

# STOA

## Science and Technology Options Assessment



STOA Panel meeting  
Thursday, 17 December 2015, 09:30 > 11:00  
LOW N1.4, Strasbourg

### Minutes

The meeting started at 09:35 with Mr Paul RÜBIG, MEP and Chairman of the STOA Panel, in the chair.

#### **1. Adoption of the draft agenda (PE 563.493)**

- The Chair informed Members that interpretation was available in Bulgarian (BG), Czech (CZ), English (EN), French (FR), German (DE) and Italian (IT), and that the meeting was being web-streamed.
- The draft agenda was adopted without modifications.

#### **2. Approval of draft minutes - STOA Panel meeting of 26 November 2015 (PE 563.489):**

- The draft minutes were approved without modifications.

#### **3. Presentation by Mr Hans BRUYNINCKX, Executive Director, European Environment Agency (EEA):**

- The Chair gave the floor to Mr Theo KARAPIPERIS, Head of the Scientific Foresight Unit (STOA), to present a short bio of Mr BRUYNINCKX, Executive Director of EEA since June 2013.
- Mr BRUYNINCKX focussed his presentation on three main issues: firstly, the recently published EEA State and Outlook of the Environment Report ('SOER 2015'); secondly, how European policies were increasingly framed and embedded in global megatrends; and, thirdly, the outcomes of COP21<sup>1</sup> in Paris. He explained that the main mission of EEA was to provide policy-makers with information about climate and environmental issues. EEA was connected to a network of more than 300 institutions. Every five years it published a report on the state of the environment for the next 20 years, and the relevant policy context.
- The speaker then noted that the key SOER 2015 messages called for working towards a better environment, and better economic opportunities in terms of innovation and technology, and also for ensuring a healthier environment, stressing the need to reflect fundamentally on a systemic transition. He went on to explain that European efficiency improvements had not secured long-term resilience. Since the 1990s economies grew by 46%, but emitted 23% less CO<sub>2</sub> than in 1990. The globalisation of unsustainable systems of production and consumption was changing the global context, giving rise to an increasing competition for resources. However, he explained that, even if Europe's resilience was affected by those driving forces (population, acceleration of technological change), the concomitant interdependencies opened up both challenges and opportunities. Looking to the future, he said, the success of Europe's long-term policies would depend on its ability to respond taking a long-term view, and actively anticipating and shaping the desirable future.
- Mr BRUYNINCKX then reflected on the outcomes of COP21, pointing out that the objective of not surpassing the barrier of 2°C was now clearer than in previous negotiations. The agreed framework involved planning for 2100 based on a climate-neutral global economy and a long-term way of thinking about these issues. Thirdly, the new broad framework that came out of COP21 was binding for nations, but depended on many specific commitments at national level. Concerning the verification of what individual countries were doing, there was, in his view, a need for a more solid and transparent system for monitoring and reporting.
- The Chair thanked the speaker and opened the floor for questions, focusing his own on the circular economy and the possibility of an alternative EU Emissions Trading System (ETS) based on payments and incentives.
- Ms Mady DELVAUX, MEP and Panel member, noted, drawing on feedback from civil society, that all electric cars used in Europe were made in the United States and Europe was lagging behind in this field.
- In his answer, Mr BRUYNINCKX explained that he had many reasons for optimism: the political shift towards affordable technologies, more competitive than traditional ones and the major breakthroughs in research and development (R&D). He explained that more than 25% of R&D programmes were linked to mobility systems. When it came to individual car ownership, he cited as an example an experiment of BMW

<sup>1</sup> 21st session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

in Copenhagen, where an agreement was concluded with the local authorities to develop a car-sharing system involving 450 electric vehicles on the streets, which resonated with the wishes of the new generations in terms of mobility. Moreover, the key message with regard to a reform of the EU ETS, linked to the discussion of subsidies, was to use public money appropriately and give a clear sense of direction.

- Ms DELVAUX took the floor again to ask what the speaker thought policy-makers should be doing in order to deliver the step change needed for innovation in the renewable-energy industry.
- Mr TAMBURRANO, MEP and Panel member, asked Mr BRUYNINCKX about what he thought Europe should do in terms of reforming the monitoring system, and how to tackle the related challenges.
- Mr BRUYNINCKX pointed out that credible policies required four main conditions: consistency, with a long-term perspective in policy-making and legislation, overall coherence and ambition in a wide range of policies, a sense of urgency and visionary policies. Moreover, he highlighted that the monetary and financial system was the key component of a systemic approach. He noted that, after SOER 2015, the European Investment Bank had shown more interest in working with EEA and that reporting and monitoring to the financial system should be required as part of the transition.
- The Chair thanked once again Mr BRUYNINCKX for his interesting talk, which, as he said, would help policy-makers to better understand the options they had for the future.

