufficient data to conduct time series analyses and limited or delayed implementation of certain interventions, etc. The evaluation plan should include actions to address such gaps. One key action in

⁴⁸ Annex II (4) of Regulation (EU) 2022/1475

⁴⁹ Article 7 (2) of the Implementing Regulation



this respect is to ensure that **data systems** are in place with the necessary configuration and can be operational on time. Lessons from the previous programming period are very pertinent in this respect.

Key questions to consider

- › What data is needed for different evaluations (data on the values of common and other indicators, other quantitative and qualitative information etc.)?
- › What data sources are available and what further ones are needed?
- › What data gaps need to be taken into account?
- › What are the key methodological issues to address with regard to data gaps?
- › How is data availability assessed, in light of past experiences?
- › What data systems are already in place and how can they be adapted/revised?
- › What are the conditions and potential legal requirements to access restricted data?
- › What arrangements are needed to ensure that evaluators can access data needed for evaluations?
- › How will clear and common definitions amongst different stakeholders/data providers be ensured during data collection?
- › What are the resources needed (financial, technical, human etc.) for collecting the data?

Territorial aspects

Institutional and quality control arrangements shall take into account the territorial scope relevant for the evaluations and include the statistical use of data from administrative registers⁵⁰. Specific issues to be considered include:

- › Agreements on the provision of information with regional authorities. It is also relevant to define internally, in each region, possible agreements for obtaining information with other agents operating at the regional level.
- › In order for the information to be aggregated in a timely manner, it is important to provide the regions with concrete guidelines that allow homogeneous supply of data/information at the same time.
- › It is necessary that the information gathered allows a convenient disaggregation at the territorial/regional level, where relevant.
- › It is relevant to consider and analyse the role of the regions as both providers and potential users.

Indicative outline of this section

1. Monitoring procedures and mechanisms
2. Data needs and data sources for evaluations
3. Data arrangements
4. Data gaps and actions to address them
5. Capacity building needs

⁵⁰ Article 7 (2) of Regulation (EU) 2022/1475



3.6 Communication and follow-up

What to include in this section of the evaluation plan

This section of the evaluation plan should describe the communication and follow-up approaches and tools using lessons learned from previous programming periods and setting minimum standards for communication and follow-up of evaluation results. Additional content for the data and information section is proposed in these guidelines, as set out in the table below.

Table 7 - Proposed content for Section 6 of the evaluation plan

Minimum content ⁵¹	Additional content	Justification
Description of channels/mechanisms for dissemination of evaluation findings to target recipients Description of mechanisms for follow-up and use of evaluation results	Description of the communication plan	Not only the dissemination, but an overall communication plan should be in place.
	Goals for communicating evaluation findings	This should be an inherent part of any communication process.
	Role of national CAP networks	CAP networks are a key channel for communication and dissemination and it is worth focusing on a more detailed description of their role.
	Role of the Monitoring Committee	The Monitoring Committee plays an important role in examining progress made in relation to the follow-up of evaluation findings, including recommendations.
Links of this section with other sections of the evaluation plan		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › <u>Section 1 - Objectives and needs</u>: The results of evaluations (topics and activities) will be communicated and follow-up given to recommendations. › <u>Section 2 - Governance and coordination</u>: Actors/bodies involved in governance structures will have an input into the design and implementation of communication and follow-up channels and activities. › <u>Section 3 - Stakeholder mapping</u>: Some stakeholders will have a particular role in communication and/or in the follow-up of evaluation findings. › <u>Section 4 - Timeline</u>: The communication and follow-up activities need to be considered in the timeline of the evaluation plan. 		

Key terms to consider

A description of how **evaluation findings** will be disseminated to **target recipients**, including a description of the **mechanisms established** for the **follow-up** and the use of evaluation results.

Evaluation findings: The results of evaluations, including conclusions and recommendations, should be based on robust evidence. They can then be used by target recipients for different purposes, e.g. to improve implementation (CAP Strategic Plan managers), plan the future policy (policy-makers), raise awareness about the outcomes of the policy (general public).

Communication: It ensures that evaluation findings (WHAT) are transmitted to the right recipients (WHO), in the right format (HOW) and at the right time (WHEN).

Target recipients: They are evaluation stakeholders at EU, national and regional level, such as policy-makers, evaluators, researchers, beneficiaries and the wider public.

Mechanisms established: These refer to the information channels, i.e. the means (e.g. e-mail, internet, intranet, newsletter, events) through

⁵¹ Annex II (4) of Regulation (EU) 2022/1475



which evaluation findings are disseminated.

