



Scientific Advice Mechanism

Minutes of the fifth meeting of the High Level Group of Scientific Advisors

(Brussels 24-25 November 2016)

0. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda of the meeting was adopted. The new member of the SAM High Level Group (SAM HLG), Carina Keskitalo, who joined the group following the departure of Dame Julia Slingo, was welcomed by the chairman of the group. The Chair, on behalf of the HLG, warmly thanked Dame Julia for her considerable contribution during the HLG's first year and wished her well in her future endeavours.

1. General coordination of SAM HLG activities

The group discussed the interactions of the SAM HLG with the Horizon 2020 grant "Science Advice for Policy by European Academies" (SAPEA). The SAM HLG welcomed the conclusion of the grant agreement between the European Commission and the SAPEA consortium. The SAM secretariat will act as a facilitator of the collaboration between the SAM HLG and SAPEA. The role of SAPEA in the scoping phase of topics was discussed. In principle, SAPEA will be involved in the scoping of longer-term topics for which the SAPEA contribution will be very substantial.

2. Discussion of ongoing topics / Working modalities between the SAM HLG and the SAPEA Consortium

A *'tour de table'* introduced all participants for this agenda item, which included representatives from the SAPEA consortium and topic experts suggested by SAPEA. Rudolf Hielscher (SAPEA coordinator) provided a brief description of the planned collaboration between the SAM HLG and SAPEA. The SAPEA consortium expects to be fully operational by February 2017 after having completed the recruitment of seven staff members.

While the need to focus on providing science advice to EU policies was highlighted the SAPEA consortium wishes to contribute to the identification of bottom-up topics in which scientific advice is needed. Two initial topics were briefly discussed: 1) Migration and Health and 2) Science Communication.

The SAM HLG and SAPEA commit to inform each other in a timely manner about relevant activities through the SAM secretariat.

The ongoing SAM topics and the possible contributions from SAPEA were discussed:

Cybersecurity

The Cybersecurity Scoping Paper outlines the issues at stake, the EU policy landscape on cybersecurity and the potential areas and topics for scientific advice to inform policy-making. The participation of experts nominated by SAPEA to the recent scientific workshop on cybersecurity and digital identities (Vilnius, 25-26 October) was greatly appreciated.

The HLG requested that for the next steps on this topic, a small team of experts will be convened as a "sounding board" for the initial synthesis and analysis of the evidence examined by the HLG to date. These experts will be nominated by SAPEA and will be drawn from outside the group of experts who participated in Vilnius, to ensure additional insight. This group should endeavour to meet on 11 January 2017 in Brussels.

New techniques in agricultural biotechnology

SAPEA will provide expertise in the form of SAPEA staff and experts.

Scientific advice to support the forthcoming evaluation of pesticides legislation

The development of a scoping paper will start after a meeting between the SAM secretariat and representatives of DG SANTE, to be held in December 2016.

Food from the Oceans

The draft scoping paper was discussed between both SAPEA representatives and experts, and HLG members. Additional elements, including those relating to health and technological aspects, were identified for potential inclusion in the scoping paper.

Professor Lorents Aksnes from Bergen University, an invited academy expert, gave his views on the topic. SAPEA confirmed its involvement in the next phases ultimately leading to the production of the scientific opinion.

3. Contractual matters: membership renewal, chair and vice-chair positions

The Decision establishing the HLG foresees that the Chair and deputy Chair are designated by the HLG on an annual basis. Consequently, the designation of these roles is required as of 30 January 2017. The HLG agreed that a final decision will be taken on that date.

Janusz Bujnicki informed the meeting about his future professional activities, which will be reflected in an updated declaration of interests.

The calendar of meetings of the SAM HLG was discussed and four plenary meetings were scheduled. In addition, a stock-taking meeting allowing for more strategic reflections will be planned as well as one or several informal meetings. These will be scheduled in April/May 2017 and September 2017, respectively.

4. Follow-up of the CO₂ opinion

The Scientific Opinion on real-world CO₂ emission testing for light-duty vehicles was sent by the Chair of the SAM HLG to Commissioner Moedas on 11 November 2016. A citizen's summary was prepared by the SAM secretariat and approved by the SAM HLG members. Both are published on the SAM website together with the European Commission's corresponding News Alert, of 25 November 2016.

