

Publications Advisory Committee (PAC) Biannual Report

November 30, 2011

Overview

The current report is intended to highlight major activities from the Milan SETAC-Europe meeting through the Boston SETAC-North America meeting (inclusive). Over that time period there was one full-committee conference call, several sub-group calls (focused on the Best Papers Initiative for Society journals-see below), and a face-to-face meeting in Boston.

Status of Revised PAC Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)

The SOP has been in a state of flux for better than a year, in part because of conversion of the PAC from a “council” to “committee” (approved by the SWC at the Milan meeting). Specifically, there was uncertainty as to what this would/should entail in terms of operational changes. However, in examining the Society charter it was determined that the definition of council versus committee was not well enough defined to require substantial alterations to the SOP. Hence, efforts have shifted more to updating the SOP, including the identification of possible new responsibilities and scope (e.g., related to electronic publishing). Prior to the Boston meeting a revised version of the SOP was provided to the full membership of the PAC with a request for comments. Several were received, and most could be handled in a straightforward manner (e.g., clarifications relative to wording). A handful of issues were deemed of sufficient breadth to merit further discussion at the Boston meeting prior to resolution. These included questions as to length of service on the committee and/or as the chair, as well as possible modifications as to membership. Most issues were resolved at the meeting, e.g., the tenure of PAC chair will be limited to two (3-year) terms. The issue of membership constitution was discussed, but no substantive suggestions for changes from the current structure were made.

The current plan in terms of finalizing the SOP is to make agreed upon changes, share the revised version with PAC members one more time for comments/suggestions related specifically to membership (it may be that no changes will be made), and submit a completed document to the SWC for approval by the end of 2011.

Best Papers Initiative

On the September PAC call a proposal was advanced to develop annual Best Paper awards for IEAM and ET&C. This subsequently was developed in written form and passed onto the SWC for consideration. The proposal was approved, and a request made by the SWC for development of an implementation strategy. An ad hoc committee comprised of PAC members (including the journal EICs) and a representative from the Awards Committee subsequently developed an implementation plan which was approved by the SWC on their October call (Appendix 1). Highlights from the plan include (1) decision to make initial awards for each journal for papers published in 2012, (2) presentation of awards at either the SETAC-NA or SETAC-Europe meetings (depending, for example, on the author’s home GU), and (3) a draft procedure for identifying papers for the award. The latter is envisioned to lie largely within the purview of the EICs and Editors for the respective journals.

For the coming year, an ad hoc committee will assist in implementing the process; the committee is comprised of Allen Burton, Herb Ward (ET&C EICs), Rick Wenning (IEAM EIC), Sabine Apitz (IEAM Associate Editor), Mimi Meredith (SETAC Publications lead), Burton Suedel (Awards Committee representative) and Lorraine Maltby (PAC representative and ad hoc committee chair).

Journals Update

Updates as to status of ET&C and IEAM were developed and submitted by the EICs to the SWC prior to the Boston meeting. Major points of note include: (1) transition of ET&C Editorial responsibilities from Herb Ward to Allen Burton (and their respective offices) appear to be proceeding smoothly, (2) submissions to ET&C have shown a recent rather substantial increase, possibly due to a significant increase in the journal Impact Factor, (3) a healthy backlog of papers is in place for IEAM, but there is not yet a need anticipated for more than four issues/year, and (4) the IEAM podcasts are getting substantial attentions/hits.

Books Update

Three book proposals were approved by the PAC in 2011 and are in various stages of development:

Title:	<i>Escort3 – Linking Non-target Arthropod Testing and Risk Assessment with Protection Goals</i>
Editors:	Anne Alix, Frank Bakker, Katie Barrett, Carsten A. Brühl, Mike Coulson, Simon Hoy, Jean Pierre Jansen, Paul Jepson, Gavin Lewis, Paul Neumann, Dirk Süßenbach, Peter van Vliet
Origin:	Workshop hosted by SETAC Europe
Status:	in the final stages of copyediting as of late November 2011

Title:	<i>Global Guidance Principles for LCA Databases: A Basis for Greener Processes and Products</i>
Editors:	Guido Sonnemann, UNEP and Bruce Vigon, SETAC
Origin:	the result of the joint SETAC United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) The Life Cycle Initiative; a SETAC workshop held in January 2011 in Japan
Status:	published by UNEP: ISBN: 978-92-807-3174-3; electronic copies available in the SETAC bookstore and at the Life Cycle Initiative publications webpage. Paper copies (limited) available from the SETAC Pensacola office

