

CARLOS MOEDAS

*Member of the European Commission*

Brussels, 30 OCT. 2019

Ms Emily O'REILLY  
European Ombudsman  
1, avenue du Président Robert Schuman  
B.P. 403  
F-67001 STRASBOURG Cedex

**Subject: Complaint by Mr [REDACTED] on behalf of [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
ref. 560/2019/TE**

Dear Ms O'Reilly,

I would like to thank you for the letter of 6 June 2019 addressed to the President of the European Commission about the above-mentioned case.

I am pleased to enclose the comments of the Commission regarding this complaint.

Naturally, the Commission remains at your disposal for any further information you may require.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]  
Carlos MOEDAS [REDACTED]

Enclosure: Comments of the European Commission

## Comments of the Commission on a request for information from the European Ombudsman

- Complaint by [REDACTED] on behalf of [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] ref. 560/2019/TE

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### I. BACKGROUND/SUMMARY OF THE FACTS/HISTORY

The European Ombudsman requests clarifications on the Commission's policy as regards the declarations of interest for experts nominated by the consortium 'Scientific Advice for Policy by European Academies' (SAPEA) in the context of the Scientific Advice Mechanism (SAM) following the submission of a complaint by the [REDACTED]

SAM was first announced by President Juncker on 13 May 2015<sup>1</sup>. In his note of 21 August 2015<sup>2</sup>, addressed to the other Commission services, the Director-General of DG Research and Innovation described SAM as a mechanism to support the Commission with high quality, timely and independent scientific advice for its policy-making activities. A diagrammatic representation of the workflow for the production of scientific advice can be found on the SAM website<sup>3</sup>. The Group of Chief Scientific Advisors is at the centre of the SAM.

SAPEA is a project, a 'Coordination and Support Action', funded by a grant<sup>4</sup> from the European Union's Horizon 2020 framework programme for research and innovation. SAPEA also denotes the consortium of beneficiaries<sup>5</sup> of the grant, a network of science academies bringing together outstanding expertise in engineering, humanities, medicine, natural and social sciences from over 100 academies, young academies and learned societies across Europe.

### II. THE COMPLAINT

The complainant refers in particular to a report published by the Group of Chief Scientific Advisors in June 2018 entitled "*EU authorisation processes of Plant Protection Products from a scientific point of view*". This report indicates that an Evidence Review Report submitted by SAPEA is part of the supporting documents. The concerns relate to the role of experts selected by the SAPEA consortium (hereafter referred to as "SAPEA experts") and to the current policy for the assessment and management of any conflicts of interest.

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<sup>1</sup> See Press release [IP/15/4970](#) at <https://ec.europa.eu/research/index.cfm?pg=newsalert&year=2015&na=na-101115>.

<sup>2</sup> See Annex 1.

<sup>3</sup> See the diagram in Annex 2, available also at: <https://ec.europa.eu/research/sam/index.cfm?pg=about> and in particular [https://ec.europa.eu/research/sam/images/sam\\_clip\\_image005.png](https://ec.europa.eu/research/sam/images/sam_clip_image005.png)

<sup>4</sup> See [https://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/wp/2016\\_2017/main/h2020-wp1617-societies\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/wp/2016_2017/main/h2020-wp1617-societies_en.pdf), p.129, Call for proposal H2020-IBA-EUROPE-ENA-2016, L 347 - 2013-12-11. The SAPEA co-ordination and support action that has received EUR 6,000,000 funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 737432, with starting date on 1.11.2016, for a duration of 48 months.

<sup>5</sup> The six beneficiaries that are members of the SAPEA consortium are: Deutsche Akademie der Technikwissenschaften, Academia Europaea, All European Academies; Deutsche Akademie der Naturforscher Leopoldina EV; Conseil Européen des Applications de la Science et de l'Ingénierie and the Federation of European Academies of Medicine.

### III. THE COMMISSION'S REPLIES TO THE QUESTIONS ASKED BY THE OMBUDSMAN

- A. UNDER POINT 1) OF HER LETTER, THE OMBUDSMAN HAS ASKED FOR THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION:

*“Please explain the role of SAPEA experts, as part of ‘working groups’, ‘co-ordination groups’ and ‘sounding boards’, in the drafting of the scientific advice (including related policy options) formally adopted by the Group of Chief Scientific Advisors. To what extent can the input of SAPEA experts be distinguished from the input of other experts in the drafting of scientific advice by the Scientific Advice Mechanism?”*

Regarding “other experts”, the Ombudsman’s letter specifies in footnote no. 2 that “[t]hese other experts are members of a formal ‘Commission expert group’. See Commission Decision C(2016)3301 establishing horizontal rules on the creation and operation of Commission expert group”.

