



# **Scientific Advice Mechanism**

## **Rules of Procedure Of the Group of Chief Scientific Advisors**

***25 September 2020***  
***(v3.0)***

**Rules of Procedure**  
**of the Group of Chief Scientific Advisors**

The Group of Chief Scientific Advisors (hereafter referred to as ‘the Group’),

Having regard to the Commission Decision setting up the Group (hereafter referred to as ‘the Commission Decision’)<sup>1</sup>

Having regard to the expert contract signed between each Member of the Group and the Commission (hereafter referred to as ‘the Contract’)

Having regard to the Commission Decision establishing horizontal rules on the creation and operation of for Commission expert groups<sup>2</sup>

Has adopted the following rules of procedure:

*Article 1*

**Membership**

1. The Group has seven Members.
2. A Member cannot be represented by another Member.
3. The duration of Membership is up to three years, renewable once. The length of two consecutive terms shall not exceed five years.
4. Members will endeavour to attend meetings in person when possible or by other means when necessary.

*Article 2*

**Chair**

1. The Group designates a Chair and a deputy-Chair from among its Members for a period of one year from the moment of designation.
2. The deputy-Chair assists the Chair and may substitute the Chair.

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<sup>1</sup> C(2015)6946 of 16.10.2015 as amended by C(2018)1919 of 05.04.2018 See: [https://ec.europa.eu/-research/sam/pdf/c\\_2018\\_1919\\_f1\\_commission\\_decision\\_en\\_v4\\_p1\\_970017.pdf#view=fit&pagemode=none](https://ec.europa.eu/-research/sam/pdf/c_2018_1919_f1_commission_decision_en_v4_p1_970017.pdf#view=fit&pagemode=none)

<sup>2</sup> C(2016) 3301 of 30.05.2016 [https://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regexpert/PDF/C\\_2016\\_3301\\_F1\\_COM-MISSION\\_DECISION\\_EN.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regexpert/PDF/C_2016_3301_F1_COM-MISSION_DECISION_EN.pdf)

*Article 3*

**Secretariat**

1. The Commission shall provide the secretariat for the Group and any sub-group created under Article 8(1).
2. The Secretariat is established within the Directorate General for Research and Innovation of the European Commission.

*Article 4*

**Meetings**

1. The Group shall schedule at least four and at most six ordinary meetings per year. Extra-ordinary meetings can be convened in particular when urgent advice is required.
2. The Chair will convene meetings of the Group in agreement with the other Members.
3. The Group can meet with other groups and persons as appropriate.
4. The Commissioner for Research, Science and Innovation or other Commissioners, or their representatives, may attend the meetings of the Group and hold exchanges with the Group, as appropriate.
5. The Group usually meets at the premises of the Commission in Brussels, but may decide to meet elsewhere, for example at events of relevance to the work of the Group.

*Article 5*

**Agenda**

1. The Chair shall draw up the draft-agenda with the Secretariat. Any member may request that a specific item is included in the draft agenda.
2. The Group shall adopt an agenda at the beginning of each meeting.

*Article 6*

**Distribution of documents**

1. The Secretariat shall send the invitation, draft-agenda and documents on which the Group deliberates to the Members at least fourteen calendar days before the date of a meeting.

2. Exceptionally, shorter notice may be given, but never fewer than five calendar days before the date of a meeting.

*Article 7*

**Decision-making**

1. The Group decides by consensus, in particular on the adoption and on the publication of Opinions, Recommendations or Reports, which may include dissenting opinions.
2. Dissenting opinions will be voiced in a timely manner.
3. Decision-making can be oral or in writing, including by email.

*Article 8*

**Topic-Specific Configurations, Rapporteurs and Sub-groups**

1. The Group may appoint rapporteurs, meet in topic-specific configurations, or establish sub-groups from among its Members to examine any specific question and prepare the position of the Group in the remit of the tasks set out in the Commission Decision.
2. A sub-group shall cease to exist when its mandate is fulfilled.
3. Rapporteurs and sub-groups report to the Group.

