

Press release: Thursday 30 November 2017

## **SAPEA provides evidence for the European Commission on Food from the Oceans**

SAPEA (Science Advice for Policy by European Academies) has published its first Evidence Review Report titled *Food from the Oceans*, which examines the question of how the ocean can help satisfy the global demand for food.

As an integral part of the Scientific Advice Mechanism (SAM), SAPEA was asked to produce this Evidence Review Report to underpin the Scientific Opinion of the High Level Group (HLG), in response to a request from Commissioner Vella (DG MARE). The request asked for advice on the question: *"How can more food and biomass be obtained from the oceans in a way that does not deprive future generations of their benefits?"*

The Evidence Review Report warns that in our extraction of food from the oceans, 'business as usual' is not sustainable from social, economic and environmental viewpoints. The report suggests a number of options, which inform the recommendations of the HLG Scientific Opinion. It states that the only way to obtain significantly more food and biomass sustainably from the ocean is to harvest seafood that on average is from a lower trophic level (lower in the food chain) than we currently harvest.

To produce *Food from the Oceans*, SAPEA worked with academies across Europe and the European Academy Networks to bring together experts in a range of disciplines. The experts formed working groups which were chaired by Professor Poul Holm (Trinity College Dublin) and Professor Dag Aksnes (University of Bergen). Academia Europaea led on this topic.

Carlos Moedas, Commissioner for Research, Science and Innovation, said: "This substantive opinion and comprehensive evidence review shows that the Commission's Scientific Advice Mechanism is going from strength to strength. I am confident that the value of this opinion will be recognised not just by European policy makers, but also by national governments and all those who care about the future of our oceans."

Professor Günter Stock, 2017 Chair of the SAPEA board said:

"Interdisciplinarity and world class expertise from across Europe are SAPEA's core strengths, and this report has successfully incorporated these under the leadership of Academia Europaea. I look forward to SAPEA's future collaborations with the SAM High Level Group, ensuring that scientific advice is informed by expertise from academies across Europe."

Professor Sierd Cloetingh, President of Academia Europaea said:

"In *Food from the Oceans*, we believe we have established an attractive model for future SAPEA projects. I would like to thank the academies across Europe and their experts who have contributed

their valuable knowledge to this report. I express my gratitude to everyone involved in making *Food from the Oceans* a success, ensuring that the Evidence Review Report was delivered on time and to an excellent standard.”

The SAPEA evidence review report is available at: [www.sapea.info/foodfromtheoceans](http://www.sapea.info/foodfromtheoceans)

The SAM High Level Group Opinion is available at:  
<http://ec.europa.eu/research/sam/index.cfm?pg=oceanfood>

#### Notes to editors:

**Interviews:** Professor Poul Holm and Professor Dag Aksnes are available for interview. For further information about SAPEA’s report, or to request an interview, please contact Laura Norton:  
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**Working Group Members:** SAPEA selected working group members across a range of disciplines to contribute to the Food from the Oceans Evidence Review Report. A full list of Working Group members is available [here](#).

**SAPEA (Science Advice for Policy by European Academies):** Spanning the disciplines of engineering, humanities, medicine, natural sciences and social sciences, SAPEA brings together knowledge and expertise from over 100 academies, young academies and learned societies in more than 40 countries across Europe.

SAPEA is part of the European Commission Scientific Advice Mechanism (SAM), which provides independent, interdisciplinary and evidence-based scientific advice on policy issues to the European Commission. SAPEA works closely with the SAM High Level Group of Scientific Advisors.

For further information visit [www.sapea.info](http://www.sapea.info) or follow SAPEA on Twitter: @SAPEAnews

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#### **SAM (European Commission Scientific Advice Mechanism):**

The SAM was established in October 2015 to contribute to the quality of EU legislation in line with the Commission's Better Regulation Agenda and complements the existing science advisory structures of the Commission, including the Joint Research Centre (JRC). The reports and opinions are prepared under the responsibility of a High Level Group of Scientific Advisors comprising up to seven independent eminent scientists. The Group draws on the best available scientific expertise and evidence, through a close relationship with SAPEA.

For further information visit: <https://ec.europa.eu/research/sam>

Contact: [EC Spokesperson for Research, Science and Innovation](#)

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