

PLANNING AND CONDUCTING SETAC TECHNICAL WORKSHOPS

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES (Approved December 16, 2009)

This Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) outlines the process used by the Society of Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry (SETAC) for planning, proposing, and conducting SETAC workshops other than SETAC Pellston Workshops. Also included is a discussion of the criteria used to evaluate proposals for SETAC sponsorship of meetings smaller than GU Annual meetings (termed Focused Topic Meetings or Special Science Symposia and referred to herein as small meetings).

This SOP provides guidance for SETAC technical workshops sponsored globally (by the SETAC World Council) or by SETAC regional Geographic Units (GUs). Because different units of SETAC are governed by either a Council or Board of Directors, and have either Science or Technical committees, this document will refer to 'Council / Board' and 'Science / Technical' committees as appropriate. A 'SETAC office' refers to office staff serving either the SWC or a SETAC GU.

The long-term objectives of SETAC with regard to Technical Workshops are to:

- Promote understanding and resolution of important technical or policy issues in environmental science by enhancing scientific knowledge, management strategies and/or philosophy.
- Enhance interdisciplinary approaches, including appropriate specialists outside of the field of environmental toxicology and chemistry.
- Foster and promote 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.
- Clearly define the goals, scope and endpoints of the workshop
- Disseminate the results of the workshops as quickly and as widely as possible to ensure that the benefits of the workshops are realized by a wide audience of environmental scientists and managers, the public, and workshop sponsors.
- Maintain prestige and stature of the Pellston Workshop designation, while promoting other workshop formats

Section 1 – Approach

SETAC sponsors workshops to bring together scientists, engineers, and managers from government, 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 1 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.

A required product of a SETAC-sponsored workshop is a publication or outreach document presenting 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* 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 always result in a publication *per se*, but at a minimum should be followed by a Press Release and/or Executive Summary document, a report in the SETAC newsletter or web site, and a poster at an annual meeting. These products will be used as reports to the SETAC Council / Board that hosted the workshop and to the sponsors and to publicize the workshop's scientific results to a wider global audience.

Depending on the scope of the workshop (global, regional, local) and the level of SETAC commitment anticipated (full sponsorship, co-sponsorship, endorsement), workshops are administered by SETAC Offices, Geographical Unit or relevant Local Chapter

Section 2 - Types of SETAC Workshops

There are two general categories of SETAC Workshops: Pellston Workshops, named after the location of the first workshops (University of Michigan Field Station, Pellston, MI, USA) and Technical Workshops, including Small Meetings. The distinction between these two general categories is primarily a function of the anticipated breadth of interest in the topic across the SETAC membership, the urgency, importance, and timeliness of the topic, and the likelihood that the workshop will significantly advance scientific understanding of the issue. A further important criterion is the level of SETAC technical and financial commitment sought by the applicant (e.g. full SETAC sponsorship, co-sponsorship, endorsement). In all cases, the basics of balance and objectivity that underlie all SETAC activities must extend to all SETAC workshops, irrespective of their format.

All SETAC workshops must adhere to the following fundamental guidance principles:

- Proposed workshop is consistent with SETAC goals
- Proposed content is scientifically sound or credible

- Workshop promotes multi-disciplinary approaches
- Workshop attendance ensures balance in opinion and representation by involving relevant constituencies (from academia, government, business and non-governmental organizations)
- Workshop has a viable communication plan coordinated with the SETAC Publications Advisory Council (PAC) and the Public Relations and Communication Committee (PRCC) that ensures timely, accurate and cost-effective publication of results to the society and sponsors as well as to a wider global audience.
- Proposed workshop does not generate a conflict of interest
- Workshop budget is viable, including publication costs, and financial liability to SETAC is controlled

Section 3 – Criteria for Workshop Designation

The criteria for designation of SETAC Pellston Workshops are described in a separate document (“SOP Pellston Workshops”). The criteria outlined below are to be used by the respective Science / Technical Committees and Councils / Boards / for final designation of a proposed SETAC technical workshop or small meeting.

SETAC supports the convening of technical workshops, small meetings and other kinds of scientific activities to bring together experts to discuss and resolve timely technical, scientific or policy issues related to environmental science. SETAC’s level of support can range from simply providing an endorsement (e.g. non-exclusive license to use SETAC name or logo for promotional purposes) to providing full technical and scientific support, as long as basic principles are met. Recognizing the diversity of possible workshop formats and varying levels of potential logistic and financial involvement, SETAC’s approval and sponsorship criteria are generally flexible and determined primarily by the level of support sought by the applicant. The governing principle: that the more is requested from SETAC (in terms of support and financial commitment), the more detail and oversight will be required from the applicant.

For evaluating the merit of a particular workshop or meeting application, SETAC adopts a modular assessment scheme, determined by the services sought. In essence, the applicant puts together a desired “workshop package”, by indicating desired services and formats on the interactive checklist below, which returns a customized list of assessment criteria and tasks.