*Article 9*

**Experts**

1. The Group can call on experts to
  - a. participate in the work of the Group, topic-specific configurations, or subgroups ;
  - b. hear their views on any relevant issue.
2. The Secretariat shall invite the experts in accordance with the applicable rules<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup> See Article 15 of Commission Decision C(2016)3301 final of 30 May 2016 (see footnote 2), as well as the *Rules on the reimbursement of expenses incurred by people from outside the Commission invited to attend meetings in an expert capacity* See: [http://ec.europa.eu/employment\\_social/egf/docs-/reglementation\\_experts\\_2008\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/egf/docs-/reglementation_experts_2008_en.pdf)

*Article 10*

**Minutes of meetings**

1. The Secretariat, under the responsibility of the Chair, shall draft minutes of the discussions under each agenda item without reference to the position of individual Members.
2. The Secretariat shall distribute the minutes by email to the Members without delay.
3. The Members shall approve or correct the minutes within ten working days after receipt. In the absence of a response within that deadline, consent is assumed.
4. The approved Minutes will be published by the Secretariat in accordance with Article 14.

*Article 11*

**Attendance list**

The Secretariat, under the responsibility of the Chair, shall draw up the list of all participants specifying their names and affiliations as appropriate.

*Article 12*

**Declaration of Interests**

1. Members shall declare any interest prior to any deliberation in accordance with the terms of the Contract.
2. Any expert mentioned in Article 9(1)(a) shall complete, date and sign a declaration of interest ('DoI'). The Commission shall assess whether declared interests constitute a conflict of interests ('CoI') in the light of the role that the expert plays in the context of a given agenda point, as well as the task of the Group. Should a CoI arise the Commission shall exclude this expert from the work of the Group or subgroup, from a particular meeting, or decide that the expert shall abstain from discussing an item on the agenda, depending on the magnitude and nature of the CoI.
3. Any experts mentioned in the previous paragraph, shall inform the Chair of any interest that may arise with regard to a specific topic prior to its discussion in the meeting irrespective of whether it was previously declared.
4. Any conflict of interest shall be recorded in writing, including in the minutes mentioned in Article 10.

5. Paragraphs 1, 2, 3, and 4 shall also apply to deliberations taken by the Group in written procedure.

*Article 13*

**Correspondence**

Correspondence relating to the Group shall be addressed to the Secretariat ([EC-SAM@ec.europa.eu](mailto:EC-SAM@ec.europa.eu)) for the attention of the Chair.

*Article 14*

**Access to documentation**

Documentation shall be published in the Register<sup>4</sup> or via a link from the Register to the website of the Group of Chief Scientific Advisors<sup>5</sup>. Access to documentation shall not be subject to user registration or any other form of restriction.

Exceptions to publication are possible where disclosure of a document would infringe the protection of a public or private interest as defined in Article 4 of Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001 regarding public access to European Parliament, Council and Commission documents<sup>6</sup>.

*Article 15*

**Confidentiality**

1. Working sessions of the Group are private and deliberations, either oral or written, are confidential.
2. The Group may decide to open its deliberations to the public.
3. The Members and invited experts shall comply with the obligations of professional secrecy laid down by the Treaties and the rules implementing them as well as with the Commission's rules on security regarding the protection of EU classified information, laid down in Commission Decision (EU, Euratom) 2015/443 and 2015/444. Should they fail to respect these obligations, appropriate measures may be taken.

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<sup>4</sup> <http://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regexpert/index.cfm?do=groupDetail.groupDetail&groupID=3378eNew-Search=1&NewSearch=1>

<sup>5</sup> <http://ec.europa.eu/research/sam/index.cfm>

<sup>6</sup> <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32001R1049&from=EN>

*Article 16*

**External relations and relations with the media**

1. Regarding relations with the media, Members shall respect the guidelines set out in Annex I of the present Rules of Procedure.
2. After having informed the Secretariat and upon approval by the Chair, Members may participate in external meetings or events on behalf of the Group, and assert their capacity as Member of the Group. They shall send all relevant documentation to the Secretariat for distribution to the Members.

