

*Revised April, 2008*

# **SETAC North America 2008 Strategic Plan**

Previously Revised: July 2006  
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## INTRODUCTION

### *Environmental Quality Through Science®*

The Society of Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry (SETAC) is a nonprofit, worldwide professional society established to provide a forum for individuals and institutions engaged in the study, analysis, and solution of environmental problems, management and regulation of natural resources, education, and research and development. SETAC is an open and democratic organization dealing with environmental science. SETAC operates in a broad social context, reflecting the needs of the environment and people. Application of sound science plays a key role in this process.

*SETAC's mission is to support the development of principles and practices for protection, enhancement, and management of sustainable environmental quality. SETAC promotes the advancement and application of scientific research related to contaminants and other stressors in the environment, education in the environmental sciences, and the use of science in environmental policy and decision-making.*

Aware of the fact that environmental quality is determined by many different factors, SETAC provides the central scientific arena for scientific discourse pertaining to sustainable environments on a worldwide basis. It propagates and facilitates the translation of environmental science into policy making.

### *SETAC's Goals*

- I. Promote research, education, communication, and training in the environmental sciences.
- II. Promote application of interdisciplinary environmental sciences in managing environmental stressors.
- III. Participate in scientific interpretation and communication of exposure to and effects of environmental stressors, ecological risk assessment/management, and solutions for global environmental problems.
- IV. Provide forums for communication and interactions among professionals on a multi-sector, interdisciplinary, and multinational basis on environmental issues.
- V. Develop principles and practices for sustainable environments, considering appropriate ecological, economic, and social aspects.
- VI. Increase financial stability and capacity of SETAC North America to develop new programs/membership service, etc.

In pursuing these goals, SETAC and its geographical units, regional chapters, and members conduct numerous activities, including:

Host annual meetings, comprised of short courses, platform and poster presentations, and professional achievement and merit awards, among others.

Sponsor scientific journal(s), a newsletter, a web site, and technical publications.

Provide for growth and development of students in environmental sciences to produce the next generation of environmental professionals.

Support education and training through SETAC awards and scholarship/fellowship programs and mentoring.

Organize and sponsor regional and student chapters to provide a forum for presentation of scientific data and to enhance communications and collaboration on regional and local levels.

Facilitate incorporation of high quality science into policy by providing effective communication of science to technical and non-technical persons, including managers and policy makers, through standing and ad hoc committees.

Provide advice and counsel to technical and non-technical persons about scientific issues through standing and ad hoc committees.

Cooperate with other societies to co-sponsor meetings.

Broaden disciplinary, geographic, and human diversity within SETAC.

### ***SETAC North America's Strategic Plan***

The SETAC North America Board of Directors has conducted long-range planning efforts for many years, primarily through the Long Range Planning Committee (LRPC - chaired by the SETAC North America Vice President). In 1997, the LRPC began a more coordinated effort to develop a strategic plan for this Geographical Unit (GU) of the Society.

What follows are the strategic goals of the Society that are specific to the North America GU. SETAC and the other GU's follow similar strategic goals. The goals of the Society are restated here in a functional manner. These goals are subject to change through time, from suggestions and new priorities brought forward by the SETAC North America Board of Directors, SETAC Committees, and the SETAC membership. Each goal is followed by one or more objectives, each of which has several strategies that offer guidance on how to implement and achieve the objectives. Benchmarks provide general guidance for implementation and review. Lead committees (in bold) are charged with identifying and prioritizing the most important objectives and strategies, constrained by

policy guidance provided by the SETAC North America Board of Directors. Other committees with responsibility for implementation of strategies and objectives also are listed. It is expected that the lead committee will coordinate and liaise with all appropriate committees and Advisory Groups as strategies and objectives are prioritized and the plan is implemented. It is implicit that the SETAC Office is an integral component of all steps of the process. Implementation and progress will be reported regularly to the SETAC North America Board of Directors, and the document will continue to evolve through long range planning. The plan is intended to complement the Strategic Plan of SETAC and other Geographical units and activities will, where needed, be coordinated with the SETAC World Council.

### ***Procedure for updating the SETAC NA Strategic Plan***

Strategic plans are dynamic documents that need to be updated regularly as part of the long-range planning process. Long-range planning is the responsibility of the vice president who conducts the SETAC NA planning meetings in the spring (usually March), summer (usually July), and fall (at the annual meeting). Ideally, the Strategic Plan will be discussed, revised and formally adopted by the summer planning meeting in the year in which it is revised. The document will serve as a guideline for the year after the planning meeting. The timeframe for the SP is 3-5 years but may be up-dated more frequently as required.

