



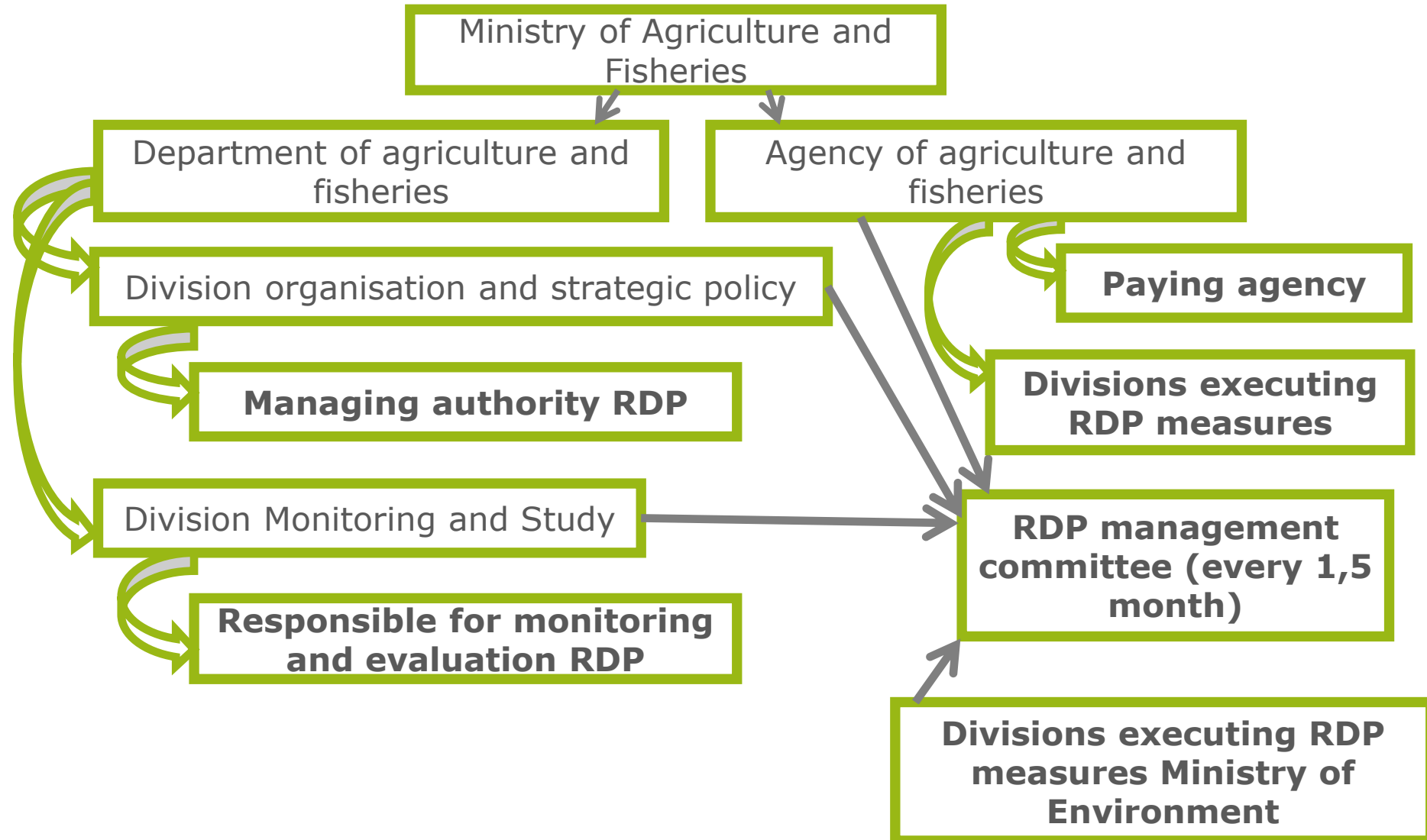
# 'IN HOUSE' ON-GOING EVALUATION IN FLANDERS (BELGIUM)

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Workshop: Good Practice workshop: „From On-going Evaluation towards the Evaluation Plan“, Vienna, May 14<sup>th</sup>, 2012

- Structure and organisation
- Realisations of on-going evaluation 2007-2012
- Success factors of 'in house' on-going evaluation
- Difficulties encountered during the process

# Structure and organisation (1)



## Structure and organisation (2)

Division monitoring and study

Data gathering

One task: **FADN-network** extend with environmental data

Reporting

Task: reporting using FADN data and all other available data sources

Analysis

Task 1: Policy related studies on demand of minister of agriculture and the other divisions