Title:	<i>Pesticide Risk Assessment for Pollinators; Proceedings from SETAC Pellston Workshop, Jan., 16-21, 2011</i>
Editors:	Dave Fisher and Tom Moriarty
Origin:	Workshop hosted by SETAC
Status:	in the final stages of writing as of late November 2011

Possible Book Pending

Title:	MODELINK: How to use ecological effect models to link ecotoxicological tests to protection goals
Editors:	Udo Hommen and Anne Alix
Origin:	Proposed Workshop SETAC Europe

Other points of note from the standpoint of books include:

- The SETAC Books Author Guide was updated in September 2011. This revision contains recommendations pertaining to editorship and authorship for works originating in SETAC-sponsored workshops. In 2012, we plan to update the SOP for Books.
- Colleagues are reporting that academic institutions are starting to give little or no credit for authorship of chapters or editing of books. Consequently, workshop organizers increasingly are favouring submissions to journals instead of books. This was the case in for least two recent Pellston workshops. With publishing decisions affected by considerations of, for example, Impact Factors of journals, and institutions in some cases minimizing books as legitimate contributions for purposes of promotion and salary, the long-term outlook for books—in particular those from Pellston-type workshops—is perhaps uncertain.
- Wiley-Blackwell has provided a revised book contract proposal for PAC consideration. At the Boston meeting Justin Jeffryes from Wiley discussed specifics of the proposal with the PAC. There are a number of very attractive features of the proposal including (1) flexibility in terms of peer-review, such that SETAC can continue to coordinate/handle this important aspect of book development, (2) availability of options for electronic publishing of new books, (3) potential for making previously-published book available electronically, and (4) provision of a support network for identifying and publishing books/book topics of direct relevance to SETAC members (that could, in some cases, be written by SETAC members via targeted invitation).

Globe Update

The EIC of the Globe (John Toll) has consistently received positive comments about the Globe from readers and SETAC. New/updated Globe policies have been drafted and will be reviewed before the next PAC call, with a goal of final approval by the end of January. These draft policies need to be viewed as a living document that will change to accommodate changing situations.

Miscellaneous Issues

As part of normal operations of the PAC, a number of requests from various parties were considered in terms of clarification/advice. A brief summary of these issues and associated deliberations is listed below.

Posting Advisory Documents on SETAC Website

A request was received to publish an advisory group product on the SETAC website. The subject paper was developed as a guide for the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA), and the question was whether the paper was the result of the AMEG advisory group's work. The concern was that the publication had been done by a consultant with funding by industry, so it wasn't clear whether the entire advisory group supported the report. After some discussion it appeared that the report was indeed supported by the advisory group and, hence, theoretically would be suitable for posting. However, it was noted by the PAC that, if the paper were to be posted, this might limit the opportunity for publication elsewhere (i.e., there was the potential for dual publication).

Advertising in Society Publications

The issue of advertising in Society journals (ET&C, IEAM, Globe) was addressed at the Boston meeting. Although not been common practice in the past for SETAC publications, advertising represents a defined revenue source that is employed by most other major journals in the field. Wiley is open to help implement this for ET&C and IEAM, but requires general guidance from SETAC in terms of what is/isn't appropriate. It was decided that, given the number of possible scenarios (and associated options) that could arise, developing an *a priori* guidance document would not be practical. Rather, the strategy in terms of proceeding will be to let the EICs evaluate submitted advertising on a case-by-case basis, and to utilize the PAC for guidance/advice as needed. That is, some decisions would be relatively straight-forward (e.g., advertising for scientific product vendors) whereas other decisions may be more problematic (e.g., advertising by an advocacy group).

As experience is gained using this type of "dynamic" decision-making process, it should be feasible down-the-line to develop a formal guidance document for Society publications. This effort would be coordinated by the PAC in consultation with the various publications EICs.

Long-Term Storage/Archiving of Scientific Data

An emerging issue on several fronts involves long-term storage of scientific data associated with publications. That is, seldom do primary publications contain all relevant data supporting the work that may be of future utility to scientists. This has been explicitly identified as an issue through OECD in conjunction with REACH, but is broadly germane to the entire field of environmental toxicology and chemistry. This long-term data storage issue is an area where the PAC could logically work with the Society journal EICs and Wiley to identify a proactive path forward.

