

# EASAC's and the „Science-Policy-Dialogue“ of European National Science Academies

*IAP-EASAC Workshop on the SDGs*

*Leopoldina, German National Academy of Sciences*

*10-12 September 2018*

**Dr Christiane Diehl**

**EASAC Executive Director**

## Presentation overview

EASAC's general activities to strengthen the „Science-Policy-Dialogue“ of the Academies on a European level

Guidance from EASAC's series of workshops (2010 to 2012) for strengthening dialogue with policy-makers

First evaluation of the responses to the Questionnaire for the SDGs Workshop

# 1.) EASAC as a means of strengthening the „Science-Policy-Dialogue“ in Europe

# Joint work of EASAC academies



- Ongoing **engagement with EU policy-makers** to identify important issues for science-based analysis and advice
- **Exchange of information** among member academies about relevant interests, scientific strengths and advice activities
- **Scoping of projects**, going beyond the input by policy-makers, to serve as basis for joint activity by all member academies, as EASAC
- Creation of a pan-European **scientific analysis and recommendations** from all EASAC member academies together
- Impactful **communication** of recommendations to policy-makers, other stakeholders and European press and media
- **Follow-up** to recommendations through continued dialogue with relevant EU policy-makers and others

## 2. The „Science-Policy-Dialogue“ workshops, their analyses and recommendations



## „Good practice“ and dialogue

- **Good vs. best practice** = recognition of specific situation of each academy with resulting specific strategies and limitations for dialogue with policy-makers
- The most efficient and effective delivery of science-based advice to policy as a **two-way process = ongoing dialogue**
- **Preparation for dialogue** by academies' fellows and staff (e.g. contribution to working groups, policy research etc.)
- Policy side: engaging with aim of longer-term contacts (of trust), different **entry-points**, recognition of specific set-ups and issue '**framings**'

# Finding and choosing topics for advice

- Importance of ongoing dialogue / **contact with policy-makers** for finding issues that matter and will be picked up
- Importance of ‘internal’ (i.e. within academy) **horizon-scanning** for issues of relevance arising in scientific community / from new scientific developments
- Evaluation of topics with respect to **likelihood of impact** (esp. *timing* of delivery of advice in relation to policy cycle)
- Importance of **detailed ‘scoping’**: boundaries of topic, most relevant policy questions, any pervasive preconceptions, possible features of scientific expertise and debate etc.

# Working Groups

- Participation in working groups on the basis of **excellence** (openness to expertise from outside academy fellowship)
- Importance of understanding by experts of their role as providers of **independent** science-based advice (willingness to be transparent about ‘interests’ in a Declaration of Interests)
- Awareness of „**handover point**“ and different roles of scientific advisor and policy-maker
- Working Group to cover the **full range of viewpoints** necessary to provide the required scope of advice
- Importance of **Working Group Chair** (e.g. to resolve possible differences, represent working group, etc.)



## Some further considerations

- Openness, transparency and confidentiality
- Consensus or plurality of opinions?
- Handling uncertainty and communicating risk
- Maintaining quality and measuring impact
- Different types of approach and output
- Active engagement with the public and stakeholders
- Regional (European) and International co-operations

## Conclusion

- Important body of knowledge already exists in the academies about good practice of engagement with policy-makers
- This can (and should) be applied to the particular case of engaging with / on the SDGs
- This also means that academies engage with a particular (& particularly relevant!) ‘frame’ of policy-makers for addressing global challenges, as a basis for dialogue

# Exploring policy advice by European academies of sciences

Viola Stursberg,

Master student at Martin-Luther-Universität-Halle,

International Area Studies, M.Sc.

Master's thesis

Title:

**Exploring policy advice by European academies of sciences for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals in the European Union**

Research Question:

**How do academies of sciences in the European Union work on creating policy advice for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals?**

Questionnaire:

## **Exploring policy advice by European academies of sciences**

Results:

**18 European academies** replied to the online survey (27.7.-26.8.2018)

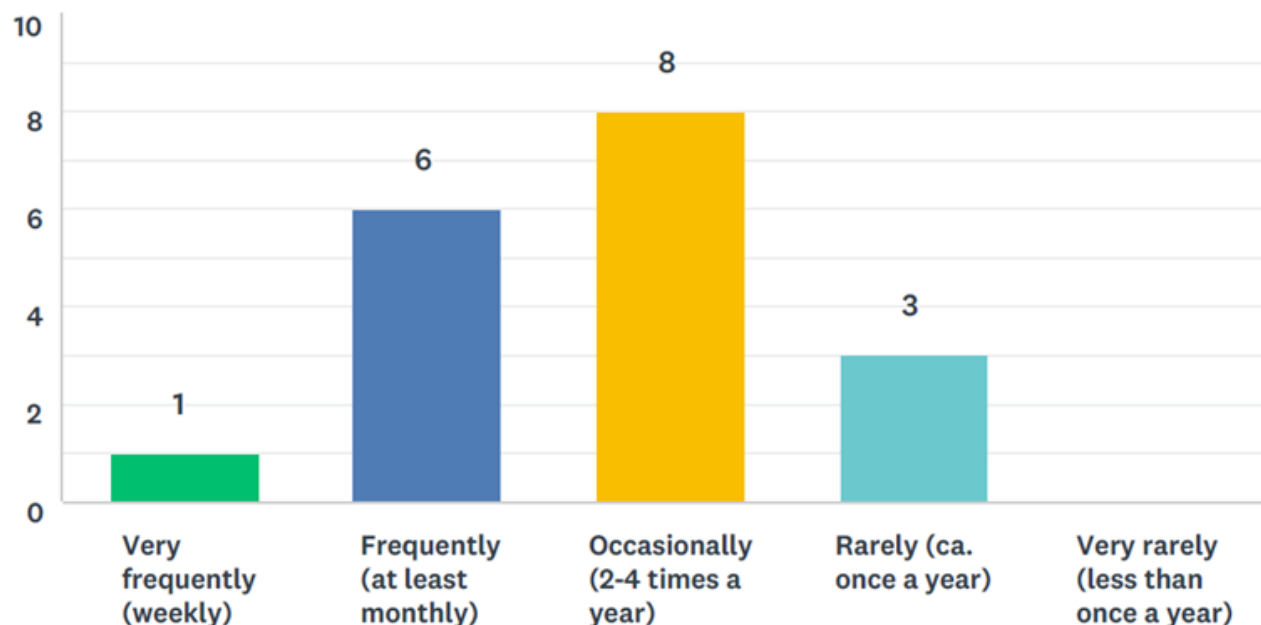
**Findings will be presented by Dr. Christiane Diehl**

### 3.) First evaluation of the responses to the Questionnaire for the SDGs Workshop

# Frequency of advice

Q5 To the best of your knowledge, how frequently does your Academy provide science-based advice to policy makers? Please tick the appropriate response.

