

**Minutes from the 1st Intersessional Meeting of the Science Advisory Board
Teleconference
September 10, 2008**

Meeting Attendees

SAB members in attendance: Dr. David Fluharty, Chair, and Wakefield Professor of Ocean and Fishery Sciences, School of Marine Affairs, University of Washington; Dr. William Ballhaus, President and CEO, The Aerospace Corporation; Mr. Raymond Ban, Executive Vice President, The Weather Channel; Mr. David Blaskovich, Sales & Marketing Executive, Weather & Environmental Markets, High Performance Computing, IBM Corporation; Dr. Frank Kudrna, President and CEO, Kudrna & Associates, Ltd.; Dr. James Mahoney, Environmental Consultant; Dr. James Neil Sanchirico, Associate Professor, Environmental Science and Policy, University of California at Davis; Dr. Carolyn Thoroughgood, Vice Provost for Research, University of Delaware

NOAA senior management and Line Office representatives in attendance: Vice Admiral Conrad C. Lautenbacher, Jr., U.S. Navy (Ret.), Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere and NOAA Administrator; Dr. William Brennan, Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere and NOAA Deputy Administrator; Ms. Carla Sullivan, Chief of Staff; Ms. Laura K. Furgione, Assistant Administrator, Office of Program Planning and Integration; Dr. Paul Doremus, Acting Deputy Assistant Administrator, Office of Program Planning and Integration; Mr. John H. Dunnigan, Assistant Administrator, National Ocean Service; Dr. Paul A. Sandifer, National Ocean Service, Oceans and Health Program; Dr. Richard Rosen, Senior Advisor for Climate Research, Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research.

Staff for the Science Advisory Board in attendance: Dr. Cynthia J. Decker, Executive Director; Mary Anne Whitcomb.

Other Attendees: Dr. Antonio Busalacchi, Chair, Climate Working Group

Opening Statement of the Chair – David Fluharty – University of Washington and Chair, NOAA Science Advisory Board

David Fluharty opened the meeting. He outlined the items on the agenda for this meeting: the SAB role in transition to new administration, a discussion of the Oceans and Human Health Working group and discussion of the Climate Working Group report on Climate Research and Modeling Program.

SAB Transition - David Fluharty – University of Washington and Chair, NOAA Science Advisory Board

The SAB has been asked to comment on NOAA transition plans and secondly to supply the SAB's own recommendations to the next Administration.

David Fluharty asked if Paul Doremus would provide the SAB with the next series of strategy papers. Paul Doremus said NOAA is very close to having content to share with the SAB.

Paul Doremus said NOAA is working with the set of issues presented at the SAB meeting in Sandusky. The SAB won't see anything new except for emphasis in mission continuity of service. Cynthia Decker said there is time on the agenda at the October meeting to discuss transition issues.

David Fluharty provided a draft outline for SAB transition efforts based on a format used for the report from 2000 on transition. In this document the SAB outlined the mission and role of the SAB and developed 11 priorities for the new Administration.

A draft for the current effort could include an introduction of the SAB and a review of the status of the priorities identified in 2000 including progress made by NOAA in responding to those priorities. The third part will review ongoing projects at SAB with the fourth and final part, SAB priorities for science in NOAA.

Discussion:

A member stated she didn't have a problem on recapping status of 2000 priorities but didn't think there should be a lot of history before reading the SAB priorities. David Fluharty agreed. Another member suggested a succinct report card format with checkmarks. David Fluharty said that for some of the priorities, it is difficult to figure out what was meant. The goal is have this document drafted by the October meeting. One part of the document could be a short review of ongoing SAB projects that would show how NOAA science is responding to national needs. The last section of the document would propose direction and priorities for NOAA in the future. From what Paul Doremus presented, the document could show support for what NOAA is already doing as well as for emerging issues, such as oceans and health, and high performance computing. One suggestion was a discussion of how successful NOAA is in making the transition research to operations and how the SAB can help. Does the SAB have a role in that? Another suggestion is talking about service to constituents in this document—how NOAA impacts real people.