Follow-up of evaluation results: This can be done through different mechanisms (e.g. action plans, seminars, workshops, committees, knowledge brokering⁵²) to feed lessons and recommendations from evaluations back into implementation of the CAP Strategic Plan and to the policy cycle, including the design of future policy. Use of the knowledge generated by evaluations is the key purpose of any evaluation. Use of knowledge should, systematically, be further analysed and shared. Progress made in relation to the follow-up of evaluation findings is one of the functions of the Monitoring Committee⁵³.

Key questions to consider

In relation to communication:

- › What communication needs exist within Member States?
- › How can one best communicate evaluation results and reach the relevant stakeholders?
- › What information channels can be considered?

In relation to target audiences:

- › Who are the target audiences (relevant stakeholders) for evaluation in general and for the results of each specific evaluation?

In relation to roles:

- › What is the role of the Monitoring Committee in the process of communication and follow-up?
- › What is the role of the National CAP Network in the process of communication and follow-up?
- › What roles do the Managing Authority, Paying Agency, managers of interventions, regional level administrations, etc. play in this?
- › What other structures exist that may be used for communicating evaluation results (working groups, networks, etc.)?

In relation to follow-up:

- › How can one follow up on the use of evaluation results and recommendations?
- › How can one ensure that evaluation results improve programme implementation?

Territorial aspects

- › It is very important that the results of evaluations can be used by regions and integrated into decision-making on all interventions that are defined/modified and managed at regional level.
- › Evaluations should also aim to obtain general conclusions that are relevant for the different regions. To this end, certain national level evaluations may include case studies that allow conclusions to be drawn at the regional level. It may be a good option for certain techniques to provide results at national and regional level (e.g. a homogeneous survey that can be analysed individually for each region).
- › In addition, it is relevant to include mechanisms to address/discuss evaluation results and their implications at regional level with regional authorities.

Indicative outline of this section

1. Approach used and lessons learned from the previous programming periods
2. Goals for communicating the evaluation findings

⁵² The term 'knowledge brokering' is well described in the Evaluation Matters - The Evaluation Policy for European Union Development Co-operation (<https://op.europa.eu/s/w7MN>). 'Knowledge brokering' is a distinct step in the process of promoting take-up of findings. It involves using the knowledge of ways in which it will influence change. The Evaluation Manager is responsible for ensuring that this takes place. However key users are best placed to promote evidence and findings from the content of the evaluation. The Evaluation Manager assists key users to set out an action plan for how they intend to do this. This may include:

- Identifying opportunities in the internal planning cycle when evaluation should be used in decision-making, and who will be responsible for these inputs,
- Identifying external opportunities to use the evidence and findings of the evaluation to influence change,
- Meta-evaluations (systematic synthesis of evaluations) conducted to bring together core learning on similar topics.

⁵³ Article 124 (3) (d) of Regulation (EU) 2021/2115

3. Overall communication plan, including communication channels and target audiences
4. Follow-up approach to ensure implementation of evaluation recommendations and use of evaluation results

3.7 Resources, technical support and capacity building

What to include in this section of the evaluation plan

This section of the evaluation plan should describe the resources needed for its implementation and any technical support and capacity building activities. The content of this section should ensure that there is enough capacity, broadly understood, available to implement the evaluation plan.

Table 8 - Proposed content for Section 7 of the evaluation plan

Minimum content ⁵⁴	Additional content	Justification
<p>Description of resources (human, financial and technical, including IT)</p> <p>Description of implementation support: support needs of stakeholders and administrations (national, regional, local level, including LAGs), technical support, guidelines, capacity building</p>	Structured capacity building plan for LAGs for evaluating the local development strategies	<p>LAGs have improved their evaluation culture, but experience from 2014-2020 reveals there are still needs, especially in relation to evaluation frameworks and evaluation methods⁵⁵.</p> <p>Having a specific capacity building plan also helps raise the evaluation culture of LAGs.</p>
<p>Links of this section with other sections of the evaluation plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › <u>Section 1 - Objective and needs</u>: The planning of resources should take into account the planned evaluation topics and activities. › <u>Section 4 - Timeline</u>: Any technical support and capacity building activities need to be included in the timeline. › <u>Sections 2 and 3 - Governance and coordination/stakeholder mapping</u>: Actors/bodies/structures involved in governance and other stakeholders will have needs in relation to capacity building needs that should be taken into account. 		

Key terms to consider

A description of the **resources** needed and envisaged to implement the evaluation plan, including an indication of the administrative capacity, data, financial resources and IT needs. Description of the implementation of the programme support referred to in Article 7(3) and (4) of this Regulation, including **technical support and capacity building** activities carried out to ensure that the evaluation plan can be fully implemented and support planned for LAGs for evaluating the Local Development Strategies.

Resources: This refers to the financial, technical and human resources required for the implementation of the evaluation plan. Technical resources include, for instance, data systems, databases, IT tools, etc.