*Article 17*

**Protection of personal data**

Personal data shall be processed in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 2018/1725<sup>7</sup>.

*Article 18*

**Amendment**

The Group can amend these Rules of Procedure and its Annexes by unanimous decision.

Brussels, 25/09/2020

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<sup>7</sup> <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32018R1725>

Annex I

**Group of Chief Scientific Advisors**

**Media guidelines**

**1. Introduction**

The effectiveness and credibility of the Group of Chief Scientific Advisors (hereafter referred to as “the Group”) requires that its independence is transparently communicated. Good communication of the work of the Group, therefore, will be an important part of establishing its reputation.

This document contains the rules that will guide the Members of the Group (hereafter referred to as “the Members” or singular: “Member”) on how they will communicate about the work of the Group. It can be amended pursuant to the procedure set out in Article 18 of the Rules of Procedure.

In all cases Unit RTD.03 in Directorate-General Research and Innovation (hereafter referred to as “the Secretariat” in the sense of Article 3 of the Rules of Procedure) is will help the Members where necessary, supported by colleagues in the Communications Unit of Directorate-General Research and Innovation (‘DG RTD’), and the European Commission's Spokespersons service (‘SPP’).

**2. Status of the members of the Group of Chief Scientific Advisors (‘the Group’)**

The Group is an independent expert group of the Commission, and the Commission will rely on the independence of its advice. This means that members should not in any way give the impression that they are employees of, or represent the views of the European Commission.

Article 7 paragraph 1 of the Rules of Procedure states that “[t]he Group decides by consensus, in particular on the adoption and on the publication of *Opinions, Recommendations or Reports, which may include dissenting opinions.*” Members should therefore refrain from presenting views or opinions on topics before they have been agreed within the Group.

Members retain their individual liberty to express opinions in public but, when doing so, should make a clear distinction between the opinion of the Group and any opinion expressed in their personal capacity. In their capacity as Members of the Group, Members should refrain from advocating any particular political or policy action or agenda.

**3. Contacts with journalists and information exchange**

Members shall inform the Secretariat about a request for an interview by a journalist on issues relating to their work as Member of the Group. They shall inform the Secretariat about the outcome of such interview.



The Secretariat shall inform the Members of Commission News Alerts regarding the Group.

For general information on the operation of the Group, Members can direct journalist to the FAQ section of the website of the Group<sup>8</sup>, which will be updated regularly.

Any questions about policies or opinions of the Commission should be directed to the Commission, for the Spokesperson to respond.

#### **4. Communications associated with meetings of the Group**

In line with the Commission Decision establishing the Group<sup>9</sup>, all agendas, meeting minutes, opinions and reports of the Group will be published on the website of the Group<sup>10</sup>. As a rule, this will be done shortly after meetings took place or reports have been finalised and adopted. Generally, drafts and preliminary versions will not be made public, although the Group may decide to open its deliberations to the public in certain instances.

The Commission may issue public statements following meetings to summarise the main points discussed. Certain major events, such as the publication of an opinion of the Group, may be publicised by the Commission through press releases, news alerts or by other means.

#### **5. Representing the Group in other fora**

Members have a high public profile, and may receive invitations to attend conferences and debates. When invited to speak at an event in their capacity as Member, they shall inform the Secretariat about the event. The Commission is keen to monitor the potential reach of the Group, in particular among the national science academies, other science advice bodies and other stakeholders. On occasion, the Commission may request Members to take part in relevant events.

Time and expenses for representing the Group in other fora are reimbursed in accordance with the terms of the contract.

#### **6. Social Media**

The website of the Group<sup>11</sup> is the primary internet source for all information related to the scientific advice produced by the Group.