One comment is that the National Institutes of Health focus is on “bench to bedside”. Translating this idea to NOAA would include taking environmental issues to constituents.

A member asked if there will be time in October to have a working session to brainstorm as an SAB. David Fluharty said he hoped that the discussions at the October meeting could focus on the recommendations for the transition document.

Action 1: The NOAA Science Advisory Board (SAB) members will write up ideas for NOAA SAB priorities in the next Administration and submit them to the SAB Office for discussion at the October 2008 SAB meeting.

Action 2: The SAB Office will send the CY2000 SAB transition documents to the SAB members and post on the members website.

Oceans and Human Health - David Fluharty – University of Washington and Chair, NOAA Science Advisory Board

David Fluharty stated that the goal of today's discussion is to review the Terms of Reference (TOR) document that was provided earlier to the members and approve a version that would allow this working group to move ahead or decide that this is not what the SAB wants to do.

Paul Sandifer clarified a point on the current Terms of Reference document--one question has been added to the draft terms of reference since the July SAB meeting—question 6 on better integration. The focus of the SAB is to look at science and where NOAA should be going on oceans and health with a working group of SAB and external members to look at science going on and where best to position NOAA.

Discussion:

A member asked if there is a question on involvement with extramural community in relation to NOAA. In this area expertise may need to be tapped from elsewhere, outside of NOAA. Is there a question that should be included?

Paul Sandifer responded that the intent is to include both. NOAA's role includes internal NOAA and external advisory panel, grants and traineeships—that is part of the scope of the working group. NOAA also works through interagency working groups. The program would welcome any advice the SAB can provide to improve the program operations.

Paul Sandifer said question 6 will be clarified to include the external community.

A member commented that this is an aggressive schedule but questioned whether the schedule was realistic. Is there a reason for this schedule? Paul Sandifer asked for some preliminary recommendations by March 2009 meeting in time for a new administration to hear these recommendations early on; that is what he is hoping for in whatever time it takes to complete this.

John Dunnigan said NOAA wants to make sure they get it right but they are willing to listen to SAB timeframe.

David Fluharty said for the Ecosystem Sciences and Management Working Group (ESMWG), the SAB is winnowing down nominations to a short list. He asked if there is overlap with what the Ecosystem group can do, if it made sense for the ESMWG to take this up as a first task.

A comment was made that these two working groups, ESMWG and OH, don't go together. A member said OH impact is on humans and health and this is different from ecosystems. The issues are related/complementary but not the same.

John Dunnigan said concerned about the way the word “health” is used when what is meant is ecosystem productivity. These issues are different from standpoint of NOAA missions we are trying to get clarified—one from ecosystem resources the other from human and marine animal health—oceans and health.

A member said we will use up time with Federal Register Notice (FRN) and getting nominations. It was clarified the SAB doesn't have to use a FRN for an ad-hoc working group—SAB and NOAA can work together to select members.

From the SAB which members have an interest in joining—Carolyn Thoroughgood, David Fluharty expressed interest. Jim Sanchirico still has reservations on how two groups ESMWG and OH work before he volunteers to be on the OH working group. Others who could be involved include those on Harmful Algal Bloom research and Paul Sandifer could come up with some suggestions, some the program is funding, and some that are not. The program has their own advisory panel, a non-FACA panel with 15 members.

David Fluharty said the process is clear for selecting members but the SAB would defer to working group to determine if they could meet these timelines in the TOR or propose another completion date.

David Fluharty asked how the current advisory committee is working. Paul Sandifer responded that the non-Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) groups are nominated through a FRN. Three of the four National Science Foundation/National Institutes of Health centers for oceans and health are represented, as well as educators, and broad natural and social scientists. The group meets twice a year; they are planning a conference call in December and a full meeting at the end of March. Meetings are limited due to budget constraints. A comment was made that the new Working Group should talk to them and perhaps have a member from the advisory committee on the group.

