

## PLANNING AND CONDUCTING SETAC WORKSHOPS

### STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

This Standard Operating Procedure outlines the process used by the Society of Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry (SETAC) for planning, proposing, and conducting SETAC workshops. Also included is a discussion of the criteria used by the SETAC Technical Committee to evaluate proposals for SETAC sponsorship. The long-term objectives of the Technical Committee in regard to SETAC workshops are:

Enhance interdisciplinary approaches, including appropriate specialists outside of the field of environmental toxicology and chemistry.

Continue developing international involvement.

Enhance participation by constituencies and user groups, including non-governmental organizations (NGOs), in workshop planning/development to increase acceptance and utility.

Ensure Steering Committee and attendees are balanced among industry, academia, government, and NGOs.

Require clearly defined endpoints, goals, and scope of the Steering Committee.

Enhance the timeliness in production of the final product, including rapid dissemination of an executive summary.

Maintain prestige and stature of the Pellston Workshop designation, and establish criteria for the two categories of workshops (Pellston and Technical).

The Society of Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry sponsors workshops to bring together scientists, engineers, and managers from government, private business, academia, and public interest groups to consider the state-of-the-art of specific environmental topics. While formats vary, generally workshops will be held over the course of 4 to 5 days with 40-50 individuals in attendance. During the workshop, a combination of formal presentations and informal working sessions are used to examine the status of current information and the knowledge base on the topic and to develop recommendations for enhancing the state-of-the-art of the science. An expected product of a SETAC workshop is a document which presents a clear description of the current state of knowledge and a description of the recommendations developed. Publication will be in accordance with SETAC's SOP for *Developing a SETAC Special, Technical, or General Publication Through SETAC (North America)*, but workshop proceedings do not need to undergo the full process. Small meetings are defined as those which are attended by up to 200 participants and aim to provide a forum for exchange of information and knowledge on specific environmental topics and may also be used as a training forum. Meetings do not usually result in a publication per se.

All workshops are administered by the SETAC Offices. It is critical to the success of every

SETAC workshop/meeting that the considerable experience of the SETAC Office staff be used from the very beginning of a workshop.

### Section 1 - Types of SETAC Workshops

There are two general categories of SETAC Workshops -- Pellston Workshops and Technical Workshops. The distinction between these categories is primarily a function of the anticipated breadth of interest in the topic across the SETAC membership, the criticality and timeliness of the topic, and the likelihood that the workshop will significantly advance our scientific understanding of the issue. **The basics of balance and objectivity that underlie all SETAC activities apply to all SETAC workshops.** The attached *Criteria for designation of SETAC Pellston Workshops and Criteria for Designation of SETAC Technical Workshops* are used by the SETAC Technical Committee and Board of Directors / Council / SWC for final designation of a proposed workshop into one of these categories. These differences in designation notwithstanding, the procedures outlined in this SOP are applicable to both types of workshops. [NOTE: Do not confuse technical workshops with technical publications; they may or may not be related. Each has separate criteria for designation as such.]

#### CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATION OF SETAC PELLSTON WORKSHOPS

The goal of a Pellston Workshop is to promote advancement in the resolution of truly cutting-edge technical and policy issues in environmental science while enhancing strategies of science and philosophy. To that end, the following criteria have been developed as guidance for the designation of Pellston Workshops.

1. Proposed workshop is consistent with SETAC goals.
2. Potential sources of funding and estimated amounts are clearly identified.
3. Steering Committee Chair or Co-Chair is an expert in the field being addressed. Members of the Steering Committee must include recognized subject matter experts germane to the workshop.
4. Steering Committee and workshop participants represent an internationally diverse group of individuals including, when possible, academia, government, business, and other non-government organizations.
5. Workshop topic is recognized as being an important and timely scientific issue by the SETAC Technical Committee and Board of Directors and is expected to be of significant interest to a broad cross-section of the environmental community.
6. Workshop objectives are clearly identified and the workshop designed so that the topic can be thoroughly addressed and definitive conclusions/action items can be developed within the time frame of the meeting.
7. Proposed workshop products have a high likelihood of significantly advancing our understanding of a critical issue in environmental science and will be recognized as being

of high value to the scientific community (i.e., establishing what is known, where uncertainties exist, research needed to address those uncertainties).

