

OPAC Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee: Formation and Functions

DISCUSSION DRAFT

For Consideration of Approval at the December 9, 2005 OPAC Meeting

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At the October 28, 2005 meeting of the Ocean Policy Advisory Council (OPAC), I volunteered to bring before the Council at its next meeting a proposal for the formation and functioning of a Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC). After some discussions and considerable reflection, I offer this approach in the interest of OPAC receiving the finest scientific and technical advice outside its voting membership. In this regard, one principle I adhered to is that such advice *not* be complicated by having OPAC voting members serving on the STAC and then participating in subsequent OPAC decisions based on STAC advice. At the same time, there are numerous opportunities within this process for OPAC and OPAC member to interact with the STAC.

Legislative Charge: ORS 196.451 Technical advisory committee. (1) To aid and advise the Ocean Policy Advisory Council in the performance of its functions, the council shall establish a permanent scientific and technical advisory committee chaired by the director of the Sea Grant College program or other similarly qualified member of the Ocean Policy Advisory Council and may establish additional committees as needed. (2) Members of the advisory committees are not entitled to compensation, but in the discretion of the council may be reimbursed from funds available to council for actual and necessary travel and other expenses incurred by them in the performance of their official duties, subject to ORS 292.495. [1991 c.501 §12]

Goal of the STAC: To provide the best available, independent scientific and technical advice to OPAC on issues or questions of interest to the Council.

To achieve this goal, the STAC may draw on its own expertise but would not necessarily provide the scientific response itself. The STAC would incorporate whatever other expertise is necessary to ensure that information needs of OPAC are met with the highest possible level of credibility.

STAC Structure and Membership: The Science and Technical Advisory Committee will include recognized science leaders, broadly representative of the scientific or technical disciplines appropriate to the various areas of OPAC's mandate and interests. Those disciplines, found within the Oregon University System, state and federal agencies, nongovernmental organizations, and other sources, may include:

- Physical, chemical, geological, and biological oceanography
- Marine ecology
- Fisheries, fisheries science and management
- Coastal processes and geomorphology
- Geographic information sciences
- Natural resources management

- Economics, sociology, and other social sciences
- Coastal and ocean law
- Ocean and coastal engineering
- Others as appropriate

The OPAC chair and vice-chair and the director of the Oregon Sea Grant Program, on the advice of OPAC members and following an open solicitation of nominations, will appoint necessary members to the STAC, along with a STAC chair from OPAC. The STAC chair will communicate regularly with the OPAC officers on progress, issues, or other matters.

STAC Operation: STAC would receive science inquiries from OPAC and (1) provide feedback and interact with OPAC so as to fully understand and agree on the science or technical questions being asked; (2) provide recommendations about what science, technical capacity, process, resources and timeline is needed; and (3) manage the scientific and technical advisory process, including providing written or other types of reports to OPAC, including syntheses. The STAC may provide requested scientific or technical advice on its own or, with the approval of the OPAC chair and vice chair, may appoint formal or informal science and technical subcommittees to work with OPAC planning committees, review panels, or other issue-based groups established to do OPAC business.

11/22/05