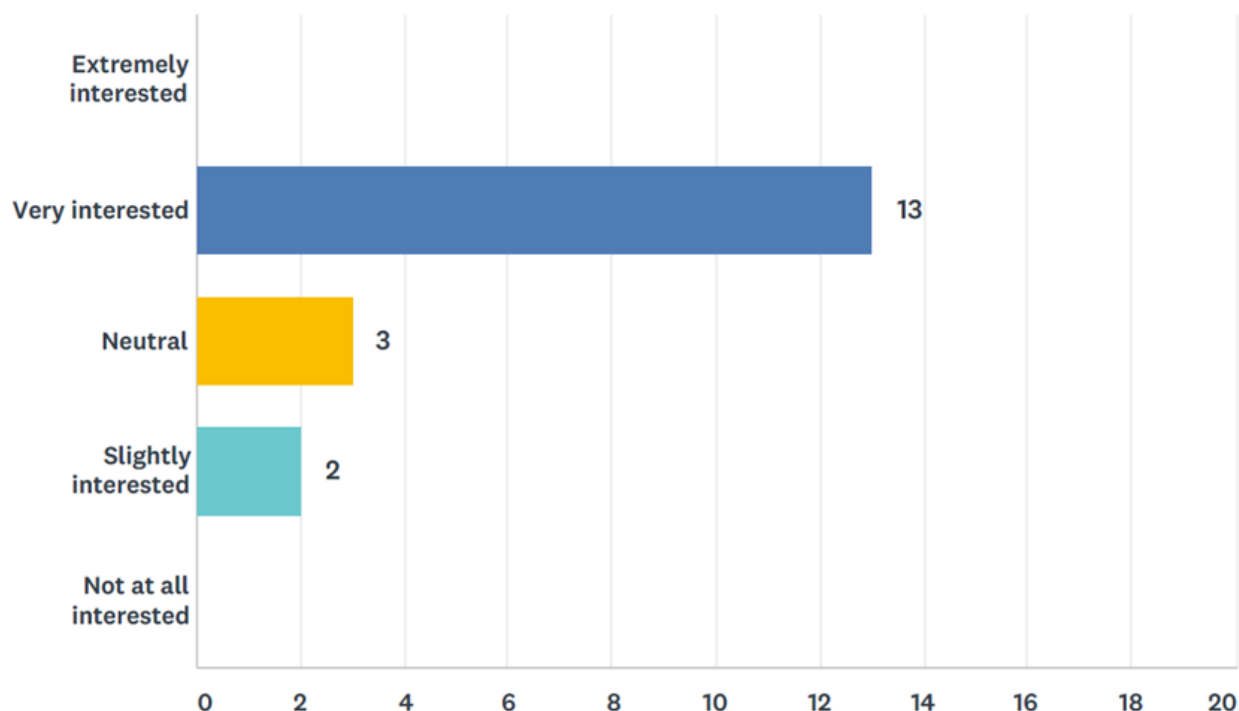
Answered: 18 Skipped: 0



# Interest in advice activity

Q6 To the best of your knowledge, how interested is the majority of your Academy's members/ fellows in providing science-based advice to policy makers? Please tick the appropriate response.

Answered: 18 Skipped: 0

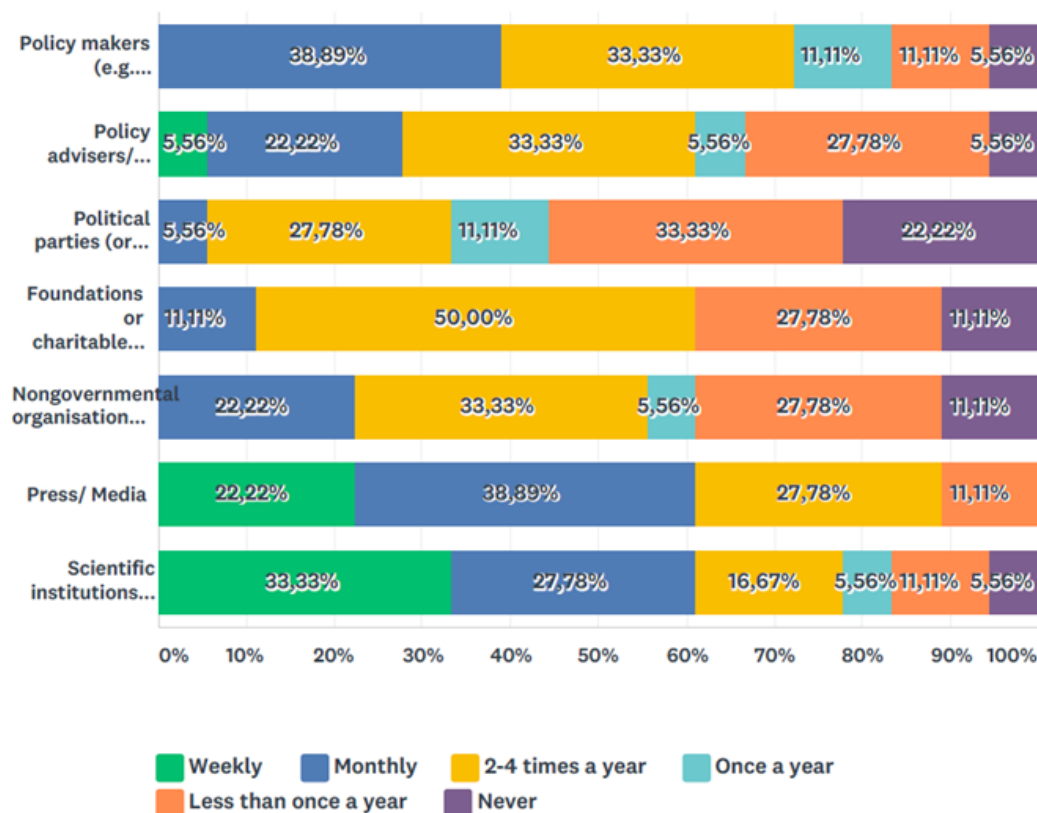




# Different 'policy contacts'

Q8 Please indicate what is, to the best of your knowledge, the average frequency of contact by your Academy with different actors of policy making (for the period since 2015).

