

## Main activities of the Members and Secretariat of ESAF for ESAF purposes (Stand 27 Nov 2022)

Overview of the activities in 2021 see the [Estonian Academy of Sciences Yearbook](#) pages 89–94

December to February: the wide and deep discussions at the 2021 annual meeting required production of not only short notes but, instead, a thorough overview of the opinions of the future of ESAF. The notes agreed with the presenters are now on the ESAF website.

26.02.2022 Letter of the Chairman to the International Science Council (ISC) European group members about possible framing of the aggression of Russia against Ukraine forwarded, with comments, to ESAF.

08.03.2022 Zoom discussion with the SAM unit about framing the future of ESAF. Meeting with new Head of SAM unit Gilles Laroche and Deputy Head of SAM Unit Jacques Verraes.

This was the first informal meeting of ESAF Chairman and new Head of SAM unit Gilles Laroche. The Chairman explained the concerns and the position of ESAF members regarding ESAF future based on the ESAF-7 meeting Group Discussions (ESAF hybrid annual meeting in December 2021). Head of SAM Unit agreed that ESAF as an informal network has big value. Both sides agreed to continue the cooperation.

*We are thankful to the SAM for the call to take more active and possible more formal role in the science for policy ecosystem in Europe. The majority of ESAF members are of opinion that the informal way of operation offers more benefit for the members and for this ecosystem.*

*The Terms of Reference and Membership Principles need certain adjustment. One important aspect has not been mentioned in ToR: the ESAF members are, as a rule, in the position (and often have the mandate) to shape the national science advice system. This feature is not really used but could be important and instrumental in the future. Another aspect: European Research Area is framework-dependent, and the relevant formulations in the Membership Principles should be adjusted so that we do not lose important competence.*

05.04.2022 The Chairman had physical meetings and discussion about the functioning of the national science advice system in Hungary with the Hungarian ESAF member Dr Istvan Szabo and the President of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences Prof Tamas Freund.

27.–28.04.2022 The Chairman and former ESAF member Prof Mark Ferguson participated in the discussion panel “How close is too close? The complex role of a government science advisor” of the conference “Science advice under pressure” co-organised by the Group of Chief Scientific Advisors to the European Commission and the SAPEA consortium of European academies.

27.04.2022 Informal ESAF dinner and discussion during the conference “Science advice under pressure”, with two ESAF members, ESAF secretariat and two guests from Finland (Jaakko Kuosmanen and president elect of the Finnish Academy of Science and Letters Kimmo Kaski).

*This meeting inspired Finnish colleagues and the Finnish Academy of Science and Letters to decide to be more actively engaged in the building of the national science advice system. The driver of the relevant analysis and task group Jaakko Kuosmanen has his affiliation in the Finnish Academy of Science and Letters.*

28.04.2022 The Chairman participated as a discussant at the satellite event of the conference “Science advice under pressure”: Special Question-Time Debate “If Covid-19 is the 9/11

Moment for Global Science Advice, What Needs to Happen Next?” organised by the International Network for Governmental Science Advice (INGSA) and The International Science Council (ISC).

13.05.2022 The Chairman had a short physical discussion about future plans of ESAF with the German representative Prof Gerald Haug and about functioning of the science advice system in the Czech Republic with the member of the GCSA and the President of the Czech Academy of Sciences Prof Eva Zažímalová.

14.05.2022 The Chairman had a longer physical meeting with the Austrian ESAF representative Prof Anton Zeilinger, now the 2022 Nobel laureate in physics. The topics included discussion about the possible change in the Austrian representative after the end of the Presidency of prof Zeilinger of the Austrian Academy of Sciences.

16.08.2022 Discussion with the President of INGSA Remi Quirion and Vice President Claire Gregg over Zoom. We agreed that INGSA and ESAF have formally similar but partially conceptually different aims: INGSA members advice while ESAF members have mandate to shape the science advice systems. An important barrier to joint advice are the issues of culture and language when giving science advice that often is non-translatable.

21.09.2022 The Chairman contributed to the workshop on Rebuilding Research, Education, and Innovation in Ukraine (21–23.09.2022) organized by U.S. National Academies of Science, National Research Council and Royal Society.

12.–13.10.2022 The Chairman chaired the annual meeting of European Members of the International Science Council (ISC). It was agreed that the main target for the chairmanship period by the Estonian Academy of Sciences could be cooperation with ESAF towards inspiring and engaging to more actively participate academies of sciences in shaping and structuring the national science advice systems.

26.10.2022 Enric Banda represented ESAF at the launch of the EC Staff Working Document “Supporting and connecting policymaking in the Member States with scientific research”.

03.11.2022 The Chairman contributed to the session “Winning from greater inclusion: Relation between diversity and academic culture” of the Triennial Conference of the InterAcademy Partnership and the Worldwide Meeting of the Young Academies (Biosphere 2, Oracle, Arizona, 01–03.11.2022) “Inclusive Excellence: Harnessing knowledge for sustainable societies”

The main message: science advice should (and can) not be limited to socio-economic aspects only. In crisis times it must be expanded towards policy shaping, including shaping international policy. [The example of Russian invasion into Ukraine was provided as an example.]

09.11.2022 The Chairman discussed in the headquarters of the U.S. national academies of sciences options of collaboration towards post-war rebuilding of Ukraine, including possibilities of structuring the national science advice system in Ukraine. Vaughan Turekian and Franklin Carrero-Martinez will share their thoughts with us today.

Tarmo Soomere

Vilnius, 30 November 2022