Planning and Conducting SETAC Technical Workshops

Standard Operating Procedures

The Society of Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry (SETAC) sponsors two distinct kinds of workshop to bring together scientists, engineers, and managers from government, business (both services and manufacturing), academia, and public interest groups to consider the state of knowledge on specific environmental topics – Pellston workshops® and Technical Workshops. The distinction between these two general categories is primarily a function of the anticipated breadth of interest in the topic across the SETAC membership, the urgency, importance, and timeliness of the topic, and the likelihood that the workshop will significantly advance scientific understanding of the issue. A further important criterion is the level of SETAC technical and financial commitment sought by the applicant (e.g. full SETAC sponsorship, co-sponsorship, endorsement). Information distinguishing the two is available online. During a workshop, a combination of formal presentations and informal working sessions are used to examine the status of current information and the knowledge base on the topic and to develop recommendations for enhancing the state-of-the-science, and broader implications.

This Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) outlines the process used by SETAC for planning, proposing, and conducting a SETAC Technical Workshop. SETAC technical workshops could be sponsored by the SETAC World Council (SWC) or by SETAC regional Geographic Units (GUs). Because different units of SETAC are governed by either a Council or Board of Directors, this document will refer to Council / Board. SETAC office refers to office staff serving either the SWC or a SETAC GU.

Section I: Technical Workshops: Components and Criteria

SETAC Technical Workshops extend from 1- to 5-days and include usually 30-50 participants. Costs vary from fully to partially funded and outputs also differ. The balance and objectivity that underlie all SETAC activities also apply to SETAC Technical Workshops. The long-term objectives of SETAC in regard to Technical Workshops are to:
- Promote understanding and resolution of important technical or policy issues in environmental science by enhancing scientific knowledge, management strategy, and philosophy.
- Enhance interdisciplinary approaches, by including specialists outside of the field of environmental toxicology and chemistry, as appropriate.
- Enhance and encourage international collaboration and participation.
- Enhance participation across relevant constituencies and user groups, including non-governmental organizations (NGO) to increase acceptance and utility.

- Ensure the Organizing Committee and all attendees are balanced among business, academia, government, and NGOs.
- For level 1 and 2 workshops, produce a high-quality, peer-reviewed key publication such as: an article in a SETAC journal (ET&C or IEAM), a book, or a technical report (see Section III below).
- Disseminate the results of the workshop quickly and to a wide audience of environmental scientists and managers, the public, and workshop sponsors so they may benefit from the workshop.

Technical Workshop Levels

There are three general levels of SETAC involvement in Technical Workshops:

Level 1 - SETAC-Hosted Technical Workshop or Meeting: Major workshop, hosted by SETAC, of global, regional or national relevance on an important, but not necessarily urgent environmental scientific or policy issue (i.e. non-Pellston), organized and advertised by a SETAC-assembled Organizing Committee, with all-invited attendance, significant scientific input, major SETAC financial and logistical support and a substantive high-quality publication.

Level 2 - SETAC-Co-organized Technical Workshop or Meeting: Workshop or meeting of global, regional or national relevance, co-organized by SETAC (in partnership with other organizers), with significant scientific input, some SETAC financial and logistical support, but limited financial liability and less comprehensive publication effort.

Level 3 - SETAC Sponsored Technical Workshop or Meeting: Workshop or meeting is organized by a different organization, but endorsed, co-sponsored or advertised by SETAC, with a certain degree scientific input, but minor or no financial and logistical support.

Technical Workshop Criteria

Level-Specific Criteria for SETAC Technical Workshops:

- Level 1 and 2: The proposed workshop topic does not merit a Pellston workshop designation.
- Level 1 and 2: SETAC member participation in balanced Organizing Committee is required
- Level 3: SETAC member participation in Organizing Committee is not required but strongly recommended.

