

Europe desperately needs science advisor post

The past week saw two significant events in European science. You know about the first one: the triumphant Rosetta mission which landed a probe on a comet. But the other event was less publicised, and much less welcome.

The European Commission has decided to [scrap its chief scientific advisor](#) (CSA) role. The current CSA, Professor Anne Glover, [tweeted](#) about the incredible achievement of the European Space Agency at the same time as her post was being axed.

I'm a chief scientific advisor myself, for the UK government's Food Standards Agency, so I understand the demands of the role and the value of such advice. Professor Glover's dignity and continued enthusiasm for European science highlights her integrity and professionalism, something she has brought to the role throughout her tenure.

The removal of the CSA post was controversial. In the UK much of the media reaction framed it as an [attack on science](#), or a triumph for the green campaigners who [wrote to the EC](#) about Glover's support of genetically modified crops. But this oversimplifies the issues and doesn't focus on what does now need addressing, in the wake of Juncker's decision not to have a CSA – what now for science and evidence in European policy?

EC president Jean-Claude Juncker needs to quickly identify how he will have the clearest and most accessible advice to assist him in making decisions shaped and informed by science. He isn't off to a great start – the commission CSA's office will be replaced by the European Political Strategy Centre which has no scientific advisory role.

Many of the attacks on Juncker's decision to abolish the post go too far, but I do wonder and worry how he will receive the words of scientific wisdom in a trusted and consensual way. Europe deserves the best possible link between science and government.

Read the full, original blog: [Why Europe needs a chief scientific advisor](#)