

Group of Chief Scientific Advisors in the European Commission's Scientific Advice Mechanism

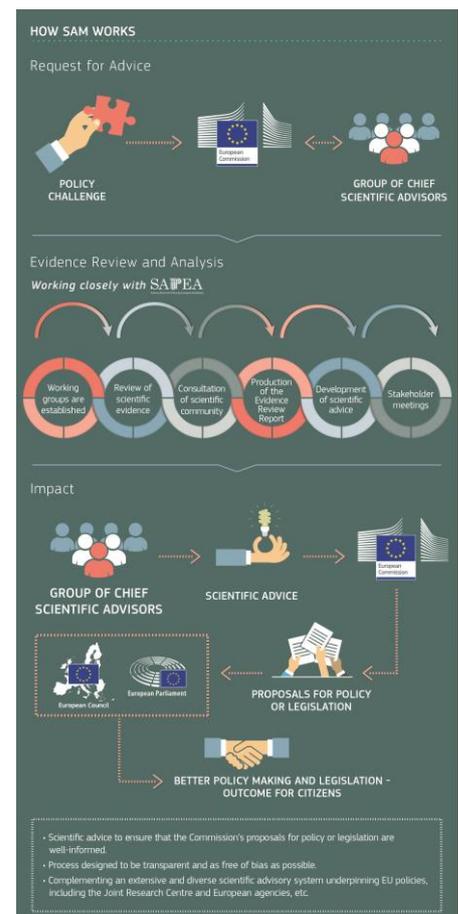
The Group of Chief Scientific Advisors (formerly known as the Scientific Advice Mechanism High Level Group) has been providing scientific advice to the College of European Commissioners (the College) since shortly after it was established at the end of 2015.

Advice is requested by the College and helps them to act by making sure they know what science has to say about a particular subject. The Group can also suggest that the College requests its advice on a subject, and can make recommendations to improve the interaction between European Commission (EC) policy making and scientific advice.

The Group is unique in its dialogue with, and provision of advice directly to, the College; the Group also works with other science advice structures supporting decision making within the EC such as the Joint Research Centre (JRC); the various decentralised agencies of the Commission; and the Scientific Committees, *etc.* This cooperation and coordination enables expertise to be shared and overlap to be avoided.

The Group has up to 7 members, who are distinguished scientists reflecting the breadth of scientific expertise across Europe. They work closely with the scientific community, mainly through the Horizon 2020 funded '[SAPEA](#)' (Scientific Advice to Policy by European Academies) project consisting of 5 European academy networks ([Academia Europaea](#), [ALLEA](#), [EASAC](#), [Euro-CASE](#), and [FEAM](#)). The expertise brought together by SAPEA from more than 100 European academies and over 40 countries enables the production of comprehensive, unbiased and high-quality evidence reviews. These reviews may contain policy options, which inform the Group's scientific opinions and policy recommendations.

The Group is supported by a secretariat in the EC's Directorate General (DG) for Research and Innovation, to which staff from the JRC and national experts are seconded. The secretariat also enables links between the Group, SAPEA, other DGs, services and agencies of the EC; and



with other science advisory bodies in Europe and worldwide. Collectively, the Group, SAPEA and the secretariat are known as the Scientific Advice Mechanism.

To date, the Group has provided five scientific opinions: [Closing the gap between light-duty vehicle CO₂ emissions and laboratory testing \(CO₂\)](#); [Cybersecurity in the European Digital Single Market \(Cyber\)](#); [Food from the Oceans \(FFO\)](#); [Novel Carbon Capture and Utilisation Technologies \(CCU\)](#); and [EU Authorisation Processes of Plant Protection Products \(PPP\)](#). These scientific opinions were well received and show impact in their corresponding policy areas: 'CO₂' forming part of the evidence base for the regulation of post-2020 CO₂ vehicular emissions measurement standards; 'Cyber' for the review of the Commission's cybersecurity strategy and related elements; FFO for the development of future maritime, fisheries and aquaculture policy development and implementation. Having only recently been published, evidence of impact for 'CCU' and 'PPP' is expected later in the year.

The Group has also provided two explanatory notes: [Scientific advice for the regulatory assessment of glyphosate in plant protection products](#), and [New techniques in agricultural biotechnology](#). The first explanatory note is of direct relevance to the Group's scientific opinion on PPP. The second supports a broad debate among stakeholders concerning the use in agriculture of organisms produced with these techniques.

The Group is presently is working on scientific advice in three further areas: [Making Sense of Science under Conditions of Complexity and Uncertainty](#) (for June 2019); [Transforming the Future of Ageing](#) (for April 2019) and [Microplastic Pollution – Scientific perspectives and its impacts](#) (Statement, July 2018; Explanatory Note end 2018; Scientific Opinion, early 2019).

The Group and SAPEA work together so that the Group can provide high quality, independent and timely input to policy, based on different forms of evidence reviews, ranging from literature review to expert elicitation. The principles of excellence, transparency and independence are of paramount importance and are underpinned, among others by:

- The use only of literature which is publicly accessible as evidence, which must also be clearly cited. The methods used to obtain and analyse literature are also clearly explained.
- The clear identification of experts consulted in workshops or other meetings.

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