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<sup>8</sup> <http://ec.europa.eu/research/sam/index.cfm>

<sup>9</sup> C(2015)6946 of 16.10.2015 as amended by C(2018)1919 of 05.04.2018 See: [https://ec.europa.eu/research-sam/pdf/c\\_2018\\_1919\\_f1\\_commission\\_decision\\_en\\_v4\\_p1\\_970017.pdf#view=fit&pagemode=none](https://ec.europa.eu/research-sam/pdf/c_2018_1919_f1_commission_decision_en_v4_p1_970017.pdf#view=fit&pagemode=none)

<sup>10</sup> <http://ec.europa.eu/research/sam/index.cfm?pg=about>

<sup>11</sup> *Idem* – See previous footnote

As for other communications, for example contacts with journalists, it is important to ensure that in social media messages Members differentiate between views expressed in a personal capacity or in their capacity as Member.

The Commission does not intend to establish a separate social media presence for the Group and will use the Facebook and Twitter accounts of the Commission, the Commissioner for Research, Science and Innovation, and of DG RTD to publicise the Group and its developments, such as the publication of a report of the Group. The Twitter hashtag *#SAMGroup\_EU* is proposed.

Members are encouraged to share these communications from their own personal Facebook and Twitter accounts.

## Annex II

### FROM QUESTIONS TO ANSWERS

#### How the Scientific Advice Mechanism produces scientific advice to support policymaking

Version: 14 March 2019

This guidance document explains the interactions between the various components of the European Commission's Scientific Advice Mechanism ('SAM') in the production of scientific advice. These components are the Group of Chief Scientific Advisors, the Science Advice for Policy by European Academies (SAPEA) consortium, and the SAM secretariat. It is primarily directed at those involved in requesting and producing advice. It therefore assumes some reader familiarity with SAM and its structure and function (further details on which are available from the SAM website).

The mandate of SAM is to provide high quality and independent scientific advice to the European Commission on matters of importance to Commission policy making, in as transparent and unbiased a manner as possible. Depending on the nature of the advice requested, and the differing subjects and timelines, it is necessary for SAM to be agile and flexible in its approaches. It is for these reasons that this is a guidance document, the contents of which may evolve based on continuing efforts better to achieve SAM's goals.

### 1. Identification of a subject for scientific advice

According to Article 2a, paragraphs 1 and 2 of the Commission Decision (16 October 2015<sup>12</sup>) on the setting up of the Group of Chief Scientific Advisors ('the Advisors'):

1. The Commission may consult the Advisors at any time on any policy field, defining the timespan in which independent scientific advice is required and;
2. The Advisors through their Chair may advise the Commission at any time to consult the Advisors on a specific policy issue which it deems relevant. This may for instance be the case when the Advisors become aware of new scientific evidence or technological developments and/or where they anticipate an upcoming need for scientific advice.
3. In both cases, requests should address specific issues where such advice is critical to the development of EU policies or legislation and does not duplicate advice being provided by existing bodies<sup>13</sup>.

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<sup>12</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/research/sam/pdf/c\\_2015\\_6946\\_f1\\_commission\\_decision\\_en\\_827417.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/research/sam/pdf/c_2015_6946_f1_commission_decision_en_827417.pdf)

Members of the Commission may initiate the process through a request to the Commissioner for Research, Science and Innovation. Such requests should detail the subject, the purpose (i.e. to provide scientific advice/ recommendations based on existing scientific evidence or to explain the available evidence on a given subject), EU policy relevance and the requested timeframe for the delivery, and describe why the request is addressed to the Advisors as science advice structure.

The Commissioner for Research, Science and Innovation then informs the Advisors that there has been a request for scientific advice on a specific topic.

The Advisors may also request to initiate that process by proposing that the Commission requests scientific advice from SAM. The suggestion can be inspired by topics suggested by the consortium of the 'Scientific Advice to Policy by European Academies' (SAPEA<sup>14</sup>) project. The request should have contents similar to the request coming from the Commission and addressed to the Advisors (described above). Elements relating to timing and policy relevance may require further discussion with the Commission, and the Advisors may instruct the Unit to prepare descriptions of the policy context as necessary.

