

EEAC Annual Plan 2023

1st March 2023



Introduction

Remit of this text

The Board of the E.E.A.C. Foundation offers you the draft set-up of the EEAC Annual Plan 2023.

This document serves as a starting point for our joint reflection which will take place on January 19th 2023.

Following your reflections, the board, in consultation with working group chairs, will submit a final Annual Plan 2023 for approval in February 2023.

Reader's guide

The first part of the document lists the thematic areas of common interest. These are the themes on which two or more advisory councils will work in 2023.

The second part of the document contains a set of proposals by the Board of the EEAC Network.

In the third and final part of the document, a framework for action is proposed. This framework is underpinned by the areas of thematic interest and the board's proposals and serves as a starting point for joint reflection.

Annex A lists some events that can be predicted to happen in 2023, and that are of relevance for our programming activity. An overview of instruments and formats can be found in Annex B.

1. Thematic areas of common interest 2023

Based on the annual working plans of EEAC member bodies, the board of the EEAC Network identified the following thematic areas of common interest:¹

- 1) Biodiversity
- 2) Climate Change & Energy
- 3) Health
- 4) Sustainable Development
- 5) Sustainable Finance
- 6) Water Policy

Biodiversity

A total of eight advisory bodies from six countries and regions will work on the theme of biodiversity. These bodies will work on the following topics:

- a) the follow-up of COP15;

¹A thematic area is identified as 'common' as soon as two or more EEAC member bodies will work on a theme in a given year.

- b) the green transition of the agricultural and land use sectors;
- c) restoration of ecosystems and nature;
- d) climate change adaptation and biodiversity;
- e) accounting for nature.

Advisory bodies that work on the topic include: CCAC, CNADS, DCCC, FRDO-CFDD, Minaraad, NESC, SRU, and RNE.

Climate Change & Energy

A total of eight advisory bodies from eight countries and regions will work on the theme of climate change. These bodies will work on the following topics:

- a) climate change adaptation,
- b) National Energy and Climate Plans,
- c) consumption-based carbon footprint,
- d) the Fit for 55 - negotiations and implementation, and
- e) climate change mitigation, among others in sectors such as: agriculture, built environment, and transport.

Advisory bodies that work on the topic include: CADS, CCAC, CNTE, DCCC, FRDO-CFDD, Minaraad, Rli, and RNE.

Health

The concept of Human Health and wellbeing and/or Planetary Health is on the agenda of several advisory bodies. A total of four advisory bodies from three countries or regions work on the topic. The bodies work on issues such health and wellbeing, one-health, health and environment as well as planetary health.

Advisory bodies that work on the topic include: CADS, CNTE, SRU, and WBGU.

Sustainable Development

Seven advisory bodies from six countries and regions will work on the theme of sustainable development. The bodies work on issues such as:

- a) Implementation of the UN 2030 Agenda: follow-up of global, national and regional policies to achieve the SDGs, preparation of Voluntary National and Regional Reviews (VNR), SDGs indicators,
- b) transformation towards sustainability, with special attention paid to 'sufficiency'/agriculture/just adaptation,
- c) sustainable buildings,
- d) the concept of 'broad prosperity'.

Advisory bodies that work on the topic include: CADS, CCAC, CNADS, FRDO-CFDD, SRU, Rli, and RNE.

Sustainable Finance

Three advisory bodies from three countries have so far indicated to be working on sustainable finance. The bodies will focus on the following issues:

- a) net-zero pledges by financial and corporate actors, and
- b) the role government can play to steer the financial sector towards more investment in the transition to a sustainable economy.

Advisory bodies that work on the topic include: FRDO-CFDD, Rli, and RNE.

Water policies

Three advisory bodies from three countries/regions have so far indicated to be working on water policies. The bodies will work on the implementation of the EU Water Framework Directive, in the context of the upcoming deadline of 2027.

Advisory bodies that work on the topic include: Minaraad, Rli, and RNE.

In conclusion

Exchange and/or cooperation on these thematic areas can be supported by individual councils in cooperation with the EEAC Network Coordinator, by the EEAC Board, or by EEAC Working Groups. Depending on a final proposal, the most suited mechanism for exchange and cooperation will be identified (an overview of instruments and formats can be found in Annex B).