General Criteria for all SETAC Technical Workshops:

- Potential sources and estimated amounts of funding are clearly identified.
- Organizing Committee Chair or Co-Chair is a strong champion for the proposed workshop. Members of the Organizing Committee must include recognized subject matter experts germane to the workshop topic.
- Organizing Committee and workshop participants must represent a geographically diverse group of individuals representing academia, government, business, and other non-government organizations.
- Workshop participants must represent geographic, gender, and career-level diversity.
- Workshop is recognized as being an important, although not necessarily pressing, scientific issue by the technical review team and Council / Board of the host SETAC unit, and is expected to be of significant interest to a reasonable number of people in the environmental community.
- Workshop objectives are clearly identified and the workshop is designed so that important aspects of the topic can be addressed and definitive conclusions/action items can be developed within the time frame of the workshop.
- Proposed workshop products have a high likelihood of contributing to our understanding of an important issue in environmental science and will be recognized as being of value to specific sectors within the scientific community (i.e., establishing what is known, where uncertainties exist, what research is needed to address those uncertainties).
- An adequate publications and communications plan has been formulated.
- The potential for conflict of interest does not exist or is acceptably resolved.

Section II: Planning and Conducting a Technical Workshop

This section provides a description of the various steps involved in proposing, planning, and conducting a SETAC Technical workshop (level 1 and 2), more specifically developing the workshop topic, preparing the proposal, securing SETAC approval, developing the workshop plan, carrying out the workshop, and publishing the workshop results.

It is critical to the success of every Technical Workshop that the considerable experience of the SETAC office staff is used from the very beginning of a workshop. The geographic location of the organizing committee and the workshop venue will determine which SETAC office will provide logistical support.

Step 1. Developing the SETAC Technical Workshop: Topic and Oversight

Any SETAC member can propose a SETAC Technical Workshop. Workshop proponents will identify a pertinent issue or environmental topic to serve as a focal point for the

proposed workshop and form a tentative Workshop Organizing Committee, which includes at least one SETAC office staff member (typically the scientific officer) as an *ad hoc* member. The Organizing Committee will develop a proposal (essentially a concept paper with certain notional components) that clearly describes the topic, workshop objectives, Workshop Organizing Committee members, participant expertise sought, benefits to be obtained from the workshop, proposed workshop timing, and anticipated cost range and potential funding sources.

The SETAC office should be contacted advice on workshop organization, input on tentative dates and locations, typical funding requirements, etc. The proposal should contain sufficient detail (usually 5-6 pages minimum) to enable an initial screening review based on the aforementioned criteria by the technical review team and the Council / Board. The proposal should follow the outline provided in Section VI of this SOP. It is strongly recommended that this proposal be submitted to the SETAC office at least one year prior to the proposed workshop date.

SETAC office staff will forward the proposal to a technical review team composed of three to six individuals. The technical review team will be identified by cooperation between the science manager, the publication manager, and the chair(s) of the relevant science committee and can include members of the science committee, the editorial boards, the IG steering committees, and the membership at large. Care should be taken that the review team represents scientific expertise on the topic as well as diversity in sector and geography. The technical review team should be instructed to maintain confidentiality.

The technical review team will review the proposal for scientific merit within 30 days, then forward their comments and recommendation to the Council / Board. If the Council / Board feels that the proposal meets the criteria sufficiently, it will approve the workshop in principle and request the preparation of a definitive, final planning document with detailed events and deadlines from the Organizing Committee and a budget from the organizing SETAC office.

Step 2. Formal Approval

The planning document will be the Workshop Organizing Committee's blueprint for the workshop. It builds upon the preliminary proposal with additional detail, and will be used as a benchmark for progress during the planning process. The information described in Step 3 (below) should be included in the planning document. In addition to the plans for funding and running the workshop, it must include a viable communications plan (Section III).

The planning document is initially reviewed by the technical review team and its scientific merit judged using the workshop components and criteria. Simultaneously, the Publications Advisory Committee will review the communications plan and provide

feedback to the Science Committee. The Science Committee will provide one of the following recommendations to the Council / Board:

- Recommend SETAC sponsorship as a Technical Workshop.
- Recommend revisions and ask for a resubmission.
- Recommend against SETAC sponsorship.

The Council / Board is not obliged to follow the recommendation of the Science Committee. The Council / Board will also consider SETAC office resource availability and funding potential. They may also consult other relevant committees.

Step 3. Planning the SETAC Technical Workshop

After formal Council / Board approval, the Workshop Organizing Committee will initiate the planning process cooperatively with the SETAC office. Listed below are guidelines and recommendations that are required in the planning process.

