EX-ANTE EVALUATIONS ROMANIAN O.P.S AND STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENTS (SEA)

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October 2008

Summary presentation

- Objectives ex-ante evaluation and SEA's

- Quality of the evaluation results

- Quality of the evaluation process

- Main lessons learned

- Conclusions and recommendations for the future

Objectives Ex-ante Evaluation

Help to ensure that the final programme is as relevant and coherent as possible and further:

- Focus on analysis strengths, weaknesses and potentials
- Assess relevancy, coherency/ consistency and realistic targets
- Serve as a a-priori quality assurance of programming and a cost-efficient budgeting
- Provide foundations for monitoring and future evaluations (quantified objectives)
- Help to specify criteria for the selection of projects, reflecting EU priorities
- Help to ensure the transparency of decisions

Objectives SEA's
European Council Directive no. 2001/42/EC

Tool for minimizing the risk and to maximize positive effects of proposed plans and programmes on the environment, and further:

- Assesses the effects of plans/ programmes on the environment
- Is carried out during the elaboration of the plans /programmes
- Preparation of an environmental report taking into account results of consultations with NGOs and Civil Society
- To be taken into account in further decision-making process
- Examines individual outputs of the planning process and may propose amendments
- Play a key tool for securing sustainable development in national strategy.

Quality of the evaluation results

An assessment of the quality of the evaluation results should not be made by the consultants themselves.

- ECU executed quality checks; the outcome of which was delivered to all ex-ante evaluators.
- Based on this quality assessment final reports were prepared and became part of the Operational Programmes

Possible criteria for quality assessment?

- The extent in which relevant M.A.s took over recommendations
- The extent to which the E.C. appreciated the submitted O.P.s
- In both cases, however, it is not hypothetical that decisions were taken totally beyond the scope of the evaluation reports.

Quality of evaluation process

Evaluated on the basis of 8 criteria

- O.P. objectives coherent enough and was the O.P. able to be evaluated?
- Were the Terms of Reference for this project adequately enough?
- How was tendering and selection process?
- An inclusive forum and process created providing sufficient feedback and dialogue?
- Did the required information, documentation and data systems exist and were they also accessible?
- Was the evaluation team was well-managed and sufficiently supported?
- Were the reports/outputs of the evaluation effectively and suitably disseminated to all stakeholders?

Main lessons learned
by the evaluators

With regard to:

- The organization and coordination of the work?
- The relationships with the main stakeholders?
- Experts taking part in evaluation activities?
- Relationship between evaluator and the SEA evaluators?
- Work relations with the special international expert for indicators?
- Coordination among all key evaluators (sufficient and effective enough)?
- For which issues is more and better fine-tuning necessary?
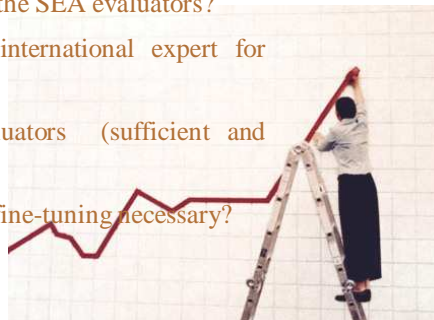
Conclusions and recommendations for the future
I. Terms of Reference

Conclusion

Together with woring paper Commission suffiently enough.

Recommendations

- For cross-cutting issues (T.A.) to include more precise reference with regard to dividing lines between tasks
- Better explain requirements for programme complements / framework reference documents
- Restrict evaluation framework reference documents to relation KAI and O.P. objectives, the chosen selection criteria and appropriateness KAIs with horizontal EU objectives.

Conclusions and recommendations for the future
II. Evaluation activities

Conclusion

Although working in restricted timescale with M.A.s working under heavy time pressure, it was possible to accomplish work in an appropriate and satisfactory way. So, circumstances were not favourable

Recommendations

– Interactive and iterative approach could still be improved by coordinating in time the process of programming and evaluation
– To allow more feasible consultation, SEAs should start as soon as possible during programming process
– Debriefing sessions ECU played a very positive role but should also offer opportunities for internal contacts evaluation team
– More frequent contacts between team leader evaluation and M.A.s could avoid misunderstanding and possible irritations

Conclusions and recommendations for the future
III. Ad-Hoc Analyses

Conclusion

Because of late start project ad-hoc analyses were not in all cases sufficiently and appropriately selected

Recommendations

– The need for ad-hoc analyses should be proved as early as possible during the evaluation process (if possible even in inception report)
– For additional studies a clear procedure should be concluded in consultation between ECU, the M.A. and the key evaluator

Conclusions and recommendations for the future
IV. Training

Conclusion

Due to restricted time available, the number of training workshops was rather limited (mainly on CBA and Indicators). Nevertheless the evaluation process as such delivered a number of learning opportunities.

Recommendations

– A training need assessment should be made from the start of the evaluation process (even in inception phase)

– Shortly after the start of the project introductory training workshops on the evaluation process should be held for all M.A.s

– Delivery of training could also be feasible for other issues as for instance SWOT analyysis and strategy development.