



CONFERENCE ON « UNLOCKING THE POTENTIAL OF THE RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS »

Brussels – 24 November 2015

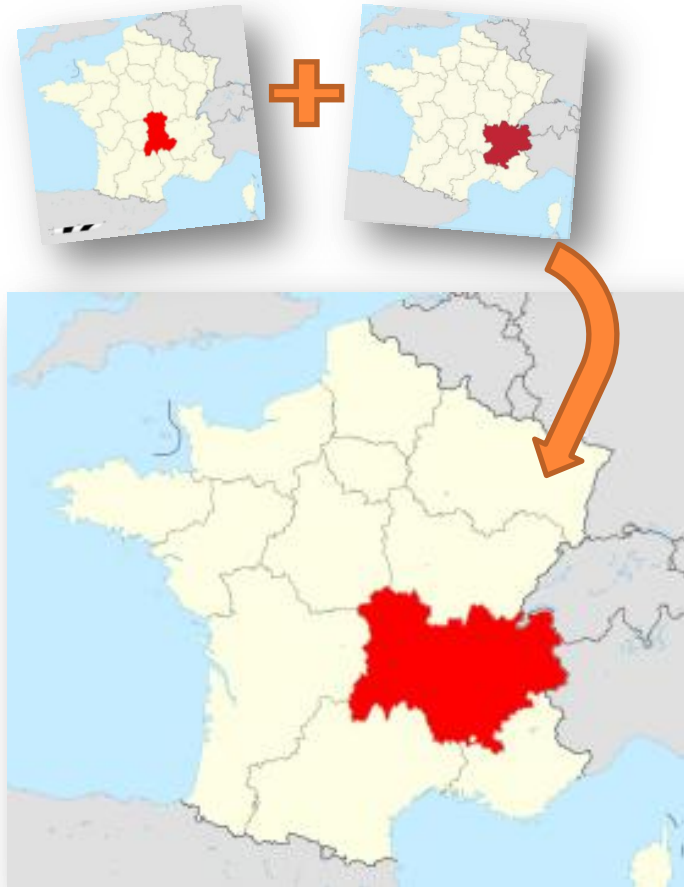
Shared perspectives from the french regional Managing
Authorities and focus on the *Rhône-Alpes* RDP

1

SUMMARY

- Member state level:
 - main characteristics of the new organization for the 2014-2020 EAFRD programming period
 - messages and lessons
- Managing Authority Level:
 - Focus on the *Rhône-Alpes* RDP : organization and perspectives in designing and implementing the RDP
 - Shared lessons, good practices and bottlenecks identified by regional MA

AUVERGNE-RHÔNE-ALPES IN FRANCE



**From 01st of January 2016:
1 MA with 2 RDP
Auvergne and Rhône-Alpes**

Agriculture in Auvergne Rhône-Alpes

- The most diverse region for its agriculture
- Small farms (46 ha av. ; 55 ha in France)
- 54% of the cultivated area in mountain area (grassland area = 55% of agricultural area)
- Strong urban pressure on central and east side
- 11% of the national milk production ; 10% of the bovine meat production ; 6% of the wine production ; 5 % of the cereals production
- Agricultural income below 30% the national average
- Food industry: 13% of the regional industry turnover

a large region in Europe

MEMBER STATE LEVEL

- A new organization for the 2014-2020 programming period for EAFRD:
 - **from 1 single RDP for the hexagonal French territory** in the past period (total of 9 with national, other-seas and Corse programs)
 - **to 27 RDP at the regional level** (including 1 **National Framework**)
 - + 1 National program for the National Rural Network
 - + 1 National program for Risks Management and Technical Assistance

MEMBER STATE LEVEL

- Consequences on designing the RDP:
 - With the European Commission:
 - Approval of the national framework **before** the RDPs
 - Delay in stabilizing for measures not covered by the national framework and for approving the RDP in general
 - At the member state level:
 - Several round trips were required to find the right cursor between expected justification elements in the national framework over RDP
 - Good balance between respect of regional specific aspects (=full use of the new regulation options) and simplification for the MA and for the users
- Consequences on implementing the RDP:
 - Single paying agency for all the regional MA
 - Tripartite convention signed between each regional MA, French state (Ministry of Agriculture) and Paying Agency (ASP) to define the role and missions of each part, based on a template designed at the national level and adapted at the regional level