8. The potential for conflict of interest does not exist or is acceptably resolved.

#### CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATION OF SETAC TECHNICAL WORKSHOPS

The goal of a SETAC Technical Workshop is to promote advancement in the resolution of important technical and policy issues in environmental science while enhancing strategies of science and philosophy. To that end, the following criteria have been developed as guidance for the designation of SETAC Technical workshops. (Text distinguishing Technical Workshops from SETAC Pellston Workshops is shown in boldface.)

1. Proposed workshop is consistent with SETAC goals.
2. Potential sources and estimated amounts of funding are clearly identified.
3. Steering Committee Chair or Co-Chair is a **strong champion for the proposed workshop**. Members of the steering committee must include recognized subject matter experts germane to the workshop.
4. Steering Committee and workshop participants must represent a **nationally or internationally diverse** group of individuals representing academia, government, business, and other non-government organizations, when possible.
5. Workshop topic is recognized as being an important, **although not necessarily pressing**, scientific issue by the SETAC Technical Committee and Board of Directors / Council and is expected to be of significant interest to a **reasonable number of people** in the environmental community.
6. Workshop objectives are clearly identified and the workshop designed so that **important aspects of the topic can be addressed** and definitive conclusions/action items can be developed within the time frame of the workshop.
7. Proposed workshop products have a high likelihood of contributing to our understanding of an **important** issue in environmental science and will be recognized as **being of value to specific sectors** within the scientific community (i.e., establishing what is known, where uncertainties exist, what research is needed to address those uncertainties).
8. The potential for conflict of interest does not exist or is acceptably resolved.
9. The proposed workshop topic does not merit a SETAC Pellston workshop.

#### CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATION OF SETAC SMALL MEETINGS

The goal of a Pellston small meeting is to promote understanding of technical and policy issues in environmental science. To that end, the following criteria have been developed as guidance

for the designation of SETAC small meetings.

1. Proposed meeting is consistent with SETAC goals.
2. Potential sources of funding and estimated amounts are clearly identified.
3. Steering Committee Chair or Co-Chair is a strong champion for the proposed meeting. Members of the Steering Committee must include recognized subject matter experts germane to the meeting.
4. Steering Committee must represent a nationally or internationally diverse group of individuals representing academia, government, business, and other non-government organizations, when possible.
5. Meeting topic is recognized as being an important, although not necessarily pressing scientific issue by the SETAC Technical Committee and Board of Directors / Council and is expected to be of significant interest to a reasonable number of people in the environmental community.
6. Meeting objectives are clearly identified and the meeting designed so that important aspects of the topic can be addressed and significant contributors can be attracted..
7. The potential for conflict of interest does not exist or is acceptably resolved.

## **SECTION II - Planning and Conducting the Workshop**

This section provides a description of the various steps involved in proposing, planning, and conducting a SETAC workshop, including developing the workshop topic, securing SETAC approval, planning the workshop, and publishing the workshop proceedings and other products.

### **Step 1. Developing the Workshop Topic**

Workshop / meeting proponents, at least one of whom must be a SETAC member or an individual SETAC member, will identify a pertinent issue or environmental topic to serve as a focal point for the proposed workshop / meeting and form a tentative Workshop / Meeting Steering Committee which includes at least one SETAC Office staff member as an ad hoc member. The tentative Steering Committee or individual will develop a preproposal (concept paper) that clearly describes the topic to be examined, the workshop objectives, the anticipated range of participants, any potential funding sources, and the benefits to be obtained from the workshop. The SETAC Office should be contacted for example documents, for advice on preliminary workshop organization, for ideas on tentative dates and location, and for funding requirements for the workshop / meeting and follow-up activities. The preproposal should contain sufficient detail (usually 5-6 pages) to enable an initial screening review based upon the aforementioned criteria by the SETAC Board of Directors / Council. It is strongly recommended

that the preproposal be submitted to the SETAC Board of Directors / Council at least one year prior to the proposed workshop date. If the Board / Council feels that the preproposal for the workshop is worthy, it will approve preparation of a complete proposal. This proposal is submitted to the Technical Committee, through the SETAC Office, for technical review.