2. Proposals by the Board

The Board proposes to dedicate additional attention to the theme of ‘operating in times of crises’, on the issue of internal learning and capacity building in the context of the EEAC Network and proposes targeted and timely approaches towards the EU policy level.

1. Operating in times of crises

Over the last year, Europe and the world have been confronted by multiple crises. The Russian attack on Ukraine, the lasting effects of the Covid-19 pandemic, and the escalating climate and biodiversity crises challenge the status quo. Within the EU we see a rising cost of living, fueling discussions about affordability and drawing attention away from long-term sustainability challenges. Although future developments are difficult to predict, it is reasonable to expect that some countries could enter a period of economic crisis and increasing political and social tension.

These volatile conditions are also expected to explicitly affect the themes on which advisory councils work. It is likely to hamper the sustainability agenda in terms of global and European cooperation as well as in terms of national and regional implementation.

In the context of this expectation, the Board proposes to leverage exchange and cooperation to enhance the resilience of advisory councils to respond to unfavorable decision making within relevant domains. The initiatives operationalizing this thematic area will be defined in the coming weeks.

2. Mutual learning and capacity building

The Board aims to intensify the exchange among councils on ways of working and good practices that can contribute to improve their work and impact. Although compositions, focus areas, and working methods among advisory councils differ, the vast majority of councils faces challenges or has valuable lessons to share regarding matters such as collecting evidence, interacting with experts, policymakers and the general public, communication, ways of collaborating online, or regarding the structuring of council debates.

The Board proposes to organize a series of internal sessions that will allow for collegial exchange throughout 2023. By providing such space for internal exchange, the EEAC Network wishes to enhance its role as a platform for inter-council exchange and capacity building.

3. The EU policy level: A targeted and timely approach

The Board notes that 2023 will be the last full year of the mandate of the current European Commission and the European Parliament. During the last year, full efforts are expected to be made to launch some final elements of the EU Green Deal. In the board's view, the final full year of the Commission's mandate also means that the time has come to start preparing messages to an incoming College of Commissioners.

Taking into account the a) areas of common interest, b) the European Commission Work Plan '23, c) scheduled inter-institutional negotiations (trilogues), d) Upcoming global summits, and e) ongoing work within different EEAC Network working groups, the Board proposes to focus joint work towards the EU policy level on the following issues:

- 1) **Sustainable food systems at EU level:** Continuation of work in the context of the Legislative framework for sustainable food systems and further developing work on the global dimension of EU food systems, and soil;
- 2) **Biodiversity policies at EU level:** Influencing the trilogue process on the proposed EU Regulation on nature restoration;
- 3) **The 2030 Agenda at EU level:** Together with the ESDN, maintaining an open space for exchange and cooperation with the EU Presidencies (Working Party on the Agenda 2030) and the European Commission Secretariat General; gearing up for new EU institutions after HLPF and SDG Summit '23;
- 4) **Climate Change advice at EU level:** Enhancing exchange and cooperation with the European Scientific Advisory Board on Climate Change.

The past years advisory councils produced joint materials that aimed to contribute to political and policy processes at EU level. The experience gained during these joint exercises is valuable. Based on these experiences, the Board also aims to improve the EEACs internal working practices as well its communication towards decision makers.

The Board also aims to upkeep the collaboration with the European Economic and Social Committee and look into what projects are possible with other European Institutions what have thus far not crossed our path, such as the EU Court of Auditors.

3. A framework for exchange, cooperation and liaison work in 2023

Over the past period, the EEAC Network has used a diversity of instruments and formats to act as a platform for exchange and cooperation, and to fulfill its role as a liaison between the work of the advisory councils and the European policy level. In this part of the document, a number of concrete proposals for actions is listed. The proposals are based on the thematic areas of common interest and the additional proposals by the Board. The proposals as presented below are obviously open for reflection and, with your input, the list of proposed activities will be supplemented.

Theme: Internal exchange and capacity building

What is proposed: To organize an exchange among councils on ways of working and good practices. Themes that could take center stage include: collecting evidence, interacting with experts, policymakers and the general public, communication, ways of collaborating online, and/or regarding the structuring of council debates and dissemination of advice and message to addressees and general public alike.

Why is this proposal made: The Annual Plenary Session '22 indicated that it would welcome an initiative focusing on internal exchange on ways of working and good practices.