The SAM Secretariat will facilitate through the Cabinet of the Commissioner for Research, Innovation and Science communication of these requests between Members of the Commission and the Advisors. The SAM Secretariat also informs other Commission services through the dedicated Inter-Service Group ('ISG').

## 2. Defining the question

The Commissioner for Research, Science and Innovation is responsible for the formulation of the request for advice following a consultation request originating in the Commission. This request for advice defines the questions to be addressed by the Advisors in the form of a scoping paper<sup>15</sup>.

The SAM Secretariat contacts the relevant Commission services through the above-mentioned ISG in view of preparing a scoping paper for the Advisors. The purpose of the scoping paper is to provide greater detail on the request for consultation and the question(s) on which advice is to be provided.

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<sup>13</sup> The avoidance of duplication is of particular importance in relation to EU regulatory agencies, the function of which is primarily to provide regulatory scientific advice.

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.sapea.info/>

<sup>15</sup> See examples on the SAM website.

More specifically, the scoping paper develops the reasoning for the request, describes the main issues at stake, the EU policy context, the requirements for evidence, frames the questions to be answered by the Advisors and indicates the date by when the product is to be delivered. The scoping paper also specifies the kind of product requested, i.e. a scientific opinion, an explanatory note, or another kind of product.

The SAM Secretariat co-ordinates the development of the scoping paper with the service(s) under the Commissioner who initiated the subject, involving also other relevant services. Comments from the relevant Commission services will be taken into consideration only to ensure factual correctness and relevance regarding the policy and regulatory context. In cases where a subject has been suggested by a Member of the Commission who is not directly responsible for a service (such as a Vice-President), as well as in cases where the Advisors recommended that the Commission consult them on a specific policy issue (possibly in consultation with SAPEA) and where the Commission did follow up with a consultation request, the relevant service(s) is (are) suggested by the Cabinet of the Commissioner for Research, Science and Innovation following consultation with the SAM Secretariat.

The SAPEA consortium will by default contribute to the scoping paper development when the topic at stake arises as a result of a SAPEA suggestion or may otherwise be invited to do so at the discretion of the Commission. The Cabinet of the Commissioner for Research, Innovation and Science consults the relevant Cabinets of the Members of the Commission on the final draft scoping paper. If agreed, the Advisors are notified by the SAM Secretariat. Requests for advice as set out in the corresponding scoping paper will by default be added by the Chair of the Advisors to the agenda of the subsequent Advisors' plenary meeting in view of discussing the request with the relevant Commissioners or their representatives. If the subject requires urgent advice (i.e., within a short deadline) the Advisors will have an exchange by written (email) procedure which will be reported by the Chair during the next meeting of the Advisors and recorded in the minutes of that meeting. The Advisors may suggest that the request is (re-)focused, that timing or precise questions are modified, or that a scoping paper is sent back to the Commission for further clarification. In such cases, the Cabinet of the Commissioner for Research, Science and Innovation will inform the other Cabinets of the Advisors's suggestion and collect their feedback; the SAM Secretariat will do the same with Commission services via the ISG. The SAM Secretariat will then inform the Chair of the Advisors whether the Commission agrees to the suggestions of the Advisors and/or provide the clarifications needed. In parallel with the development of the scoping paper, the SAM Secretariat will assist the Advisors in deciding how the work will be organised in operational terms, including the identification of tasks to be carried out by the SAPEA consortium. The collection and presentation of the relevant scientific evidence (evidence review), which often includes consultation with experts in the field through expert

workshops, is by default undertaken by the SAPEA consortium, unless agreed otherwise with the Advisors and SAM secretariat. Irrespective of the origin of a scoping paper, the final decision to adopt a scoping paper lies with the Commissioner for Research, Science and Innovation in cooperation with the Advisors. The Advisors may suggest the prioritisation of Commission requests, taking due consideration of the capacity of the Advisors, SAPEA and that of the SAM secretariat.

