



KEEPING AN EYE ON CAP PAYMENTS

THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION USES INNOVATIVE GIS AND LAND PARCEL IDENTIFICATION SYSTEMS TO DETER AND DETECT IRREGULARITIES IN CLAIMS FOR AGRICULTURAL SUBSIDY PAYMENTS

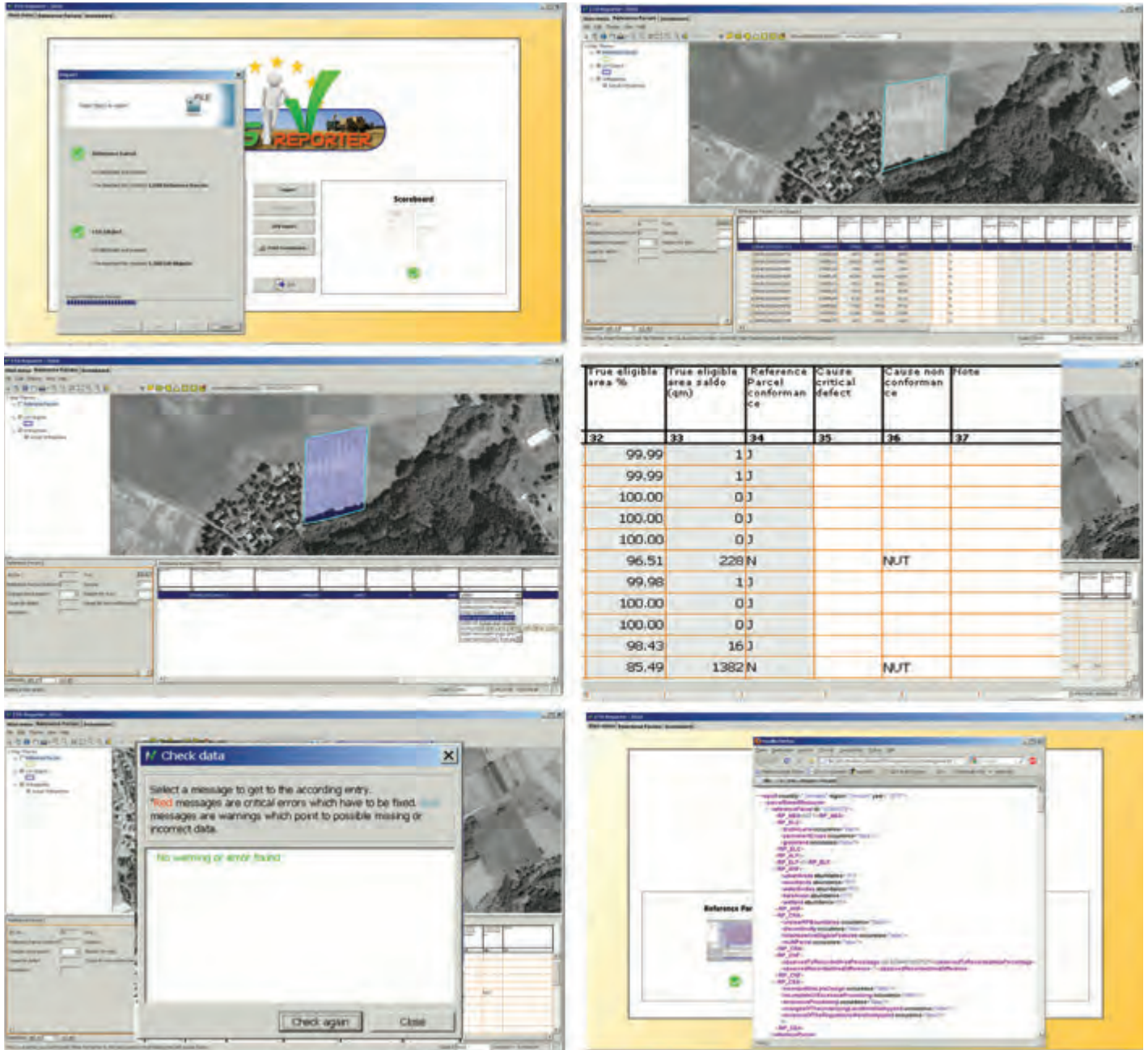
The budget of the European Union (141 billion Euros in 2011, to give you a rough idea) is not only spent on administration. Agricultural funding is a considerable part of the budget – some 40% of the total. The EU's Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) is the basis of the whole subsidy process. It includes direct subsidy payments for crops and land and influences the pricing of the goods to some extent. It aims to provide farmers with a reasonable standard of living and – at the same time – deliver quality food at fair prices to consumers. Last, but not least, it also seeks to preserve rural heritage.

Keeping track

For understandable reasons, the European Commission tries to ensure that funds go to the right destinations and are spent reasonably. Keeping track is not always easy, given that payments go to many different countries with diverse administrative structures.