When will this happen: Throughout 2023

Who will be involved in the implementation: This initiative will be facilitated by the German Advisory Council on the Environment (SRU) and is part of the Board's proposals for 2023.

What is the intended the output: Organizing a series of online internal meetings among EEAC member councils.

Theme: Operating in times of crises

What is proposed: to organize some proactivity within and between our councils, when advising on the multiple crises that our societies are facing.

Why is this proposal made: Over the recent years, Europe and the world have been confronted by a collision of crises: peace, energy, food, health etc. The volatile conditions are expected to remain for a while and to explicitly affect the themes on which advisory councils work. Generally, the European Union acts as a kind of buffer and catalysator in relation to the management of crises of this type. By capturing the content of these European initiatives fast, we can provide our councils

with information with which they can give guidance to their policy makers. The potential of advisory councils to pre-empt unfavorable decision making within relevant domains should thus be strengthened.

When will this happen: this is an activity of continuous alertness and exchange.

Who will be involved in the implementation: This initiative is part of the Board's proposals for 2023.

What is the intended the output: exchange via briefings and one or two meetings at the director level.

Theme: Sustainable Food Systems

What is proposed: To organize a launch and discussion event following the publication of the EEAC Position Paper on sustainable food systems. The event should take place in person at the premises of the Dutch Permanent Representation to the EU in Brussels on February 2nd 2023. Thereafter, we will continue the discussion, probably focusing on the social and/or the global dimension, and on soil policy.

Why is this proposal made: Following the launch of the Position Paper, considerable interest was generated. The event would be an additional opportunity to distribute the views expressed in the position paper among relevant (institutional) actors, and to foster the debate and exchange on the issue of sustainable food systems.

Moreover, during the preparatory process of Position Paper the debate about the global dimension of EU food systems, as well as the social aspects of instruments to enhance sustainable food systems, gained momentum. Moreover, at the moment of the launch, considerable interest in soil policy was noted. It will be worthwhile to continue exchange and mutual learning on these issues.

When will this happen:

- Phase 1 – event: 2 February 2023;
- Phase 2 – continuation of discussion: Q2 / Q3 2023.

Who will be involved in the implementation: This initiative will be facilitated by the EEAC Working Group on Ecosystem Services. All EEAC member councils are invited to participate in the event.

What is the intended outcome:

- Phase 1 – a high-level in person event in Brussels, gathering an audience that include policy makers at both EU and national/regional levels;
- Phase 2 – a series of 2 or 3 discussion moments, followed by a summary of the chair.

Theme: Biodiversity policy at EU level

What is proposed: To make an analysis of the consequences, for biodiversity policies and national and regional level, of the global Post 2020 Framework on Biodiversity, and the expected outcomes

of the EU negotiations on the Regulation for nature restoration. To jointly identify elements in this proposed Regulation that we consider of particular relevance, and to express support for these elements.

Why is this proposal made: it is expected that the global framework and the EU regulation will influence the policy context at national and regional level. It is therefore worthwhile to look into the anticipated impacts in advance. The Regulation is, subsequently, expected to shape the context in which national and regional biodiversity policies and adjacent domains will need to develop.

When will this happen: Throughout 2023. Firstly, during the Swedish EU presidency, then during the Spanish Presidency.

Who will be involved in the implementation: This initiative will be facilitated by the EEAC Working Group on Ecosystem Services. EEAC member councils are invited to propose a rapporteur for this process.

What is the intended the output: a (series) of (online) meetings with relevant partners to analyze and discuss the Post 2020 Framework and the Regulation on nature restoration in the context of national and regional policy-making. An EEAC Position Paper or a Summary by the Working Group Chair, with the aim of informing (coalitions) of Member States, The EU Presidency and/or Parliament.

Theme: Agriculture in times of climate change, environmental degradation and growing social pressures

What is proposed: To organize a collegial exchange session on sustainable agriculture.

Why is this proposal made: *"The new CAP is due to be implemented from 1 January 2023."*, meaning that the national strategies for implementation of the Common Agricultural Policies are now being put into action. Moreover, several advisory bodies indicated to be working on issues related to agriculture, climate change, soil, environment and (social) sustainability. In this context it is proposed to organize a collegial exchange session on the theme to enhance knowledge exchange and knowledge building.

