

**TECHNOLOGY FOR SUSTAINABILITY SUBCOMMITTEE**

**Conference Call Summary  
Tuesday, January 23, 2007  
9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. Eastern Time**

**Welcome**

*Dr. John Giesy, University of Saskatchewan, Subcommittee Chair*

Dr. John Giesy, Chair of the Technology for Sustainability Subcommittee, welcomed the Subcommittee members to the conference call and thanked them for serving on this Subcommittee. He explained the meeting protocol and indicated that he would need to leave 1 hour into the teleconference; Dr. Wayne Landis agreed to serve as the Acting Subcommittee Chair for the remainder of the call. Dr. Giesy asked members of the Subcommittee to introduce themselves and relate any pertinent information regarding their experience in the area of sustainability. Following the introductions, Ms. Clois Slocum, the Designated Federal Officer (DFO) for this Subcommittee, asked additional participants to acknowledge themselves.

Dr. Giesy explained that the Board of Scientific Counselors (BOSC) works independently but in concert with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The members serve EPA, performing reviews of Office of Research and Development (ORD) programs, centers, and laboratories. This Subcommittee will perform a program review of the Technology for Sustainability Research Program. The Subcommittee will offer constructive criticism and observations on the strengths and weaknesses of the program, including scientific leadership.

The Technology for Sustainability Research Program is unique in that it is a program in transition, beginning as another program ends. The Subcommittee's role is to guide and strengthen the planning and implementation of the new program. The Subcommittee also will provide a review that can be used by ORD in responding to the Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) Program Assessment Rating Tool (PART) review. Dr. Giesy asked the Subcommittee members if there were any questions regarding their role or Draft Charge to the Subcommittee.

Dr. Earl Beaver asked to what extent the materials provided to the Subcommittee should be protected. He asked if they should be kept locked at all times or if general precautions were adequate. Dr. Giesy responded that Ms. Slocum would answer his question during her administrative remarks.

Dr. Giesy explained that each Subcommittee member would be assigned to several workgroups to write each portion of the review document. These assignments allow the members to concentrate on specific areas of expertise. He asked if there were any members who had not

been involved with a Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) committee in the past. Drs. Concepción Jiménez-González, Ted Tomasi, Martin Abraham, and Peter Corcoran responded that they had not.

### **Administrative Procedures**

*Clois Slocum, EPA/ORD, DFO*

Ms. Slocum reviewed the FACA procedures that are required for all BOSC Subcommittee meetings. As the DFO for the Technology for Sustainability Subcommittee, Ms. Slocum serves as the liaison between the Subcommittee, the public, and EPA. She explained that the BOSC is a Federal Advisory Committee that provides independent, scientific peer review for EPA's ORD. The purpose of this Subcommittee is to review ORD's Technology for Sustainability Research Program. This is the second conference call for this Subcommittee. The first was an administrative call that took place on January 17, 2007. A third conference call and a face-to-face review meeting in Cincinnati, Ohio, will be held in the near future. Following the meeting, the Subcommittee will prepare a report that will be submitted to the BOSC Executive Committee for review. The Executive Committee will revise the report as it deems appropriate and submit it to ORD. The BOSC advises EPA, but the Agency retains its rights of decisionmaking and program implementation.

Ms. Slocum stated that it is her responsibility as the DFO to ensure that the Subcommittee's conference calls and meetings comply with all FACA rules. All meetings and conference calls involving substantive issues, whether in person, by phone, or by e-mail, that include one-half or more of the Subcommittee members must be open to the public and a notice must be placed in the *Federal Register* at least 15 days prior to the call or meeting. Issues that are preparatory or administrative in nature are exempt from this requirement. The Subcommittee Chair and DFO must be present at all conference calls and meetings. The information for this conference call was published on December 29, 2006, and entered into the federal docket management system (Docket ID EPA-HQ-ORD-2006-1010). Per FACA rules, any workgroups must be comprised of less than one-half of the Subcommittee members.

During this conference call, items will be discussed according to the agenda, and a summary of the call will be made available to the public after certification by the Subcommittee Chair. The Chair must certify the summary within 90 days of the call or meeting. The summary then will be posted on the BOSC Web Site (<http://www.epa.gov/osp/bosc>). If questions asked during the conference call must be answered by EPA staff, the Subcommittee Chair must determine if the question is appropriate and recognize the EPA staff member designated to provide the answer. Because a notetaker is taking detailed notes of the call, Ms. Slocum asked speakers to identify themselves when making a comment. She stated that no requests for public comment were submitted prior to the call, but the agenda allows time for public comment at 10:15 a.m. She will call for public comments at that time.