Among the flexible workshop formats, there are three general levels of SETAC involvement:

- **Level 1 - SETAC-Hosted Technical Workshop or Meeting:** Major workshop or meeting, hosted by SETAC, of global, regional or national relevance on an important, but not necessarily urgent environmental scientific or policy issue (i.e. non-Pellston), organized and advertised by a SETAC-assembled Steering Committee, with all-invited

attendance, significant scientific input, major SETAC financial and logistical support and a substantive high-quality publication coordinated through the PAC and with the assistance of SETAC publications staff.

- **Level 2 - SETAC-Co-organized Technical Workshop or Meeting:** Workshop or meeting of global, regional or national relevance, co-organized by SETAC (in partnership with other organizers), with significant scientific input, some SETAC financial and logistical support, but limited financial liability and less comprehensive publication effort coordinated through the PAC and with the assistance of the SETAC publications staff.
- **Level 3 - SETAC Sponsored Technical Workshop or Meeting:** Workshop or meeting is organized by a different organization, but endorsed, co-sponsored or advertized by SETAC, with a certain degree scientific input, but minor or no financial and logistical support.

Section 4 – Requirements for approval of SETAC-hosted technical workshops or small meetings (Levels 1 or 2).

The goal of a SETAC-hosted or co-organized technical workshop (Level 1 or 2) is to promote advancement of 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 (in addition to the general guidance principles listed above):

- The proposed workshop topic does not merit a Pellston workshop designation.
- Potential sources and estimated amounts of funding are clearly identified.
- SETAC member participation in balanced Steering/Organizing Committee is required
- 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 topic.
- Steering Committee and workshop participants must represent a internationally or nationally diverse group of individuals representing academia, government, business, and other non-government organizations.
- Workshop or meeting topic is recognized as being an important, although not necessarily pressing, scientific issue by the Science / Technical Committee and Council / Board of the host SETAC unit, and is expected to be of significant interest to a reasonable number of people in the environmental community.
- Workshop or meeting objectives are clearly identified and the workshop is 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.

- 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).
- An adequate publications and communications plan has been formulated that includes at a minimum an Executive Summary document, a Newsletter article or web page/log report and a Presentation at an annual SETAC meeting.
- The potential for conflict of interest does not exist or is acceptably resolved.

Section 5 – Criteria for Designation of SETAC-sponsored technical workshops or small meetings (Level 3)

The criteria for a SETAC-sponsored level 3 workshop or small meeting designation are:

- Potential sources and estimated amounts of funding are clearly identified.
- SETAC member participation in Steering/Organizing Committee is not required but strongly recommended.
- The Steering Committee Chair or Co-Chair is a strong champion for the proposed workshop, but does not need to be a SETAC member. Members of the steering committee must include recognized subject matter experts germane to the workshop.
- Steering Committee and workshop participants must represent an internationally or nationally diverse group of individuals representing academia, government, business, and other non-government organizations, when possible.
- Workshop or meeting topic is recognized as being an important, although not necessarily pressing, scientific issue by the Science / Technical Committee and Council / Board of the host SETAC unit, and is expected to be of significant interest to a reasonable number of people in the environmental community.
- Workshop or meeting 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.
- 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).

- An adequate publications and communications plan has been formulated in coordination with the PAC, the PRCC, and the SETAC that includes, at a minimum, an Executive Summary document, a Newsletter article or web log, and a Presentation at an annual SETAC meeting.
- The potential for conflict of interest does not exist or is acceptably resolved.

Section 6 - Planning and Conducting the Workshop

There are a number of necessary steps involved in proposing, planning, and conducting a SETAC workshop (level 1 and 2), 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 pre-proposal (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 relevant SETAC offices should be contacted for sample documents, advice on preliminary workshop organization, ideas on tentative dates and location, and to coordinate the funding requirements for the workshop / meeting and follow-up activities.
- The pre-proposal should contain sufficient detail (usually 5-6 pages) to enable an initial screening review based upon the aforementioned criteria by the relevant Council / Board. It is strongly recommended that the pre-proposal be submitted to the Council / Board at least one year prior to the proposed workshop date.
- If the Council / Board judges the pre-proposal for the workshop to be acceptable, it will approve preparation of a complete proposal. This proposal is submitted to the relevant Science / Technical Committee, through the relevant SETAC office, for technical review.

The complete proposal, if approved, becomes the Steering Committee's blueprint for all further planning. In addition to plans for funding and running the workshop, it must include a viable publications and communications plan in coordination with the PAC, PRCC and SETAC

publications staff which details the workshop products to be communicated, their format, a funded budget for their production, the proposed editors and writers, and achievable schedules (see the suggested timelines below).

Communication and outreach are critical aspects of the process given the important goal of conveying scientific results to a broader global audience. There are a variety of possible publications arising from a workshop (see below), but the minimum acceptable plan would include an Executive Summary and/or a Press Release, a newsletter or web log article, and a poster at an annual meeting. These products will provide feedback to the host SETAC Council / Board, to workshop sponsors, to the membership at large, and to the broader global scientific community. The review of the complete proposal by the Science / Technical Committee of the SWC or by the relevant Geographic Units will include input from the PAC and PRCC as well as the relevant public relations committees of the relevant SETAC GU hosting the workshop.