The Group of Chief Scientific Advisors is a Commission expert group, established by Commission Decision C(2015)6946<sup>6</sup>, as amended by Commission Decision C(2018)1919<sup>7</sup>. The group is subject to Commission Decision C(2016)3301 establishing horizontal rules on the creation and operation of Commission expert groups. In particular, Article 11 of Commission Decision C(2016)3301 requires individuals applying to be appointed as members of expert groups acting in a personal capacity to disclose any circumstances that could give rise to a conflict of interest by submitting a declaration of interests. Such declarations of interests are then used by DG Research and Innovation to assess whether there is any conflict of interest. Declarations of interests of experts appointed as members of the Group of Chief Scientific Advisors are published on the Register of Commission expert groups and other similar entities (‘the Register of expert groups’)<sup>8</sup>. The seven members of the Group of Chief Scientific Advisors have an outstanding level of expertise and collectively cover a wide range of scientific fields and expertise. They are appointed by the Commissioner for Research and Innovation following a selection process in their personal capacity and act independently and in the public interest. The Group of Chief Scientific Advisors provides the Commission with independent scientific advice on specific policy issues where such advice is critical to the development of EU policies or legislation<sup>9</sup>.

The way in which the group is involved in the SAM and the various ways through which it interacts with experts who are not members of the group is linked to the specialised nature of the scientific advice that is sought, which entails that experts who are not members of the Group are invited to participate in its deliberations. In fact, the group operates according to the institutional and working arrangements described further below in detail. These working arrangements have been developed since the establishment of the group and may be further developed in future in line with the overall objectives and mandate of the group.

The Commission points out that the members of the Group of Chief Scientific Advisors are the sole authors of the advice that they provide to the Commission. The established practice of

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<sup>6</sup> Commission Decision of 16.10.2015 on the setting up of the High Level Group of Scientific Advisors.

<sup>7</sup> Commission Decision of 05.04.2018 amending Decision C(2015)6946 on the setting up of the High Level Group of Scientific Advisors.

<sup>8</sup> See <http://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regexpert/index.cfm> (Expert Group number E03378).

<sup>9</sup> See Article 2 of the Commission Decision C(2015)6946 of 16.10.2015.

the Group of Chief Scientific Advisors is that all evidence on which it relies must be in the public domain at the time of the publication of its advice, that its use of expertise is recorded and public, and that any interests of experts who participate in its deliberations must be appropriately and transparently assessed and managed. The Group of Chief Scientific Advisors uses a variety of sources of evidence and makes use of an array of expertise to substantiate its scientific advice, including Evidence Review Reports delivered by SAPEA.

The role of SAPEA is to provide expertise and evidence analysis to the Group of Chief Scientific Advisors in order to support the scientific advice given by the Group of Chief Scientific Advisors to the Commission. Often, this takes the form of an **Evidence Review Report**, a multi-author, peer-reviewed publication. An Evidence Report may include options for action, but only the scientific advice provided by the Group of Chief Scientific Advisors includes policy advice and recommendations.

Collectively, the Group of Chief Scientific Advisors, SAPEA and unit RTD.03 in the European Commission's Directorate General for Research and Innovation are referred to as the **Scientific Advice Mechanism (SAM)**. The unit RTD.03 is responsible for the management the SAPEA project and for the administrative support of the Group of Chief Scientific Advisors.

The Group of Chief Scientific Advisors meets alone and with a variety of external experts, including SAPEA experts, during its work to provide scientific advice.

The SAPEA experts meet regularly to produce their Evidence Review Reports. A SAPEA Evidence Review Report contributes to and precedes the completion of the scientific advice of the Group of Chief Scientific Advisors. A meeting of SAPEA experts for the development of an Evidence Review Report is called a **working group**.

A meeting of members of the Group of Chief Scientific Advisors to co-ordinate work ongoing in the working groups on the Evidence Review Reports is called a **co-ordination group**; the scope and content of the Evidence Review Reports is discussed as one strand of evidence informing the Advisors' subsequent scientific advice. SAPEA working groups experts are invited on an *ad-hoc* basis in the meetings of the co-ordination group. Usually, the Chair and one or two main members of a Working Group participate in the coordination meeting that is a project-specific configuration of the Group of Chief Scientific Advisors.

