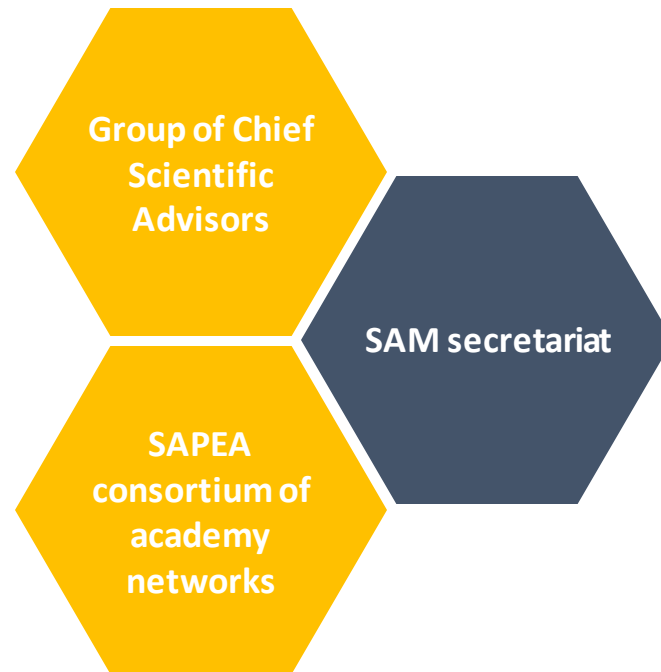## Who we are

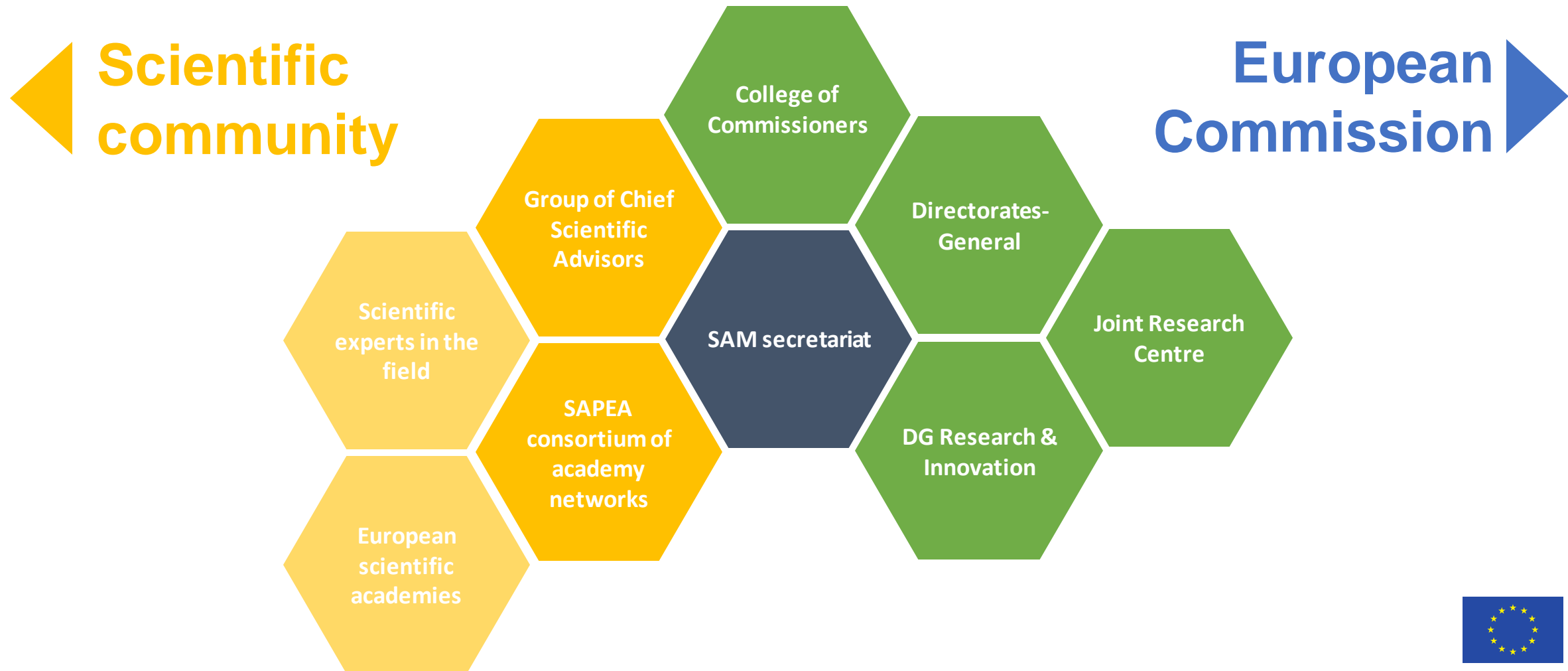**We provide independent scientific evidence and policy recommendations to the European institutions by request of the College of Commissioners.**

