

Minutes ESAF-5
Regent House, Trinity College Dublin
27-6-2019
12:45 – 13:25

Host: Mark Ferguson

Chair: Wim van Saarloos

1. Opening and welcome. The Chair opens the meeting. Due to flight arrangements later in the afternoon, the meeting has been brought forward to occur during lunch time. Welcoming of new members and guests has been done properly already in the course of events in the previous days and is skipped for efficiency. The chair very briefly recalls the history of ESAF and concludes that ESAF now consists of a diverse group of experts.

2. Adoption of the agenda. The agenda is adopted. Due to the constraints of the setting, agenda items will be kept minimal and/or will be discussed in more detail at the next meeting. Actions since June 2018 will be described in the minutes (see annex below).

3. New coordinating country. As no nominations have come in via e-mail, the coordinating country has requested a small committee, consisting of Gerd Folkers, Karin Kjaer Madsen, Janusz Bujnicki and Tarmo Soomere to come up with recommendations on a few issues, including the matter of the rotation of the coordinating country. The committee recommends that The Netherlands acts as coordinator up to and including the next meeting (ESAF-6) in 2020. In the last few days before the meeting it has become clear that Estonia is willing to become the next coordinating country, provided Tarmo Soomere will be re-elected as president of the Estonian Academy of Sciences. The meeting reacts to this by acclamation. Tarmo Soomere thanks the members for the trust. Recommendations of the committee on other issues: 1) added value of ESAF; 2) policy for science and/or science for policy, and 3) ESAF's priorities / SWOT analysis will be discussed at the next meeting. Until then, ESAF will function according to its Terms of Reference. After thanking the committee, the chair proposes to not dismiss the committee but to keep it in place until the next meeting. This suggestion is approved by the committee and the members of ESAF.

4. Proposal host ESAF-6. The next meeting will be held in Ljubljana, Slovenia. Marco Topić takes the floor and provides a brief overview of the planning and of the host city. The proposal is to start with a city tour for those that are interested, followed by a dinner on day one, and then continue on day two with the business meeting at the Ministry of Science. Borut Pohor, president of Slovenia, has agreed in the patronage of ESAF-6 and will hopefully attend the dinner. Suggested days are either 23-24 June or 1-2 July. It is suggested to explore if a combination with ESOF Trieste is possible. The planning will be decided upon after further investigation. The main topic of ESAF-6 will be capacity building in strategic science based advice for policy, particularly in new member states.

5. Danish proposal. Jens Oddershede provided some background information to the proposal from the Danish Centre for Food and Agriculture to organize and facilitate a two-day workshop at Aarhus university on food and agriculture under the umbrella of ESAF. The meeting agreed that this type of activity fits within the focus of ESAF and asked the ESAF secretariat to explore options, together with the SAM secretariat. If possible, the workshop should take place in the spring of 2020, so we can discuss the possibility of more 'ESAF-umbrella-activities', at the ESAF-6 meeting.

6. Wrap up.

- The Finnish SOFI initiative will hold a conference on 13 November 2019. All ESAF members are welcome – registration is open (<https://www.sapea.info/symposium/>).
- Expanding and securing a strong membership of ESAF is a challenge. Existing members may be contacted in the near future for suggestions.
- The chair thanks the participants and closes the meeting.

Annex: Actions since ESAF-4

- The ESAF website is live. The website is helpful in raising the profile and positioning of ESAF and exchange information and publications within and outside the network. To make sure the website has added value, the secretariat relies on input from the members and associates. Please send suggestion for content to keizer@wrr.nl
- At the INGSAs conference in Tokyo (October 2018) we started a dialogue with the INGSAs team to discuss the complementarity of both networks. A first result of this discussion was the joint meeting in Dublin. We will continue the dialogue to explore further possibilities to work together.
- After the ESAF-4 meeting we collected best practices from the members as input for the *Making Sense of Science* project of the Scientific Advice Mechanism. These contributions also served as important input for the session *Best practices in science based strategic advice* at the meeting in Dublin. ESAF members and associates from Austria, Germany, Denmark, Switzerland and Finland presented cases with lessons on the timing of advice and the involvement of stakeholders. After a first reaction by a panel, a lively discussion with the audience followed. The Sam opinion *Scientific Advice to European Policy in a complex world* was published on 24 September 2019. A link is available on the ESAF [website](#).