#### **4. Ongoing and new STOA projects:**

- The Chair drew Members' attention to the five ongoing STOA projects: 'ICT in the developing world', 'Technology innovation in substance disorder use', 'Ethics of cyber-physical systems', 'Precision Agriculture and the future of farming in Europe', 'Assistive technologies for the inclusion of people with disabilities in society, education and jobs' and 'Towards a circular economy for waste management'.
- He also explained that there were more projects about to be launched and the Panel would be kept informed.

#### **5. MEP-Scientists Pairing Scheme 2015 - 'Brussels Week', 25-27 January 2015**

- The Chair gave the floor to Mr PATAKI, Head of the STOA Secretariat, who thanked all Members who had shown an interest in the MEP-Scientist Pairing Scheme, choosing their scientist counterparts. The selection procedure has been closed and 33 pairs had been established – the names of the scientists and Members were published on the STOA website. He then argued that this edition of the Pairing Scheme showed a good evolution compared to past experience – in 2011 there had been 12 pairs and shared some statistics: paired Members and scientists came from 18 Member-States, with the UK, Germany and Belgium being the most represented, and most of the scientists worked in the life sciences. As for the gender dimension, there were more men among paired scientists, whereas among Members women were better represented than men.
- Mr PATAKI recalled that the 'Brussels Week' was to take place from 25 to 27 January 2016. The scientists would come to the European Parliament (EP), where they would attend information meetings and shadow their MEP counterparts according to an updated programme – available in the dossier – which included training by the Joint Research Centre (JRC) on how to communicate science to policy-makers. After this event, the scientists and Members were encouraged to organise follow-up activities, such as workshops, visits to research or innovation facilities, or exhibitions. Press conferences on such occasions were welcome.
- The Chair expressed his satisfaction to be part of the Pairing Scheme and invited Members to mark the 'Brussels Week' in their calendars, especially the reception for the scientists on the first day of the event, and feel free to invite the scientists to dinner on the second day. He then opened the floor for questions.
- Mr TAMBURRANO wanted to know whether MEPs participating in previous editions were involved or if they were all 'newcomers' and if there would be a second round of meetings for the participating pairs.
- The Chair explained that this was the 4th round of the scheme and the majority of Members were new.

#### **6. STOA Workshops and joint activities with external organisations:**

##### 6.1. Forthcoming events

- The Chair drew Members' attention to the table of forthcoming events in the dossier.

##### 6.2. Proposal for a STOA-JRC event to present the 'UNESCO Science Report: towards 2030', 2 March 2016 (t.b.c.)

- The Chair gave the floor to Mr PATAKI who informed Members that the aim of this event would be to present and discuss the 'UNESCO Science Report: towards 2030' in cooperation with the JRC. The proposed date was 2 March 2016. The event would focus on assessing the current state of science in the

world and on identifying opportunities for action. Due to its timing, it would aim at helping define the role of science in realising the Sustainable Development Goals and the EU contribution in this regard. The programme could start with an introduction by the STOA Chair, followed by a presentation of the key messages of the report and interventions by one or more of the authors. Further speakers could be the JRC Director-General Vladimír ŠUCHA and Ms Flavia SCHLEGEL, UNESCO Assistant Director-General for Natural Sciences. Additional speakers could be the Commissioners for Research, Science and Innovation and/or for International Cooperation & Development or their Directors-General. The speeches could be followed by a panel discussion among Members and speakers.

- The Chair announced that, as there were no objections, the Secretariat would begin preparations as outlined.

#### 6.3. Proposal for a working breakfast on earthquake prevention in Europe, 27 January 2016

- The Chair explained that the aim of this event would be to underline the seriousness of the seismic risk in Europe and present comprehensive earthquake mitigation strategies adopted at national and European level in recent years, with the goal to decrease human and infrastructural losses caused by these natural disasters.
- The Chair then announced that, as there were no objections, the Secretariat would proceed with the organisation of the workshop as described.

#### 6.4. Proposal for Working Breakfast on Brain enhancement, 16<sup>th</sup> February 2016

- The Chair reported that he had received a letter from Professor David NUTT, President of the European Brain Council, and Professor George CASTEL, Director of the NERRI<sup>2</sup> project, which aimed at shaping the future of European Responsible Research and Innovation in neuro-enhancement by mapping the scientific, technological and societal drivers in this field, engaging scientists, policy-makers, industry, civil society organisations and the wider public. The working breakfast, proposed for 16 February 2016, would give the NERRI consortium an opportunity to present and discuss with the participants the conclusions of the study.
- The Chair announced that, as there were no objections, the Secretariat would start preparations for this working breakfast.