The three parts of the SAM

Interfacing between science and policy

How we work (simple version)

We receive a request

European Commissioners can ask us for advice on any topic

We review the evidence

A SAPEA working group writes an evidence review report

We make recommendations

The Advisors write a Scientific Opinion based on the evidence
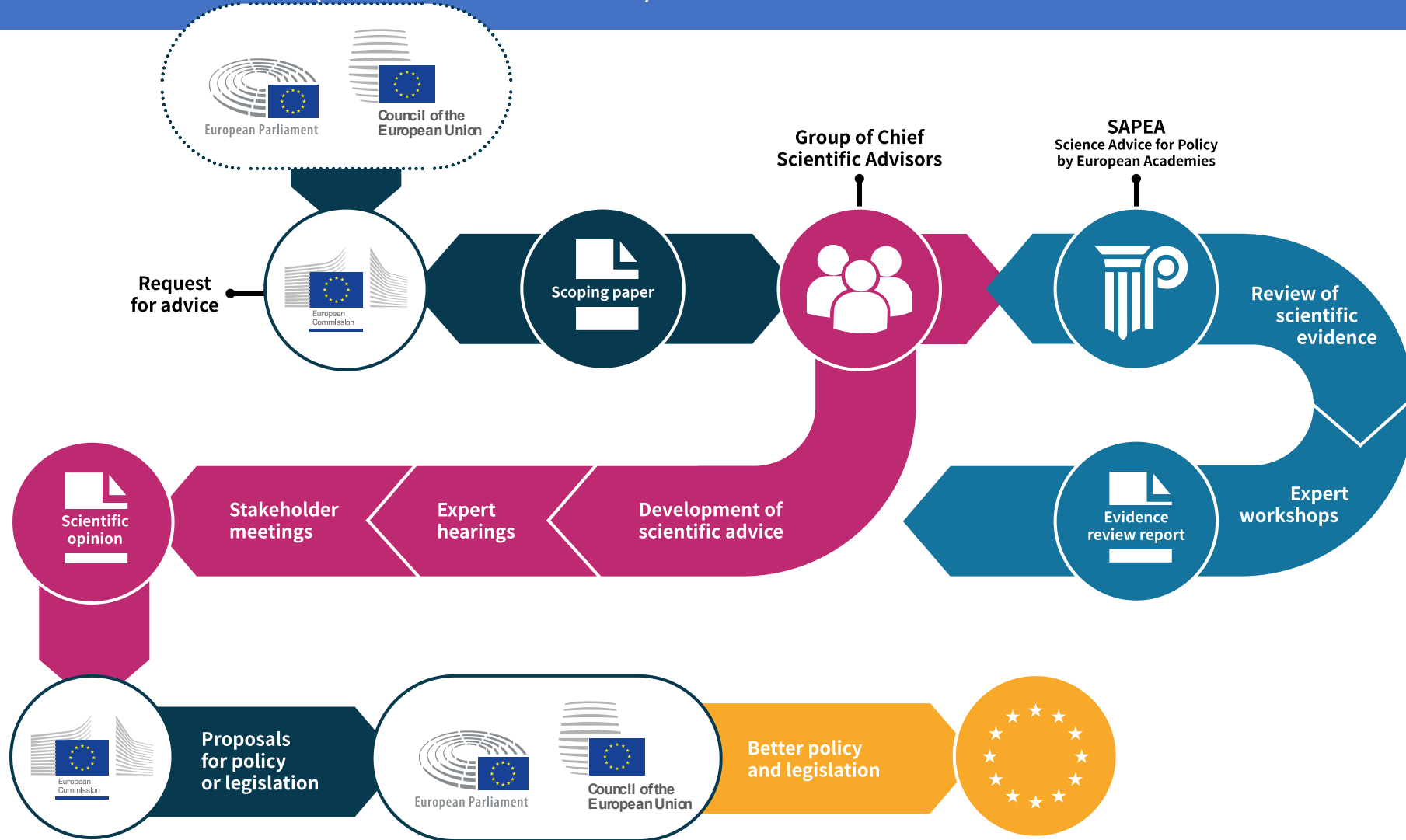
We deliver our advice