Dr. Giesy left the conference call at this time, and Dr. Landis assumed the responsibilities of the Chair.

**ORD Overview**

*Jeff Morris, EPA/ORD/Office of Science Policy (OSP)*

Jeff Morris, Director, OSP, presented background information on ORD, EPA's strategic planning process, and the multi-year planning process. He noted that previous BOSC Subcommittees have found this introduction to be effective in orienting their members. ORD, with nearly 2,000 employees, 13 research facilities, and an approximately \$600 million dollar budget, is tasked with providing credible, relevant, and timely research results and technical support to inform EPA policy decisions with the strongest possible science. ORD's mission is to advance the scientific knowledge to solve environmental problems that the Agency faces by: (1) performing health and ecological effects research that provides scientific discoveries responsive to environmental decisions EPA must address; (2) supporting EPA program offices and regions and other organizations through scientific and technical advice and assistance; and (3) providing scientific leadership in identifying, studying, and resolving critical environmental health and ecological effects issues and in shaping the environmental health and ecological effects research agenda. EPA's seven centers are supported by two headquarters offices, the Office of Resources Management and Administration and OSP. Eight National Program Directors (NPDs) lead the planning and development of eight research programs. There is not an NPD for the Technology for Sustainability Research Program because it is a cross-cutting program that will guide the research of the other programs.

ORD evolves its research programs via the ORD Executive Council, which makes corporate decisions informed by two key groups: the NPDs and the Laboratory and Center Directors. The NPDs decide what research areas will be investigated and when the work will be done. The Laboratory and Center Directors provide leadership and implement the research programs. Communication between the NPDs and the Laboratory and Center Directors is critical in the planning and implementation of EPA's research programs. Input also is received from programs, regions, the EPA Strategic Plan, congressional mandates and presidential priorities, BOSC reviews, external advisory committees, stakeholders, and the public. Feedback also is received from the evaluation process, which includes BOSC reviews, reviews by other external committees, and PART reviews. The role of this Subcommittee is two-fold. The members should provide input that allows EPA to move the Technology for Sustainability Research Program forward, as well as input on the current research program from qualitative and relevancy points of view. Dr. Landis asked if the primary responsibility of the Subcommittee is to review the program or to provide prospective input. Mr. Morris responded that a retrospective review would be the bulk of the Subcommittee's task, but ORD welcomed prospective inputs as well.

As the ORD Evaluation Framework moves through its implementation process, environmental outcomes and results are expected, including short-term, intermediate, and long-term outcomes. Intermediate outcomes include changes in public or corporate behavior, whereas long-term outcomes include changes in environmental quality as a result of the implementation of standards.

Multi-Year Plans (MYPs) are used as planning tools to address EPA's high-priority science questions, provide information to assist and support resource decisions, demonstrate how programs contribute to Agency strategic goals, provide information to be used in OMB PART reviews, and communicate research inside and outside of ORD. MYPs include Long-Term Goals (LTGs) that identify the timeframe to deliver research and determine ORD's role, Annual

Performance Goals (APGs) that identify the sequence to provide results and integrate research from all sources, and Annual Performance Measures (APMs) that determine who will accomplish the work and ensure that available resources are adequate to perform the work. Thirteen MYPs have been completed; the Technology for Sustainability Research MYP still is in draft form.

BOSC evaluations help answer two key questions: (1) Are we doing the right science? (2) Are we doing the science right? In answering the first question, it is necessary to take a prospective look at the program to ensure that the science work being performed meets the key needs of the Agency. PART reviews are the government's key tools to evaluate program effectiveness in the areas of purpose and design, strategic planning, program management, and program results. In the case of EPA program results, how the program contributes to environmental outcomes is assessed. The key criteria used to evaluate programs are quality, relevance, and performance.

In summary, ORD seeks input from many sources to enhance and evolve its research program, with BOSC program evaluations being one of the most important inputs. The Subcommittee's review of ORD's Technology for Sustainability Research Program will be of great value and is much appreciated.

Dr. Landis stated that he was not clear on the key questions of the research program and asked if Gordon Evans would be providing that information during his presentation. Mr. Morris responded that Mr. Evans would provide more specific details about the Sustainability Research Program. Mr. Morris' presentation was a general overview of ORD's research programs.

