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COMPARATIVE IMPLEMENTATION ASSESSMENT OF THE AFFORESTATION MEASURE 221

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Abstract: The sustainable planning and management of forest resources is today a common objective across the European Union, as a way of guaranteeing the sustainable management of natural resources, combating climate change and promoting the economic and social development of rural areas. Thus, the National Rural Development Programs include norms and measures that meet this objective, among which standard 221- First norm for afforestation of agricultural lands, a measure that aims at afforestation of land for carbon sequestration, avoiding soil erosion and other risks such as floods and increased production from a renewable energy source. In this sense, the main objective of this work is to make a comparative analysis of the measures taken under norm 221, common in the NRDP 2007-2013 of two member states: Portugal and Romania.

• Introduction

Forest areas (forest, forests and unproductive land) occupy a total area of 6.2 million hectares, which represents about 69.4% of the territory of mainland Portugal, with the overwhelming majority being private property. Currently, according to the 6th National Forest Inventory, the forest in mainland Portugal can be organized into 4 forest formations: - Pinhais, composed of wild and tame pines; - Perennial noble woods, the so-called Montados, which are composed of cork and holm oaks; -Hard, deciduous wood, composed of oaks, chestnut trees and others and - Silvo-industrial hard wood, formed by eucalyptus. It is estimated that forestry activity in Portugal represents 9% of exports (PORDATA, 2017), which makes it a highly important sector for the country's economy. Similarly, the Romanian forest represents a major contributor to the protection of global biodiversity. According to the Inventory of Primary Forest Areas and Ancient Growth in Romania 2019, Romania's forest areas are about 3 million hectares in length and occupy approximately 30% of Romanian territory. The dominant species are beech (31%) and coniferous (26%) forests (Biris, 2017). Also according to the same inventory, 525,632 hectares of forest are potentially primary, representing about 8% of Romania's forest cover, including 480,054 hectares shown to be absent of signs of human use at least since 1960.

• Material and method

The paper proceeds to an analysis based upon a synchronic approach based on secondary data sources as official implementation programming, reporting and assessing documents from the selected member states in order to secure a comparison of supported interventions publicly co-financed for the two selected EU member states, Portugal and Romania. The analysis results based on observations and findings and interpreted for concluding remarks on a pre-impact and ongoing stage of previous interventions.

• Results and discussions

The results obtained in the implementation of measure 221 reveal that in Portugal, the number of applications was 965, of which 175 were rejected and 790 were approved (approval rate close to 85%), while Romania initially had 52 applications, of which 40 were accepted and only 18 were approved (approval rate close to 34%). The number of hectares covered by the measure in Portugal was 10,382 ha, with an execution rate close to 118%, since the rate initially forecast was 8800 ha. In Romania, the number of hectares initially forecast was 344.98 ha, however only 875 were covered by the measure. The species with the largest area in Portugal were falling leaves with 13506 hectares, followed by conifers with 9608 hectares. In turn, in Romania, the species with the largest area were Falling leaves with 228.14 hectares, followed by Mixed plantations with hectares. In terms of financial execution, Portugal paid € 12106.72,032 of € 14,522, while Romania paid € 522.22 of the € 3,201.97 initially foreseen.

Table 1: Result indicators

Result indicators	Portugal	Romania
Water quality	Fulfilled	Not fulfilled
Soil quality	Fulfilled	Partially fulfilled
Combating climate change	Fulfilled	Not fulfilled
Biodiversity	Fulfilled	Not fulfilled

• Conclusions

After analyzing the various result indicators, it can be concluded that the measure obtained very satisfactory results in Portugal, revealing itself to be totally unsuccessful in Romania. This can be due to the following factors: - Low number of applications / projects / areas (hectares) approved for the measure in Romania; Large number of adherence to the measure in Portugal, largely due to the support provided by the measure for some of the main economic and environmental threats, such as fires (the program included measures to defend forests against fire and prevent and recover burnt areas) and the decline of the cork oak and holm oak; Difficulty in accessing the measure in Romania due to poor projection; Dramatic decrease in the financial allocation initially foreseen for the measure in Romania, in the estimated initial value. Thus Portugal generally achieved the objectives intended with the measure, in contrast, Romania (which with a slight exception in the quality indicator) performed poorly in practically all indicators and therefore was unable to achieve the intended objectives.