Step 2 - Technical Committee Review

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

- Recommend SETAC sponsorship as a Technical Workshop (level 1 or 2) at a GU level.
- Recommend SETAC sponsorship as a Small Meeting (level 1 or 2) at GU level.
- Recommend SETAC sponsorship (level 1, 2, 3) contingent upon securing funding.
- Recommend SETAC sponsorship contingent (level 1, 2, 3) upon incorporation of mandatory changes.
- Recommend SETAC sponsorship (level 1, 2, 3) with minor changes suggested.
- Recommend against SETAC sponsorship.

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

Step 3 - Planning the Workshop

After approval by the responsible Council / Board, workshop proponents should initiate the

planning process, cooperatively with the relevant SETAC Office. The following guidelines and recommendations 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 balanced representation from government, business, academia, and public interest groups, as appropriate and feasible.
- B. Final Program Development. The Workshop Steering Committee is to develop a specific program for the workshop. Although details will vary depending upon the workshop objectives, the format will generally 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, particularly to facilitate timely completion of publication and outreach objectives.
- C. Securing Financial Support. The Steering Committee must consult the appropriate SETAC office in the preparation of a budget and in securing adequate funding. All formal letters of solicitation are mailed from the SETAC 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 does 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. For a Level 3 Technical Workshop, funds must normally be secured, or at least have a very high probability of being secured before the relevant SETAC Council or Board 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.

- Publication and outreach costs
- 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 through to completion of required publication and outreach goals.
 - 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 a SETAC Office. The office staff assists 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. Publications and outreach is to be coordinated with the PAC and PRCC and supported by the SETAC publications staff.

Section 7 - 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*. 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 coordinate with the PAC, PRCC and SETAC publications staff to ensure that the proceedings are completed. SETAC has first right of refusal to publish all materials that result from a workshop.

The essential publications required from each workshop include:

- Executive Summary document. Nearly ready at completion of the workshop; the Steering Committee should conduct one review. The Executive Summary will be

submitted to the Council / Board of the SETAC unit authorizing the workshop

- Press Release. Basically a brief version of the Executive Summary; ready within 2 weeks after completion of workshop.
- Newsletter article and/or Web Log. Posting of Executive Summary document. A Newsletter article or web log report informs the membership and a global audience about the purpose and main outcomes of the meeting, and provides contacts for SETAC members who were not at the workshop
- Poster (minimum) and/or a platform presentation or special topic session at a GU SETAC Annual Meeting (promotes on-going discussion and development)

Considering the target audience, other potential publications/activities may include:

- 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 relevant governmental agencies or departments, either globally or within GUs.
- 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 may be produced in coordination with the PAC, PRCC and SETAC publications staff.
- Journal article (peer-reviewed summary of workshop issues and outcomes in IEAM, in the first instance)
- Other products that might be used for education or publicity (e.g. short courses, videos, DVDs)

Section 8 - 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 to ensure inclusion of broader and fresh perspectives.
- The Workshop Steering Committee, working with the PAC, PRCC and SETAC publications staff 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 time 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.

Section 9 – Framework for Planning, Funding, and Scheduling SETAC-hosted Technical Workshops (Level 1 and 2)

The following indicative timelines are recommended for preparing and implementing Level 1 and 2 workshops. Level 3 workshops should be coordinated with the SWC or relevant GU Council or Board no later than three months prior to the proposed workshop date.

Months Prior to Workshop	Objective
12	Pre-proposal submitted to a SETAC Council / Board of Directors for approval and return to workshop Steering Committee for proposal development.
9	Proposal submitted for Science / Technical Committee review.
8.5	Proposal returned to workshop Steering Committee to address comments and to provide fund raising strategy.
8	Proposal submitted to Science / Technical Committee for second review.
7.5	Proposal returned to Steering Committee to address final comments if not accepted by Science / Technical Committee; submitted to Council / Board for approval if accepted by Science / Technical Committee.
7	Proposal reviewed by Chair of Science / Technical Committee (or Committee if necessary) for acceptance or rejection.

6.5	Accepted proposal submitted to Council / Board for approval.
6	If proposal approved by Council / Board; funding sources identified and cost estimates for workshop submitted; rejections may be appealed to Council / Board; Publications Advisory Committee advised of approval.
4	Commitments for 50% of funds due.
2	Commitments for 80% of funds due.
Months Following Workshop	
0	At end of workshop, executive summary, news release, and rough draft of proceedings provided; selection of liaison ^b ; distribution of the executive summary to the Council / Board of the host SETAC organization, and to the newsletter or homepage; submission of an abstract to the next GU SETAC annual meeting
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.

^a. See attached "SETAC Publications Development Process" for additional details.

^b. 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.