### ***Goals, Objectives, and Strategies***

**Goal I: Promote research, education, communication, and training in the environmental sciences**

**Objective 1: Promote training and education in environmental sciences**

Rationale: SETAC should play an important and proactive role in developing education initiatives to facilitate communication and training of individuals within and outside the society who work, research, or have an interest in the environmental sciences.

***Strategy A: Identify, develop, and offer training and continuing education modules to educate and train professionals in critical areas of environmental sciences***

Timeframe - Ongoing

Cost: Self-sustaining

Implementation: Education Committee, **Short Course Committee**, Regional Chapters Committee

Benchmark – New modules (potentially including on-line options); continuing education units; offer one new course per year; increased short-course attendance

Priority: High

***Strategy B: Develop educational forums and materials for the public, including K-12 teachers***

Timeframe: Immediate and on going

Cost: Medium (explore funding opportunities from the development (endowment) fund)

Implementation: **Education Committee**, Short Course Committee, Endowment Committee

Benchmark: Continue to offer existing modules; develop one new module/yr (potentially includes on-line options and webcasts); increase availability, dissemination, and influence of materials

Priority: Medium

***Strategy C: Encourage participation of undergraduate students in regional and student Chapter activities and annual meeting***

Timeframe: Immediate and on going

Cost: Low

Implementation: **Regional Chapter**, Membership, Student Activities Committees

Benchmark: Increase undergraduate student participation in local and student chapter meetings and at the annual meeting by 10% in two years

Priority: High

***Strategy D: Implement a mentoring program for targeted groups (e.g., students, early career professionals, mid to late career professionals)***

Timeframe: 1-2 years

Cost: reduced meeting registration

Implementation: **Mentoring**, Student Activities, Membership, Regional Chapter, and Education Committees

Benchmark: 10% of SETAC members identify that they are mentoring an undergraduate student or early career professional

Priority: High

**Objective 2: Improve/increase effectiveness of workshops and focused topics meetings on interdisciplinary topics**

Rationale: One of SETAC's strengths is its foundation of good science; focused topics meetings could be an excellent way to showcase these strengths within SETAC and between other societies/disciplines. The goal is to combine strengths and common interests with other societies or disciplines

to the mutual benefit of both. Potential venues for the delivery of such meetings could be via the Regional Chapters (e.g., traveling short courses), Pellston-style workshops, focused topics meetings, and at the annual meeting.

**Strategy A:** *Expand workshops and focused topics meetings, focusing on smaller (200-member) workshops on timely topics (e.g., mercury in wildlife, environmental impacts of urbanization). Ideally, focused topic meetings should broaden membership; this may be achieved by including expertise from outside of SETAC in workshops and focused topics meeting..*

Timeframe: Ongoing

Cost: Low-Medium (ideally will be self-sustaining)

Implementation: Meetings Committee, **Technical Committee**, Short Course Committee, Long-range planning committee

Benchmark: Increased/improved workshops; Link workshops to annual meeting sessions or Expanded Technical Sessions

Priority: High

**Strategy B:** *Increase interdisciplinary focus of annual meetings, workshops and focused topics meetings*

Timeframe: On-going

Cost: Self-sustaining

Implementation: **Technical Committee**, Short Course Committee, Meetings Committee

Benchmarks: Increased interdisciplinary content at annual meeting and workshops; include technical expertise outside of SETAC (e.g., policy, human health) in workshops; undertake booth exchanges between societies; Regional Chapter special workshops or short-course presentations

Priority: High

**Strategy C:** *Increase interaction with government employees, with NGOs, and with others who are unable to participate in traditional SETAC fora such as annual meetings (e.g., special workshops, virtual meetings)*

Timeframe: On-going

Cost: Low/Medium

Implementation: **Meetings Committee**, BOD

Benchmarks: Ensure that workshops and other technical fora bring together diverse, interdisciplinary groups

Priority: Medium

***Strategy D: Develop approaches to increase involvement of the local scientific and regulatory community in annual meeting***

Timeframe: on-going and continuous

Cost: reduced meeting registration

Implementation: **Meetings Committee**, Annual Program Committee

Benchmarks: Aim for one day of regionally-focused sessions at annual meeting; increase participation by local non-SETAC members by up to 5%

Priority: High

**Objective 3: Enhance communication with SETAC members in North America**

Rationale: Effective communication is the cornerstone of an informed membership and can serve as the basis for recruitment of new members. In SETAC NA, we lack effective mechanisms to directly communicate with our membership. These strategies are designed to enhance communication among SNA membership.

