Benchmarking

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Aim and approach

- Identify and evaluate farmers' motivations to participate in FADN and future FSDN
- Understand incentives and disincentives for voluntary participation
- Identify key elements for the benchmarking module
- Develop a strategy for efficient and effective implementation of the benchmarking module

Sources of information

- Pilot Project Questionnaire for farmers (see Sections III and IV)
- Online survey for Liaison Agencies reporting tool and benchmarking
- A deeper analysis using a combination of literature review and case study methodology

Outputs

- Four case study summary reports
- One cross-case study analysis report presenting evidence about the strategies for designing and implementing the benchmarking service

How to implement an effective strategy for the benchmarking service

1. How to interact with farmers
2. How to create user-friendly data
3. How to increase the usefulness of data for farmers
4. How to motivate farmers to participate in FADN/FSDN

→ For each requirement, at least one policy implication was highlighted

1. How to interact with farmers (1/2)

- **Institutional cooperation:** Emphasising practical cooperation among institutions

  Policy: Define roles, responsibilities, and encourage collaboration with incentives such as funding or recognition

- **Personal commitment.** Strong farmer-advisor relationships.

  Policy: Enhance advisor training, resource allocation, and communication tools; prioritise feedback channels

1. How to interact with farmers (2/2)

- **Tailoring outputs for diverse audiences:** Addressing IT literacy.

    Policy: Collaboration among policymakers, Liaison Agencies, and stakeholders to align the benchmarking service with varying farmer needs

- **Enhancing farmer-adviser interactions.** Boosting feedback and support.

    Policy: Promoting responsive advisers via a dedicated help desk, enabling ongoing farmer feedback for refining data collection and analysis in benchmark reports

2. How to create user-friendly data

- **Advisory service:** Valued but with concerns (possible bias, liability risks)

    Policy: Ensuring fair advisory design for all farmers, regardless of FADN participation, and implementing safeguards against liability risks

- **Farmer Training:** Limited but valuable

    Policy: Prioritising pilot training projects and leveraging available resources

Suggestions include prioritising visuals over tables or text and offering editable tools within specific software or online platforms

3. How to increase the usefulness of data for farmers

- **Data timeliness:** Case studies consistently show FADN reports issued within a year of the accounting period's end.

  Policy: Foster prompt data submission for accurate and effective reporting, potentially through resource allocation or farmer incentives

- **Data Diversity:** Current reports mostly focus on economic performance, while the growing interest of civil society results in a potential interest for farmers in benchmarking their sustainability data.

  Policy: Consider financial incentives or resource aid for comprehensive data collection and analysis.

4. How to motivate farmers to participate in FADN/FSDN (1/2)

- **Effective communication:** Raise awareness of available tools from LAs and optimise their utilisation among farmers

    Policy: Collaborate with FADN stakeholders and communication specialists for strategy development

- **Ensuring data protection:** Prioritising privacy concerns of multiple entities (farms, farmers, workers, working relationships/agreements, etc.)

    Policy: Enforce stringent data safeguards such as anonymisation, controlled access, and secure storage and transmission

4. How to motivate farmers to participate in FADN/FSDN (2/2)

- **Acknowledge bonus points for funding applications:** FADN/FSDN participants could earn extra points for national or EU-backed initiatives or for simplifying follow-up checks

  - ➢ Policy: Collaborate with pertinent funding agencies to validate FADN/FSDN involvement within funding requisites

- **Provide predictive analysis and investment guidance support:** Ensuring editable tools that allow users to freely conduct extensive analysis and comparisons

  - ➢ Policy: Foster tool development, training and support for farmers to optimise utilisation

Factors to consider when recruiting farms

- In a broader context, farmers' willingness to provide their data can be enhanced through incentive programmes, technical assistance and educational programmes.

- Data protection is critical to ensure farmers' confidence in data-sharing initiatives.

- For farmers, a gradual implementation strategy when transitioning from purely economic to sustainability data collection is beneficial for understanding the benefits of receiving services such as benchmarking reports.

- The relationship between farmers and data collectors/advisors fosters trust and encourages participation.

- Existing data sources should be utilised to enrich environmental, social and economic data collection; cooperation and coordination among various stakeholders are vital.

In your opinion, what are the main incentives for farmers to participate in reporting and benchmarking?

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