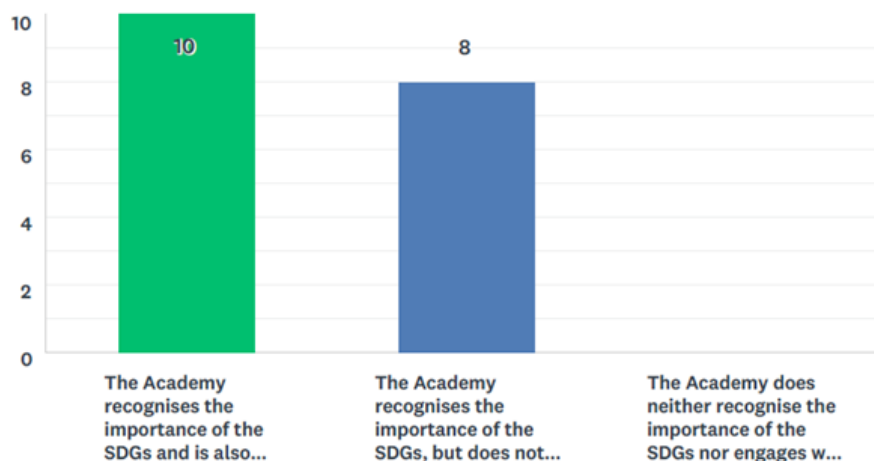
Answered: 18 Skipped: 0



# Engagement with SDGs

Q11 To the best of your knowledge, to what extent has your Academy been engaged with the SDGs since their adoption by the United Nations in September 2015? Please tick the appropriate response.

Answered: 18 Skipped: 0

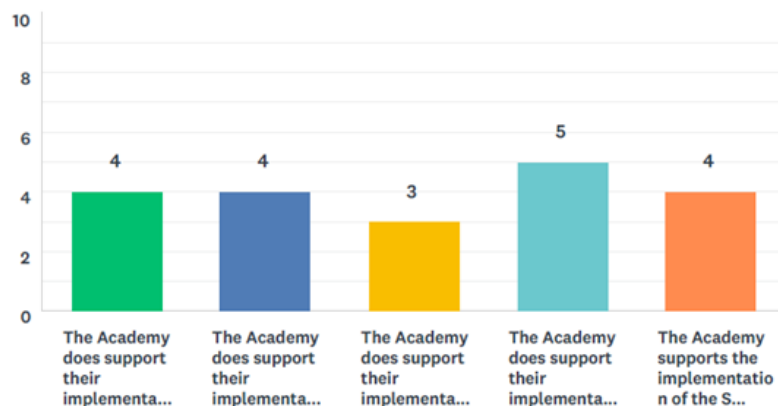


ANTWORTOPTIONEN	BEANTWORTUNGEN	
The Academy recognises the importance of the SDGs and is also active on the Sustainable Development Goals (by establishing and fostering contacts, producing documents or events etc.).	55,56%	10
The Academy recognises the importance of the SDGs, but does not actively engage with them (i.e. not establishing contacts or producing documents or events).	44,44%	8
The Academy does neither recognise the importance of the SDGs nor engages with them actively.	0,00%	0
GESAMT		18

# Support for the SDGs

Q12 To the best of your knowledge, how has your Academy supported the implementation of the SDGs since their adoption by the United Nations in September 2015? Please tick all that apply.

Answered: 10 Skipped: 8



ANTWORTOPTIONEN	BEANTWORTUNGEN	
The Academy does support their implementation by producing documents of relevance (i.e. statements or reports; journal publications) to the Sustainable Development Goals.	40,00%	4
The Academy does support their implementation by engaging with policy makers about the Sustainable Development Goals (i.e. in (in-) official briefings).	40,00%	4
The Academy does support their implementation by engaging with (national) media about the Sustainable Development Goals.	30,00%	3
The Academy does support their implementation by organising public events about the Sustainable Development Goals.	50,00%	5
The Academy supports the implementation of the SDGs in other ways. Please specify.	40,00%	4
Befragte gesamt: 10		

# Additional ways to support SDGs

THE ACADEMY SUPPORTS THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SDGS IN OTHER WAYS.  
PLEASE SPECIFY.