Task 2: Monitoring and evaluation of RDP (1,5 full time equivalent)

Task 2.1: Monitoring: annual report and strategic monitoring report

Task 2.2: Follow-up of ex-ante, mid-term and ex-post evaluation: administration **and content**

Task 2.3: **On-going evaluation** of RDP

## Structure and organisation (3)

- Steering group on-going evaluation: Division monitoring and study (4 people) but reporting and involvement of RDP management committee (and by this also MA)
- Activities of on-going evaluation in Flanders:
  - Provide high quality data sources for ex-ante, mid-term and ex-post evaluation
  - Execute RDP evaluation studies internally
  - Launch calls for external RDP evaluation studies: administration and content
  - Participation to evaluation expert committee and activities of EENRD
  - Exchange of experience regarding monitoring and evaluation with other regions
  - Capacity building regarding monitoring and evaluation:
    - Development of IT-system
    - Training

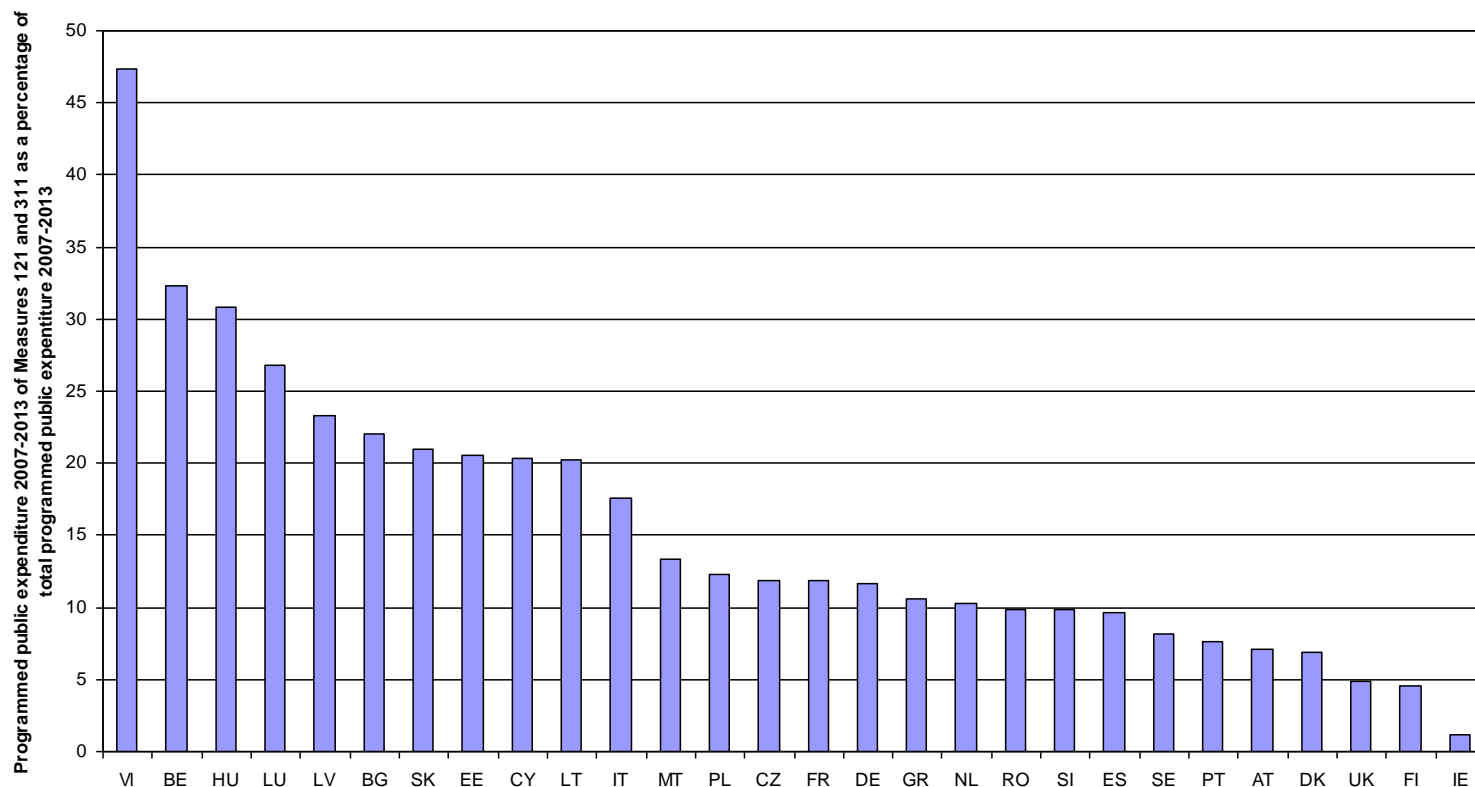
## Structure and organisation (4)

