

ESAF

European Science Advisors Forum

Terms of Reference

July 2017

1. Mission

The primary focus of the European Science Advisors Forum (ESAF) is on science-for-policy advice. Its goal is to facilitate exchange of information, expertise, practices and results.

- a. *Science-for-policy advice is a common need in evidence-based policy making and scientific expertise and evidence play a significant role in preparing policy decisions.*
- b. *The variety of structures and institutions for science based strategic advice across different national governments is of great value for ESAF.*
- c. *ESAF members have a lot to gain from exchanging information, expertise, practices and results. As such exchange does not come natural, ESAF provides a platform and a network for organizations that may function in different systems but share a common ground regarding their ambition to provide the best science based strategic advice.*
- d. *ESAF has no formal advisory task, however members of ESAF can join forces and provide joint advice.*
- e. *Sharing information, expertise, practices and results within ESAF may lead to:*
 - i. *suggestions for advisory topics and feedback on recent advisory work to members of ESAF as well as to other entities, such as the Scientific Advice Mechanism of the European Commission (SAM);*
 - ii. *broadening access to existing work (e.g. by translation).*

2. Structure

ESAF is an independent, informal network of European science based strategic advisers, driven by its members.

- a. *Members have to be in a formal and active position to provide science based strategic advice to their democratic governments. Their advice should be based on the highest quality, publicly available research.*
- b. *ESAF is independent of the European Commission's Scientific Advice Mechanism (SAM). ESAF and SAM could seek however to communicate and cooperate regularly.*
- c. *Membership of ESAF is based on country representation, but members do not formally represent the position of their country.*
- d. *ESAF may invite non-EU European countries to participate.*

3. Organization

ESAF is a non-legal entity without budget. Procedures within ESAF:

- a. *ESAF meets (at least) once a year.*
- b. *Every year, the ESAF meeting is hosted and chaired by another ESAF member.*

- c. Coordination and secretariat will be provided by an ESAF member country for a period of three years.*
- d. The responsibility of the coordinating country and the secretariat is to prepare the agenda of the meeting in close consultation with the host country and other members, and to write the minutes of the meeting.*
- e. The host member provides the venue for the meeting, members pay for their own travel and accommodation expenses.*
- f. At the starting phase of ESAF's on-line presence, information about ESAF will be provided on the SAM website. In the mid-to long-term it is foreseen to develop an ESAF website that will be managed by the ESAF secretariat .*
- g. The ESAF webpage will show the Terms of Reference, membership, the minutes of its meetings and, possibly, its running projects and its results as well as access to (translated) advisory work of members.*
- h. Joint reports of subgroups of ESAF are the responsibility of the subgroups. Such reports will be made available on the webpage of ESAF.*