Delegates of the Academy are participants in the National Committee for Sustainable Development of the Parliament and experts have contributed to SDG reports and the preparation of a few policy actions.

A course: UN Agenda 2030 - SDGs has been given during the Fall semester of 2016 and 2017 and the materials distributed in a written form. A book is in the process of finalization and it is aimed not only for students but for the public in general.

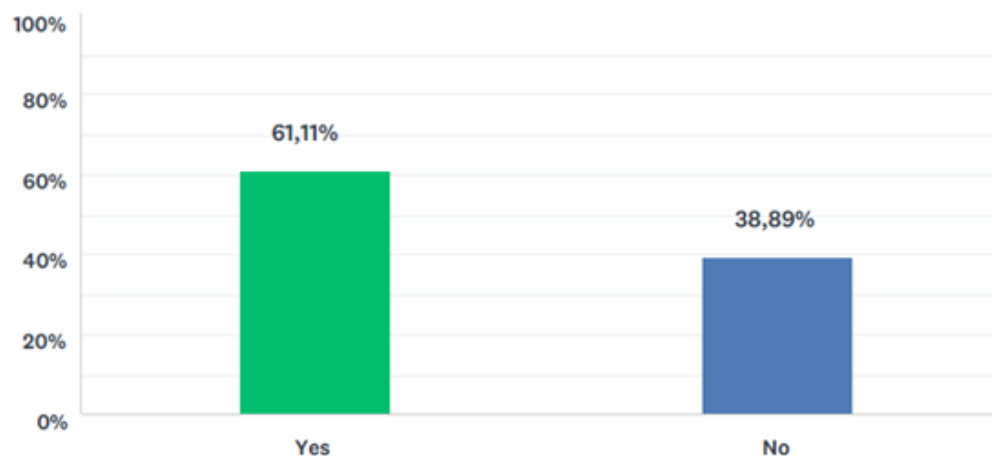
promoting the creation of UNESCO Chairs in Africa, South America and Asia countries with emphasis to portuguese speaking Countries

PAN carries out research projects and organises international conferences on issues related to SDGs.

# Specific SDGs in focus

Q13 Has your Academy identified any particular goals or themes under the SDGs that it wants to work on/ give special attention to? Please tick the appropriate response.

Answered: 18 Skipped: 0



ANTWORTOPTIONEN	BEANTWORTUNGEN	
Yes	61,11%	11
No	38,89%	7
GESAMT		18

# Key SDGs for academies

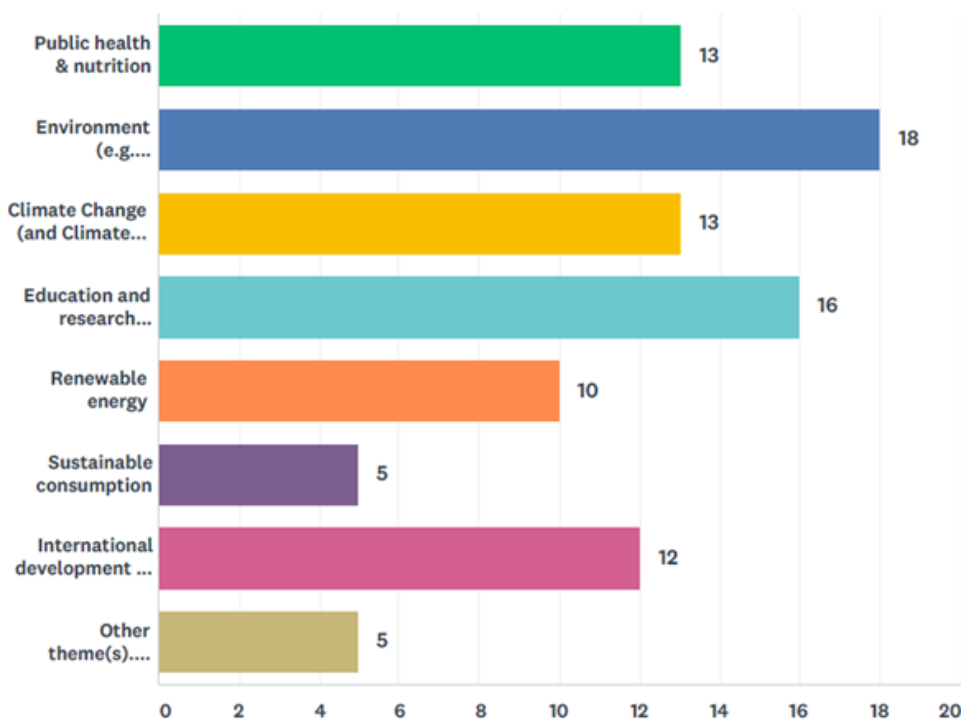
- SDG 6 – Water
- All SDGs connected to Global Health
- Everything connected to (UNESCO) Biosphere Reserves
- Renewable Energy, Biomass
- Low carbon energy
- Migration (Goal 1,3, 8, 10) – Vaccinations (Goal 3) - Primeval forest (Goal 15) - Women in science (Goal 5) Air pollution and climate change (Goal 15).
- Food and agriculture (2), Health (3), Education (4), Economic growth (8), Innovation (9)
- Education
- Energy and Environment