***Strategy A: Timely and informative communication with members***

Timeframe: Immediate

Cost: moderate

Implementation: **SETAC Office**, Membership Committee, Student Council, Regional Chapters Committee

Benchmarks: Increased traffic of NA members at SETAC website; members report that communication vehicle/s is/are useful

Priority: High

***Strategy B: Develop and enhance use of electronic communication tools (web, CD-ROM, etc).***

Timeframe: Ongoing

Cost: moderate

Implementation: **SETAC Office**; as needed, work with the SETAC PAC and other global resources to update and maintain web site.

Benchmarks: Ensure that the SETAC North America sections of the web site, particularly those pertaining to the North America Annual Meeting, are up to date and useful

Priority: High

***Strategy C: Increase and improve activities to promote networking during the meeting***

Timeframe: one-two years

Cost: minimal

Implementation: **Meetings Committee**, Annual Meeting Committee, BoD  
Benchmarks: Each annual meeting will have networking opportunities and activities, particularly for new members.  
Priority: Medium

**Objective 4: Support research and training through funding**

Rationale: Identifying potential funding sources to develop new initiatives to support research activity, outreach, education, and mentoring is an important goal for SETAC NA.

**Strategy A: *Identify ways to continue to grow the SETAC NA endowment fund***

Timeframe: Ongoing  
Cost: Self-sustaining  
Implementation: **Development Committee**, BOD  
Benchmarks: bring endowment fund to a level that is self-sustaining (50 K); identify new contributors annually  
Priority: High

**Strategy B: *Provide direction and support for fund-raising activities that will support outreach, education, or mentoring programs***

Timeframe: Ongoing  
Cost: Low  
Implementation: **BoD**, Development Committee  
Benchmarks: Develop a concrete strategy for the Development Committee via conference call or in person at the spring BoD meeting each year  
Priority: High

**Strategy C: *Develop research funding for graduate fellowships***

Timeframe: Long term  
Cost: Variable (monies should be generated from the Endowment Fund)  
Implementation: **Development Committee**, Awards Committee  
Benchmarks: Identify at least 3 funding sources  
Priority: Low

**Strategy D: *Expand young professional research award opportunities***

Timeframe: Long term  
Cost: Variable (monies should be generated from the Endowment Fund)  
Implementation: **Development Committee**, Awards and Fellowship Committee  
Benchmarks: Identify at least 3 funding sources  
Priority: Low

**Strategy E:** *Develop the science exchange program for student researchers to visit other laboratories*

Timeframe: Yearly

Cost: Low (funded by Student Activities Committee fund-raising)

Implementation: Student Activities Committee, Development Committee, Science Advisory Committee

Benchmarks: at least one exchange student per year

Priority: Low

**Objective 5:** **Increase the efficiency of SETAC NA governance and training of governance personnel to enhance the core activities of SETAC NA and to increase cooperation at regional/international/global level**

Rationale: Developing a good governance model, through new initiatives, strategic planning, and training of new members of governance, is an important component of the successful and efficient day-to-day and long-term operation of SETAC NA.

**Strategy A:** *Educate future and new Board members on core SETAC NA activities and governance*

Timeframe: Yearly

Cost: Low

Implementation: **BoD**

Benchmarks: Develop agreements regarding responsibilities/expectations for/from council members; increase member involvement in SNA committees; develop a BoD primer to provide essential governance information and clear descriptions of responsibilities

Priority: High

**Strategy B:** *Undertake periodic self-assessments as a basis for reviewing governance and direction within SETAC NA.*

Timeline: On-going (every two years)

Cost: Low

Implementation: **BoD**

Benchmarks: A self assessment is held every two years or as deemed appropriate by the BoD

Priority: Medium

**Goal II Promote balanced, interdisciplinary approaches to managing chemicals and other stressors.**

**Objective 1: Promote balanced representation within SETAC NA that encourages effective scientific interpretation and communication of environmental science and solutions for global environmental problems**

Rationale: SETAC is committed to balanced representation of the membership from the government, academic, and business sectors as a way to ensure the science is balanced.