Our evidence and recommendations are both handed to the Commission

Scientific Advice Mechanism
to the European Commission

How we work (detailed version)

European Parliament

Council of the European Union

Group of Chief Scientific Advisors

SAPEA
Science Advice for Policy by European Academies

Request for advice

European Commission

Scoping paper

Review of scientific evidence

Scientific opinion

Stakeholder meetings

Expert hearings

Development of scientific advice

Evidence review report

Expert workshops

European Commission

Proposals for policy or legislation

European Parliament

Council of the European Union

Better policy and legislation

Delivered advice

2017–2019

Glyphosate

Light duty vehicle real-time CO2 emissions

Cybersecurity

New techniques in agricultural biotechnology

Food from the oceans

Carbon capture and utilisation

Improving authorisation processes for plant protection products in Europe

Microplastics in nature and society

Transforming the future of ageing

Making sense of science for policy

2020–2023

A sustainable food system for the EU

Adaptation to climate change-related health effects

COVID-19, future pandemics and other crises in the global context

Biodegradability of plastics in the open environment

A systemic approach to the energy transition in Europe

Improving cancer screening in the EU

Strategic crisis management in the EU

Sustainable food consumption

The Group of Chief
Scientific Advisors

*Science Advice
for Policy by
European* Academies
consortium
(Horizon 2020)

Scientific Advice
Mechanism (SAM)

Towards
Sustainable Food
Consumption

Group of Chief Scientific Advisors
Scientific Opinion No.14, June 2023

Independent
Expert
Report

Towards sustainable food consumption

Scoping question

What **tools** could be used at EU level, in addition to those mentioned in the 2020 Farm to Fork Strategy, to **overcome the barriers preventing consumers to adopt sustainable and healthy diets**, fostering the necessary change towards sustainability in the food environment?

Sustainable and healthy diets

- Composition in quantity and frequency of foods

- More legumes, fruits and vegetables, nuts and seeds

- Less meat (mostly red and processed meat); Less foods rich in saturated fat, salt and sugar; Less snacks with poor nutritional qualities, some ultra-processed foods, sugary drinks, alcohol.

- Reduce food waste all along supply chains.