- Detailed on-going evaluation plan:
  - Yearly, we started with it in January 2010
  - Before it was not written down and it was more on a 'ad hoc' basis
  - Why we started with it?:
    - Principles of project management that are used within team:
      - A detailed plan of execution is part of it
- Since 2012 the on-going evaluation's main focus is on preparation of the new programming period

- Realisation 1: IT-system (SAS®) for monitoring (annual report):
  - Made 'in house' with 10 days guidance of consultant
  - Customer made Excel-sheets have to be filled in by data providers, as much as possible data is requested on a **yearly** basis
  - Excel sheets are read in SAS®, over year cumulating and other data treatments (including quality control) are done; at the end the data is outputted to the Excel-file (web application) of EC
  - Advantages:
    - Minimisation of work to be done by data providers
    - Maximisation of data quality

# Realisations of on-going evaluation 2007-2011 (2)

- Realisation 2: Evaluation of environmental impact of investment support (121 and 311)
- Why?:

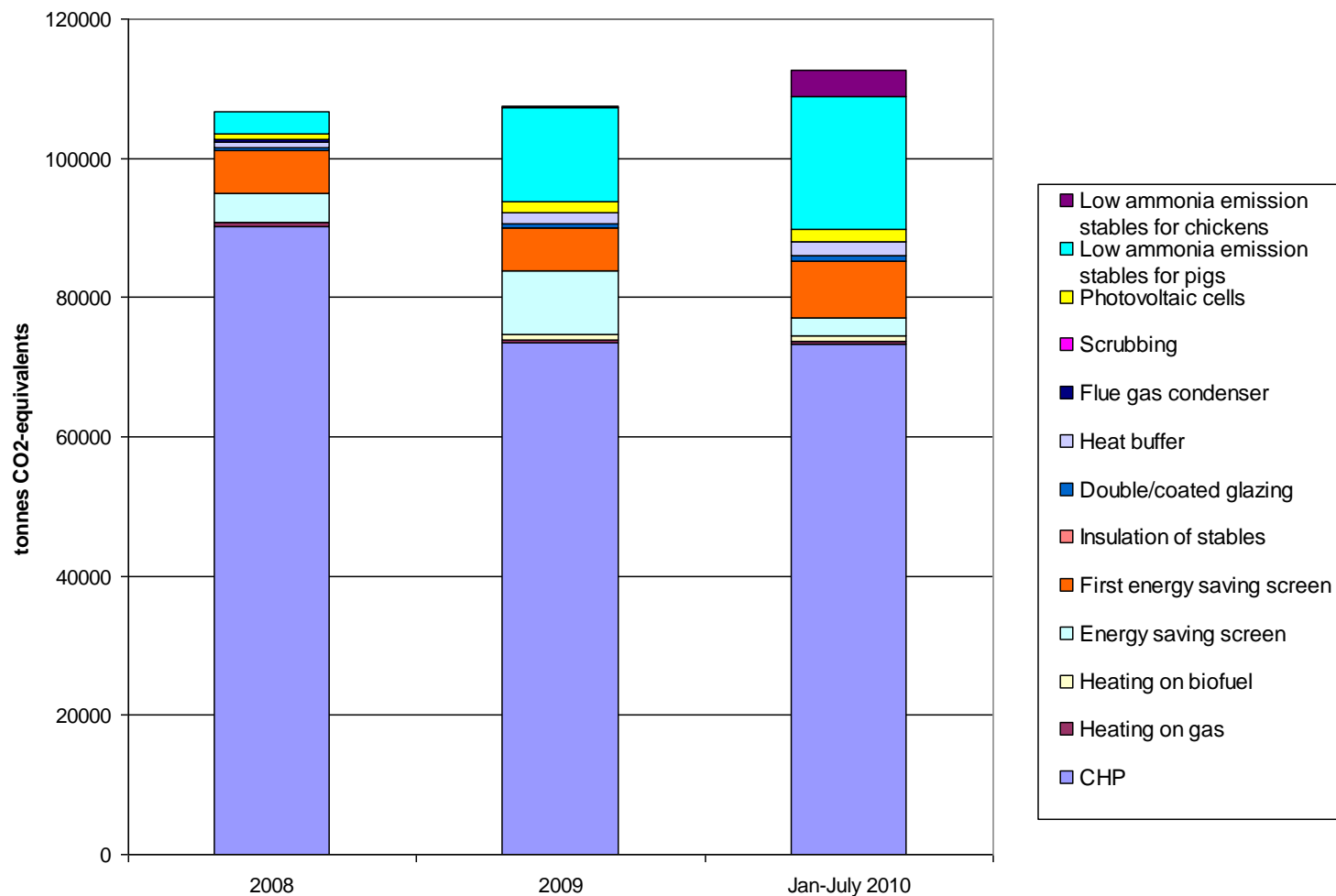




## Realisations of on-going evaluation 2007-2011 (3)

- During on-going evaluation ('in house'):
  - For each type of investment indicators were developed
  - These indicators are situated on the 'output indicator level'
  - At average for each investment type, 5 indicators were added at the IT management system for the investment files
  - Indicators are registered by the file managers of the Flemish Agricultural Investment Fund with input from the farmers if necessary
- During mid-term evaluation (work done by consultant):
  - Out of the type of investment specific output indicators, the impact indicators (for example avoided GHG emissions) were calculated

# Realisations of on-going evaluation 2007-2011 (4)



- Realisation 3: Databases made available for mid-term evaluator:
  - FADN database coupled to different kind of other databases:
    - Investment database
    - Database of training courses
    - Agri-environmental measures database
    - Farm Advisory System database
  - GIS-databases
  - Privacy?: no names, addresses and identification numbers were provided to the mid-term evaluator
- Realisation 4: method ready for mid-term evaluator to calculate result indicator: Gross Value Added:
  - Farms: FADN and extra data of private accounting firms
  - Agri-food companies: data National Bank of Belgium

- Realisation 5: 'In house' studies (in Dutch, English translation):
  - Indicators for the monitoring of agricultural land with a high nature value (HNVF). An exploratory analysis (Danckaert et al., 2009)
  - Green and blue services in Flanders (Danckaert et al., 2009, 2011)
  - Less Favored Area with natural handicaps in Flanders (Van Zeebroeck et al., 2010, 2011)