The SAPEA consortium will by default contribute to the scoping paper development when the topic at stake arises as a result of a SAPEA suggestion or may otherwise be invited to do so at the discretion of the Commission.

The Cabinet of the Commissioner for Research, Innovation and Science consults the relevant Cabinets of the Members of the Commission on the final draft scoping paper. If agreed, the Advisors are notified by the SAM Secretariat.

Requests for advice as set out in the corresponding scoping paper will by default be added by the Chair of the Advisors to the agenda of the subsequent Advisors' plenary meeting in view of discussing the request with the relevant Commissioners or their representatives. If the subject requires urgent advice (i.e., within a short deadline) the Advisors will have an exchange by written (email) procedure which will be reported by the Chair during the next meeting of the Advisors and recorded in the minutes of that meeting.

The Advisors may suggest that the request is (re-)focused, that timing or precise questions are modified, or that a scoping paper is sent back to the Commission for further clarification. In such cases, the Cabinet of the Commissioner for Research, Science and Innovation will inform the other Cabinets of the Advisors's suggestion and collect their feedback; the SAM Secretariat will do the same with Commission services via the ISG. The SAM Secretariat will then inform the Chair of the Advisors whether the Commission agrees to the suggestions of the Advisors and/or provide the clarifications needed.

In parallel with the development of the scoping paper, the SAM Secretariat will assist the Advisors in deciding how the work will be organised in operational terms, including the identification of tasks to be carried out by the SAPEA consortium. The collection and presentation of the relevant scientific evidence (evidence review), which often includes consultation with experts in the field through expert workshops, is by default undertaken by the SAPEA consortium, unless agreed otherwise with the Advisors and SAM secretariat.

**Irrespective of the origin of a scoping paper, the final decision to adopt a scoping paper lies with the Commissioner for Research, Science and Innovation in cooperation with the Advisors.** The Advisors may suggest the prioritisation of

Commission requests, taking due consideration of the capacity of the Advisors, SAPEA and that of the SAM secretariat.

### **3. Gathering evidence**

Once the scoping paper with the related deadline has been adopted, the Advisors rapidly appoint a lead member and may set up a dedicated coordination group, which is a meeting of the Advisors in a different format. The lead member/coordination group asks the Commission (SAM secretariat) to allocate responsibility for the evidence gathering to SAPEA or (in exceptional cases) asks the SAM secretariat to be responsible for the evidence review, or to share responsibility with SAPEA. The lead member/ coordination group prepares the Advisors' advice, and is supported by the other Members of the Group of Chief Scientific Advisors, the SAPEA consortium, and the SAM Secretariat. The Advisors' advice is accompanied by a methodological statement on the evidence gathering and the development of the advice.

The Advisors consider as admissible only evidence which is publicly accessible at the time of publication of its scientific advice.

Depending on the subject matter, the evidence gathering process may include elements of the following, non-exhaustive list, intended to cover all relevant disciplines:

- 1) Searching the relevant scientific literature;
- 2) Collecting reports produced by the European academy networks or their respective Member academies (a translation may be required to make these accessible);
- 3) Consulting the JRC on existing data and reports as well as ongoing activities;
- 4) Consulting DG RTD on the intermediate or final results of relevant ongoing or finalised EC framework programme-funded projects and initiatives;
- 5) Consulting other Directorates-General of the Commission involved in the subject, most notably those that contributed to the scoping paper, on evidence they possess;
- 6) Consulting the EU Agencies on existing data and reports, as well as ongoing activities, in consultation with the relevant Commission services;
- 7) Consulting other evidence providers and science Advisors, including those in EU Member States and beyond;
- 8) Eliciting expert opinions, e.g. through dedicated workshops.

The collection and review of evidence will by default be carried out by the SAPEA consortium, and appropriately documented and stored. If SAPEA cannot provide an evidence review or any other part of the work they are asked to perform, either internally or through subcontracting, SAPEA will inform the Advisors through the SAM secretariat without delay, and alternative arrangements made.