Technical support and capacity building: This refers to the skills as well any external support (e.g. analysis, tools, guidelines) required for implementing the evaluation plan. These may include technical/IT skills, methodological and/or analytical skills. Support and capacity building shall be offered after identification of the support needs of stakeholders and administrations involved in the evaluations of CAP strategic plans at national, regional and local levels, including LAGs⁵⁶. Support can be provided in the form of training, guidelines and any other relevant capacity building activities, offered by or in collaboration with the National CAP Network⁵⁷. These activities should consider the diverse capacity of institutions and stakeholders in the field of monitoring and evaluation⁵⁸. At the same time, capacity building activities in relation to evaluation also contribute to raising awareness of the importance of evaluation and building evaluation culture.

⁵⁴ Annex II (4) of Regulation (EU) 2022/1475

⁵⁵ Various capacity building activities of the Evaluation Helpdesk support this finding, e.g. https://enrd.ec.europa.eu/sites/default/files/evaluation_publications/fs-026-it-lags.pdf as well as the [Evaluation support study on the impact of LEADER on balanced territorial development](#)

⁵⁶ Article 7 (3) of Regulation (EU) 2022/1475

⁵⁷ Article 7 (4) of Regulation (EU) 2022/1475

⁵⁸ Article 7 (3) of Regulation (EU) 2022/1475

Key questions to consider

- › Are there relevant resources (human, financial and technical) available for the implementation of the evaluation plan?
- › How can relevant resources be obtained if needed?
- › What are the capacity building needs for the evaluation plan implementation and how can these be identified throughout the implementation period?
- › What support and evaluation capacity building activities are more pertinent for which institutions and stakeholders?
- › How can one plan and implement capacity building at national, regional and local level, including for LAGs?
- › What is the budget available for the different evaluation activities?

Territorial aspects

- › Depending on the role assumed by the regions in the implementation of the evaluation plan, it is important to ensure that they have the necessary financial and technical resources.
- › It is necessary to contemplate training and other support actions that guarantee the adequate participation of the regions in the evaluation process.

Indicative outline of this section

1. Resources needed for implementing the evaluation plan (financial, human, data, IT)
2. Technical support and capacity building activities (list, content, timetable)
3. Structured capacity building plan for LAGs



Annex - Definitions of the evaluation criteria

The definitions used for the evaluation criteria are the ones presented in Tool #47 of the Better Regulation Toolbox⁵⁹ and summarised in the following box.

Box 1 - Definitions used for the evaluation criteria

EFFECTIVENESS

Effectiveness analysis considers how successful EU action has been in achieving or progressing towards its objectives. The evaluation should form (a) an opinion on the progress made to date and (b) the role of the EU action in delivering the observed changes. The effectiveness analysis should also look closely at the benefits of the EU intervention as they accrue to different stakeholders (Better Regulation, Tool #47, p.403).

There are two levels to be considered in effectiveness: a) operational effectiveness, where progress towards the CAP Specific Objectives is assessed based on the target values of result indicators, and b) impacts, where progress towards the CAP general and Specific Objectives is assessed based on impact indicators.

EFFICIENCY

Efficiency considers the resources used by an intervention for the given changes generated by the intervention. Efficiency analysis should look closely at the costs of the EU intervention as they accrue to different stakeholders. The efficiency analysis should also compare the identified costs with the benefits that were identified under the effectiveness criterion as well as explore the potential for simplification and burden reduction. (Better Regulation, Tool #47, pp. 404-405)

RELEVANCE

Relevance looks at the relationship between the needs and problems at the time of introducing the intervention and during its implementation. Relevance should also look at the relationship between the current and future needs and problems in the EU and the objectives of the intervention. (Better Regulation, Tool #47, p. 407).

COHERENCE

The evaluation of coherence involves looking at how well (or not) different interventions, EU/international policies or national/regional/local policy elements work together. Checking 'internal' coherence means looking at how the various components of the same EU intervention operate together to achieve its objectives. Checking 'external' coherence means that similar checks can be conducted in relation to other ('external') interventions, at different levels. Where relevant, analysis of coherence may involve checking whether interventions are in line with the objectives of the European Green Deal, or whether the intervention is consistent with the overarching environmental goals (such as the Climate Law) or other policies targeting the environment. (Better Regulation, Tool #47, p. 408).

EUROPEAN UNION VALUE ADDED

EU added value looks for changes that are due to the EU intervention, over and above what could reasonably have been expected from national actions by the Member States. Under the principle of subsidiarity (Article 5 Treaty on European Union), and in areas of non-exclusive competence, the EU should only act when the objectives can be better achieved by European Union action rather than action by the Member States. (Better Regulation, Tool #47, p. 409).

⁵⁹ [Better Regulation Toolbox - Chapter 6 \(europa.eu\)](#)





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