### **Overview of Technology for Sustainability Research Program**

*Gordon Evans, EPA/ORD*

Mr. Evans stated that the program currently is in transition and involves two laboratories: the National Risk Management Research Laboratory and the National Center for Environmental Research. The current Pollution Prevention Research Program ends on September 30, 2007; the Technology for Sustainability Research Program will begin on October 1, 2007. ORD is expecting a retrospective and prospective review of the programs by this Subcommittee. The Pollution Prevention Research Program decision-support tools will be brought forward into the Technology for Sustainability Research Program, including two assessment tools and the Collaborative Science and Technology Network for Sustainability (CNS). The Environmental Technology Verification (ETV) Program, the Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) Program, the P3: People, Prosperity, and the Planet Student Design Competition for Sustainability, and an in-house Green Chemistry Program also will be brought forward into the new program.

Subcommittee members should examine the research strategies and MYP to help form recommendations that will guide the program forward. The new program will have three broad themes: decision-making and decision-support tools, technologies that support sustainability, and application of metrics and measures to guide sustainability. The strategy was written to be cross-cutting so that the leadership of ORD's other programs will look at their own problems and challenges in a sustainable fashion. The three pillars of sustainability are society, economy, and the environment. The goal of the Technology for Sustainability Research Program is to help people pursue the environmental pillar using a systems-based approach to problems and solutions. The program is, however, a small research program and cannot accomplish

everything. The Subcommittee is expected to make suggestions that will help modify and improve the plan and to identify strengths and weaknesses of the programs (e.g., ETV, SBIR, P3, etc.) that are being brought forward from Pollution Prevention to Technology for Sustainability.

Four types of materials have been provided to the Subcommittee members: (1) strategies (e.g., EPA Goal 5, ORD, Technology for Sustainability, Prevention Pollution, etc.); (2) MYPs (e.g., Technology for Sustainability and Pollution Prevention); (3) information on how EPA does business (e.g., peer review, quality assurance); and (4) preliminary information about the face-to-face meeting. There will be two additional mailings with supplementary information. Before the next conference call, Subcommittee members will receive a CD-ROM with background and program-related (e.g., ETV, SBIR, CNS, P3, etc.) documents. The second mailing will occur before the face-to-face meeting and will include specific program information, staff *curriculum vitae* and biosketches, a bibliography with bibliometric analysis, and posters. Subcommittee members are asked to request any additional information that they think would be helpful from Ms. Slocum.

### **Public Comment**

The discussion was paused at 10:15 a.m. for public comment. Ms. Slocum asked if anyone present wanted to make a comment. When no comments were offered, the discussion resumed.

### **Overview of Technology for Sustainability Research Program Discussion**

Dr. Beaver asked if the metrics and measurements were performance measures of Agency programs and procedures or if they included the development of tools to make government decisions in the public sector or applied to industry standards of performance. Mr. Evans responded that metrics were developed to guide environmental decisionmakers, such as public officials or land managers of ecosystems and watersheds, in regional sustainability. Metrics also measure technological developments. It also is desirable to develop measurements that are suitable for EPA to include in its *Report on the Environment*.

### **Overview of Charge/Rating Program Performance**

*Dr. Wayne Landis, Western Washington University, and Mr. Phillip Juengst, EPA/ORD*

Dr. Landis stated that the objective of this Subcommittee is to provide a retrospective and prospective review of the Technology for Sustainability Research Program. The Subcommittee members will consider a series of questions on program relevance, structure, and quality; scientific leadership; coordination and communication; and outcomes. The questions are as follows:

#### *Program Relevance*

- ? How relevant and consistent has our Pollution Prevention research been with respect to Agency goals and customer needs?
- ? How evident are the public benefits of the Pollution Prevention research?
- ? How consistent are the LTGs of the Technology for Sustainability Research Program with achieving the Agency's strategic plan?

- ? How responsive is the new Technology for Sustainability Research Program direction to client needs and recommendations from outside advisory boards?

*Program Structure*

- ? How clear and logical are the LTGs in the Technology for Sustainability Research MYP for organizing and planning the research and demonstrating outcomes of the program?
- ? How appropriate is the science used to achieve each LTG in the Technology for Sustainability MYP (i.e., is the program asking the right questions, or has it been eclipsed by advancements in the field)?
- ? To what extent does the Technology for Sustainability Research MYP describe an appropriate flow of work that reasonably reflects the anticipated pace of scientific progress and timing of client needs?
- ? How logical is the Technology for Sustainability Research Program design? How clearly identified are the Technology for Sustainability Research Program priorities?

*Program Quality*

- ? How good is the scientific quality of the Pollution Prevention research products?
- ? How appropriate is the science that has been used in the Pollution Prevention research?
- ? To what extent have appropriate means been employed to ensure quality Pollution Prevention research (including peer review, competitive funding, etc.)?

