



Council of the
European Union

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OUTCOME OF PROCEEDINGS

From: General Secretariat of the Council

To: Delegations

No. prev. doc.: 9170/16

Subject: Special Report No 20/2015 from the European Court of Auditors entitled
"The cost-effectiveness of EU Rural Development support for non-
productive investments in agriculture"
- Council conclusions (17 June 2016)

Delegations will find in the annex the Council conclusions on:

Special Report No 20/2015 from the European Court of Auditors entitled "The cost-effectiveness of EU Rural Development support for non-productive investments in agriculture",

adopted by the Council at its 3475th meeting held on 17 June 2016.

Council conclusions
on Special Report No 20/2015 from the European Court of Auditors entitled:
“The cost-effectiveness of EU Rural Development support for non-productive investments in
agriculture”

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

- (1) WELCOMES Special Report No 20/2015 from the European Court of Auditors entitled: “The cost-effectiveness of EU Rural Development support for non-productive investments (NPIs) in agriculture” in the context of contributing to the environmental objectives of the rural development policy in the 2007-2013 programming period;
- (2) WELCOMES the Court's overall conclusion that NPI support contributed to the achievement of environmental objectives linked to the sustainable use of agricultural land, such as landscape and biodiversity protection;
- (3) NOTES the Court's findings, however, which suggest certain improvements to be made with the implementation of NPIs in the 2014-2020 programming period, such as:
 - to ensure the overall effectiveness of NPI support through applying appropriate selection procedures with the result that unreasonably high or unjustified costs are avoided and that costs do not exceed the costs of similar work on the open market;
 - the need to assess the extent to which NPIs are implemented in synergy with other environmental schemes and that this is specifically addressed during the evaluations of the 2014-2020 programming period;

- the need to define specific results indicators for the NPIs to allow for the monitoring and assessment of NPIs contribution to achieving the EU agri-environmental-climate objectives, including in the Member States' annual implementation reports and evaluation plans;
- (4) WELCOMES the extensive guidance provided by the Commission for the 2014-2020 programming period to Member States/regions with the aim of ensuring that only the best operations and investments contributing to the programmes' objectives and priorities are selected, giving due account to ensure reasonableness of costs;
- (5) ACKNOWLEDGES the need for appropriate reporting, monitoring and evaluation of NPI projects, while balancing the administrative efforts required with the relatively low level of funding for NPIs.
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