When will this happen: we should look for a suitable moment in order to exchange on what is happening in our regions and/or states and what the councils are doing.

Who will be involved in the implementation: This initiative will be facilitated by the EEAC Working Group on Ecosystem Services.

What is the intended the outcome: an online collegial exchange session that supports knowledge exchange and knowledge building.

Theme: Implementing the Fit for 55 Package

What is proposed: To re-start the distribution of information about the state of play of the implementation of the Fit for 55 Package.

Why is this proposal made: Councils indicated to consider the information useful.

When will this happen: It is anticipated that the vast majority of the trioloques will wrap-up during the first half of 2023. If required, briefing notes will continue to be produced during the whole of 2023.

Who will be involved in the implementation: Online policy briefings are organized by the secretariat, with the support of the Chair of the working Group and/or individual councils. Briefing notes are produced by the EEAC Network Coordinator under the auspices of the Chair of the Working Group on Climate Change and Energy.

What is the intended the output: a series of internal EEAC briefing notes and/or online policy briefings.

Theme: European Scientific Advisory Board on Climate Change

What is proposed: To start (more structural) exchange and cooperation with the staff and members of the European Scientific Advisory Board on Climate Change.

Why is this proposal made:

When will this happen: Timing will partly depend on the agenda of the ESABCC.

Who will be involved in the implementation: initially the board and working group Chair will invest in establishing a more structural relationship. Councils that wish to contribute to the process are kindly invited to join the efforts.

What is the intended the output: to organize an (in person) meeting between the ESABCC and EEAC member councils.

Theme: Climate Change Adaptation

What is proposed: To organize a collegial exchange session on the issue of climate change adaptation.

Why is this proposal made: Several advisory bodies indicated to be working on the issue of adaptation. In this context it is proposed to organize a collegial exchange session on the theme to enhance knowledge exchange and knowledge building.

When will this happen: tbc.

Who will be involved in the implementation: This initiative will be facilitated by the EEAC Working Group on Climate Change and Energy.

What is the intended the outcome: an online collegial exchange session that supports knowledge exchange and knowledge building.

Theme: Development of the energy system linked to security of supply and affordability

What is proposed: to address the complex subject of energy and climate change, in the face of RES, geopolitics and affordability of energy

Why is this proposal made: this subject connects domains the councils are advising on (industry, agriculture, build environment) in connections with social and economic aspects like affordability and all this linked to technical issues on energy systems and energy supply.

When will this happen: tbc.

Who will be involved in the implementation: ESABCC, EEAC (with a special role for the climate councils), EC.

What is the intended the output: structured discussion and information exchange in a set of two / three webinars.

Theme: The EU contribution to the achievement of the SDGs at the global level and priorities for the new appointed EU Commission for the achievement of the SDGs

What is proposed:

To discuss, within the framework of the working group and with the participation of experts and representatives of relevant organizations, how the implementation of the SDGs can be reinforced at EU level and how the EU can contribute to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in the period to come (until 2030).

The discussion will take place in 3 internal webinars to be organized by the WG, complemented with an exchange of views on paper. The EU Voluntary Review on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, to be launched in the 2nd quarter of 2023 will be used for structuring the WG work.

Based on the discussions, to formulate views on the required steps a newly appointed European Commission could best take in order to strengthen the implementation of the 2030 Agenda at the EU level as of 2024.

Why is this proposal made: Insights gained from the ongoing presidency exchange conversations that the Co-Chairs of the EEAC Network have with representatives of the rotating EU Presidency and the European Commission on the issue of sustainable development at EU level revealed that there is appetite for input from the EEAC member councils on the issue.

When will this happen: one webinar before July 2023, one after the UN SDG Summit (September/October) and a final discussion at the end of November or in December 2023.

Who will be involved in the implementation: This initiative will be facilitated by the EEAC Working Group on Sustainable Development.

What is the intended the output: a summary document by the co-chairs to be released in January 2024. Such paper will be addressed to the current an incoming European Commission, to the EU Council Working Party on the 2030 Agenda and the EU Parliament, as well as other relevant stakeholders.

Theme: EU Presidency Exchange sessions on the 2030 Agenda at the EU level

What is proposed: To continue the so called EU Presidency Exchange Sessions. These sessions bring together EEAC and ESDN representatives and representatives of the rotating EU Presidency and the European Commission, to discuss the issue of sustainable development at EU level.

