



Letter of Intent:

**Co-operation between Joint Research Centre (JRC) and
the European Academies Science Advisory Council (EASAC)**

1. The Joint Research Centre (JRC) of the European Commission and the European Academies Science Advisory Council (EASAC), which acts on behalf of the national academies of the EU member states, agree to develop a process of co-operation. It is intended that this co-operation should lead towards closer links between EU national science academies and the European Union's policy-making process. Now is an important moment when dialogue between policy makers and scientists is needed more than ever as the citizens of Europe raise questions about the implicit risks as well as the intended benefits attached to scientific progress. Therefore, the quality of communication between science and policy needs to be strengthened.
2. JRC is the Directorate General of the European Commission in charge of direct research and scientific support of EU policies, in particular those concerning Europe 2020 priorities.
3. EASAC, built on its network of national science academies in Europe, is a key actor in providing independent, expert, evidence-based advice about the scientific aspects of public policy to those who work or influence the European Union policy-making process.
4. Although the two organisations both work in the field of science advice for the EU, their roles are quite distinct. The JRC provides in-house scientific expertise to the Commission and EU institutions and bodies on EU policy priorities and gives scientific-technical support for specific legislative decisions. EASAC, acting through expert groups of outstanding European scientists, mostly drawn from the EU national academies, engages particularly in horizon-scanning and has an independent perspective on the scientific aspects of EU policy issues from outside the structure of EU institutions.
5. JRC and EASAC agree that it is in the mutual interest of the European Commission and its Member States to coordinate their science and technological development activities and aim to achieve consistency between European and national policies.
6. JRC and EASAC agree on the importance of independent scientific advice for the European Commission to improve its capacity to detect science and technology signals and to anticipate their relevance to present and future policies.
7. JRC and EASAC agree on the importance of developing international cooperation both within Europe and beyond in order to include the global dimension in European priorities.
8. In the context of this co-operation, the JRC will facilitate the exchange of information on European science priorities and the main political decisions in the field of science. JRC will endeavour to do so by assigning to a member of their staff the task of collating and delivering information from the JRC to EASAC. JRC will also give assistance to EASAC to expand the visibility of its activities and works at the EU level.
9. EASAC will continue to address scientific topics relevant to the key priorities of the EU, including innovation, through the advice and expertise of outstanding scientists of the national science academies of Europe.

10. EASAC will continue to advise the European Commission on advances in the following key sectors: Energy; Environment and Climate Change; Agriculture and Food Security and Public Health. Possible advice on other sectors, such as clean transport, information and communication technology, safety and security, would depend on additional resources being made available.

11. JRC and EASAC are in a good position to cooperate on horizon-scanning and foresight activities.

12.1 JRC and EASAC will appoint members to meet annually to identify specific topics of mutual interest which are relevant to the above key sectors and outline their possible wish to proceed jointly in providing relevant science-based policy advice to the Commission.

12.2 Other work carried out by the JRC and EASAC will continue outside this agreement and will be pursued independently.

12.3 The following parameters would help to identify when a collaboration of JRC and EASAC is appropriate: the timeliness of a topic, access to relevant scientists, the usefulness of advice for the EU legislative process and the existence of synergies between the capabilities of the two organisations to address the issue.

13.1 For collaborative work to proceed there would have to be an agreement between the JRC and EASAC on: ways and means for specifying the topic in detail; appointment of working groups; means of access to scientists, policy-makers and policy audiences; provision of additional and adequate support from JRC to facilitate joint work; and procedures for publication and dissemination of the outputs and outcomes of joint work, which would be subject to peer-review and approval of both Councils.

13.2 Furthermore, the JRC and EASAC would agree to organise appropriate high-level meetings within the relevant European institutions - European Commission, European Parliament, Council of Ministers - to broadcast the conclusions and recommendations of these joint reports.

13.3 Whenever the JRC and EASAC are collaborating on a joint report, there shall be at least two meetings per year between the JRC and EASAC Secretariats to review progress and report to their respective Hierarchies/Governance bodies. Either party would have the right to withdraw from a joint activity providing they gave three months notice of their intention.

14. This letter of intent recognises the positive features of possible collaboration between the two parties. Respective Officers (with the approval of their Hierarchies/Governance bodies) should first work out further details of the matters listed in paragraphs 12.1 to 13.3, together with recommendations about an annual retrospective review of progress and procedures in the event of disputation. Such recommendations would be based on any lessons learned from the pilot project on Nanosafety ("*The Impact of Engineered Nanomaterials on Health*"), which should also be incorporated into a technical annex to this Letter of Intent.

15. The agreement, as set out in this letter of intent between the JRC and EASAC, shall be reviewed after three years to consider the future and the direction of the co-operation.

Dominique Ristori
Director General, EC-JRC

Sir Brian Heap
President, EASAC