A. Final Workshop Organizing Committee formation. A Workshop Organizing Committee should be finalized. The Workshop Organizing Committee will be responsible for organizing the workshop, conducting the workshop, and ensuring that the workshop products are completed and distributed. The composition of the committee should be based on the workshop objectives, and to be consistent with SETAC goals, the committee should contain diverse representation from government, business, academia, and other relevant groups.

B. Final Participant List. The Workshop Organizing Committee is also responsible for identifying and inviting workshop participants. The expertise of the individuals invited to participate in a workshop should reflect the workshop's purpose and objectives. See template for the participant list provided in Attachment I.

Considerations for participant selection include:
- Technical expertise that is relevant to the topic of the workshop.
- Balance among government, business, academia, and other public interest groups.
- Geographic, gender, and career level representation. Typically a student is also invited to participate.
- Willingness and ability to participate in the entire workshop.
- Willingness and ability to appraise alternative ways of addressing the workshop topic.
- Ability to set aside parent affiliations agenda(s) and participate as an individual expert in the workshop.

C. Final program development. One of the responsibilities of the Workshop Organizing Committee is to develop a specific program for the workshop. Although details will vary depending on the workshop objectives, generally the format will include a combination of formal presentations and informal workgroup and team discussions. See template for the program based on previous workshops provided in Attachment II. Frequently, the formal presentations are documented and distributed prior to the meeting, while the workgroup discussions are documented during the workshop. White papers or other formation documents may also be prepared beforehand and distributed or made available to participants in a document repository. For a Level 1 Technical Workshop, draft workgroup oral reports are presented to the entire group periodically during the workshop. Further, for a Level 1 Technical Workshop, it is desirable to have a draft of the key publication completed prior to the end of the workshop (see Section III).

D. Acquisition of financial assistance. It is the responsibility of the Workshop Organizing Committee to consult the SETAC office regarding the targeted fundraising goal and secure adequate funding. It is the responsibility of the SETAC to develop the final budget for the workshop. All formal letters of fund solicitation are mailed from the SETAC office, but Workshop Organizing Committee members must make advanced inquiries and identify specific individuals in different governmental agencies, companies, trade associations, etc., that may be financial contributors to the workshop. Financial support will not guarantee that the contributor or its staff is automatically invited to the workshop (see B. above). While the specific cost of a given workshop will vary, it is important that sufficient funding be secured as early in the planning process as possible. For a Level 1 Technical Workshop, funds must normally be secured, or at least have a very high probability of being secured, before the Council / Board will grant final approval for the workshop. The SETAC office can advise of costs. Usual cost considerations include:
    - Travel costs for Workshop Organizing Committee for organizational and planning meetings.
    - Travel and *per diem* costs for workshop participants. Note that self-funding of travel expenses is encouraged, but lack of funding is not a condition for rejecting a participant.
    - Location costs for the workshop meeting room(s).
    - Other supplies for producing on-site working documents.
    - Staff support for ensuring a quality workshop and to work out logistical arrangements.

E. Management of workshop logistics. All logistics for SETAC Level 1 Technical Workshops are handled by a SETAC office, either in Pensacola or Brussels. The objective is to assist the Workshop Organizing Committee in planning the workshop, help workshop participants with travel plans, secure a comfortable

but productive setting for the workshop, and provide participants onsite support as needed.

Section III: Communication of Workshop Outputs

Communication is a critical aspect of the SETAC Technical Workshop process because if it fails, the hard work of the organizers, participants, and sponsors may be lost. Further, publication and dissemination of workshop proceedings is an indispensable component of a SETAC Technical Workshop and should be clearly identified in the communication plan portion of the workshop planning document. The type of communication will vary based on the level of the workshop.

The review of the communications portion of the plan will take place in concert with the formal review and will draw on comments from the publication advisory committee (PAC). The participants responsible for leading or drafting each product should be clearly identified and deadlines for various milestones associated with publications should be set. For help with the communication plan including setting reasonable deadlines, please contact the SETAC Publications Manager.

All workshop participants are strongly encouraged to view the Presentation produced by the Editors of the SETAC journals as it provides critical advice for successful and impactful workshop publications. It is essential that the publication outlet is confirmed prior to the workshop being held. The decision is made based on the scope of the workshop and in consultation between the Workshop Organizing Committee or appointed liaison and the appropriate Editor.