A **sounding board** is a meeting of the Group of Chief Scientific Advisors to which experts are invited on an *ad hoc* basis, and which takes place during the later stages of the drafting of advice by the Group of Chief Scientific Advisors. Sounding board experts are selected by the Group of Chief Scientific Advisors and are invited by the Commission (Unit RTD.03). These experts are usually not SAPEA experts. Only in exceptional circumstances, they may be SAPEA experts in particular if experts in a specific scientific field are few<sup>10</sup>. A sounding board tests and gives feedback on key elements of preliminary versions of Group of Chief Scientific Advisors scientific advice, which may include points for improvement.

The process for the development of scientific advice and the SAPEA Evidence Review Reports may require the Group of Chief Scientific Advisors or the SAPEA working groups to meet other experts (in **expert group meetings**), or the Group of Chief Scientific Advisors to meet stakeholders in **stakeholder meetings**. Expert groups and stakeholders meetings are not designed to determine the scope or content of the Evidence Review Reports. Rather, they are

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<sup>10</sup> This has occurred only once when the Commission invited SAPEA working groups' members for the sounding board meeting on the Environmental and Health Risks of Microplastic Pollution (See <https://www.sapea.info/wp-content/uploads/report.pdf>), because the experts concerned were acknowledged as leading scientists in an emerging and therefore still relatively small field.

intended to inform SAPEA working groups or members of the Group of Chief Scientific Advisors (in the case of expert group meetings) and to enable the members of the Group of Chief Scientific Advisors to inform stakeholders of their main findings (in the case of stakeholders meetings). These experts are not considered to be participating in the deliberations of the Group of Chief Scientific Advisors and they are therefore not required to make a declaration of interests or a conflict of interest statement (as stated in Article 11(8)(d) of Commission Decision C(2016)3301).

B. UNDER POINT 2) OF HER LETTER, THE OMBUDSMAN HAS ASKED FOR THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION:

*“Please outline the current policies on declarations of interest and conflicts of interest for SAPEA experts involved in the development of advice adopted by the Group of Chief Scientific Advisors as part of ‘working groups’, ‘co-ordination groups’ and ‘sounding boards’.*

- a. At which stage in the development of scientific advice do invited SAPEA experts sign a declaration of interest?*
- b. When does the Commission make declarations of interest of invited SAPEA experts publicly available?*
- c. How does the Commission identify and avoid potential conflicts of interest situations of invited SAPEA experts?”*

As described above, members of the Group of Chief Scientific Advisors are obliged - as members of a Commission Expert Group - to declare their interests pursuant to Article 11 of Commission Decision C(2016)3301.

That Commission decision also required any invited expert ‘to inform the competent Commission department before the meeting of any interest which may compromise their capacity to act independently and in the public interest when advising the Commission’.

The role of external experts, including SAPEA experts, involved in the preparation of opinions of the Group of Chief Scientific Advisors goes beyond that of invited experts in the sense of Article 15 of Commission Decision C(2016)3301. The Commission believes therefore that it is justified and appropriate to ask these experts to declare their interests by using declaration of interest forms identical in substance to those completed by the members of the Group of Chief Scientific Advisors.

Accordingly, the Group of Chief Scientific Advisors’ Rules of procedure<sup>11</sup> require that any experts participating in the work of the Group shall sign a declaration of interests prior to the meeting in which the experts were invited to participate. Therefore, all experts participating in deliberations of the Group of Chief Scientific Advisors make and sign a declaration of interests using a form prepared by the Commission, unless they are experts selected by SAPEA and they have already completed SAPEA working group declarations of interest.<sup>12</sup> In

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<sup>11</sup> Rules of procedure were adopted by the Group of Chief Scientific Advisors as required by Article 4(3) of the Commission Decision C(2015)6946 (establishing the Group). The Rules of procedures are available under [https://ec.europa.eu/research/sam/pdf/sam-hlg\\_rules\\_of\\_procedure.pdf#view=fit&pagemode=none](https://ec.europa.eu/research/sam/pdf/sam-hlg_rules_of_procedure.pdf#view=fit&pagemode=none). Article 12(2) provides that “any expert (...) shall sign a declaration of interest” and that the Chair of the Group “shall assess whether declared interests constitute a conflict of interest 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”.