*Strategy A: Develop alternate membership categories, recruiting campaigns, organizing conference sessions aimed at increasing the membership of underrepresented sectors.*

Timeframe: Ongoing

Cost: Low

Implementation: **Membership Committee**, BoD, All Committees

Benchmarks: Strive for balanced representation of sectors in all SETAC activities; proposals to SWC for incorporation of new membership categories as appropriate

Priority: High

*Strategy B: Ensure (and/or promote) the representation of underrepresented groups (e.g., NGOs, minorities, geographical areas) and disciplines (e.g., chemists) across SETAC NA activities. Consideration should also be given to balancing gender.*

Timeframe: Ongoing

Cost: Low

Implementation: **Membership**, BoD, Other Committees

Benchmark: Increased representation of under-represented groups in all SETAC activities, committees and the BoD

Priority: Medium

**Objective 2: Foster development of personal networks to facilitate effective exchange of information between and within professional societies and organizations**

Rationale: An important mechanism to promote scientific interpretation and communication of environmental science is interaction between SETAC and other societies and professionals. These strategies, designed to encourage such interactions, will not only enhance appreciation of SETAC as a society but may also serve as a basis for recruiting new members.

**Strategy A:** *Provide opportunities to interact at annual and focused meetings (workshops, symposia, and other forums)*

Timeframe: Ongoing

Cost: Low

Implementation: **Meetings Committee, Annual Meeting Committee, Regional Chapter Committee, Technical Committee**

Benchmark: Increased attendance at meetings or workshops by groups not affiliated with SETAC

Priority: Medium

**Strategy B:** *Encourage other professional societies and organizations to use SETAC as a resource. Regularly explore the operations and scientific issues of concern of other societies in order to improve SETAC North America operations*

Timeframe: On going

Cost: Low

Implementation: Executive Director, **BoD**, Technical Committee, collaboration with International Programs Committee

Benchmark: Promote use of SETAC by other societies and organizations; increased interactions with other societies; partner with other organizations in a way that matches our strengths with areas in which they are not strong and/or we wish to improve in; Distribute Globe to a wider audience (not just members) - the Globe should be available to anyone for direct download from the website (e.g., outside the members only area)

Priority: medium

**Strategy C:** *Involve others (e.g., non-members and other societies) by inviting them to participate in or lead short courses, sessions, critical review publications, and workshops*

Timeframe: Ongoing and continuous

Cost: Self-sustaining

Implementation: Membership, Technical, **Meetings**, Annual Meeting Program, Short Course Committees

Benchmarks: Evaluate registration counts at meetings

Priority: Medium

**Strategy D:** *Invite other society presidents to a strategic planning meeting at the Annual meeting to share ideas and facilitate their interactions with our committees, board, and membership*

Timeframe: Yearly

Cost: May include travel and registration fees

Implementation: Board President/Executive Director

Benchmarks: at least one society president per year  
Priority: High

**Objective 3: Provide collegial, multi-disciplinary setting for balanced discussion in all SETAC NA activities**

Rationale: Effectively promoting SETAC NA goals, and by association those of SETAC, will require opportunities to bring scientists and professional groups together in an interdisciplinary setting. The strategies below, which focus on interactive meetings, are designed to promote such interactions.

**Strategy A:** *Provide at least one opportunity for interdisciplinary interaction (e.g., jointly-sponsored symposium, jointly sponsored short course, evening reception or dialogue, etc.) at each Annual Meeting*

Timeframe: Ongoing

Cost: Low

Implementation: Meetings Committee, Technical Committee, **BoD**

Benchmark: At least one such interaction at each Annual Meeting

Priority: Medium

**Strategy B:** *Hold annual meetings, regional meetings, workshops and other forums that utilize a multi-disciplinary focus*

Timeframe: Ongoing

Cost: Low

Implementation: **Meetings Committee**, Technical Committee, Annual Meeting Committee, Technical Committee, BoD, members

Benchmark: Increased multi-disciplinary focus in all SETAC activities; allow a percentage of Pellston participants to be selected by an application process when soliciting a specific expertise

Priority: medium

**Strategy C:** *Use strategic liaisons with other Professional Groups and Organizations to plan and implement activities addressing principles and practices*

Timeframe: On-going

Cost: Low/medium

Implementation: **Technical Committee**, BoD, Meetings Committee

Benchmarks: Development of activities that address principles and practices; development of topics and integration into SETAC workshops, symposia, and other activities

Priority: medium

**Objective 4: Communicate the outcomes of interdisciplinary interactions**

Rationale: Promotion of SETAC NA goals will be enhanced if the outcomes of the interactions described above are published in a timely manner using broadly distributed media.