David Fluharty asked for a motion on how to move forward on OH. A member made a motion to adopt the proposal for the working committee in light of the ability to get members on board rapidly. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously, pending some amendments in the TOR. David Fluharty said that with only eight members to represent all relevant issues, the group will need to focus on NOAA and its issues. John Dunnigan agreed. Frank Kudrna also volunteered to serve on the working group. The SAB members of the group should think about members with advice from others. Paul Sandifer will send a list of names in a few days and to be sure that recipients not receiving current NOAA funding.

Action 3: NOAA will revise the draft terms of reference for the Oceans and Health Working Group as per comments from the conference call. The SAB approved these terms of reference with changes

Action 4: NOAA will draft a list of candidates for the Oceans and Health Working Group and submit to the SAB Office for circulation to the SAB. The SAB members on

the OHWG will work with NOAA to develop a slate of candidates for discussion at the October SAB meeting.

Climate Working Group (CWG) Review of the NOAA Climate Research and Modeling Program- *David Fluharty – University of Washington and Chair, NOAA Science Advisory Board*

David Fluharty said that SAB members have the Working Group report as well as the PowerPoint presentation from the July 2008 meeting. The SAB members are requested to provide comments on the draft report, suggestions for improvements/amendments and approval to send the report to NOAA.

Antonio Busalacchi, Chair of the Climate Working Group, said the Working Group reviews one program area of the Climate Program Office, bringing in additional reviewers with expertise in the area being review. The group reviewed Climate Observations and Analysis program a year ago. Climate research and modeling is the second review completed by the Working Group. The Climate Working Group is asking for SAB endorsement of the report.

A member asked if the Working Group attempted to do a prioritization of its recommendations. The response was that the group did not do this; the primary outcome from the review is to recommend a strategy to determine priorities.

A member said there is a cultural difference in that the SAB/NOAA culture is aimed at receiving specific recommendations of limited number upon which NOAA can clearly act. The Working Group produced a large number of recommendations without prioritization; this makes implementation of recommendations by NOAA a challenge and is not an efficient way to proceed.

Antonio Busalacchi said the bottom line is to advise NOAA to develop a strategic plan and that plan would take into consideration of items brought up by CRM review.

A member asked if the report is practical in terms of the SAB. Cynthia Decker asked the SAB if they consider that the review report is an appropriate response. Paul Doremus said there is a comparison to the External Ecosystems Task Team which had a similar report and their report became a productive basis that could be used to interact with the SAB on a long-term strategy. Therefore Paul Doremus thought that it was not a problem for NOAA to take on these recommendations.

David Fluharty said some wording on how we expect NOAA to use these recommendations would make sense. In the executive summary of the report, he doesn't see where the strategic plan is made clear. He suggested that this plan be made clearer before the report is submitted to NOAA.

A member said he is concerned about whether this report will be taken seriously by the climate constituency. It is appropriate to get recommendations out and but there should be clarity about procedure for reviewing, digesting and what NOAA can do about it.

A suggestion was made to emphasize the strategic plan in the transmittal memo; this could be the easiest way to do this. David Fluharty would also like to see a stronger statement in the executive summary.

Action 5: The SAB accepted a motion to accept the amended final report from the Climate Working Group Review of the NOAA Climate Research and Modeling Program. Amendments will include revisions to the Executive Summary to emphasize the need for a Climate Goal Team strategic plan. Language about this will also be included in the transmittal memorandum to NOAA.

Public Comments

There were no public comments submitted or presented.

David Fluharty asked for any additional items of business. As there were none, David Fluharty commented that he thought the intersessional meeting was successful and may need to be used again as appropriate.

Meeting Adjourns

Summary of Action Items from Meeting

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