Well aware of this, the Commission created institutions and mechanisms to assure a smooth distribution of CAP subsidies. One such mechanism – the Land Parcel Identification System or LPIS – plays a key role in preventing agricultural subsidy irregularities. Further information on this mechanism can be found at <http://marswiki.jrc.ec.europa.eu/wikicap/index.php/Category:LPIS>

"These reforms and monitoring measures will enable the EU-wide geographical management of agricultural subsidy data," claimed Commissioner Philippe Busquin in July 2004 when



ETS-Reporter screen output (clockwise from top left): data import; delineating Reference Parcels; delineating Land Under Inspection (LUI) Objects; displaying Reference Parcel attributes; data checking, and generating XML reports

introducing CAP reforms. "European farmers and taxpayers will benefit from a more efficient and equitable distribution of agricultural funds, with the assurance that irregularities are less likely and environmental sustainability is given greater attention."

Detect and deter

LPIS uses GIS technology as the backbone for field identification. The system's main purpose is to cross-check eligibility of claimants against land use and declared areas. Its digital data are referenced to ensure that payment for any piece of land is claimed just once – and by one farmer. The technology also means that farmers can more precisely determine their land boundaries and even file more accurate subsidy applications. All this smooths administrative processes and helps both the Commission and EU member states detect irregularities in claims for payments.

Also important in this context are the IACS (Integrated Administration and Control Systems), used by the national authorities of Member States: According to a regulation of the European Commission issued in February 2010, Member States have to check the quality of their LPIS on an annual basis and document the results.

To achieve this, an Executable Test Suite (ETS) must be used. The Joint Research Center of the European Union (JRC) defines the specifications of the workflow and the input and output data structures to be used for the LPIS quality checks.

Tailor-made application

ETS-Reporter, a tailor-made application for such quality checks has been developed by GDV GeoSoftware of Ingelheim-am-Main in Germany in close cooperation with the JRC. The easy-to-use, stand-alone software has been adopted for use in eight German states (Lander) as well as in two other European Member States.

Denmark opted for ETS-Reporter after being introduced to the software during a JRC workshop in May 2011. The Danes are working with the standard English language version of the software, In Poland, however, users demanded a solution that customised it to the Polish Geodata Infrastructure and Polish reference system (EPSG-Code 2180). The system has been introduced successfully and is now provided centrally for all 16 'Wojewodschafte' (administrative areas, similar to federal states).

GDV GeoSoftware (www.gdv.com/index.php?id=192) is justly

proud of this success. "We now have a much broader perspective," says Thomas Riehl, CIO at GDV. "After having played an important role in the domestic GIS and mapping sector since 1993, we are now glad to work with other European experts. Contact with our new clients in Denmark and Poland, plus our collaboration with the JRC in Italy, gives us an insight into wider European processes."

Continuing role

LPIS and IACS will continue to play a strong role in the administration of European agricultural subsidies, not least because many new members depend on agriculture as a main source of income. GDV will further develop its ETS-Reporter to keep pace with new EC regulations and will maintain its close contact with the JRC.

The European Commission also has big plans for the future. In March 2012, it announced the introduction of a single mechanism for all structural funds, called the "Common Strategic Framework" (CSF). This will set clear investment priorities in Member States and their regions and combine various funds to maximise the impact of EU investments. National and regional authorities will use this framework as a basis for drafting their 'Partnership Contracts' with the Commission, committing themselves to meeting Europe's growth and jobs targets for 2020.



ABOUT ETS-REPORTER TECHNOLOGY

ETS-Reporter is a Java 6-based desktop client, which uses well-proven components from applications used for "On the Spot"-Checks (OTS). ETS-Reporter is based on GDV-MapBuilder, a JAVA-GIS-API for easy platform-independent development of GIS applications, applets, servlets, and Java Web Start applications. ETS-Reporter supports file-based data sources, Web-Services and database integration.

The software can be used in multiple Reference Parcel-systems and can be integrated in multiple LPIS-applications and is also able to generate reports and XML-files in accordance with the JRC specifications.

The latest version of ETS-Reporter provides an English language version

and merges ETS-Reporter with the GAC mask. GAC stands for "Good Agricultural Condition". The term is part of the CAP reforms, following the entry of new member states into the European Union in 2003. Some of these countries are SAPS (Single-Area-Payment) member states.



The single area payment scheme means direct subsidy payments to landowners

and takes special care to keep land in good agricultural and environmental condition. Other new features in ETS-Reporter cover coordinate transformation on-the-fly and enhanced export functionalities.

Quality Assurance



LPIS Quality checks at the push of a button – with ETS-Reporter

Make your life easier! The European Commission asks for annual reports for LPIS quality checks. ETS-Reporter enables you to create your reports with a simple mouse click. ETS-Reporter is continuously further developed in close cooperation with the Joint Research Center of the European Union (JRC), making sure that your reports are always in accordance with the latest EU regulations.

With ETS-Reporter it is easy to comply with EU guidelines – anywhere in Europe! www.gdv.com