*Scientific Leadership*

- ? Please comment on the leadership role that ORD staff has had in contributing to advancing the current state-of-the-science for tools, methodologies, and technologies that support environmental decision-making.

*Coordination and Communication*

- ? How effectively has ORD engaged outside organizations (both within and outside government) for the Pollution Prevention research? How effectively has ORD collaborated with and obtained input from others on research objectives, especially to avoid duplication of effort?
- ? How effective were the mechanisms used for communicating research results for the Pollution Prevention Research Program, both internally and externally?

*Outcomes*

- ? How much have the results from Pollution Prevention research projects been used by environmental decision-makers to inform decisions and achieve results?

? How well defined are the program's measures of outcomes for the Technology for Sustainability Research Program?

Mr. Phillip Juengst explained that the Summary Assessment of the Draft Charge is a new element in BOSC reviews. ORD is trying to develop measurements for output of the APGs and LTGs but struggled in determining a satisfactory measurement of long-term outcomes. A workgroup was formed, and the result of the workgroup's efforts is the Summary Assessment portion of the Draft Charge, which the BOSC Executive Committee approved during its own meeting that morning. This provides a qualitative rating that will allow ORD leadership to assess research programs and set targets for improvement. In the Summary Assessment, each LTG is rated, but as the old Pollution Prevention LTG 1 no longer applies, the Subcommittee will only rate LTGs 2 and 3. The Summary Assessment charge questions are:

? How appropriate is the science used to achieve each LTG in the Technology for Sustainability Research MYP (i.e., is the program asking the right questions, or has it been eclipsed by advancements in the field)?

? How good is the scientific quality of the Pollution Prevention research products?

? How much have the results from Pollution Prevention research products been used by environmental decision-makers to inform decisions and achieve results?

Elements to include for LTG 2: (1) the appropriateness, quality, and use of Pollution Prevention decision-support tools and methodologies to inform stakeholder decisions and achieve results; and (2) the extent to which ORD is asking the right questions and conducting the right science to provide tools and methodologies that are responsive to the needs of decision-makers.

Elements to include for LTG 3: (1) the appropriateness, quality, and use of Pollution Prevention technologies to inform stakeholder solutions to environmental problems and achieve results; and (2) the extent to which ORD is asking the right questions and conducting the right science to provide technologies that are responsive to the needs of decision-makers.

Dr. Landis asked when the Subcommittee members would receive the research questions, and if the questions involved assumptions or paradigms being investigated. Mr. Juengst responded that Subcommittee members are applying these Summary Assessment questions to what they read in the background materials, the MYPs, the Strategic Plans, and the research they will review at the face-to-face meeting.

Dr. Jiménez-González asked if there was a template for writing the ratings and reviews.

Ms. Slocum stated that she would investigate and inform the members when she had an answer.

Mr. Juengst explained that the Summary Assessment should add to the reviews and not change them. The Summary Assessment is another key element to be used to determine benchmark standards for ORD research.

Dr. Landis asked about the audience of the BOSC review document. Mr. Juengst responded that the review will be read by ORD leadership, NPDs, the Assistant Administrator, and Laboratory and Center Directors. He added that the first Summary Assessment to be performed will be by the Safe Pesticides/Safe Products Subcommittee in February 2007, and the second will be

performed by this Subcommittee; ORD is very interested in receiving feedback from the two Subcommittees on how useful the Summary Assessment is as a measurement tool.

### **Preparation for Next Call and Face-to-Face Meeting**

*Dr. Wayne Landis, Western Washington University*

Dr. Landis reported that Ms. Slocum had sent out a list of available documents via e-mail that morning; this is a list of documents that Subcommittee members may request. He then asked if anyone had any agenda items for the next conference call. No items were offered.

Dr. Corcoran asked if the available documents on the list that Ms. Slocum forwarded that morning would be included on the CD-ROM that would be delivered before the next conference call, or if a request had to be made to receive these documents. Ms. Slocum responded that some would be sent, as Dr. Giesy already had requested some of them. The memo of January 18, 2007, that was included in the binder lists the additional documents that will be delivered later.

Dr. Abraham indicated that he did not have that memo or the electronic copy of the list of available documents that was sent that morning. Ms. Slocum said that she would re-send them.

A discussion about the dates for the face-to-face meeting followed. Dr. Giesy has a conflict with the original dates of the meeting, and several Subcommittee members have conflicts with the rescheduled date. Ms. Slocum will speak to Dr. Giesy and determine a window of possible dates between the end of March and the beginning of April and send this information to the Subcommittee members, who then will respond as to which dates they will be able to attend.