➔ *The easiest solution ?*

MANAGING AUTHORITY LEVEL : FOCUS ON THE *RHÔNE-ALPES* RDP

- Organization and perspectives in designing and implementing the RDP:
 - Broad consultations with professional and funding partners started early 2013 → a long way to get a RPD approved
 - Difficulties for MA to accommodate the Commission framework (SFC) ; we've started writing the strategy too early
 - Stable and involved geographic correspondent in the French Unit in DGAgri
 - **Difficulty to manage and balance, for writing RDP, both partnership and technocratic regulation**
 - State agencies involvement for implementation as close to the ground as possible

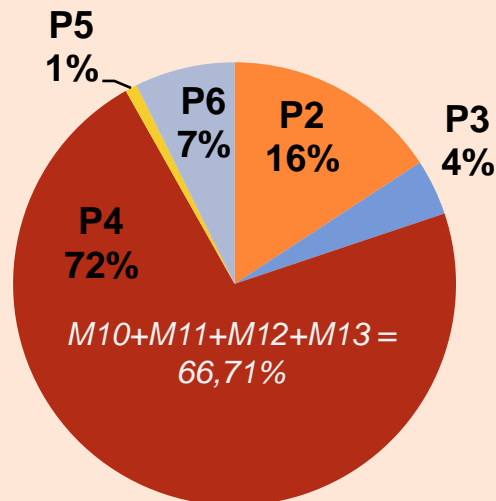
MANAGING AUTHORITY LEVEL : FOCUS ON THE *RHÔNE-ALPES* REGION

14 measures
↑
55 types of operations

Strategy : Maintain, and if possible develop the productive potential related to agriculture and forestry, and refer to maximize their positive externalities

Financial Model RDP Rhône-Alpes

1 059 M€ of EFARD



3,3% on Innovation Priority (P1)

Measure 16 : 23,9M€ - 2,26%

≈ 10M€ on research and innovation
≈ 10M€ on local development strategy

➤ difficulty in mobilizing the measure for the benefit of regional development strategy (food chain organization and strategy)

CSO : several CSO adopted, but could do better

MANAGING AUTHORITY LEVEL :

SHARED LESSONS, GOOD PRACTICES AND BOTTLENECKS

Main shared lessons

- A political debate should have been organized before RDP writing negotiation
- Lack of prior information about latest new regulation (selection, principle of proportionality, COS)
- Changing instructions on the precisions to be given in writing types of operations
 - French RDP are very (too) detailed
- A « geographic correspondent » effect on both sides (EC and MA)
- Lack of support from the Commission when the regulation had to be interpreted
 - input rate of annex I products on sub-measures 4.2
 - selection governed by public procurement law on measure 2, but beneficiaries are providers of advice → explanation might have been given
 - irrigation infrastructure definition not clear (*which is freely available for use by anyone*)
- Rate of aid set precisely in the RDP : important novelty in France (many co-financiers)

MANAGING AUTHORITY LEVEL :

SHARED LESSONS, **GOOD PRACTICES** AND BOTTLENECKS

Good practices identified by the MA

- As much continuity as possible at least from the design to the first modifications period
 - Evolving guidelines or regulation interpretations need to be anticipated and stabilized considering the implementation tools that need to be developed at the national or regional level
- Ex : late arrival of guidelines on Monitoring Implementation Report tables
- « Board » at the EC level to share and stabilize answers and interpretation of regulations beyond guidelines

A specific and further support on those matters between the main meetings held between EC and MA

Many sharing of experience and information between French MA, but lack of contact with other MA

The complexity of the RDP assumes a narrow steering team to manage information and design the implementation of the program tools
BUT the workload is intense

To share experience on measure 16

MANAGING AUTHORITY LEVEL :

SHARED LESSONS, GOOD PRACTICES AND BOTTLENECKS

Bottlenecks form the Commission side:

- An absolute regulatory intransigence that weakens political sense of the RDR
- RDR : a framework regulation too complicated and very thorough
 - ➔ from evaluation questions that are precisely listed to an excessive segmentation of types of operations
 - ➔ should the selection be generalized when eligibility conditions are strong or when operations responds to priorities?
 - ➔ how to take into account the existence of national frameworks?

This leaves little room for national initiative & subsidiarity

- State aid schemes for RDP should be negotiated during the RDP approval

Bottlenecks from the MA side:

- a RDP too large (too many types of operations have been selected)
- A large diversity of financiers that give place to important negotiation
- Dealing with one national payment agencies for regional RDP

Risk: Energy and administrative intelligence mobilized for compliance with procedures and not for rural development

Question: What is the cost of an error rate of less than 2%?

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION!

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