<sup>12</sup> For the identification and the selection of experts for participation in the SAPEA Working Group, see §§ 4.2 and 4.2.2 of the Quality Assurance Document available at <https://www.sapea.info/wp-content/uploads/SAPEA-guidelines-update-sep-2018.pdf>. Identification and selection of peer reviewers Group, see §§ 4.6.1 of the Quality Assurance Document <https://www.sapea.info/wp-content/uploads/SAPEA-guidelines-update-sep-2018.pdf>.

the latter case, these SAPEA declarations of interest are made available to the Commission by the secretariat of the SAPEA Consortium with the consent of the expert concerned or by the experts themselves. The Commission examines these declarations and does not require these experts to sign a new one.

The European Commission publishes these declarations of interests and the declarations of interests of SAPEA experts who participate in meetings of the Group of Chief Scientific Advisors on the corresponding pages of the website of the European Commission<sup>13</sup>. These declarations of interests are published from the moment of publication of the Scientific Advice to which the invited experts contributed until six months thereafter. Declarations of interests are published in the interest of transparency and accountability, and at the same time as scientific advice in order to avoid that experts are subject to influence during their participation.

The Commission retains these declarations of interests in line with Regulation 2018/1725<sup>14</sup>.

Independently from the above, all SAPEA working groups' experts complete and sign a dedicated declaration of interests, which is assessed by the SAPEA Consortium under the authority of its Board, in line with Article 35 of the Grant Agreement No 737432 signed between the Commission and the SAPEA Consortium<sup>15</sup> and as outlined in the SAPEA Quality Assurance Guidelines<sup>16</sup>. SAPEA is bound to take all measures to prevent any situation where the impartial and objective implementation of its work is compromised for reasons involving a conflict of interest. Moreover, SAPEA must formally notify the Commission without delay of any situation constituting or likely to lead to a conflict of interest and immediately take all the necessary steps to rectify this situation.

The dedicated SAPEA declaration of interests as well as the declaration of interests of all experts invited to participate in deliberations of the Group of Chief Scientific Advisors are identical in substance to the declaration of interests form used by the European Commission for members of expert groups in the sense that they record information in the same interest categories.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> The Commission does not publish the declarations of interests of SAPEA working groups members who are not invited to participate in Group of Chief Scientific Advisors meetings since these are the responsibility of the SAPEA consortium.

<sup>14</sup> Regulation (EU) 2018/1725 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2018 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data by the Union institutions, bodies, offices and agencies and on the free movement of such data, and repealing Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 and Decision No 1247/2002/EC.

<sup>15</sup> The following is the text of ARTICLE 35 — *CONFLICT OF INTERESTS*:

*“35.1 Obligation to avoid a conflict of interests*

*The beneficiaries must take all measures to prevent any situation where the impartial and objective implementation of the action is compromised for reasons involving economic interest, political or national affinity, family or emotional ties or any other shared interest ('conflict of interests').*

*They must formally notify to the Commission without delay any situation constituting or likely to lead to a conflict of interests and immediately take all the necessary steps to rectify this situation.*

*The Commission may verify that the measures taken are appropriate and may require additional measures to be taken by a specified deadline.*

*35.2 Consequences of non-compliance*

*If a beneficiary breaches any of its obligations under this Article, the grant may be reduced (see Article 43) and the Agreement or participation of the beneficiary may be terminated (see Article 50). Such breaches may also lead to any of the other measures described in Chapter 6.”*

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.sapea.info/guidelines/>

<sup>17</sup> Meeting its obligation under Article 35 of the Grant Agreement, SAPEA aligned its rules to the horizontal rules applicable to the Commission's expert groups.

SAPEA experts named in the complaint were invited, based on their academic experience and as proven experts in the area concerned, to attend the deliberations of the co-ordination group meeting related to the development of the scientific opinion on “Authorisation processes of Plant Protection Products in Europe” and to contribute to the corresponding Evidence Review Report. The organisation of this meeting was concurrent with the formation of the SAPEA working group and so on this occasion, the Commission had invited these experts to complete a declaration of interests prior to their attendance at that meeting, which they did, and the Commission assessed these declarations.

None of the interests declared were found to constitute a conflict of interest in relation to the deliberations in which the experts participated.