Why is this proposal made: The past exchange meetings were considered fruitful. In this context, the Swedish EU Presidency asked the EEAC and ESDN to continue the exchange. The exchange provides a unique and uncensored view into EU policy making processes related to the 2030 Agenda, and enables the working group to share the views of EEAC member bodies with relevant policy makers at EU level.

When will this happen: Throughout 2023. The first session will take place on 4th May 2023, under the Swedish Presidency, and the second one in Autumn (under the Spanish Presidency of the EU).

Who will be involved in the implementation: The co-chairs of the working group, accompanied by experts from EEAC member bodies.

What is the intended the outcome: maintaining the ongoing conversation with representatives of the rotating EU Presidency and the European Commission on the issue of sustainable development at EU level.

Theme: Policy briefings on relevant documents and / or initiatives at the EU and global levels.

What is proposed: To organize online policy briefings in order to provide background information following relevant publications (e.g. Eurostat Sustainable Development Monitor, to be released in May 2023; the EU Voluntary Review on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development), or events (e.g. HLPF and the SDG Summit).

Why is this proposal made: To contribute to the role as information liaison between international/EU level developments at work of advisory councils.

When will this happen: Primarily during spring and autumn 2023.

Who will be involved in the implementation: This initiative will be facilitated by the EEAC Working Group on Sustainable Development. EEAC member councils are invited to propose a rapporteur for this process.

What is the intended the output: Providing relevant information to be used by the councils.


Annex A: The international context in which advisory bodies will work in 2023

The board expects that the following matters will create and alter the context in which advisory bodies work in 2023:

- ❖ The impact of ongoing and/or rising tensions in the geopolitical realm;
- ❖ Ongoing and growing relevance in policy making of the themes: security, accessibility, affordability, and fairness;
- ❖ The output and outcomes of the Conference on the Future of Europe;
- ❖ Sweden (January-June) and the Spain (July-December) will hold the EU presidency in 2023, setting the agenda of all council configurations and Working Parties, including the Working Party on the 2030 Agenda.
- ❖ The European Commission will enter the last full year of its mandate, and indicated to be focussing on: (to be updated on the basis of the Commission WP)
- ❖ The following files will be finalized in trilogue: (to be updated on the basis of the Commission WP)
- ❖ The G7 Summit will take place in Japan in May. The Japanese Presidency of the summit announced that it will focus on (to be updated on the basis of the agenda shared by the Japanese Presidency)
- ❖ The High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) will be held from Monday, 10 July, to Wednesday, 19 July 2023. The theme will be "Accelerating the recovery from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) and the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at all levels". The HLPF in 2023, will also review in-depth Goals 6 on clean water and sanitation, 7 on affordable and clean energy, 9 on industry, innovation and infrastructure, 11 on sustainable cities and communities, and 17 on partnerships for the Goals.
- ❖ The EU will present its EU Voluntary Review at the 2023 HLPF.
- ❖ The 2023 SDG Summit will be convened on 19-20 September 2023, during the United Nations General Assembly high-level week. Heads of State and Government will gather at the United Nations Headquarters to follow-up and review the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- ❖ The 28th session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 28) to the UNFCCC will convene from 30 November to 12 December 2023. It will take place in the United Arab Emirates.

Annex B: Overview of instruments of the EEAC-network

Instrument	Format
Conferences	EEAC Annual Conference
	Co-hosted conferences
Thematic & Collegial (e-) Meetings	Public Webinars
	Internal sessions to develop common viewpoints.
	Semi-public sessions to share knowledge on a specific theme or topic.
	Internal sessions to share findings deriving from council publication.
	Internal sessions to enhance (informal) collegial exchange
Policy updates	Internal-policy briefings
	Briefing notes
	Weekly EU Green Deal Update
(External) Communication & Exchange	Joint communication
	Communication by the (co)Chair(s)
	Publication packages
	Engaging in external partnerships
	Meetings with external stakeholders
	EEAC-Newsletter
	EEAC -Website
	EEAC-Twitter Account
	Podcasts
	EEAC- Video library on YouTube



EEAC Network Foundation
Bezuidenhoutseweg 30
P.O. Box 27
2501 CA The Hague
The Netherlands
www.eeac.eu