SAPEA produces Evidence Review Reports (ERR) following methods developed with SAM to ensure the highest quality standard in order to minimise bias, improve efficiency and ensure transparency. SAPEA ERRs may, in addition to the review of the evidence, identify policy options. The ERRs inform the Advisors' Scientific Opinions (or other kinds of products), which respond to questions set out in the scoping paper, for example through observations and recommendations for policy making.

Expert workshops which are part of the evidence review process are by default organised by SAPEA. In selecting experts for workshops, SAPEA pays due attention to diversity (of scientific views, geographical balance, gender balance, as well as including young scientists).

The Advisors are invited to take part in the expert workshops.

In addition, the lead member or the dedicated Advisors' coordination group mentioned above may choose to consult relevant experts through hearings or meetings, to organise dedicated workshops, to visit relevant laboratories, etc. Depending on the subject and the timeframe, the Advisors may also choose to meet relevant stakeholders from governments, non- governmental organisations, and/or civil society.

The Advisors chair and lead the stakeholder workshops, which are information events organised close to the publication of the Scientific Opinion (or, if applicable, other kinds of products). They are organised by the SAM unit on behalf of the Advisors. SAPEA representatives are invited to take part.

SAPEA and the SAM Secretariat ensure the proper keeping of the record(s) of all evidence gathered, including the source (institutions and persons involved) and time of gathering, in order to ensure transparency.

To this end the Members of the Group of Chief Scientific Advisors will inform the SAM Secretariat of all contacts made and information received in the framework of the evidence gathering and science advice process. All information should be stored in a manner, which permits access on the basis of a request for access to documents pursuant to Regulation 1049/2001<sup>16</sup>.

#### **4. Drafting the advice**

In view of the evidence, the lead member/coordination group will draft the Advisors' advice, also explaining existing uncertainties as well as minority views in science, if

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<sup>16</sup> Regulation (EC) no 1049/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 May 2001 regarding public access to European Parliament, Council and Commission documents



considered relevant. Each scientific opinion should follow a similar format, including in general an executive summary, a description of the issue, the policy context and the methodology used, a discussion of the options (if appropriate), a set of conclusions, providing science advice. Explanatory notes have a similar structure but do not make recommendations to policy and will not include a discussion of options. The SAM Secretariat will assist the preparation, proofreading, editing and formatting of the advice. Other Members of the Group of Chief Scientific Advisors may be invited to contribute.

The draft advice shall be presented to the relevant Commission services prior to its adoption by the Advisors. The purpose of this presentation is to ensure that the report answers the questions asked, to ensure factual correctness regarding the policy and regulatory background and that any necessary clarification can be sought from the Advisors.

Following these consultations the lead member/coordination group will ask Advisors Members for their final comments, and then submit the final draft to the Chair of the Advisors and the SAM Secretariat in view of its inclusion on the agenda of the next meeting (or adoption by written procedure).

### **5. Adopting and communicating the advice**

The Advisors will aim for adoption by consensus of its advice. A dissenting opinion by any member(s) of the Group of Chief Scientific Advisors will be noted.

Once adopted, the Chair of the Advisors will send the advice to the Commissioner for Research, Science and Innovation who will transmit it to the other Members of the Commission, including to the President. The Director-General for Research and Innovation will inform the relevant services.

The SAM Secretariat will publish the Advisors' advice on the SAM website once it is adopted and handed over to the Commissioner for Research, Science and Innovation by the Advisors, along with (or incorporating) the evidence (or appropriate references to the evidence) that was used as a basis for the advice. Depending on the subject matter, a printed version might also be envisaged. Likewise, the Commission may consider issuing a news alert or press release, as appropriate, which should be published on the same day the advice is uploaded on the SAM website. A citizen's summary may also be produced, in order to inform the non- specialist public.

The input provided by the SAPEA consortium can be published independently of the Advisors' advice, in co-ordination with the Advisors, and it should refer to the Advisors Scientific Opinion, or other relevant Advisors products.