5. Progress report on ongoing topics to Commissioner Moedas

Commissioner Moedas welcomed Carina Keskitalo as new member of the SAM HLG. He congratulated the SAM HLG and the SAM secretariat for the first Scientific Opinion on real-world CO₂ emission testing for light-duty vehicles. The Commissioner informed the HLG that he was extremely thankful to Dame Julia for her considerable contribution to the HLG and to the production of this Opinion in particular.

The HLG provided the Commissioner with an update on all ongoing work.

6. Discussion of the request of Commissioner Vella on the "Food from the Oceans" topic

Commissioner Moedas welcomed Bernhard Friess from the Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries (DG MARE) and highlighted the links with the European Commission Food 2030 initiative and its four pillars: Nutrition, Climate, Innovation and Circular Economy. Mr. Friess presented the content of the scoping paper produced by DG MARE in close consultation with other Commission services. He also provided an overview of the policy context in which the request is framed, including the Commission's Blue Growth initiative and the implications for international oceans governance.

The members of the HLG welcomed the strategic character of the draft scoping paper and discussed some suggestions on content. The target date for the delivery of the Opinion is the end of 2017.

Lunch

Lunch provided an opportunity for an exchange of views between the HLG members, Ann Mettler, Head of the European Political Strategy Centre (EPSC) and Commissioner Moedas.

7. Next steps

Cybersecurity

A key milestone in the evidence-gathering process was the scientific workshop on cybersecurity and digital identities, 25-26 October 2016, Vilnius. The scientific evidence proposed by the workshop participants and, where necessary, the evidence review on specific topics will contribute to the SAM HLG's opinion. The next steps include an expert group meeting in January (see above) and the organisation of a stakeholder meeting in February.

New techniques in agricultural biotechnology

Regarding the topic on new techniques in agricultural biotechnology, the SAM HLG agreed that Janusz Bujnicki (lead), Pearl Dykstra and Henrik Wegener would constitute the HLG subgroup on this topic.

As a finalThe scoping paper for the delivery of an explanatory note by the end of March 2017 was endorsed and the organisation of work will be defined in December.

Scientific advice to support the forthcoming evaluation of pesticides legislation

As described above the first step will be a meeting in December 2016 between the SAM Secretariat and DG SANTE.

Food from the Oceans

Carina Keskitalo (lead) together with Elvira Fortunato and Janusz Bujnicki will constitute the HLG subgroup for the "Food from the Oceans" topic. After the meeting, a new version of the scoping paper will be circulated to have the final approval of Commissioner Vella and the HLG.

8. SAM HLG activities

Potential participation of SAM HLG members at the following events was discussed:

European Science Open Forum (ESOF) 2018

American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) 2017

EU Agencies Network for Scientific Advice meeting (EU-ANSA), hosted by DG RTD – Brussels 30-31 May 2017

European Science Advisors Forum (ESAF), Amsterdam 20-21 April 2107

World Science Forum 2017, Amman (Jordan), November 2017

9. Any other business

None

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Present:

- Henrik-Caspar Wegener, Chair of the SAM HLG
- Cédric Villani, Member SAM HLG
- Carina Keskitalo, Member SAM HLG
- Rolf-Dieter Heuer, Member SAM HLG
- Pearl Dykstra, Member Sam HLG
- Janusz Bujnicki, Member SAM HLG
- Carlos Moedas, Commissioner for Research, Science and Innovation
- Keith Sequeira, Cabinet Commissioner Moedas
- Johannes Klumpers, Head of Unit, SAM unit
- José Jiménez Mingo, Secretary of the SAM HLG
- Other members of the SAM Unit

Excused:

- Elvira Fortunato, Deputy Chair of the SAM HLG (contributed during the meeting via email)

Invited participants:

Agenda Point 6. Food from the Oceans

- Bernard Friess, Director for Atlantic, Outermost Regions and Arctic, DG MARE
- Iain Shepherd, DG MARE

Agenda point 2. Representatives and experts from European Academy Networks

- Bernard Charpentier, President, Federation of European Academies of Medicine (FEAM)
- Christiane Diehl, Executive Director, European Academies' Science Advisory Council (EASAC)
- Ole Petersen, Chair, Academia Europaea
- Jacques Lukasik, Secretary General, European Council of Applied Sciences Technologies and Engineering (Euro-CASE)
- Rudolf Hielscher, Coordinator SAPEA
- Bruno Jarry, Euro-CASE Bioeconomy Platform
- Dag Lorents Aksnes, Bergen University

Lunch

- Ann Mettler, Head of the EPSC
- Antoine Kasel, Cabinet President Juncker