The Ombudsman’s letter refers to the Commission’s website which states that “*experts invited to participate in a co-ordination or sounding board meeting declare any interest which they may have in writing. The Commission assesses these declarations and, where relevant, takes measures to avoid that the independence of the work is compromised*”. The Ombudsman observes that, “*in its letter to the complainant of 14 January 2019 (ARES(2018)6353185), the Commission notes that it “is not bound to carry out background checks on these declarations of interests and it is possible that some of them are incomplete or could be perceived as misleading”.*”

The declarations of interests are signed ‘on honour’ as being complete and accurate to the best of the knowledge of the expert concerned. As a consequence, the statement that “*it is possible that some of them are incomplete or could be perceived as misleading*” is truthful in as much as this is typical to any system relying on the self-declaration of interests. It is for this reason that the Commission Department responsible for the Group of Chief Scientific Advisors, carries out an internet search on each candidate-expert to identify any obvious and publicly known interest, which may constitute or be perceived to constitute a conflict of interest in relation to the intended task to be performed, prior to inviting them to attend a meeting and to completing a declaration of interest.

The conflict of interest assessment for each expert is based on three sources of information: the initial Internet search, the signed declaration of interests and an up-to-date CV of the expert. The assessment of this information aims at establishing whether an interest is relevant in the given context, i.e. constitutes a situation that may compromise or be reasonably perceived to compromise the capacity of the expert concerned to act independently and in the public interest in the framework of the expert’s contribution.

In this context, the indirect nature of the contribution of external experts to the advice, which the members of the expert group will adopt and present to the Commission, as well as their limited mandate, and the *ad hoc* nature of their contribution, is taken into account.

If the Commission finds that an expert has a relevant interest that is not insignificant or minor, it takes measures to avoid that the interest unduly influence the advice. These measures range from partial exclusion to full exclusion from the meeting.

C. UNDER POINT 3) OF HER LETTER, THE OMBUDSMAN HAS ASKED THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION:

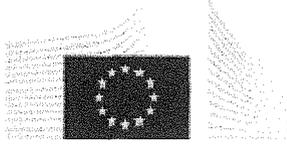
*“Would the Commission be ready to put in place a more stringent policy of checking and possibly publishing declarations of interest of SAPEA experts involved in ‘working groups’, ‘co-ordination groups’ and ‘sounding boards’ within the Scientific Advice Mechanism?”*

The role of the SAPEA experts is namely to identify scientific evidence in the context of the subject at issue that will be subsequently submitted to the Group of Chief Scientific Advisors.

This scientific evidence will be part of the information used to draft its scientific opinion. The assessment of the scientific evidence remains always the preserve of the members of the Group.

The Commission believes that the current practice adequately addresses the issue of conflicts of interest of external experts involved in the work of the Group of Chief Scientific Advisors. The composition and the function of the Group sufficiently safeguard the necessary wide range of the supporting evidence and the essential balance in the representation of different scientific opinions.

As described above, those experts submit to the Commission a declaration of interests or the Commission assesses the declaration of interests submitted in the context of the SAPEA Consortium. The content of both those declarations is identical to the one submitted by the members of the Group of Chief Scientific Advisors. If a conflict of interest is identified, the Commission takes appropriate measures. Finally, should the Ombudsman need more information, the Commission is available to provide it.