### **Step 2. Technical Committee Review**

After referral from the Board of Directors / Council, the appropriate national SETAC Technical Committee reviews the proposal in reference to the *Criteria for Designation of SETAC Pellston Workshops* and *Criteria for Designation of SETAC Technical Workshops*. Based upon this review, the Technical Committee will provide one of the following recommendations back to the Board of Directors / Council:

Recommend SETAC sponsorship as a Pellston Workshop and submission to the SWC Technical Committee for consideration.

Recommend SETAC sponsorship as a Technical Workshop at a national level.

Recommend SETAC sponsorship as a Small Meeting at national level.

Recommend SETAC sponsorship contingent upon securing funding.

Recommend SETAC sponsorship contingent upon incorporation of mandatory changes.

Recommend SETAC sponsorship with minor changes suggested.

Recommend against SETAC sponsorship.

Based on the recommendation of the relevant Technical Committee and in light of other demands on the SETAC Office and the probability of obtaining adequate funding for the proposed workshop, the Board / Council / SWC will approve or disapprove the workshop / meeting or the SWC will refer back to national level as a technical workshop as relevant. This can take place at any regularly scheduled meeting throughout the year or by ballot.

### **Step 3. Planning the Workshop**

After approval of the SETAC Board of Directors, workshop proponents may initiate the planning process, cooperatively with the SETAC/SETAC Foundation Office. Listed below are guidelines and recommendations that are relevant to the five primary components of the planning process.

- A. Final Workshop Steering Committee Formation. A Workshop Steering Committee should be established which will have the responsibility for organizing the workshop, conducting the workshop, and ensuring that workshop products are completed and distributed. The composition of the Committee should be based upon the workshop objectives. However, to be consistent with SETAC goals, the Committee should contain representation from government, business, academia, and public interest groups, if

appropriate.

- B. Final Program Development. One of the responsibilities of the Workshop Steering Committee is to develop a specific program for the workshop. Although details will vary depending upon the workshop objectives, generally the format will include a combination of formal presentations and informal workgroup and team discussions. Frequently, the formal presentations are documented and distributed prior to the meeting, while the workgroup discussions are documented during the workshop. Draft workgroup reports are presented to the entire group and efforts are made to reach consensus positions on each subject during the workshop. It is desirable to have a draft workshop proceedings document completed prior to the end of the workshop.
- C. Acquisition of Financial Assistance. It is the responsibility of the Steering Committee to consult the SETAC/SETAC Foundation Office in the preparation of a budget and in securing adequate funding. All formal letters of solicitation are mailed from the Office, but Steering Committee members must make advance inquiries and identify specific individuals in different governmental agencies, companies, trade associations, etc. who may be financial contributors to the workshop. **Financial support will not guarantee that the contributor or its staff is automatically invited to the workshop** (see D. below). While the specific cost of a given workshop will vary, it is important that sufficient funding be secured as early in the planning process as possible. Funds must normally be secured, or at least have a very high probability of being secured before the SETAC Board of Directors will grant final approval for the workshop. Usual cost considerations include:
- Travel costs for Workshop Steering Committee for organizational and planning meetings.
  - Travel and per diem costs for workshop participants.
  - Location costs for the workshop meeting room(s).
  - Computers, printers, copy machines, paper, and other supply costs for producing draft reports and proceedings.
- D. Invitation of Workshop Participants. The Workshop Steering Committee is also responsible for identifying and inviting workshop participants. The expertise of the individuals invited to participate in a workshop should reflect the workshop's purpose and objectives. Experience has shown that 40 to 50 people (including the Steering Committee) is a manageable and productive number of participants for a SETAC workshop. Considerations for participant selection include:
- Technical expertise that is relevant to the topic of the workshop.
  - Balance among government, business, academia, and public interest groups.
  - Willingness to participate in the entire workshop.

Willingness and ability to appraise alternative ways of addressing the workshop topic.

Ability to set aside parent affiliation agenda(s) and participate as a workshop member.

- E. Management of Workshop Logistics. All logistics for SETAC workshops are handled by the SETAC/SETAC Foundation Office. The objective is to assist the Steering Committee in planning the workshop; to help workshop participants with travel plans; to secure a comfortable but productive setting for the workshop; and to support all participants with state-of-the-art computer, copying, and communication equipment.

