

SAM meeting 4 December. Speaking points

11:00 – 11:30 Agenda point 3 – Update on topics

- Let me start by thanking you for your statement on gene editing. It is extremely important.
- At the moment the Commission is in a difficult position, as it cannot pre-empt the decision of the next Commission to revise the GMO Directive. But I would suggest that we raise this in the next agenda point, where representatives of Commissioner Andriukaitis' cabinet as well as DG SANTE will be here, along with Phil Hogan.
- [My team have also been working on an Op Ed which I hope to put in national media, and would welcome your views on this]
- Regarding your ongoing work (microplastics, ageing, making sense of science), please let me know if you need my help.
- Also I would like your views on the relationship with the Academies (SAPEA) ahead of our lunch today.

[invite ██████ to give overall update; ██████ on gene editing; ██████ on micro-plastics topic; others on SAPEA]

11:30 – 12:30 Discussion with Commissioner Hogan

The purpose of the discussion is first to present to Cmmr Hogan the results of SAM work relevant to his portfolio and second to discuss a possible new topic on food systems. On the latter, the SAM unit has analysed existing reports on food systems which already cover most of the policy needs. However there is a potential gap on how different policy fields (agriculture, health, food standards, environment, marine, etc) inter-relate in an overall food systems approach.

- Let me warmly welcome Commissioner Hogan. He was one of the first Commissioners to support SAM, so I thought it was extremely important for him to meet the chief scientific advisors.
- In particular, I would like Commission Hogan to hear about the work of the scientific advisors which is relevant to agriculture, such as on Pesticides and on Gene Editing. In addition, we should discuss if there is some work the Group could undertake for Commissioner Hogan on sustainable food systems.
- I also welcome Marco Valleta from Commissioner Andriukaitis' cabinet and Sabine Juelicher who is a director in DG SANTE.
- Let me first invite [REDACTED] to present the work of the chief scientific advisors on pesticides, on gene editing and on a potential new topic on "sustainable food systems".
- I would then invite Commissioner Hogan to give his reactions and where he sees the policy need for scientific evidence which could be taken up in a new topic of food systems.

[Invite [REDACTED] to present]

[Invite Cmmr Hogan to provide his views]

[Open discussion on the potential new topic; next step would be to prepare a "scoping paper" to launch the work on food systems]

12:30 – 14:00 Lunch discussion with Presidents of the Academies

The lunch participants from the academies are:

- [REDACTED] AE), incoming [REDACTED] of SAPEA board;
- [REDACTED] ([REDACTED] FEAM)
- [REDACTED] ([REDACTED] ALLEA);
- [REDACTED] ([REDACTED] EASAC);
- [REDACTED] ([REDACTED] Euro-CASE)

The SAPEA grant agreement was subject to an external mid-term review which found the reports to be of good quality, but recommended improvements in terms of: a rapid response mechanism, better cooperation with individual academies, strengthened communication, and use of novel methods (horizon scanning, big data, etc). The SAPEA grant agreement runs until 2020 and there is sufficient budget left to extend if needed. So a decision on whether to continue or not will be taken by the next Commissioner.

- Let me thank the five academies for all being present at the highest level. Congratulations also to [REDACTED] as the [REDACTED] of the SAPEA [REDACTED].
- Before we discuss scientific advice, let me update you with the latest developments with Horizon Europe.

Horizon 2020 update

- There was a critical meeting of the Council last Friday, where all EU 28 science ministers agreed a common position on the Horizon Europe.
- The meeting lasted more than 8 hours and there were last minute negotiations on four aspects. But, I am glad to report that Member States found a compromise on all these issues.
- In parallel, the European Parliament is due to vote on its position next week where we expect a positive result.
- I hope the Parliament and Council will quickly start the “trilogue” discussions to reach an overall agreement. The challenge is to reach this agreement by around the end of March, before the European elections.

[Open for discussion/ comments]

Relationship with SAM and the academies (SAPEA)

I would like to open the discussion now on the work of the academies under SAPEA. Let me start with three comments for the discussion.

- 1 **Overall, the Scientific Advice Mechanism has been a great success.** We have seen a strong policy demand from other Commissioners. The structure with the Chief Scientists and the SAPEA agreement has worked well. The academies have reinforced the independence of the advice, increased the capacity to provide advice, and provided access to leading scientific experts. So let me thank all the Presidents here today for making this possible.

- 2 As we are at the end of the mandate of this College, there will be **fewer policy demands and more space for own initiative topics.** This applies to both the Chief Scientists and for SAPEA. So when the next College of Commissioners is appointed, there should be new advice ready.

- 3 **The system could be further improved.** Let me give 3 examples:
 - a. *Increase the visibility to the general public.* This means engaging in more controversial topics such as gene editing in a way which allows people to understand the issues.

 - b. Finding ways to *respond rapidly* to urgent policy needs. This means responding within a few weeks.

 - c. *Deepening the relationship to Member States.* Here the academies could play a stronger role through the various national academies.

[Invite [redacted] and other [redacted] to give their views, followed by [redacted] and SAM members]