

□ L'écho des Directions

Evaluation of the Environment and Forests Regulations

(2493/2000 and 2494/2000)

This evaluation was completed in November 2004 (commissioned by the Evaluation Unit common to EuropeAid, Relex and DG Development to DRN-ADE-NCG-ECO consortium). The final evaluation report is available on:

<http://europa.eu.int/comm/europeaid/evaluation/program/sectorrep.htm>



Brasil, Manaus, tower for canopy climate monitoring directed research project

The purpose of this evaluation was to account for the funds expended under both Regulations to the legislative authority, to the relevant services of the EC and wider public. Additionally, the purpose was to provide an independent evaluation along with proposals for the future of both Regulations, including their possible modification or termination as stipulated in articles 12 of 2494/2000 and 11 of 2493 respectively.

Briefly in terms of **methodology**, the evaluation was managed by the evaluation unit with the support of a steering group composed by members of the services concerned.⁽¹⁾

The evaluation was carried out in 3 main phases:

(i) *desk* – structuring, reconstruction

of the intervention logic of both Regulations, development of suitable judgement criteria and indicators for the evaluation questions (EQ) indicated in the ToRs, selection of a sample of 35 projects in 16 countries to be visited, development of instruments for the field data collection including project assessment sheets and questionnaires (presented to 36 EC Delegations plus to the organizations responsible for the implementation of the projects);

(ii) *field* – completion of data, gathering of new information and testing hypothesis;

(iii) *synthesis* - analysis of data collected previously to complete the answers to the EQ and draft the conclusions and recommendations.

The evaluation embodies three levels of assessment. The first level represents the Regulations' design and content vis-à-vis the wider development policy framework. The second level addresses the practical enforcement of the Regulations, and administration of Budget Line B7-620. The third level touches upon the practical implementation of individual measures (projects) by contractors in partner countries.

The **Evaluation finds** that: both Regulations are coherent with the relevant EC policy framework and international agreements and that procedural restriction by the coming into force of the financial regulation reduces the Commission's discretion to pursue both environment mainstreaming activities at the global level and strategic policy objectives through the Forests Regulation. In what regards particularly the environment regulation, mainstreaming has more to do with decision-making, planning, and allocation of resources than with practical im-

plementation of measures at field level. Concerning the Forests Regulation the evaluation finds that its complementarity with other financing instruments is largely coincidental. Annual financial allocations have decreased and are not commensurate with the Regulation's extended thematic and geographical scope.



India, restoration of the tropical dry evergreen forest of the Coromandel coast project (Forest divinities protecting the restored dry evergreen forests)

THE MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE COMMISSION

At regulation and wider EC framework level :

- Ensure both Forests and Environment Regulations' continued existence beyond 2006, or – in case the Commission's proposal for the merger of all current instruments for external action under the Development Cooperation and Economic Cooperation Instrument⁽²⁾ is adopted – ensure adequate consideration and visibility of both forests and environment (this one with a clear focus on mainstreaming).
- Increase budgetary commitments.
- Limit overlaps among the regulations' scope.
- Enhance synergy between measures under the Forests Regulation and those under other financing instruments. In addition, integrate sustainable forest sector in CSP negotiations, where appropriate.

- Restore the Forests Regulation's focus on tropical forests.

At Budget-Line administration level :

- Closely follow up on environment mainstreaming progress.
- Improve efficiency of Call for Proposals (CfP) procedures. Better reflect strategic goals and regional needs for forests and environment mainstreaming by regionalizing the CfP (define regions according to their common, sector-specific ecological, social and economic properties; identify regional priorities, with the involvement of the Delegations).
- Allow for small-scale mainstreaming interventions in and drop the minimum threshold in the next guidelines for applicants.
- Improve role of southern partners by defining criteria for more equitable partnerships between northern and southern partners, and include them in the guidelines for applicants.
- Furthermore adhere to eligibility criteria for applicants as stipulated in the Regulations.
- Provide EC Delegations with adequate resources for the budget line's administration and improve

Delegations' technical capacities, establishing regional focal points with adequate expertise.

At project implementation level :

- Ensure continuity and impact of promising projects. Accordingly, a set of respective mechanisms needs to be installed at the following different levels: (i) project selection and design (check for realistic approach and corresponding OVIs); (ii) monitoring and evaluation (assure flexible adaptation of approach, and focus on exit strategies); (iii) EC Delegations should facilitate take-over by other financing instruments, donors, or the partner country itself; (iv) work towards an amendment of



Cambodia, Siem Reap, fuelwood saving project (CFSP-II)

of the Financial Regulation, so as to allow additional funding for second phase for exceptionally innovative and promising grant projects, without a CfP procedure.

FOLLOW-UP

Following the publication of this report, we are currently on the process to complete the Fiches Contractoires. These Fiches are intended to optimise feedback by aggregating the answers of the Commission's services to each recommendation (stating services agreement or disagreement and in the latter case, the reason why services disagree totally or partially together with comments and/or proposed actions). A follow-up of the Commission's responses is scheduled to take place one year later.

A dissemination seminar for the presentation of the results of this evaluation is foreseen for the first semester of 2005.

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⁽¹⁾ AIDCO C6, D4, F4; DEV B4; RELEX G1,H1; ENV B3, E3; RTD N02; BUDG B5.

⁽²⁾ Pursuant to COM(2004) 626 of September 29th, 2004.

Asia News

Outcome and follow-up of the 188th ALA Committee of 17-18th November 2004

Sixteen projects for Asia were submitted to Member States ALA Committee of November 2004. Thirteen projects received a favourable opinion of the Member States represented at the meeting, while the remaining three projects were subsequently agreed in December following additional elements being provided to Member States under written procedure.

The projects were: Bangladesh: €10 Mio, Vietnam (2): €11 Mio, India: €33 Mio, China (2): €55 Mio, Indonesia (3): €33.5 Mio, Asean: €6 Mio, Nepal: €3 Mio, Afghanistan: €12.5 Mio, and two Asia TA: €14 Mio + €3 Mio, (i) Strengthening of Governance in Cambodia (€10 Mio), (ii) Border Management in Philippines (€4.9 Mio).

Most of the approved projects have been the subject of Financing Decisions which have been committed under the 2004 ALA budget, with the exception of the two TA framework projects for Asia which will be the subject of Financing Decisions to be concluded in January 2005 (n+1 rule). These framework projects will permit the Brussels Headquarters and the Delegations concerned to hire short term TA to help implement EC financed projects on the ground. This technical assistance

will be related to the full project cycle and can be related then to identification, feasibility, formulation, operational and technical follow-up, monitoring, evaluation and other technical advice or support.

EU-China Summit, the Hague, 8th December 2004

The Seventh High Level Summit meeting between the EU and China took place in The Hague, The Netherlands, on 8th December 2004.

At the meeting, China welcomed the new European Commission and European Parliament, the enlargement of the EU and the agreement by EU Heads of State and Government on the Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe.

The two sides affirmed that the deepening and widening of the EU