The outline and format for the publication are dependent upon the workshop objectives and program. Development of a complete first draft of the key publication during the workshop is essential. After the workshop is held, it is the responsibility of the Workshop Organizing Committee to ensure that the key publication is published in a timely manner. SETAC has right of first refusal to publish all materials that result from a workshop. All publications will undergo the same rigorous peer-review process as any submitted work.

Essential publications required from a SETAC Level 1 Technical Workshop include:
- Key publication in the form of a synthesis paper for a SETAC journal (ET&C or IEAM), a book, or a technical report. The synthesis paper can be formatted as a critical review or Focus article, or can be an original article no longer than 30 double-spaced pages, or 8000 words without references.
- Press Release: Example press releases can be found on the SETAC media center. The timing of the press release is contingent on the topic and the publications

plan. Contact the Publications Manager or Communications Manager for support.

- SETAC Globe article: The article should include the dates, location, attendance topic, and plans for communicating the results. The article is intended to inform the membership about the purpose and main outcomes of the workshop and direct members to other publishing outlets, if available at the time of publication. Examples of Globe articles can be found in the Globe archive. Should be ready 30 days following the workshop.
- Poster (minimum) or platform presentation or organizing a session at a SETAC GU annual meeting: Poster, session, or talk is subject to the same review process as all others submitted – no special consideration is given. The goal of this is to promote on-going discussion and development.

Considering the target audience, other potential publications and activities encouraged are:

- Technical Information Paper (TIP): A formatted version of the Executive Summary with a broader target audience. If public outreach is a priority for the workshop, this is the outlet that can be used.
- Agency or Departmental Briefings: If the subject area is of special interest to governmental agencies or departments, briefings by the Organizing Committee or key participants can be held up to one year after completion of the workshop.
- Journal Articles: Additional papers may be published separate from the synthesis paper. For example, if the workshop synthesis paper is published in IEAM, there may also be opportunity to publish individual paper(s) or a special series on the topic in ET&C. Please note, however, that all documents submitted for consideration for publication to one of the SETAC journals will undergo the same rigorous peer-review process as all other submissions.
- Educational and Publicity Products: Short courses, professional training courses, and webinars are options available for educational purposes.
- Executive Summary: Broad overview summarizing key issues that is openly accessible to the public. The Workshop Organizing Committee should conduct one review.

Section IV: Other Considerations and Recommendations

The following items represent considerations and recommendations that have been shown to improve the quality and likelihood of success of a SETAC workshop:

- A substantial amount of time should be allotted for discussion following each formal presentation. Additionally, the workshop format should provide ample opportunity for informal interaction and discussion among participants. Building

consensus on complex topics often requires considerable interaction outside the formal workshop setting.

- Clearly define endpoints, goals, and the scope of the workshop and for the Organizing Committee.
- The Workshop Organizing Committee should ensure that draft workshop key publication products (e.g., synthesis paper) are acceptable in terms of length, format, and content before the close of the workshop. It is much easier to ensure completion of tasks before participants have dispersed.
- It is particularly helpful if at least one member of the Workshop Organizing Committee has served on a previous Organizing committee or as a session chair or workgroup chair at a previous SETAC Technical Workshop.

Section V: Workshop Schedule

Timeline for planning, funding, scheduling, conducting, and communicating:

Months	Objective
Prior to Workshop	
12	Proposal drafted and presented to Science Committee and Council / Board for preliminary approval. Any required revisions should be resubmitted in a timely manner (1 month).
9	Proposals will not be considered after this time.
7	Planning document should be submitted to the Science Committee, the Publication Committee, and Council / Board for final approval.
5.5	Planning documents will not be considered after this time.
4.5	Contract(s) or agreements in place for venue.
4	Initial invitations sent to prospective participants.
4	Commitments for 50% of funding are due.
2	Commitments for 80% of funding are due.
2	Main publication outlet should be solidified (ET&C, IEAM or SETAC Books). If a book publication is identified, a book proposal form should be submitted to the book editors at this time. Discussions must occur with the Editor of one of the two SETAC journals regarding the synthesis paper.
Following Workshop (maximum durations indicated)	
1 month	SETAC Globe Article

Section VI: Suggested Outline for Proposal / Planning Document

For electronic Submittals, please use the following file name convention:
SETAC_Technical WS Proposal_ topic_date
Following is a suggested proposal outline:

- Topic – Description and Justification
- Objectives
- Organizing Committee: list names, affiliations, email addresses, sector, SETAC affiliation (if any)
- Workshop Communication Plan
- Potential Timeframe: Winter/ Spring/ Summer, year
- Potential Locations and Venues: A preference to location could be noted with reasoning.
- Funding Goal and Potential Funding Sponsors
- Workshop Schedule (use table in SOP as guidance, add milestones specific to workshop and to set specific dates as deadlines)
- References
- Attachment I: Participants: Anticipated Range and Affiliations and Number of Participants (for proposal) or Participants list with listing names, affiliations, email addresses, Sector, SETAC affiliation (for planning document)
- Attachment II: Workshop Program (for planning document)

Note that the detailed budget is prepared by the office separately from proposal

Attachment I
Workshop Participants List
SETAC-Technical Workshop
Title

The workshop will include 40-50 participants from three sectors (academia, government, industry) ranging from early careers (including post-docs) to experts and including two students.

Participants that will be invited are listed below (to be revised after proposal is final).

Name	Affiliation	email	GU	Sector	Expertize
Workshop Chairs:					
Group 1: **Title:** **Chairs:**					
				Academia	
				Industry	
				Government	
Group 2: **Title:** **Chairs:**					
Group 3:					

GU= Geographic Unit; SAf: SETAC Africa; SAP: SEATC Asia Pacific; SE: SETAC Europe; SLA: SETAC Latin America; SNA: SETAC North America

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Attachment II
Workshop Program
SETAC-Technical Workshop
Title, date, location

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Saturday   Organizing Committee Arrival

Sunday
8:00 am   Organizing Committee meeting
                  Participants arrive

2:00 pm   Introductions, opening remarks
                  Review logistics, agenda, and reminder of end products
                  <u>Plenary -</u> Title

18:00   Dinner / social evening

Monday
06:30 – 07:45   Breakfast

08:00 – 10:00   <u>Plenary</u> - Title

10:00 – 10:30   Break (Coffee/tea/snacks available)

10:00 – 12:00   <u>Plenary</u> - Title

12:00 – 13:00   Lunch

12:45 – 13:00   Organizing Committee Meeting

13:00 – 17:00   Group Breakouts start

15:00 – 15:30   Break (Coffee/tea/snacks available)

17:30   Reception / Dinner

20:00   Organizing Committee meets

Tuesday

06:30 – 07:45   Breakfast

08:00 – 09.30   <u>Plenary</u> – Report out – each group has 10 mins, 5 min Q&A

09.30 – 12.00   Group Session cont'd

10:00 – 10:30   Break (Coffee/tea/snacks available)

12:00 – 13:00   Lunch

12:45 – 13:00   Organizing Committee Meeting

13:00 – 17:00   Group Session cont'd

15:00 – 15:30   Break (Coffee/tea/snacks available)

17:30   Reception / Dinner

20:00   Organizing Committee meets

Wednesday

08:00 – 09.30   Plenary – Report out – each group has 10 mins, 5 min Q&A

09.30 – 12.00   Group Session cont'd

10:00 – 10:30   Break (Coffee/tea/snacks available)

12:00 – 13:00   Lunch

12:45 – 13:00   Organizing Committee Meeting

13:00 – 16:00   Group Session cont'd - outlines for submission to Synthesis Group

16.00 – 17.00   Synthesis Group drafts initial Synthesis Document Outline

15:00 – 15:30   Break (Coffee/tea/snacks available)

17:30   Reception

18.30   Dinner

20:00   Organizing Committee meets

Thursday

08:00 – 09.30   Plenary - Presentation of Initial Outlines

09.30 – 12.00   Group Session cont'd

10:00 – 10:30   Break (Coffee/tea/snacks available)

12:00 – 13:00   Lunch

12:45 – 13:00   Organizing Committee Meeting

13:00 – 17:00   Group Session cont'd

15:00 – 15:30   Break (Coffee/tea/snacks available)

17:30   Reception

18.30   Dinner

Friday

06:30 – 07:45   Breakfast

08:00 – 09:00   Organizing Committee Meeting

09:00 – 10:30   FINAL Plenary - Presentation of Outlines

12:00 – 13:00   Lunch *Attendees (Non-Organizing Committee or Chairs) depart*

13:00 – 14.00   Final Meeting of Organizing Committee

14.00   ***Workshop Closed, all depart***