  - Cohesion policy in relation to rural development policy (Van Zeebroeck, 2011)
  - Agro-environmental measures: thoughts of the farmers (Maertens, 2011)
  - Stimulation of cooperation in agriculture: Part 2: Possibilities of rural development policy (Vuylsteke and de Regt, 2011)
  - Investment support in agriculture: an European comparison (Van Zeebroeck, 2012)

- Realisation 5: studies to be completed in 2012 in preparation of 2014-2020 period:
  - Tool to calculate the on-farm costs to execute agro-environmental measures
  - Scenarios for new Farm Advisory Systems in Flanders
  - Study about the management (administrative) costs of agro-environmental measures
  - Study on European Innovation Partnership
  - Preparation of SWOT for rural development program
  - Launch of call for ex-ante evaluation

- Realisation 6: Ordered studies (in Dutch, English translation):
  - Impact of RDP measures on biodiversity in Flanders (Strubbe et al., 2010)
  - Agro-biodiversity: a starting point for 3th generation agro-environmental measures? (D'Haene et al., 2010)
- Realisation 7: Continuous monitoring network in order to measure net impacts of Rural Development measures on meadow birds and birds typical for arable land (2012-?)  
(initiated by the study impact of RDP measures on biodiversity, 2010)
- Realisation 8: exchange of experience and information (apart from focus group meetings):
  - Exchange with the Netherlands: Utrecht (2008) and Scherpenheuvel (2011)
  - Exchange with Wallonia: Namur (2007) and Brussels (2008, 2009 and 2010)

# Success factors of 'in house' on-going evaluation

- Direct access to all data sources (FADN and administrative databases)
- Direct communication with managing authority and executers of the RDP measures
- Flexibility: pool of 15 people that be used for on going evaluation studies
- Evaluation knowledge: 'high level' communication with external consultant of ex-ante, mid-term and ex-post evaluation: quality control
- Competent head of division with an open mind and a good network (also in Ministry of Environment); experience in RDP evaluation since 2004
- Cheaper than an external on-going evaluator?

## Difficulties encountered during the process

- No success: Webservice provided by EC; design too complex for MS implementation
- Three different public institutions. Not straightforward to achieve a full picture of the M&E needs of all measures.
- As a consequence: control of steering group on axis 3 and 4 on-going evaluation activities is low
- Policy impact of (on-going) evaluation results on current RDP program period on the low side
- Impact of (on-going) evaluation results on RDP program development 2014-2020 will be greater, but possibly still weak



# Thanks for your attention



Exchange about monitoring and evaluation with the Netherlands (Fort Vechten, Utrecht, The Netherlands, 2008)