Dr. Beaver requested that he be sent, in electronic format, all of the documents contained in the binder. He also requested that any paper copies sent be double-sided to conserve paper.

Dr. Landis requested that Subcommittee members who had not served on a FACA committee in the past receive background information regarding FACA.

Dr. Landis told the Subcommittee members to e-mail Ms. Slocum if they had any questions regarding the Draft Charge and asked if any members had immediate feedback regarding their writing assignments. Dr. Abraham responded that he was not assigned to either the A or B team, and he probably should be assigned to one or the other. Ms. Slocum will discuss this with Dr. Giesy and clarify Dr. Abraham's writing assignment. Dr. Landis proposed that a discussion of writing assignments be placed on the agenda for the next conference call.

Dr. Corcoran commented that his role is stated as "to be defined" and asked if the Chair will define his role as a consultant to the Subcommittee. Ms. Slocum responded that the Chair will define the role within the limits of what is allowed. Dr. Corcoran asked if he should contact the Chair directly. Ms. Slocum stated that she will discuss the issue with Dr. Giesy, and one of them will contact Dr. Corcoran.

Dr. Landis asked if anyone had any additional information needs. Dr. Corcoran asked if the philosophy and theory of the three pillars of sustainability could be found in the binder under Tab F. Mr. Evans responded that the chapters contained in Tab F would be the best source. Chapter 2 speaks to the broad information, Chapter 3 provides the definition, and Chapters 4-6 describe the research themes derived from the definitions.

Dr. Landis asked if anyone had questions regarding timesheets or accounting. Dr. Beaver asked what qualifies as time spent working for the Subcommittee. Ms. Slocum responded that any hours incurred since January 1, 2007, in the process of the review are applicable. Subcommittee members must keep accurate records of hours spent assessing materials for the review. Dr. Abraham asked if hours spent on conference calls or at the face-to-face meeting need to be recorded or if these hours are assumed already. Ms. Slocum responded that all time needed to be captured, including time spent on conference calls or at the face-to-face meeting. Dr. Landis asked if travel time is accountable. Ms. Slocum replied that she will clarify with the main office if travel time is considered accountable and will send out more guidance and information to the Subcommittee members.

Dr. Landis thanked the presenters and the Subcommittee members for their time and concluded the call at 11:02 a.m.

### **Action Items**

- ✍ Ms. Slocum will determine if there is a template for writing the Summary Assessment.
- ✍ Ms. Slocum will send new copies of the January 18, 2007, memo included in the binder and the list of available documents to Dr. Abraham.
- ✍ Ms. Slocum and Dr. Giesy will determine possible dates for the face-to-face meeting, and Ms. Slocum will provide these dates to the Subcommittee members.
- ✍ Following the determination of possible dates for the face-to-face meeting, the Subcommittee members will inform Ms. Slocum of their availability.
- ✍ Ms. Slocum will send the documents found in the binder to Dr. Beaver in electronic format.
- ✍ Ms. Slocum will send FACA information to those members who have not served on a FACA committee prior to this one.
- ✍ Ms. Slocum and Dr. Giesy will clarify Dr. Abraham's writing assignment.
- ✍ Dr. Giesy and Ms. Slocum will define Dr. Corcoran's role as appropriate and inform him of his role.
- ✍ Ms. Slocum will clarify if travel time is considered accountable and will send out more guidance and information to the Subcommittee members.

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## **APPENDIX A: Teleconference Agenda**

### **TECHNOLOGY FOR SUSTAINABILITY TELECONFERENCE MEETING AGENDA**

**January 23, 2007**

**9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. Eastern Time**

#### **Tuesday, January 23, 2007**

9:00-9:15am	Welcome - Introduction of Subcommittee Members - Overview of Subcommittee Objectives and Purpose of Program Review	Dr. John Giesy, Subcommittee Chair
9:15-9:30 am	Administrative Procedures	Clois Slocum, Subcommittee DFO
9:30-10:00 am	ORD Overview	Mr. Jeff Morris, Office of Research and Development
10:00-10:15 am	Overview of Technology for Sustainability Program	Gordon Evans, Office of Research and Development
10:15 – 10:25 am	Public Comment	
10:25-10:40 am	Overview of Charge/ Rating Program Performance	Dr. John Giesy, Subcommittee Chair, and Mr. Phillip Juengst, Office of Research and Development
10:40-11:00 am	Preparation for Next Call and Face-to-Face Meeting - Review Draft Agendas - Make Writing Assignments - Identify Additional Information Needs	Dr. John Giesy, Subcommittee Chair
11:00 am	Adjourn	