*“For example, we are working on low carbon energy as an issue important in its own right and where this presents an opportunity to help an SDG we are delighted. That is to say we are not working on the areas below because they are SDGs, but because our Fellows recognise them as important areas of science.”*

# Academies' focus interest areas

Q14 There are a number of research areas that are of particular relevance to the SDGs. In which of them (if any) has your Academy a particular interest for the provision of science-based advice? Please tick all that apply.

Answered: 18 Skipped: 0





# Assuring quality of advice

Q15 To the best of your knowledge, how does your Academy measure the scientific quality and useability of its advice? Please tick all that apply.

ANTWORTOPTIONEN	BEANTWORTUNGEN	
Regular and systematic review by Academy bodies (Board, scientific committees, etc.)	22,22%	4
Regular and systematic review by Academy staff/ teams	38,89%	7
Irregular review by either Academy bodies or staff	27,78%	5
Collection of evidence from 'outside' (e.g. reviews in press or by other organisations)	33,33%	6
No established way at the Academy for systematic evaluation of scientific quality and useability	38,89%	7
Other measurement. Please specify.	11,11%	2
Befragte gesamt: 18		

NR.	OTHER MEASUREMENT. PLEASE SPECIFY.	DATUM
1	As for the scientific quality, standard procedures of the Academy apply just like in case of any publication, but there is no evaluation of useability.	29.08.2018 11:48
2	Our Academy has not yet established measures for systematic evaluation.	02.08.2018 11:52

# Measuring impact of advice

Q16 To the best of your knowledge, how does your Academy measure the policy impact of its science-based advice? Please tick all that apply.

ANTWORTOPTIONEN	BEANTWORTUNGEN	
Evaluation through assessment of policy change, done by the Academy (either fellows/ members or staff)	27,78%	5
Feedback from the recipients of the Academy's science-based advice, requested from them by the Academy	38,89%	7
External assessment, e.g. by a consultant brought in for this task by the Academy	11,11%	2
No assessment by the Academy of the policy impact of its science-based advice	44,44%	8
Other measurement. Please specify.	16,67%	3
Befragte gesamt: 18		

NR.	OTHER MEASUREMENT. PLEASE SPECIFY.	DATUM
1	The Presidency of the Academy regularly assesses all views, positions and results relevant for the realization of SDGs.	24.08.2018 11:48
2	We measure a number of factors. As examples, these include 1. the funding government puts into policy action both directly and indirectly attributable 2. meetings with Ministers and civil servants.	23.08.2018 10:45
3	Discussion at the monthly academic sessions.	02.08.2018 11:52

# How could academies strengthen their advice on the SDGs?

- *“By setting up a presidential committee / working group to co-ordinate the research activities and policy advice already made and to create a group of experts within the Academy”*
- *“Through more interaction and knowledge transfer from other international bodies with expertise in SDG”*
- *“Improving communication with politicians. Raising awareness of politicians and their knowledge of the importance of scientific advice by co-organizing events and producing reports”*

# How can IAP and EASAC help?

- *“By sharing the best practice of the activities / involvement of Academies”*
- *“Initiate international projects aiming at the elaboration of one or more specific SDG topics, in areas where regional effort is crucial and policy response is expected to be rather uniform within Europe or other regions.”*
- *“Permanent and repeated written intervention directly to the Presidium of the Academy about the importance of sustainable development research, its results.”*
- *“It will be useful to put in common the actual state of play on this subject and to exchange ideas on how to strengthen it.”*