

The purpose of this letter is to emphasize the strong belief of NOAA's Science Advisory Board (SAB) that diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEIA) is fundamental to quality of science and associated work products. Team diversity is essential to stimulate diversity of ideas and thinking throughout the science process and is thereby directly linked to resulting products, conclusions, and recommendations. In addition, scientific research on DEIA topics is critical to raise awareness and advance knowledge of DEIA. The SAB is confident that the importance of DEIA is precisely in line with NOAA leadership values. To support NOAA's efforts on advancing DEIA, the SAB makes two recommendations related to briefings and reviews of Cooperative Institutes (CIs).

We appreciate the comprehensive briefings presented by NOAA at our SAB meetings. The presentations reflect the quality and range of work being performed by NOAA. However, we have observed at our meetings that NOAA presenters do not reflect the diversity within NOAA, nor the diversity within the weather, water, climate, oceans, and fisheries communities as a whole. Specifically, the vast majority of NOAA presenters at SAB meetings are male, with little diversity in other metrics such as race/ethnicity. This lack of diversity among presenters has been identified multiple times in past meetings.

We respectfully suggest future presenters selected by NOAA to brief the SAB more appropriately reflect the full diversity of NOAA. In addition, we request NOAA presentations include a brief review of diversity of the team working the topic, as well as any relevant information if reporting teams have limited diversity.

Further, we encourage using SAB presentations as an opportunity for young scientists to gain relevant experience. In particular, providing leadership opportunities to diverse scientists at all career levels is essential for them to acquire experience necessary to prepare them for effective leadership at the most senior levels.

The second recommendation of this letter is to reinforce previous SAB comments on criteria for SAB review of CIs. Current CI review criteria do not include diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility. Including a DEIA criterion in CI reviews is critically important because engaging diverse and underrepresented students and young scientists sets the stage for increased diversity at more senior levels and impacts diversity throughout earth science communities. SAB strongly recommends NOAA specifically identify CI development of diverse and underrepresented students/scientists as well as DEIA research as a key factor in evaluating CI performance.

We appreciate efforts by NOAA to increase DEIA, and we look forward to continuing to work with NOAA leadership to assist in your efforts to increase diversity in NOAA staff, NOAA leadership, and the earth sciences communities in general. The SAB believes this mission is vital. Please feel free to contact me if we can be of further assistance.

Very respectfully,