

Long Island Sound Study
Science and Technical Advisory Committee Meeting
June 3, 2005
Marine Sciences Research Center, Stony Brook University

The meeting was called to order at 9:30 a.m. by New York co-chair Dr. Larry Swanson. There were 20 attendees (Attachment 1).

1. Public Comments

Art Glowka expressed concern over the increase of *Crepidula fornicata* (slipper shell snail) in Long Island Sound. These snails have no predators and are taking over thousands of acres of productive shellfish beds. Glowka stated that the goal of the LISS is to restore physical, biological and chemical characteristics of the Sound, so focus must be placed on addressing all these aspects.

2. STAC Mission – STAC Co-Chairs

After a review of the goals of the STAC and the mission, Charlie Yarish asked if there were any additions to the proposed mission statement. Larry Swanson motioned to adopt the mission statement and Mark Tedesco seconded the motion. Larry Swanson called for a vote. All were in favor, and the mission statement was adopted (Attachment 2).

3. STAC Bylaws– STAC Co-Chairs

Larry Swanson opened the discussion regarding the proposed STAC bylaws.

Article II, Section 6: Paul Stacey suggested staggering the officers' terms to enable the STAC to maintain some continuity. All were in agreement that the officers should be elected in alternating years. Swanson proposed a motion to change the term of office from 3 to 2 years, with elections of officers held every year staggered by state. All voted in favor of the motion.

Article II, Section 2: Discussion centered on including one of the following phrases: oceanographic processes, estuarine processes, ecosystem management, estuarine and ecosystem processes and coastal and estuarine ecosystem processes. The group agreed that the first sentence should be revised to read "Each member shall have some knowledge of and interest in aspects of Long Island Sound coastal and estuarine ecosystem processes, water quality and resource management issues."

Article III, Section 5: Discussion focused on whether or not to allow votes to be submitted via email. Jim O'Donnell said that the discussion that takes place at the meetings is more important than a vote. Ron Rozsa suggested that a move toward using electronic methods of communication would help improve participation. Swanson motioned to leave this section as written. All agreed.

Larry Swanson asked the members to vote to adopt the bylaws. All voted in favor. The STAC bylaws were adopted, with revisions (Attachment 3).

4. 2006 STAC priorities

The STAC had previously identified research, monitoring, and assessment needs under five broad categories: hypoxia; toxic contaminants; living resources and habitat; land use and development; and global climate change. The plan had been to devote the majority of the meeting to break-out groups focused on the five topics. However, due to the low number of STAC members at the meeting, the decision was made to hold the discussion of priorities among all the STAC members in attendance rather than in smaller break-out groups.

Summaries prepared by members of the STAC for the hypoxia, toxic contamination, land use and development, and global climate change sections were distributed in advance of the meeting. Carmela Cuomo took the lead on developing the hypoxia and global climate change summaries, Paul Stacey developed the toxic contaminants summary, and John Mullaney wrote the land use and development summary. Mark Tedesco asked each of the lead authors to discuss the topics highlighted within their summary. Discussion began on the land use and development summary. STAC members focused on nutrient loads, the need for phosphorus management, and understanding the role of non-point source pollution.

Robert Armstrong suggested that the STAC create a hierarchy of why we care about particular issues to provide a structure for considering which topics are of the highest priority. The following framework was developed:

- I. Living marine resources; aesthetics; public health
- II. Toxicity/disease; eutrophication/hypoxia
- III. Nutrients, toxicants, pathogens
- IV. Sources → land use, habitat alteration/modification, transport
- V. Management

All of these topics are affected by global change and inter-annual variability, and instrumentation and methodologies for addressing these issues need to be considered. STAC members recommended that the STAC priorities should be organized according to this framework.

STAC members also discussed additional topics that should be added to the list identified through the Needs Inventory. Sergio Sañudo-Wilhelmy suggested that a monitoring program focused on toxic contaminants should be developed. Paul Stacey expressed concern over emerging contaminants and endocrine disruptors, their toxicity, and sources in Long Island Sound. Ron Rozsa recommended that living resource/habitat research priorities should include tidal wetland submergence, nitrogen criteria for eelgrass, studying the impacts of ditch plugging, investigating causes of sudden wetland dieback, identifying stressors on food webs, and benthic mapping and the identification of key species' habitat.

Action: The EPA-LISO will identify proposed topics for the Research Grant RFP to be released in summer 2005 for consideration by the Management Committee. Development of the Comprehensive Research,

Monitoring & Assessment Needs Inventory will require additional STAC review and effort. The LISO will work with the STAC to propose the next steps to complete the inventory.

5. MACOORA Update – *James O'Donnell, University of Connecticut*

The Mid-Atlantic Coastal Ocean Observing Regional Association (MACOORA) constituency includes stakeholders representing fishermen, industry, and state associations. The observing region is from the Chesapeake Bay to Cape Cod, which covers RI, CT, NY, NJ, MD, DE, and PA, and is divided into five subregions. The multi-regional meeting was held on May 17-18, 2005 where a decision was made on a structure that includes a board, a member group (federal, states, academia, industry), a user council, and a science council. The goals of MACOORA include the following: 1) to integrate systems and data management, 2) build strong advocacy and funding for the region (planning, marketing), and 3) to deliver reliable, useful products.

6. Broadwater Energy presentation – *John Hritcko, Broadwater Energy*

Broadwater's proposal is to build a Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) terminal in Long Island Sound. The terminal would use a floating storing regasification unit that would be held in place by a mooring tower. John Hritcho presented the background and details of the current proposal and answered questions from meeting attendees.

The meeting adjourned at 3:00 p.m.

NOTE: Complete versions of STAC meeting minutes, including any attachments, are available from the EPA – Long Island Sound Office.