Food environment

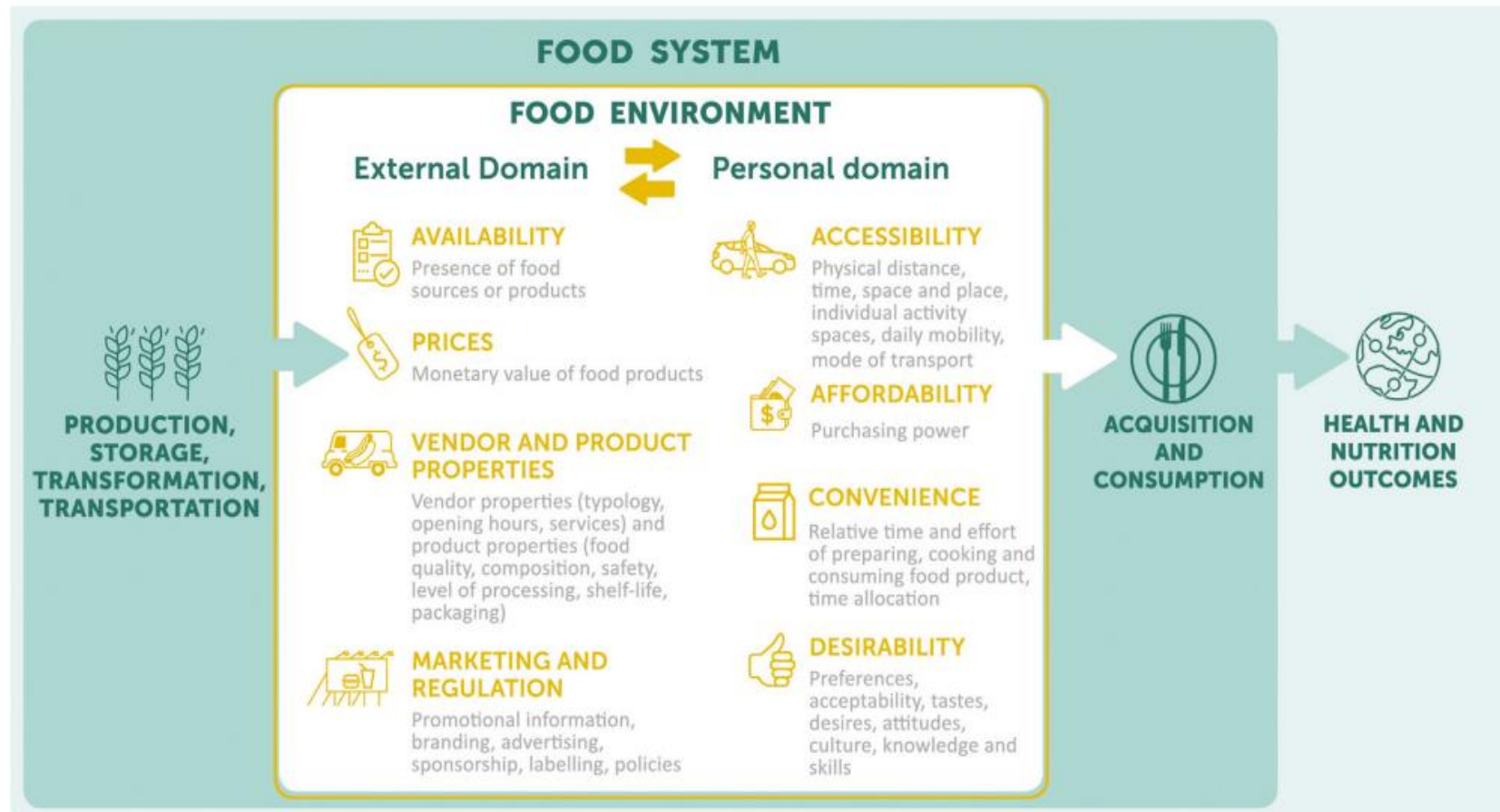*Anywhere where people obtain, eat and discuss food.*

Fig. 2. Conceptual framework. The conceptual framework depicts the food environment as the interface within the wider food system. Key dimensions are mapped to external and personal domains. Interactions between these domains and dimensions shape people's food acquisition and consumption.

Turner et al. 2018

Policy mix

Multiple complementary policies that reinforce each other.

Information,
reporting

Incentives,
motivation

Rules,
mandates

Coordinate the adoption of a coherent mix of complementary policies that include instruments addressing incentives, information on healthy and sustainable food, and regulatory measures.

- Develop a long-term vision on healthy and sustainable diets that is shared by all supply chain actors.

- Ensure coherence between different interventions that influence the food system and remove conflicting interventions.

- Ensure high-level policy coordination by developing communication channels and a harmonized governance system.

- Monitor responses to new policies by food processors and retailers in order to anticipate any unintended effects of policy interventions.

1. Make healthy and sustainable diets the easy and affordable choice.

- Identify fiscal mechanisms to introduce meat and sugar taxes, with appropriate communication.

- Make healthy and sustainable diets more affordable (lower VAT).

- Adjust subsidy schemes for production systems with low environmental performances.

- Address root causes of poor nutrition with social policies aimed at eradicating poverty and investing in better education for all.

2. Provide trusted information on the environmental and health impacts of foods to encourage better decision-making by consumers.

- Include sustainability criteria in national dietary guidelines.

- Define EU-wide time-bound goals for healthy and sustainable consumption.

- Develop information campaigns and education programmes to raise consumer awareness about health and the sustainability impact of diets; sustainability labelling.

- Use the digital food environment to inform consumers about sustainable diets.

- Restrict advertising for food products and drinks whose frequent consumption is unhealthy and unsustainable.

- Engage with all food-system actors and give an equal voice to all stakeholders to overcome opposition from some food industry actors.

3. Mandate new interventions to promote the availability and accessibility of products for healthy and sustainable diets.

- Encourage Member States to regulate the placement in retail outlets of food products.

- Require food product reformulation to increase availability of healthy and sustainable food.

- Restrict EU imports of food commodities from places where food production causes major environmental damage.