#### 6.5 International Conference of Science Advise to Governments, 29-30 September 2016, Brussels

- The Chair announced to Members that he had received an invitation from Sir Peter GLUCKMAN, Scientific Adviser to the Prime-Minister of New Zealand to participate himself or nominate someone else from STOA to be on the Programme Committee for the 2nd International Conference on Science Advice to Government, to be held on 29-30 September 2016 in Brussels.
- He then announced that, as there were no objections, he would be part of the Programme Committee in his capacity as STOA Chair, with the support of the Secretariat.

### **7. Visits / external activities:**

#### 7.1. STS<sup>3</sup> forum Council meeting, 2-3 May 2016, Paris

#### 7.2. STOA visit to Washington, D.C., and Silicon Valley, 16-21 May 2016 (t.b.c.)

#### 7.3. ESOF<sup>4</sup> 2016, 22-27 July 2016, Manchester

#### 7.4. 13th Annual Meeting of the STS forum, Kyoto, 2-4 October 2016

#### 7.5. EPTA<sup>5</sup> Council meeting and Conference, 3-4, 17-18 or 20-21 October 2016 (t.b.c.), Vienna

#### 7.6. STOA visit to the European Environment Agency, 10-11 November 2016, Copenhagen

- In addition to those of the above points previously discussed and decided by the Panel, the Chair proposed to request authorisation for a delegation of one Member to the STS *forum* Council meeting in Paris and, dates permitting (no overlap with an EP part-session), a delegation up to 3 Members to the EPTA Council meeting and Conference in Vienna. For the previously decided delegations, he suggested requesting up to 6 Members for Washington and Silicon Valley, up to 4 Members to ESOF 2016, one Member for the STS *forum* in Kyoto (partial overlap with EP part-session) and up to 3 Members for EEA in Copenhagen.
- The Chair informed Members that he wanted to add to the above list a delegation of up to two Members to attend the innovation forum ‘INNOVEIT’ organised by the European Institute of Innovation & Technology (EIT), due to take place on 25-26 April 2016 in Budapest. During his visit to EIT in November 2015, EIT

<sup>2</sup> Neuro-Enhancement Responsible Research and Innovation, 3-year project funded under the 7th Research Framework Programme.

<sup>3</sup> Science and Technology in Society

<sup>4</sup> EuroScience Open Forum

<sup>5</sup> European Parliamentary Technology Assessment network

had invited STOA to this annual event, which combined the EIT Stakeholder Forum, the EIT Awards, the EIT Roundtables and the EIT Alumni Connect event. The objectives were to promote innovation and encourage entrepreneurship by putting the most innovative ventures, entrepreneurial graduates and innovation teams emerging from the KICs in the spotlight and to create role models to drive future change.

- The Chair announced that, as there were no objections, he would write to the President as indicated.

## **8. Any other business**

- None.

## **9. Date of the next meeting: Thursday, 21 January 2016, 09:30-11:00**

- The Chair announced that the next Panel meeting was scheduled for Thursday, 21 January 2015, at 9:30 a.m., and would exceptionally take place in Room SDM S-7 in Strasbourg. The rest of the Panel meetings in 2016 would take place in the same room as in 2015 (LOW N1.4).
- He also announced that, at the next meeting, there would be a presentation by Mr Steve PURSER, Head of the Core Operations Department, EU Agency for Network and Information Security (ENISA).
- The Chair recommended to the Panel, on behalf of the STOA Bureau, not to hold the Panel and Bureau meetings in February 2016, as the January and February plenary part-sessions of the Parliament were only two weeks apart. The Panel endorsed the Chairman's recommendation.
- The Chair wished to all participants an enjoyable festive season, as well as good health, personal happiness and professional success for the New Year.

The meeting ended at 11:08.

Brussels, 14 January 2016

## **ANNEX** **List of participants**

### STOA Panel members:

Mr Rübig, Mr Tošenovský, Ms Briano, Ms Delvaux, Ms Ford, Mr Coelho, Mr Lewer, Mr Liberadzki, Ms Moody, Ms Petir, Ms Schmidt, Ms Swinburne, Mr Tamburrano.

### Scientific Foresight Unit (STOA):

Mr Karapiperis, Mr Pataki, Ms Van Woensel, Mr Plese, Ms Mendes Cunha (Trainee).

### Other participants:

Mr Teasdale (DG EPRS), Mr Dunne (DG EPRS), Mr Hiller (Secretariat of the Conference of Presidents), Ms Grigorescu (Assistant to Mr Lewer), Ms Grahammer (Assistant to Mr Rübig), Mr Rinaldo (Assistant to Ms Beghin), Ms Hollerich (Assistant to Ms Delvaux), Ms Frayling (Assistant to Ms McIntyre), Ms Mio i (Trainee in the office of Ms Petir), Ms Grahek (JRC), Mr Tindemans (EuroScience).