**EUROPEAN COMMISSION**  
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR RESEARCH & INNOVATION

Director-General

**21 AOUT 2015**

Brussels,  
rtd.ddg1.a.6(2015)3668038

**NOTE FOR THE ATTENTION OF**

**MS CATHERINE DAY, SECRETARY-GENERAL**  
**MR LUIS ROMERO REQUENA, DIRECTOR-GENERAL, SJ**  
**MR DOMINIQUE RISTORI, DIRECTOR-GENERAL, DG ENER**  
**MR VLADIMÍR ŠUCHA, DIRECTOR-GENERAL, DG JRC**  
**MR TIMO PESONEN, DIRECTOR-GENERAL, DG COMM**  
**MS NADIA CALVINO, DIRECTOR-GENERAL, DG BUDG**  
**MR DANIEL CALLEJA CRESPO, DIRECTOR-GENERAL, DG GROW**  
**MR FERNANDO FRUTUOSO DE MELO, DIRECTOR-GENERAL, DG DEVCO**  
**MR ALEXANDER ITALIANER, DIRECTOR-GENERAL, DG COMP**  
**MR MARCO BUTI, DIRECTOR-GENERAL, DG ECFIN**  
**MR XAVIER PRATS MONNÉ, DIRECTOR-GENERAL, DG EAC**  
**MR MICHEL SERVOZ, DIRECTOR-GENERAL, DG EMPL**  
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**MS PARASKEVI MICHOU, DIRECTOR-GENERAL (FF.), DG JUST**  
**MR JOÃO AGUIAR MACHADO, DIRECTOR-GENERAL, DG MOVE**  
**MR MATTHIAS RUETE, DIRECTOR-GENERAL, DG HOME**  
**MR CHRISTIAN DANIELSSON, DIRECTOR-GENERAL, DG NEAR**  
**MR TUNG-LAI MARGUE, DIRECTOR-GENERAL, DG FPI**  
**MR HEINZ ZOUREK, DIRECTOR-GENERAL, DG TAXUD**  
**MR JEAN-LUC DEMARTY, DIRECTOR-GENERAL, DG TRADE**  
**MR CLAUS SØRENSEN, DIRECTOR-GENERAL, DG ECHO**  
**MR LADISLAV MIKO, DIRECTOR-GENERAL, DG SANTE**  
**MR JERZY BOGDAN PLEWA, DIRECTOR-GENERAL, DG AGRI**  
**MR KARL FALKENBERG, DIRECTOR-GENERAL, DG ENV**  
**MR JOS DELBEKE, DIRECTOR-GENERAL, DG CLIMA**  
**MR ROBERT MADELIN, DIRECTOR-GENERAL, DG CNECT**  
**MR LOWRI EVANS, DIRECTOR-GENERAL, DG MARE**  
**MR WALTER DEFFAA, DIRECTOR-GENERAL, DG REGIO**  
**MR WALTER RADERMACHER, DIRECTOR-GENERAL, ESTAT**  
**MR ALAINE LE ROY, ADMINISTRATIVE DIRECTOR-GENERAL, EEAS**  
**MS ANN METTLER, HEAD OF EPSC**

**Subject: Inter-service consultation on a Commission Decision to set up a High Level Group of Scientific Advisors**

Please find enclosed the draft Commission Decision to set up a High Level Group of Scientific Advisors in the context of the new Scientific Advice Mechanism, which is intended to be adopted by the Commission by oral procedure.

As announced by President Juncker on 13 May 2015, the European Commission intends to set up a new Scientific Advice Mechanism. It will support the Commission with high quality, timely and independent scientific advice for its policy-making activities. This will contribute to the quality of EU legislation, in line with the Better Regulation agenda.

The Scientific Advice Mechanism will draw on the wide range of scientific expertise in Europe through a close relationship with national academies and other bodies, as well as the expertise of a High Level Group of Independent Scientists.

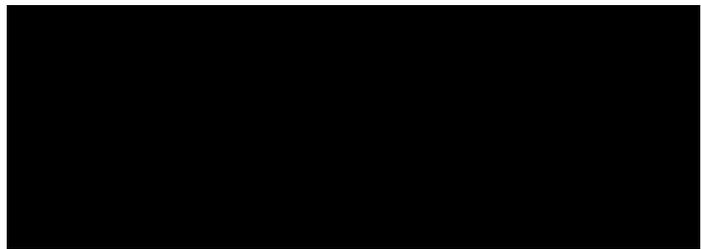
The present Decision describes the mission, the setting up and the operational functionalities of the new High Level Group.

The members of this High Level Group will be appointed in their personal capacity and act independently and in the public interest. They must be highly qualified, specialised, independent experts selected on the basis of objective criteria respecting the principles of non-discrimination, equal treatment and absence of conflict of interest.

In order to meet these objectives, it is intended that the members of the HLG shall be paid honoraria as well as travel and subsistence expenses as laid down in Annex II of the proposed Decision.

We would be grateful to receive your agreement or any other comments you may have within 10 working days of the launch of the inter-service consultation.

Please contact Mr Jean-Claude Burgelman, Head of Unit RTD.A.6 (tel. [REDACTED]) for any further information.

A large black rectangular redaction box covering the signature area of the document.

Robert-Jan Smits

A long, thin, handwritten signature in black ink, extending from the right side of the page towards the left.

Enclosure: Draft Commission Decision to set up a High Level Group of Scientific Advisors  
Simplified financial statement

c.c.: W. Burtscher, J. Metthey, JC. Burgelman, C. Kurrer