**Strategy A: *Provide mechanisms that allow communication to broader audiences:***

- i. Through SETAC publications (including electronic)
- ii. Alternative education opportunities
- iii. Other (non-SETAC) publications

Timeframe: Short, medium, long term

Cost: Medium/High

Implementation: Short Course Committee, **Education Committee**, Technical Committee, to liaise with PAC

Benchmark: Annually, the BoD shall assess the nature and output of interactions with other organizations and groups, such as the number, quality, and impact of co-sponsored symposia, workshops, publications, etc

Priority: High

**Strategy B: *Encourage SETAC NA leaders to communicate more broadly across scientific and popular media (Beyond SETAC publications)***

Timeframe: on-going

Cost: Low

Implementation: **Advisory Group chairs, Technical Workshop Chairs**, Education Committee, Technical Session/symposia Chairs

Benchmark: Annually, the BoD shall assess the nature and output, such as the number, quality, and impact of co-sponsored symposia, workshops, publications, etc. in addition to supporting SWC outreach policy and exploration of “hot topics” from SETAC and other professional organizations

Priority: High

**Goal III: Increase scientific input into decision-making processes**

**Objective 1: In conjunction with SETAC, provide sound science and interpretation of science to policy makers, regulators, legislators, and other decision makers involved in environmental issues**

Rationale: SETAC and its GU's have long struggled with the developing the best mechanism to ensure that the science of SETAC is directed toward decision-making processes in a non-partisan and neutral manner. These

strategies are designed to advance the science of SETAC to policy makers, regulators and decision makers without the appearance of advocacy.

**Strategy A:** *Provide fora for the dissemination of peer reviewed information in support of policy and regulatory decisions*

Timeframe: Ongoing and continuous

Cost: Low/Medium

Implementation: **Technical Committee**

Benchmarks: Development of clearly defined criteria for disseminating information related to policy; Dissemination of technical information in support of policy initiatives (Press releases, TIP's, web-based meeting synopses for SNA workshops); Interactive sessions at annual meeting that include policy perspectives

Priority: High

**Strategy B:** *Provide forums for the interaction of scientists and decision makers (e.g., workshops, focused sessions)*

Timeframe – Ongoing

Cost – Low/Medium

Implementation – **Technical Committee**, Meetings Committee,

Benchmarks – Increase the number of workshops, special focused sessions (e.g., Expanded Technical Sessions), co-sponsored sessions at annual meeting, and other activities that bring diverse groups together

Priority: High

**Strategy C:** *Develop guidelines to evaluate SETAC North America's participation, from engagement to execution, in outside projects*

Timeframe – Short term

Cost – Low/Medium

Implementation – **Technical Committee, BoD**

Benchmark – Guidelines that will allow rapid response on a decision to accept/decline participation in a particular project (to be completed by June of 2008)

Priority: Medium

**Goal IV** **Promote the development of principles and practices for sustainable environments**

**Objective 1:** **Promote SETAC's goals nationally and globally**

Rationale: The four strategies described here are intended to increase participation of scientists from under-represented countries to facilitate increased

communication for this group in multi-sector discussions and the development of national and global environmental solutions.

***Strategy A: Provide scientific tools and information to increase national/international awareness and perspectives of environmental issues***

Timeframe: Ongoing

Cost: Medium to high

Implementation: **Education Committee**, Development Committee

Benchmark: Disseminate informational tools (e.g., courses, workshops) to appropriate groups throughout the year

Priority: Medium

***Strategy B: Provide assistance in developing the Mexico Regional Chapter***

Timeframe: Long term

Cost: Medium to High

Implementation: Regional Chapters Committee, BoD

Benchmarks: Hold a BoD meeting in Mexico in the next several years (eventual goal is to have a focused topic meeting in Mexico), develop strategies for increased participation of Mexico chapter members at annual conference and on Board of Directors and SNA committees

Priority: Medium

***Strategy C: Increase dissemination of material at GU and Regional Chapter meetings***

Timeframe: Ongoing

Cost: Low to medium, but potentially self-sustaining

Implementation: **Regional Chapters Committee**

Benchmarks: Continue to provide SETAC material (books, TIPS, etc.) to Regional Chapters for review and/or dissemination

Priority: medium

***Strategy D: Develop and institute strategies for promoting an environmentally sustainable annual meeting***

Timeframe: On-going

Cost: Low to Medium

Implementation: **Meetings Committee**, Technical Committee, BoD

Benchmark: Develop new ideas for each annual meeting to offset carbon footprint (e.g., strive to achieve carbon neutrality), reduce use of non-recyclable materials at annual meeting

Priority: High