### **Section III - Publication of Workshop Proceedings**

Publication and dissemination of proceedings from SETAC workshops is highly encouraged. Workshop proceedings are generally published as either a SETAC Special Publication or a SETAC Technical Publication in accordance with the guidelines provided in SETAC's SOP for *Developing a SETAC Special, Technical, or General Publication Through SETAC (North America)*. The outline and format for the publication is dependent upon the workshop objectives and program. Development of a complete first draft of the proceedings during the workshop is essential. After the workshop is held, it is the responsibility of the Workshop Steering Committee to ensure that the proceedings are completed. SETAC has first right of refusal to publish all materials that result from a workshop.

Other potential workshop publications/activities strongly encouraged are:

Executive Summary. Nearly ready at completion of the workshop; the Steering Committee should conduct one review.

Press Release. Basically a brief version of the Executive Summary; ready within 2 weeks after completion of workshop.

Home Page Notice. Posting of Executive Summary.

Technical Information Paper (TIP). A formatted version of Executive Summary; ready within 4 weeks after completion of workshop (see SETAC Technical Issue Paper SOP).

Open Forum. Depending on funding and interest in topic; should be held within 4 to 6 months after completion of workshop.

Agency/Departmental Briefings. If the subject area is of special interest to governmental agencies or departments; briefings by the Steering Committee and/or key participants can be held up to 1 year after completion of workshop.

Poster. Every workshop and related activity should have a poster at the SETAC (North America) Annual Meeting following; some subject areas might lead to poster display at

European and/or Asia/Pacific meetings.

Proceedings. Goal is to have the publication ready within 1 year after completion of workshop; in appropriate instances, quick-turnaround, informal publications that are expanded Executive Summaries have been produced.

#### **Section IV - Other Considerations and Recommendations**

The following items represent considerations and recommendations that have been shown to improve the quality and likelihood of success of a SETAC workshop:

A substantial amount of time should be allotted for discussion following each formal presentation. Additionally, the workshop format should provide ample opportunity for

informal interaction and discussions among participants. Building consensus on complex topics often requires considerable interaction outside the formal workshop setting.

It is also important to invite qualified experts who have not had an opportunity to participate in a SETAC workshop.

The Workshop Steering Committee should ensure that draft workshop products are acceptable in terms of both length and content before the close of a workshop. It is much easier to ensure completion of tasks before participants have dispersed.

It is particularly helpful if at least one member of the Workshop Steering Committee has served on a previous Steering Committee, or as a Session Chair or Workgroup Chair at a previous SETAC workshop.

#### **FRAMEWORK FOR PLANNING, FUNDING, AND SCHEDULING WORKSHOPS**

##### **Months Prior to Workshop**

##### **Objective**

12

Preproposal submitted to Board of Directors for approval and returned to workshop Steering Committee for proposal development.

9

Proposal submitted for Technical Committee review.

8.5	Proposal returned to workshop Steering Committee to address comments and to provide fund raising strategy.
8	Proposal submitted to Technical Committee for second review.
7.5	Proposal returned to Steering Committee to address final comments if not accepted by Technical Committee; submitted to Board for approval if accepted by Technical Committee.
7	Proposal reviewed by Chair of Technical Committee (or Committee if necessary) for acceptance or rejection.
6.5	Accepted proposal submitted to Board for approval.
6	If proposal approved by Board; funding sources identified and cost estimates for workshop submitted; rejections may be appealed to Board.
4	Commitments for 50% of funds due.
2	Commitments for 80% of funds due.

**Months Following Workshop<sup>a</sup>**

0	At end of workshop, executive summary, news release, and rough draft of proceedings provided; selection of liaison. <sup>b</sup>
2	Chapter development/references completed; outline submitted to Publications Advisory Council.
6	First complete draft submitted for participant review; status report/time extension requests due.

7	Participant review completed.
10	Revised draft submitted for peer review.
11	Peer review completed.
12	Final revisions made.
13	Publication description and advertising layout completed.
15	Book/report produced.

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<sup>a</sup> See attached "SETAC Publications Development Process" for additional details.

<sup>b</sup> A SETAC Liaison is typically assigned by the Editor of SETAC Special Publications to coordinate the review and production of the book with the editors of the publication and the SETAC Office. This Liaison must be a SETAC member and cannot be the editor of the publication; however, a Liaison can be a co-editor on the publication.