APPENDIX 1

Best Paper Awards for ET&C and IEAM:

A Draft Strategy and Implementation Plan (24 October, 2011)

Background

Many professional organizations have “Best Paper” awards for their society journals. There are a variety of models for this, ranging from identification of single papers to annual recognition of multiple top papers within different categories. Irrespective of the approach used, a Best Paper awards program is of direct benefit to authors, as it provides opportunities for high-profile, professional recognition. Importantly, identification of high-visibility and high-quality publications also has a number of inter-related benefits for the journals, including (1) encouraging authors to publish their best quality work in a SETAC journal, (2) providing a reason to highlight the journals via outlets such as press releases (i.e., formal announcement of awards) and ultimately, (3) resulting in increased visibility and enhanced citation metrics (e.g., Impact Factor). In this sense an effective award program serves as a positive feedback system, increasing overall quality of submissions over time, which improves metrics, etc.

Although there historically has been a program for Best Student Paper Awards in *ET&C*, there has not been any sort of formal effort to recognize best overall papers in either journal. Discussions associated with activities of the Publications Advisory Committee (PAC) have indicated strong support for the concept of developing a Best Paper Award for both *ET&C* and *IEAM*. A draft proposal to initiate such a program was developed for approval by the SWC, which was given as part of a call 28 September 2011.

To develop a strategy and initial implementation plan for Best Paper awards, an *ad hoc* sub-committee of H. Ward and A. Burton (*ET&C* Co-Editors-in-Chief), R. Wenning (*IEAM* Editor-in-Chief), S. Apitz (*IEAM* Associate Editor), L. Maltby (PAC member-at-large), B. Suedel (Awards Committee representative), M. Meredith (Publication Manager) and G. Ankley (PAC chair) was formed. The present document captures the discussions and recommendations from that sub-committee.

Vision for the Process

The award process would begin with the January 2012 issues of *ET&C* and *IEAM*. The first awards would be in 2013 at the annual meetings (SETAC North American and/or SETAC Europe). During the coming year the process would be stream-lined and optimized by the above *ad hoc* sub-committee, and an update provided to SWC in November 2012. Our initial thoughts on the process are provided below, with discussion points where there has yet to be consensus.

Nature of the Award

Awards would be made for papers published over the course of a calendar year. For *ET&C* there would be one to three awards, with a possible option for an award being made for each of the three major

discipline or specialty areas: Environmental Chemistry, Environmental Toxicology and Hazard/Risk Assessment. In the case of *IEAM*, multiple awards might also be considered, although these likely would not be aligned with each of the journal discipline areas, as there are several.

There would be no requirement to make an award if no suitable papers are identified.

All papers published in *IEAM* or *ET&C* would be considered potentially eligible for recognition.

NOTE: The sub-committee discussed the possibility of runner-up recognitions, in addition to that for Best Papers, but decided to table consideration of this pending further discussion, e.g., after working through the nomination/review process at least one time.

Awardees would be recognized as part of the Opening Session Awards ceremony at one (or more) of the annual SETAC geographic unit (GU) meetings. The choice of the meeting at which to make the actual physical presentation should reflect the preference of the recipient (e.g., his/her home SETAC GU) and the concurrence of the GU Executive Director. The lead or corresponding author would receive a plaque, while co-authors would receive paper certificates.

NOTE: There was strong desire by the sub-committee to augment the award with something in addition to a plaque. Options discussed included a free one-year membership (for non-member awardees), waiver of page or color charges for one (or more) subsequent papers (for member awardees) and/or open access to the award paper(s). Possible additional benefits such as these have yet to be resolved. Budgetary requirements would have to be established and approved, both within SETAC (with appropriate interactions with Mike Mozur), and with the journals' publisher Wiley-Blackwell.

Selection and Review of Papers

Although there might be slight variations between *ET&C* and *IEAM* with regard to certain logistics (e.g., due to differences in paper volume and/or number of Editors), the actual process used should be basically the same for both Society journals. Further, the approach needs to be both comprehensive and transparent. To achieve this, the following three-step process is initially proposed. It should be noted that this needs to be an evolving/learning process to achieve a final approach that is optimized both in terms of review quality and efficiency.

Step 1. Scholar One on-line manuscript review forms should be modified to include a question asking the reviewer whether this paper is worthy of being considered for a Best Paper award. The Editor or Associate Editor directly responsible for handling review of the paper would then decide if, based on responses from multiple reviewers and his or her knowledge and expertise the manuscript should proceed to the next level of review.

Step 2. Papers identified in Step 1 as potential candidates then would be considered as a group by a committee comprised of Editors from each of the respective journals. This would be an annual activity. The group of Editors will identify those papers worthy of further consideration, and may (if feasible) develop a recommended ranking of the papers. The goal of this step would be to winnow the number of papers under consideration to a group of, for example, four to six manuscripts for each Best Paper

Award category. The team of Editors may wish to develop formal guidance and criteria whereby to judge the papers (**NOTE:** *IEAM* Editors already have started to develop such guidance).

Step 3. The final step of the review process could involve consideration of this smaller set of papers submitted by the journal Editors to an ad hoc group organized through the Awards Committee. This group could be comprised of representatives from the Awards Committee, PAC and the journal Editors, as well “at large” members identified and selected by the Awards Committee. These at large members should have sufficient technical expertise to fairly judge the nominated papers and, to the extent possible, should reflect Society membership diversity. Care should be taken to ensure that no potential conflicts of interest exist within the ad hoc group relative to the papers under review.

NOTE: There was some sentiment on the sub-committee for having an alternative, additional “track” for achieving Step 1 related to nominations of papers from outside the formal review process. The possibility of this should continue to be explored as the procedure for identifying and reviewing potential Best Papers evolves.

Implementation-Near Term

The following steps are those we feel need to be implemented by the end of 2011 to ensure that the Best Paper award process moves forward in a timely manner. Initials of proposed responsible parties for each “action item” are indicated.

(1) Share the current proposal and plan with SWC for concurrence before the Boston meeting, so that a formal announcement of the program can be made to Society membership (e.g., at the Opening Awards ceremony of the SETAC North America 32nd Annual Meeting in Boston); GA

(2) Inform the Awards Committee of the initiative, and start planning for a timeline and logistics associated with Step 3 of the review and selection process; BS

(3) Set aside time at the upcoming *IEAM* and *ET&C* Editorial Board meetings in Boston to discuss this initiative, in particular the short-term implementation of Step 1. Also, start to discuss the logistics of Step 2, including the development of guidance and criteria for judging papers; HW/AB, RW/SA

(4) Inform the journals Publisher, Wiley-Blackwell, of the plan, and seek input as to how the Best Paper award program can be highlighted starting in January (e.g., description on journal-specific web pages); MM

NOTE: Changes to the Scholar One review form consistent with achieving Step 1 ideally should need to be in place for all submitted papers as of 1 January, 2011. A challenge that will need to be addressed here is that papers already are being accepted or reviewed for publication early next year. It would seem reasonable, therefore, to have appropriate Editors go through these early papers and select potential Best Paper candidates. AB/RW

Implementation-Longer Term

Once in place and functioning smoothly it is envisioned that the Best Paper awards process will be handled through interactions of the *ET&C* and *IEAM* Editors-in-Chief and the Awards Committee. However, through the first year of the process, as issues (such as those noted above) are resolved (and new ones identified), and logistics and lines of communication worked out, it seems reasonable that the present ad hoc sub-committee should transition to an implementation and coordination role.

Since it remains logical at present to maintain PAC involvement (e.g., to assist in development of an SOP), we request that chairmanship of the group be assumed by LM.

Some practical and conceptual issues to consider over the course of the next year include those identified above: (a) number of awardees (e.g., runners-up), (2) awards benefits, and (3) alternative nomination/review approaches for papers. An additional issue that will need to be considered involves how the awards will be publicized both by SETAC and the Publisher of the journal (e.g., press releases; open-access to the awarded paper(s), etc.).

Motion Proposed for SWC Consideration

The SETAC World Council recommends there be a Best Paper Award(s) for *Environmental Toxicology & Chemistry* and *Integrated Environmental Assessment and Management*, each calendar year beginning in 2012. The *ad hoc* Best Paper Awards Subcommittee will refine the process during 2012 and report back to the SWC in November.

Appendix 2